

Where All Thrive: Understanding the Intersection of Culture and Thriving in College for
Students from immigrant Families

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Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

Degree of Master of Arts in Cultural Sustainability

Welch School for Graduate Studies

Goucher College, Baltimore, Maryland

December 8, 2016

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Executive Summary

Subject Matter

Sitting in the warm, well-lit coffee shop, I felt tense. Were my questions echoing along the bare walls and missing my interviewee? After several minutes of inquiring about her culture, I found myself frustrated. My carefully crafted questions that invited her to share details about her cultural identity and upbringing were met with resistance. Everything I tried, including charm, failed to unlock what I hoped to discover. As a last resort I fell onto the question, “How do you prefer to be asked about your culture?” Smiling, she answers, “So, tell me about yourself.” In that moment I felt freedom as an ethnographer and as a friend to ask about culture and identity without constricting others with my questions. Through this simple request to “tell me about yourself” one does not feel obligated to address what I assume to be their culture or identity. One has the opportunity to share what he or she wants to tell or what he or she may think important to make known. This interaction was a significant lesson in minimizing limiting language.

Within the context of university environments, campus-wide events, classrooms, and interpersonal interactions are shaped and informed by the cultural contexts of the organizers and participants (with more evident cultural expression of the organizers). Understanding that Evangel University enrolls students who identify with a variety of cultures, the one-size fits all manner with which events and lectures are handled potentially ushers tension for those who feel limited by the cultural approach and language used by administrators or organizers.

This research seeks to understand the cultural experience of first and second generation immigrants to the United States as they aim to thrive in college. Children of immigrants live in the intersection of cultures—the culture of their parents, the culture of their city, and now, as college students, the culture of their university. Located in southwest Missouri, Evangel University (EU) has a student population that reflects the diversity of the city of Springfield. According to the US Census the population of Springfield, Missouri, is 88% white.¹ Being aware of the lack of racial and ethnic diversity, a number of students of ethnic minorities choose to attend Evangel University for a number of reasons, but most often because the Christian atmosphere provided by the institution aligns with their personal Christian faith.

This research aims to know if and how first and second generation immigrant students who identify with a variety of cultural contexts thrive at Evangel University—a small, private, Evangelical Christian university located in one of the least diverse cities in the United States.

Methods of Analysis

Ethnographic interview is the primary method of research for this study. Paired with a review of the academic literature on thriving, culture, and the experiences of Third Culture Kids, the ethnographic analysis allows for the student's stories to reveal the perceptions, challenges, and triumphs experienced by this student population. Using basic concepts from Laurie Schreiner's Thriving Project, student narratives were also analyzed for several themes of thriving in college: positive perspective, academic

¹ "QuickFacts: Springfield City, Missouri," *United States Census Bureau*, Accessed November 5, 2016,

satisfaction, sense of community and spirituality.² Thriving is also understood as the sense of fulfillment and personal value in a particular season of life.

Findings

All students participating in this research affirm that they enjoy being a student at Evangel, and yet they share that they face challenges as minorities racially, ethnically, and culturally. While they positively look for common ground with other members of the Evangel community, first and second generation immigrant students have particularly unique cultural contexts.

Language, attire, music, and food preferences are the most obvious traditions of difference that this student population brings to campus. Underlying themes of this research that uniquely define this group of students include family relationships, resiliency, and approach to community. Despite the contrast with a majority culture of the city of Springfield and Evangel campus, the first and second generation immigrant students' lives demonstrate aspects that align with elements of Laurie Schreiner's thriving theory, suggesting that these students are thriving on the university campus.

This research also brings to light several principles that can be applied to any institution. These principles include the importance of minimizing limiting language, the transformative power of genuine curiosity, that one's work is always subject to refinement, and the significance of knowing one's audience (in this case, the student body). Through the process of this research, ethnography proves to compliment

² These themes are consolidated by the researcher from a slightly larger set of key elements of thriving as determined by Laurie Schreiner and associates. Allison N. Ash and Laurie A. Schreiner, "Pathways to Success for Students of Color in Christian Colleges: The Role of Institutional Integrity and Sense of Community," *Christian Higher Education* 15, no. 1-2 (2016): 39-40 doi:10.1080/15363759.2015.1106356.

statistical data while also building trust with the student body because the discipline of ethnography is a strong tool for understanding a community.

Conclusions

A deep desire to thrive and elements of thriving resound through the student stories. Student participants are resilient, a skill learned or enhanced through their navigation through multiple cultural settings during their younger years. As members of the Evangel community, this student population not only leans towards thriving, but they have capacity to enhance the opportunity for all students at the university to succeed. The university has the chance to further support the first and second generation immigrant college student population by providing a platform and opportunity for their specific cultural elements to be incorporated into the Evangel experience.

This work brings light to implications that impact the entire Evangel Community. From the research with the students and literature I found a consistent message: that individual students should know that they have the agency and space to continue practicing significant cultural elements and perspectives. Thus, ensuring margin for individualism within the community is important because the platform and celebration of cultural expression becomes a shared experience that fosters a sense of community.

Recommendations for Evangel University

Along with themes, student participants provide indirect and direct recommendations for the university throughout their interviews. This list is not exhaustive, but it is a place to start. Student engagement in university decisions should be consistent in order to ensure that the needs of current students are addressed and

that their cultural identities are valued and respected. Recommendations discussed include:

- Provide Platforms for Students to Share Cultural Stories – Students are ready and willing to share cultural narratives.
- Develop Culturally Minded Events For Students – Open invitation events for cultural expression.
- Increase Access to Cultural Foods For Student Body – Expanding dining service menus, constructing kitchens, and access to spices that are familiar for students who identify as ethnic minorities.
- Prepare Students and Faculty for Deeper Dialogue – Conversations about diversity, race, and culture are occurring on and off-campus. Equipping faculty and students with skills and knowledge of navigating these conversations will set students up for success on campus and in their future careers.
- Diversify Faculty and Approach to Learning – Students seek role models and mentors in the faculty and staff of the university. Diversifying backgrounds of faculty and expanding the cultural approaches to education promotes greater sympathy for students and their cultural approach to learning.
- Engage with Students – Deferring to students offers them a sense of ownership and affirms their opinions and experiences which builds trust between the administration and the student population.

Limitations

The scope of this research covers the experience of first and second generation immigrants to the United States. While all student participants are persons of color, this

research is not all-inclusive for minorities on campus, although, some of the themes identified and the recommendations may relate and benefit all students who identify as minorities. Because a formal record of first and second generation students could not be generated by the university, students were approached through a personal connection. The interviews were conducted between April 2016 and September 2016. Eight were individual student interviews; seven of which were with female students. Four female students who interviewed individually also participated in one group interview. One staff member was also interviewed in this time period. While the aim of this research is to better understand the cultural elements specifically of the first and second generation immigrant student population as it relates to thriving, the recommendations and conclusions provided are broad to consider the thriving of students from all cultural contexts.

Context

To best understand this research, it is important to acknowledge the context of the field site: Evangel University. As an evangelical Christian university established in 1955, Evangel University's mission of "educating and equipping students to become Spirit-empowered servants of God who impact the church and society globally" drives this research aimed at understanding how students who identify with a minority culture thrive at the university.³

³ "Our Mission," *Evangel University*, Accessed October 5, 2016, www.evangel.edu.

Appealing to a Christian demographic through the Assemblies of God denominational network and offering a wide range of liberal arts and seminary programs, the university draws students from across the United States and world, including first and second generation immigrant students. Evangel University currently offers students a range of services (academic support, career preparation, counseling, wellness center, clubs, etc.) and programs (over 100 academic majors and minors) and has a strong record of effectively preparing students for their vocations and graduate work. While the university is meeting students' academic, professional, and social needs some students are also seeking cultural support.

Stationed in one of the least diverse cities in the United States, Springfield, Missouri, the cultural context of Evangel naturally caters to that of the majority culture.⁴ Looking at where Evangel students move from (568 of the 1309 traditional undergraduate students enrolled during the Spring 2016 semester are from the state of Missouri) it makes sense that the culture of the university is mainly focused on and shaped by students who identify with Midwestern traditions and values.⁵ Even so, diversity of cultural expressions is present within the Midwest. This research seeks to understand the intersection of thriving in college and culture for students whose home cultures significantly differ from the cultures of the majority of students and employees of Evangel. For this study "thriving" is understood as: satisfaction with college choice and sense of fulfillment in the present season of life.

⁴ "Top 100 Least Racially Diverse Cities (pop. 50,000+)," *City-Data.com*, Accessed November 5, 2016, <http://www.city-data.com/top102.html>.

⁵ Cathy Williams, e-mail correspondence to author, December 5, 2016.

With a mission statement proclaiming to “educate and equip” students to serve, it is clear that Evangel hopes that all students will thrive at the university and throughout their lives. The concept of thriving is easily desirable and agreed upon as a goal; however, facilitating an environment where all students have the potential to thrive increases complexity. The varied cultural lenses students bring to the university presents opportunity for the institution to pay close attention to the cultural context of each student to best serve their needs and empower him/her to thrive.

The research conducted with first and second-generation immigrant students at Evangel University throughout 2016 reveals that the institution is facilitating an environment primed for thriving and ready to progress. Student participants indicate that they are thriving despite the contrast in culture amongst the majority of students and faculty. For instance, all of the students interviewed have at least one parent who immigrated to the United States. Two of the students remember moving to the US at a young age with their parents. The rest of the students interviewed were born in the US, mostly in large cities where many other immigrants and children of immigrants live. In addition to identifying as Americans, of the students interviewed three identify as Latinas, two identify as Caribbean Islanders, two identify as Africans, one identifies as Asian, and one identifies as European. All participants speak in another language or dialect than American English. One aspect of the participants’ cultural identity that is shared with all of the Evangel community is that every student interviewed professes a belief in the Christian faith. Identifying as Christian does provide a bridge on which relationship can be built with any other Evangel community member.

While the research affirms Evangel's efforts in the spiritual life and community life offices to construct space for young people to mature and thrive in their personal, spiritual, and professional selves, it also highlights areas with room for greater potential. Student participants vocalize frustrations along with solutions for increased affirmation of the value of each student's culture and for addressing racial, ethnic, and cultural tension across Evangel's campus.

Evangel not only has the responsibility to support and celebrate its students, but it will also benefit from engaging with students on a cultural level. Through the stories of student participants, a desire to improve race and cultural relations across the campus and world is marked. The student participants and their peers are truly an asset to the university and the entire student body. The first and second-generation immigrant students I interviewed possess openness to diversity that is critical to a learning environment. When decision makers engage with students (increasing opportunities for their cultures to be celebrated, facilitating dialogue, and engaging the students in critical decisions) the entire Evangel University community benefits, including this student population.

Methodology

Definitions

Ethnography – Ethnography can be defined as the process of documenting lived experiences.⁶ In this project I used interviews as primary resources for the research. I also recorded fieldnotes of each interview experience with students to further connect impressions and how the information is presented with the facts.⁷ Although fieldnotes were not taken while observing students' lives at Evangel, noting the impressions and interview experience provides some insight into the students' stories. Fieldnotes are a tool to understand everything that is being communicated in the interview. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw describe ethnography as “firsthand participation in some initially unfamiliar social world and the production of written accounts of that world that draw upon such participation.”⁸ The same authors describe ethnography as an immersion into the culture of a community. Unfortunately, I was unable to immerse myself in the culture of the first and second generation immigrant students. In fact, it is challenging to say if they have a distinct culture among them. Some experiences are shared; however, several perspectives are unique to individuals.

This work skims the surface of understanding this specific student population. As an alumnus and current employee of Evangel University, I have exposure to the

⁶ Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), xiii.

⁷ Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein, *The New Language of Qualitative Method*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), quoted in Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 15.

⁸ Emerson, et al., *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, 1.

systems and people of the institution. While I am unable to be fully immersed with the current student body, I can recall my personal experiences as a student and current experiences as an employee. I drew additionally insight from my experience with my stepmother, a first generation immigrant from the Philippines. Despite these limitations, this work does illuminate the experiences and perspectives of a portion of the first and second generation immigrant student population at Evangel University. This research also keeps in mind the fluidity of the experiences of each student; therefore, the results of this research can be used as tools for understanding certain principles and serve as a philosophical foundation that students possess unique cultures and needs.

Culture – As mentioned above, culture is fluid. Culture is particularly fluid for first and second generation immigrants. The blending of traditions, expectations, and perspectives from one's own family is met with another set of traditions, expectations, and perspectives from another culture. The students are then faced with navigating through questions on what they find important and how they want to identify. Culture itself is challenging to define. For this research, I am defining as the traditions, expectations, and perspectives with which one identifies and through which one connects with others. Or as Adler more eloquently defines culture: "the symbol of one's essential experience of oneself as it incorporates the worldview, value systems, attitudes, and beliefs of a group with which such elements are shared."⁹ Culture is most often referred to in terms of nationality or ethnicity. It is critical to this research that

⁹ P. Adler *Beyond Cultural Identity: Ramifications on Cultural and Multicultural Man*, In "Culture Learning: Concepts, Application and research, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1977), quoted in Joe Greenholtz and Jean Kim, "The Cultural Hybridity of Lena: A Multi-method Case Study of a Third Culture Kid," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 33, (2009): 392, Accessed September 13, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.05.004>.

culture is understood as complex for many and that within any given culture one can discover diversity.

Identity – Identity is “both a category of practice and a category of analysis. As a category of practice, it is used by [people]...to make sense of themselves, of their activities, of what they share with, and how they differ from, others.”¹⁰

In other words, identity can be understood as the sum of, or collection of distinguishable qualities of an individual or group. Noting the identity of the students in this research was critical, not only in the researcher’s noting of a student’s identity, but how a student identifies. What the student finds significant about himself or herself provides clarity for the researcher and assumes that the student understands his or her identity best, thus establishing the authority of the student early on in the interview.

Thriving – This study defines thriving as a person having a sense of fulfillment within a season of one’s life and that individual understands that he or she has inherent value. Laurie Schreiner’s work with the Thriving Project is most frequently noted as the foundation for understanding the elements of thriving in college. Because my research is with college students, Schreiner’s findings greatly inform my understanding of thriving. Schreiner and associates define thriving as engaging completely in a variety of areas in life (academic, scholastic, interpersonal, spiritual).¹¹ What is challenging with supplying a definition for this term is that, like culture, thriving is personal. Thriving can also be understood through a cultural lense. Its rubric is different for each person and

¹⁰ On “ethnic identity entrepreneurs,” see Barbara Lal, “Ethnic Identity Entrepreneurs: Their Role in Transracial and Intercountry Adoptions,” *Asian Pacific Migration Journal* 6 (1997): 385-413, quoted in Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, “Beyond ‘Identity,’” *Theory and Society* 29 no. 1 (2000): 4-5, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3108478>.

¹¹ Laurie A. Schreiner, “The ‘Thriving Quotient’: A New Vision for Student Success,” *About Campus* 15 (2010): 4, doi:10.1002/abc.20016.

cultural context. However, an overarching understanding of thriving for this research generalizes that a college student possesses a positive outlook in regards to a specific area of his or her life with respect to being a student at this university.

Community – A sense of community is gained when an individual finds support through at least one avenue of social interaction. In the college setting, one can have a sense of community within one’s family, peers, mentors, staff, instructors, or a group or organization off-campus. One can turn to a person or persons for encouragement, guidance, and affirmation and this support structure empowers the individual and contributes to his or her overall sense of value. Laurie Schreiner notes that the following help students gain a sense of belonging in their campus community: “use of rituals, traditions, honor codes, symbols of the university and telling the campus ‘stories.’”¹²

Spirituality – One engages in spirituality when he or she participates in meaning making. Eric James McIntosh offers several ways to understanding thriving in addition to “meaning making.” He offers that spirituality is “reliance—especially in difficult times—on a power greater than self, an awareness of purpose, and a lens through which to perceive and interact with the world.”¹³ Spirituality can be connected to an organized religion, and for the majority of this research it is connected to the Christian tradition. However, spirituality is not contained to only being connected to faith in a recognized religion. Spirituality is personal and is one’s way of connecting with something or others outside of oneself.

¹² Laurie A. Schreiner, “Thriving in Community,” *About Campus* 15, no. 4 (2010): 5, doi:10.1002/abc.20029.

¹³ E. J. McIntosh, “Thriving and Spirituality: Making Meaning of Meaning Making for Students of Color,” *About Campus* 19 (2015): 18, doi:10.1002/abc.21175.

Students from immigrant Families – This college student population includes those interviewed whose parents immigrated to the United States. Those who were alive when their family immigrated and those who were not yet born when their parents immigrated are both included in this population.

First Generation Immigrant – In this research, a first generation immigrant is understood as an individual who immigrated to the United States within his or her own lifetime. Those interviewed immigrated with their parents as opposed to immigrating on their own.

Second Generation Immigrant – A second generation immigrant is understood as an individual whose parent or parents immigrated to the United States before the individual's birth. Throughout this research, first and second generation immigrants are discussed as one community. The reason is two part: 1) I am seeking to understand the intersection of cultures and thriving for those whose parents immigrated to the United States and both first and second generation immigrants share this experience. 2) The volume of students who are second generation immigrants is unknown and I was uncertain how I could identify and connect with this student population. To my surprise, I was able to interview six second generation immigrant students and two first generation immigrant students.

Third Culture Kid (TCK) – A third culture kid is someone whose family is of one culture, but they are growing up and living in another culture. Hoersting and Jenkins use a quote from Useem's research from 1999 to define the third culture kid experience. The TCK is a person who blended the cultural aspects of both or all cultures in which

the student has lived, including a home culture.¹⁴ Pollock and van Reken as quoted by Knorr, share that “with regard to cultural identity, a TCK is defined as a person ‘who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents’ culture. The TCK builds relationship to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership of any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK’s life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background.’”¹⁵ All of the students interviewed can be understood to have the “third culture kid” experience, even though most were born in the United States. While most are US citizens, all of the student participants were born to individuals who are citizens of a country other than the United States and continue to practice significant elements of their home cultures. The students interviewed are negotiating the culture of their parents, peers, and their new community. For the purpose of this research, first and second generation immigrant students will be referred to TCK’s some times.

Ethics

While this research is seeks to understand the current state of the first and second generation student population, the intent of this research is to help ensure that all students are respected and have the opportunities and resources necessary for each

¹⁴ R. H. Useem *Third Culture Kids: Focus of Major Study—TCK “Mother” Pens History of Field*, Retrieved from www.tckworld.com/useem/artl.html. (1999), quoted in Raquel C. Hoersting and Sharon Rae Jenkins, “No Place to Call Home: Cultural Homelessness, Self-esteem and Cross-cultural Identities,” *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 35 (2011): 20, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2010.11.005>.

¹⁵ David C. Pollock and & Ruth E. van Reken, *Third Culture Kids. The Experience of Growing Up Among Worlds*. (Boston: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2004), 19, quoted in Jacqueline Knorr, “When German Children Come ‘Home.’ Experiences of (Re-) migration to Germany—and some Remarks about the ‘TCK’-Issue,” In *Childhood and Migration*, ed. by Jacqueline Knorr (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2005), 53.

respective student to thrive at the university. With the good of the students in mind, it has been critical throughout this research that students are treated with dignity and respect.

Participants were first approached with the opportunity to participate in this research by agreeing to be interviewed. Some declined the request while others wanted to engage in an interview. All participants approached received a copy of the consent form before agreeing to the interview. All consent forms were signed and submitted before the finalization of this document. Each student indicated his or her confidentiality preference on his or her respective consent form. If a student selected to maintain total confidentiality, the log notes from his/her interview are seen only by the researcher along with all interview transcriptions. In this report all identifying information is stripped from the examples of the students who prefer strict confidentiality. Those who did not prefer confidentiality will still be identified as a participant in the report to Goucher College. No names are found in this manuscript; however, the log notes of their interviews (that do include their names) will be submitted to Goucher College.

Since the number of students who are first and second generation immigrants is small at this university, it may be easy for those reading this document to speculate as to who participated in this research. However, the researcher attempts to only reveal information critical to understanding the research and asks that the reader remain in the perspective not of speculation but of open-mindedness to what this research contributes to enhance the university experience for all students.

Several of the student participants have become friends of mine through my work with the university and as a result of this research. One friendship in particular opened

the door to all interviews in this work. We have shared meals and spent time together outside of the interviews and off campus. The friendships have opened doors for certain participants to trust me with the interview, which inspires me to take extra care in respecting the stories of the students. The friendships also grant me the space to ask for leads for additional interviews. This has proven helpful since the university does not have a way of identifying students who are first and second generation immigrants.

Statistically, it is unknown how many students at the university are first or second generation immigrants. The university is able to track the number of international students (students who are from another country) since the admissions application process notes when a student is international. While the university can track permanent residents (some first generation immigrants interviewed) through the admissions process, other first generation immigrants who have gained citizenship and second generation immigrants note that they are US Citizens and in no formal way are these students able to identify as children of immigrants to the United States.

I chose to research the cultural contexts and thriving quotient in the first and second generation immigrant students because of the lack of evident support specifically offered to them. I think the lack of obvious support is two fold. First, there is not an efficient way to know which students are members of the second generation immigrant population. Secondly, it does not appear that the university acknowledges the strong cultural influences students of this population have from the culture of their parents since these students grew up in the United States. Inversely, the university enrolls a number of students who are TCKs, but through their parents being missionaries outside of the United States. The missionary kid student population is

traceable and receives evident support from the university through financial aid and social support. Could this great support be expanded to serve students with various cultural backgrounds and strong cultural influences? Missionary kids are celebrated in a different way on campus, yet the students in this population are not really recognized as having the TCK experience, even though they do. If the university acknowledges this it is not obvious.

This research is possible because of the openness of the university. When presented with the research concept several staff members, including a vice president, affirmed that research focusing on students from immigrant families is needed at Evangel. The affirmation reveals that the university cares for this student population and may have been prevented from conducting research or investing more for reasons unknown or urgency in other areas of university life.

Despite the lack of an accurate reporting system for the number of students in this specific demographic, the number of individual interviews with students (eight) aims to represent a significant percentage of this student population. The first and second generation immigrant student population was chosen instead of international students because it is easier for an institution to overlook the cultural context of this student population because, as mentioned above, through the enrollment process these students are not officially identified and little to no connection or support is offered based on cultural identity. Unlike this student population, international students experience a different enrollment process and are introduced to one another, faculty, and staff support when they arrive on campus.

Current Thinking On The Experience of Immigrants and Students Thriving in Higher Education

The literature selected informs the approach and analysis of the ethnographic methodology as well as understanding the culture of first and second generation immigrants. Ethical approaches to the interviewees and guidance for analyzing interview content were also gleaned from the assortment of resources. The literature supporting this research includes articles focused on ethnography, cultural relevance, culture in higher education, and immigrant students. Dr. Laurie Schreiner and her colleague's works on thriving were used as the primary evaluation tool for understanding thriving of the first and second generation immigrant students.

Schreiner's "The 'Thriving Quotient: A new vision for student success'" and "Thriving in Community" articles served as the foundation to my understanding of thriving in college. Throughout the original work, three main aspects are highlighted as significant indicators of thriving: academic engagement, community, and psychological well-being. Schreiner breaks these three aspects down further. "Thriving was conceptualized as optimal functioning in five key domains: (1) Engaged Learning, (2) Academic Determination, (3) Social Connectedness, (4) Diverse Citizenship, and (5) Positive Perspective."¹⁶ Before and during student interviews, students' sense of community was of primary focus. Students themselves reference the individuals and groups they turn to for support (family members, peers, professors, etc.) and I inquired about their support system in hopes to better understand their sense of support and cultural outlook. This choice of focusing on community was later confirmed as one of the

¹⁶ Laurie A. Schreiner, "Different Pathways to Thriving Among Students of Color: An Untapped Opportunity for Success," *About Campus* 19 (2014): 11, doi:10.1002/abc.21169.

best aspects to focus on in interviews by Schreiner's publication "Different Pathways to Thriving Among Students of Color: An Untapped Opportunity for Success" and the research of Ash and Schreiner as seen in "Pathways to Success for Students of Color in Christian Colleges: The Role of Institutional Integrity and Sense of Community." Drawing on their survey research, both articles emphasize that a sense of community is the paramount indicator that a student is thriving in college.¹⁷

In the context of Evangel University, throughout student interviews, and in Schreiner and associate's literature, spirituality is attributed as another key indicator of thriving, especially for students who identify as a racial minority. Eric McIntosh and Allison N. Ash, associates of Laurie Schreiner, studied spirituality among students of color. Upon an interaction with an advisee, Eric McIntosh investigated the relationship between thriving and spirituality among students from a wide range of colleges. McIntosh's survey research indicates that spirituality is another means by which a student, particularly a student of color, thrives in college regardless of the faith-based or secular foundation of the school.¹⁸ In the 2016 publication, Ash and Schreiner look specifically at Christian colleges. Through surveys conducted with over 1,500 students at 12 Christian colleges, their research further confirms the significance of spirituality in regards to thriving while emphasizing the responsibility of the faith-based institutions to celebrate differences in order to unify believers in the Christian faith.¹⁹ Their statistical

¹⁷ Ibid, 16.

¹⁸ E. J. McIntosh, "Thriving and Spirituality: Making Meaning of Meaning Making for Students of Color," *About Campus* 19 (2015): 16, doi:10.1002/abc.21175.

¹⁹ Allison N. Ash and Laurie A. Schreiner, "Pathways to Success for Students of Color in Christian Colleges: The Role of Institutional Integrity and Sense of Community," *Christian Higher Education* 15, no. 1-2 (2016): 42, 52-54, doi:10.1080/15363759.2015.1106356.

findings and Christian scripturally founded recommendations make a strong case for Christian college and universities to further invest in the diversity of their student bodies, among other items like maintain the integrity of the university.

The research mentioned above addresses the original theory on holistic thriving for college students and acknowledges the different means by which a given student will thrive at college, specifically students of color. My one critique of these articles is the focus on students' race as the primary indicator culture. Granted, Schreiner and associates ask students to indicate the race with which they personally identify; however, in this question they assume culture based on race. Race is only a potential indicator of culture. Therefore, some of their findings may not be conclusive on a cultural basis. Much of Schreiner and associate's findings, though, are generalized and support that universities have a responsibility, to their students and for the good of the university, to address students' needs on an individual level since potential diversity exists within student groups. Schreiner advocates, "the 'one size fits all' approach that many institutions have taken over the past three decades has not resulted in greater success for historically underrepresented students."²⁰

Schreiner considers underrepresented students as students of color. In this research, I am not focusing on all students of color. Instead, this research highlights the experiences of college students who are first or second generation immigrants to the United States; those whose parents immigrated to the United States. This student population was chosen because of the assumed complexity of navigating the culture a student experienced with his or her family, the culture of the American city in which the

²⁰ Schreiner, "Different Pathways to Thriving Among Students of Color: An Untapped Opportunity for Success," 12.

student was raised, and the culture of the student's university (in this case, Evangel University, a private, Christian, university located in one of the least culturally diverse cities in the United States).²¹

To better understand the plight of the first and second generation immigrant students, a number of articles and books focusing on immigrant and third culture kid (TCK) experiences were reviewed. The literature provides a framework for understanding culture, particularly the culture of students who identify with an ethnic minority. The foundation of my cultural analysis begins with Franz Boas' cultural analysis. Boas presents that while culture unites members of a group, each member possesses unique features and characteristics.²² I find Boas' approach critical to begin with because while all students interviewed are first or second generation immigrants, each student has a unique culture, story, personality, and worldview.

Similar to Boas' findings, researchers working with Third Culture Kids, Peterson and Plamond, recognize that individuals who identify as TCKs have diverse experiences.²³ Through my own study, I find that while some themes translate from one student's experience to another's, a number of details do not correlate. For example, while all interviewees who shared about food mentioned spices enjoyed in traditional foods, the spices used and appreciated are different.

²¹ Dora Mekouar, "This is America's Least Diverse City...and It's Not Black or White," *Voice of America* (blog), January 13, 2016, <http://blogs.voanews.com/all-about-america/2016/01/13/this-is-americas-least-diverse-city-and-its-not-black-or-white/>.

²² Franz Boas, "Individual, Family, Population, and Race," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 87, no. 2 (1943): 164, <http://www.jstor.org/goucher.idm.oclc.org/stable/985093>.

²³ Bill E. Peterson and Laila T. Plamondon, "Third Culture Kids and the Consequences of International Sojourns on Authoritarianism, Acculturative Balance, and Positive Affect," *Journal of Research in Personality* 43, (2009): 759-760, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2009.04.014>.

Despite limitations in studies with TCKs, many of the articles amplified a positive perspective on the TCK experience for the individuals and the communities with which they engage. Melles and Schwartz in their study on prejudice within the TCK experience quote Lambiri to highlight “widely accepted traits” of TCKs. These three traits include: comfort with diversity, cross-cultural sensitivity, and open mindedness.²⁴ Through their study, the researchers also found that the TCK experience (exposure to other cultures and multiple cultures) most often decreases levels of prejudice.²⁵ Throughout the interviews, students echoed the practice of asking genuine questions about culture and identity and listening to understand. The Evangel students who identify as third culture kids align with Melles and Schwartz’s findings.

Reflecting on the work of the late Jim Laue, Peter W. Black and Kevin Avruch state the following in *Cultural Relativism, Conflict Resolution, and Social Justice*, “Stereotyping—imputing uniformity where it does not exist—is one of those errors, and it results from the assumption that some identified cultural attribute must be shared by everyone.”²⁶ To avoid such an error, I am acknowledging here that the error is easily made. However, with perseverance and consistent reflection, I hope to avoid stereotyping in this work and to encourage the reader to keep the potential error of stereotyping at arms length. While the majority of this work highlights the themes that

²⁴ V. Lambiri, *TCKs Come of Age*. Retrieved from <http://transition-dynamics.com/>, (2005), as quoted in Elizabeth A. Melles and Jonathan Schwartz, “Does The Third Culture Kid Experience Predict Levels of Prejudice?” *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 37 (2013): 261, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2012.08.001>.

²⁵ Elizabeth A. Melles and Jonathan Schwartz, “Does The Third Culture Kid Experience Predict Levels of Prejudice?” *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 37 (2013): 265-266, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2012.08.001>.

²⁶ Peter W. Black and Kevin Avruch, *Cultural Relativism, Conflict Resolution, Social Justice*, Accessed May 12, 2016, <http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/pcs/BlackAvruch61PCS.html>.

rose from the interviews, it is critical in this line of cultural work to acknowledge that the cultural identities of my interviewees still possess variations within sub groups and individuals.

In addition to the thriving rubric and research with Third Culture Kids, professionals from a variety of fields note the significance of understanding culture when implementing any policy. In *An Afrocentric Approach to Building Cultural Relevance in Social Work Research* authors Davis, Williams, and Akinyela propose that understanding culture is key to developing effective policies. While this article highlights L. T. Smith's approach to social work specifically, the need for cultural relevance in all fields relates to the research conducted at Evangel.

Davis, Williams, and Akinyela recognize that "all too often, the stories of a people or culture are developed by outsiders and then forced on that group." They later assert, "ultimately, the insider/outsider dilemma must be taken seriously if we are to move beyond superficial connections of race, class, and gender. If transformation is truly the goal of any inclusive paradigm, then the lives and experiences of marginalized groups must be placed at the core of the research context."²⁷ This suggests that faculty members who identify with minority students and the students themselves must be involved in developing the policies that directly and indirectly impact their experience at the university.

Given that one of my recommendations from this research is for the university to engage its diverse community of students in dialogue, Black and Avruch present important tools for furthering the dialogue within a diverse community. They share, "Methodological relativism has to do with the suspension of one's own ethnocentrism for

²⁷ Davis, et al., "An Afrocentric Approach to Building Cultural Relevance in Social Work Research," 342.

the purpose of understanding another culture. This, we argue, is crucial to all conflict analysis. In the concrete practice of conflict analysis, methodological relativism is crucial for the stage of the resolution process that Laue called ‘getting to the table,’ the pre-negotiation stage.”²⁸ The methodological relativism suggested by Black and Avruch invites people to share their stories and pieces of themselves in braver spaces. It is an open door to a community “table” that represents equality of cultures. When the university gathers community members to develop policy or dialogue about diversity, the practice of methodological relativism may be a helpful tool in fostering a space for fruitful conversation and positive change.

Equally as important, the language used to construct the platforms within which students can dialogue about diversity impacts the conversation and its effects. As Arao and Clemens highlight in “From Safe Space to Brave Spaces: A New Way to Frame Dialogue Around Diversity and Social Justice” and Monahan expounds upon in “Brave Classrooms and Courageous Conversations” the term “brave” holds greater potential for students to fully address the issues. Inversely, when “safe” is used in the language surrounding diversity, the dialogue is limited because participants do not want to offend or be offended and thus hesitate to address the destructive realities they face.²⁹ I firmly believe that these tools are examples of loving one’s neighbor—a core value of Evangel University. These thinkers present additional tools with which the faculty and staff can

²⁸ Black, et al., *Cultural Relativism, Conflict Resolution, Social Justice*.

²⁹ Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens, “From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces: A New Way to Frame Dialogue Around Diversity and Social Justice,” In *The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections From Social Justice Educators*, ed. by Lisa M. Landreman (Sterling: Stylus Publishing, 2013), 135.

continue to implement and facilitate the dialogue while reflecting a core aspect of the university.

Scope of Research

Once a student agreed to the interview, the student and I set a time and chose a place where the student felt comfortable. Most students provided their signed consent forms at the time of the interview. For those who did not, I clarified details of the capstone and obtained the signed consent form later.

All interviews were recorded with an Olympus digital voice recorder VN-722PC. Each interview began with the participant stating his or her name. Then I followed with questions about cultural identity, family, experience at Evangel, and thriving. Once the interview was complete the recording was transcribed, logged, and then analyzed.

Simultaneous to transcribing each interview, I wrote reflections on the interview. The written observations of the students' body language and the interview exchange provided additional analysis of the interview in the immediate and for the overall understanding for the research.

As mentioned previously, relationships provided access to interviews. Since Evangel University does not keep a record of which students are first and second generation immigrants, I asked a student who I knew was a first generation immigrant to the United States to help me identify others who would fit the profile population for this research. She obliged and provided me with a list of names and e-mail addresses after she checked with each student to see if she could share their name.

The students' openness to interviewing with me could be due to their trust in me as a researcher or an employee of the university, their knowledge of my history (being an alumnus of Evangel and from a large, diverse city on the East Coast), availability within their schedules, their trust in their peer who served as our connection, and/or possibly their comfort with answering questions about their culture.

My employment at the university provides me with access to the students as well as awareness about current university programs and services. Being an alumnus, I also understand the student experience at this university. I recognize that while my role as a staff member does provide numerous benefits to the research, it may also limit my ability to interview some students. A few students may feel as though it is a conflict of interest for an employee of the university to interview them due to bias and thus did not respond to my request for an interview.

Overall, eight student were interviewed individually. Four of the eight students also attended a group interview, and one staff member was interviewed. All but one of the students interviewed are female and the one staff member interviewed is male. The time frame of these interviews began at the end of April and the final interview was conducted in September. Interviews varied in length from twenty minutes to over one hundred minutes. Students were asked a variety of questions during the interview. Questions were primarily focused on the cultures of the students and on thriving.

The questions and answers did not provide a full picture of each of Schreiner's elements of thriving. Rather, the findings move deeply into two elements while the other two keys to thriving are lightly reviewed. With further questioning, surveys, and time this research would have been able to delve more deeply into all areas of thriving.

Short field notes were taken directly after the interviews in conjunction with the reflections; however, I was unable to observe or participate with students outside of the interviews due to the limitations of the consent form and time constraints. Some of my experiences with the students outside of the interview inform my interpretations of the interview experience and are weaved into the analysis. I attempt to acknowledge those influential experiences, and yet note that not all could be identified.

Analysis of Interviews and Literature in Relation to First and Second Generation Immigrants

Themes found in the interviews include: 1) members of this student population generally sense that they are thriving in college, 2) expressing cultural identity is significant for this student population, and 3) the benefits of supporting culture for this student population and for the entire Evangel campus. Throughout the interviews, themes surfaced from the experiences of students interviewed; however, I find it of ethical importance to acknowledge that what is presented in this work is not concrete for all student participants or all students within this demographic at Evangel University. Furthermore, my research suggests that culturally inclusive attitudes from Evangel community members and a variety of culturally minded activities across campus will further support thriving for first and second generation immigrant students at Evangel University.

Thriving In College

In light of Schreiner's research on thriving in college and the students' responses in my interviews, I conclude that their sense of community and faith are the strongest contributors to their thriving. A few students did acknowledge or focus on academic success as an indicator of thriving within their personal understandings of thriving. Because of their comments, academic satisfaction is mentioned in the following analysis. Since psychological well-being was not addressed in the interviews, it is only lightly mentioned in the analysis.

As mentioned, Laurie Schreiner investigates thriving of college students enrolled at universities across the United States and finds the following significant for thriving at any institution of higher education: sense of community, diverse citizenship or openness to diversity (which I will merge in "Sense of Community" since part of diverse citizenship addresses how individuals interact with people from a variety of backgrounds and who hold a variety of opinions), engaged learning, and academic determination (which is merged into "Academic Satisfaction and Student Success"), and positive perspective.³⁰ Since Evangel University is a faith-based institution, Schreiner and McIntosh's finding on the value of spirituality is additionally significant to this research, and so spirituality is analyzed as well. Schreiner's research serves as a thriving rubric in which the details of the student interviews are categorized and further explored relative to these elements of thriving.

With the Schreiner thriving rubric, though, two aspects that inform if the thriving elements relate to individual students and are the best thriving elements for them are

³⁰ Laurie A. Schreiner, "Thriving in Community," *About Campus* 15, no. 4 (2010): 3, doi:10.1002/abc.20029.

missing, first being, the in-depth opinion of the student. Ethnography is an avenue through which students can voice how their culture influences and informs how they thrive in college. The second aspect absent is an understanding of the cultural implication of the meaning of thriving in college not limited by racial identification. Addressing the thriving question from a cultural perspective is challenging because thriving and the elements of thriving have the potential to be varied in scope depending on the cultural framework. Schreiner's rubric provides a foundation for how we, the administration of a private, Christian university in the United States perceive thriving. The student's cultural perspective is what this research seeks to understand.

I explicitly asked half of the student participants if they would consider themselves to be thriving. During the final four student interviews direct questions about thriving were asked. These questions focused on community, scholarship, faith, and significant cultural elements. Throughout the interviews students unknowingly connected their definitions of thriving with elements Schreiner's rubric. Their definitions of thriving were interpreted the following way:

- 75% of students include sense of community in their definition
- 88% of students include spirituality in their definition
- 25% of students include positive perspective in their definition
- 50% of students include academic satisfaction in their definition

Overall, students asked about their understanding of thriving in college, and specifically at Evangel, collectively incorporate Schreiner's most basic elements of thriving into their answers. Then, through their answers and narratives, the students reveal that they carry the majority of the elements of thriving. While students may have

answered in a way they assumed I would want to hear, the fact that some answers overlap within a given personal interview and within the collection of student interviews leads me to conclude that their answers are true of the group. To say that a student or all student participants are thriving in all areas is challenging according to the scope of this research; however, all student participants appear to possess two of the most significant elements of thriving (community and spirituality) and are leaning in the direction of thriving.

Here is a glimpse into what students said about thriving at Evangel University:

A senior interviewed shares that being at Evangel has changed her understanding and perception of thriving in college. Her answer came during the general question about thriving in college. She shares, “I think that [my] answer has totally changed ... because of Evangel....coming into [college]... I thought thriving was: be the best. Like, beat everyone else out. If you can be the best in your class and you can be the best at connecting in...the Springfield area and you can make the most money somehow then I mean, you are thriving—you’re in your prime. And I think that now I’d probably say you’re thriving if people can trust you. Like, if people can speak well of you and your name is ... not tainted ... and if you’re someone that ...people can just trust and like respect. You can do it, I think you’re thriving.”³¹ Her definition is primarily focused on having healthy relationships and being a virtuous person.

These two elements are included in Schreiner’s rubric: interpersonal relationships and positive psychological state. Community is a core value of the university. Here, it appears as though a core value of the university (i.e. community) has become a part of the identity and perspective of the student.

³¹ Student Five, interview by Celia Duncan, July 1, 2016, 53:49, transcript.

Evangel's focus on community and healthy relationships and positive sense of self is empowering its students from all cultural contexts to thrive. I would like to note that this student's prior understanding of thriving could be connected with academic satisfaction. In the interview, the student notes that she is not as academically challenged as she expected to be at college; however, what she has learned has become more important to her. The understanding of thriving has transformed for this student. Through her experience at Evangel, it appears that she has refined her definition of thriving to one that is reflective and not as related to being the best or perceived as the best in a variety of areas in life. When asked if she believes that she is thriving she answers positively. "I think I am....I don't think I started off thriving at all. I think I hadn't learned to be honest yet....I think I'm a lot more honest with people and myself and I think it definitely feels like more of a real college experience."³² She shared that the chapel plays a significant role in her thriving. Facilitating space for students to grow spiritually is one of Evangel's greatest assets in empowering students to thrive since spirituality is noted as one of the strongest indirect indicators of thriving.³³

Another student's voice emphasizes that she understands thriving in college as "someone who's very involved in the classroom and outside of the classroom." Academic satisfaction and interpersonal relationships are connected to this student's classification of thriving. When asked if she is thriving at Evangel, she laughs and says, "I hope so. I think I am.... I could say, I could say that I am, yeah." When describing

³² Ibid., 53:49.

³³ Allison N. Ash and Laurie A. Schreiner, "Pathways to Success for Students of Color in Christian Colleges: The Role of Institutional Integrity and Sense of Community," *Christian Higher Education* 15, no. 45 (2016): 55, doi:10.1080/15363759.2015.1106356.

someone who thrives the student also uses the term “well rounded.” Throughout the interview, the student reveals her involvement with her academic department and social outlets on and off of campus. According to her own explanation, this student is “well rounded.”³⁴

One student reflects on her identity as a first generation student. This could be in relation to first generation college student or a first generation American. Nevertheless, what she shares is reflexive and insightful to this research, “...being a first generation student, I think it, it’s kind of hard, but it’s also such a blessing. You get a lot of benefits from it because, you know, you’re kind of leading this new legacy for your family and your family gets so proud to know that you’re going off to college. It’s also like this really big thing on your shoulders. Like, ‘I gotta do this!’ you know, ‘It’s not just for me. It’s for my family.’ And, I think, sometimes people take that lightly.”³⁵

Through academic satisfaction, positive mental state, expression of faith, and healthy relationships elements of cultural affirmation can be attributed. The way in which one learns (learning in an inclusive environment that celebrates diversity, which Schreiner does mention when describing diverse citizenship³⁶), views and builds relationships, and develops personal identity is culturally informed. For example, in the group interview students discuss body image. They express that they love who they are and are grateful for their bodies, but being of darker complexion and curvier figures comes with struggles that others do not understand. While I have not taken the Thriving Quotient survey, I conclude from the Thriving Project literature that significant space is

³⁴ Student Eight, interview by Celia Duncan, August 30, 2016, 43:23, transcript.

³⁵ Student One, interview by Celia Duncan, April 25, 2016, 43:10, transcript.

³⁶ Schreiner, “Thriving in Community,” 8–10.

left for cultural differentiation in respect to the components of thriving. The researchers could intend cultural interpretation, but without explicit explanation the margin for error is broad. In the following paragraphs, interviews are analyzed through elements of thriving.

Sense of Community: Based upon my interviews, a sense of community at Evangel is built around shared experiences, conversations, and meals (which allows for both). The student participants voice that they source their support systems not only from their peers, but also from university faculty, university staff, and family members. The development and investment in these relationships looks different for every student; however, several patterns are seen throughout interviews with this group of students.

Third culture kids (TCKs) most often feel most comfortable with those who have similar experiences of living in a culture different than the culture of their birth country or their parent's native country.³⁷ The group interview revealed how well the participants connect with each other. While occasionally their answers would differ, they echoed each other's sentiments throughout the majority of the interview. Within these relationships they find understanding and common ground. One student whose parents immigrated to America from West Africa notes that being around people from similar cultural contexts, even if it not exactly the same culture helps her feel more comfortable at college and eases missing her family.

The majority of students interviewed grew up in communities that are not homogenous and continue to surround themselves with people of different backgrounds. They are aware of assumptions and are passionate about cultivating

³⁷ Joe Greenholtz and Jean Kim, "The Cultural Hybridity of Lena: A Multi-method Case Study of a Third Culture Kid," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 33, (2009): 392, Accessed September 13, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.05.004>.

openness within the community while also exercising their own cultural identities. For example, a student whose family only allows Spanish to be spoken in their home (unless a guest does not speak Spanish) grew up in several different neighborhoods alongside of families from a variety of cultures.³⁸ She finds exercising open-mindedness important in the midst of other individual cultural expressions. Similar to other third culture kids (TCK) at Evangel University, namely dependents of missionaries, first and second generation immigrants possess a perspective of culture, cross-cultural interaction, and identity that would benefit an institution of learning. As documented in interviews and in literature on TCKs, first and second generation immigrant students are culturally sensitive, open to diversity, adaptable, and willing to embrace cultural standards and contexts.³⁹ They have friends from a range of backgrounds including students of the majority ethnic cultures on campus. They desire to better connect with their peers as Evangel students and empower them to have successful intercultural relationships in the future.

Thriving students report having a supportive community on campus; however, Schreiner makes a strong case that students who thrive also have a sense of support from their families. All students interviewed expressed that they have at least one family member with whom they feel close. Additionally, their families highly value education. Students are constantly encouraged to apply themselves academically.

Academic Satisfaction: A thriving college student is one who takes initiative and ownership of his or her education. The sense of responsibility motivates the student

³⁸ Student One, interview by Celia Duncan, April 25, 2016, 1:06 and 4:25, transcript.

³⁹ Raquel C. Hoersting and Sharon Rae Jenkins "No Place to Call Home: Cultural Homelessness, Self-esteem and Cross-cultural Identities," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 35 (2011): 18, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2010.11.005>.

to take advantage of the classroom experience and apply principles developed in the learning environment. Schreiner found that when students demonstrate a high level of engagement in the academic setting that one could predict an overall satisfaction with the college experience in addition to a sense of fulfillment in learning.⁴⁰

Throughout the interviews, students appeared to be engaged academically, at least by what was said. They connect well with the material they are learning in the classroom. One student notes that she doubts she would have learned elsewhere what she has learned at Evangel because of the academic experience and the people she has met.⁴¹ Another student says, “My speech has changed as a result of going to college...I’m just more...intellectual, and...my vocabulary has ... expanded....I’ve learned how to think for myself.”⁴² Students also feel a deep sense of connection with the faculty members. The faculty serves not only as instructors in the classroom but also as mentors for students.

Students feel pressure from their parents to achieve in college. The interviews reveal that a significant portion of the student’ interviewed (at least half) sensed a responsibility to do well in classes and to choose an approved career path—a career that is widely admired and lucrative. Not all students chose a path approved by their families. These students note that it has taken time for their parents to accept to the idea of them pursuing a degree that is not in medicine, law, or finance. However, the spiritual element lightens their responsibility to choose a culturally approved degree. As

⁴⁰ Laurie A. Schreiner, “Thriving in the Classroom,” *About Campus* 15 (2010): 3, doi:10.1002/abc.20022.

⁴¹ Student Two, 47:27.

⁴² Student Six, 39:17.

the students shared in the group interview while talking about choosing a major, “you can’t fight God.”⁴³ As noted in the group interview, despite their parents increased willingness to approve their chosen major based on faith, the students still confront the expressed and implied expectations held by their parents and culture. The expressed expectation is that the student will pursue an approved career. The unexpressed expectation is that they, the parents, immigrated to the United States, suffered hardship of language and cultural barriers and struggled financially so that their child(ren) would have a successful career and life.

Positive Perspective: Involvement on campus is an indicator of positive perspective and is viewed as an opportunity for many platforms: enacting positive change on campus, building relationships, practical application of skills, resumé-building activities, and of course, avenues for students to place their unique mark on the university. All but one student interviewed have at some time been involved in campus life outside of attending classes and living in one of the residence halls. Some students participate in musical groups, dance teams, campus employment, workshops, and Crosswalk ministries (volunteer and faith based initiatives on and off campus). A few of the participating students are also involved in organizations and ministries off campus, and others are developing their own groups and organizations.

Within the questions about thriving, this research assumes that a student would not be actively engaged on campus or claim to be thriving if he or she had low self-esteem. When asked if they feel like they are thriving when they consider themselves, students participating in the group interview agree. They answer with “mhm,” “yes,” “yeah,” and only one student offers her story. She shares “I think the personal thing that

⁴³ Group Interview, interview by Celia Duncan, September 15, 2016, 1:26:35, transcript.

I have gone through in life...I have gotten to that point now, and it's something that I'm going to continue to work on, ...just speaking personally, that's just something that...I think everyone has to continue to grow personally, relationships and any aspect of your life, it's not like you just get to a point and that's it. There's always room for growth."⁴⁴ By recognizing her growing potential, this student acknowledges her present state while also stating her capacity to grow—revealing her belief in herself.

Spirituality: The central focus of Evangel University is to provide a Christian faith based atmosphere where students can develop skills that will equip them for their vocational callings. The term “calling” itself is spiritual because it infers an external connection and purpose. All students interviewed profess an active faith in the Christian God and have a sense of calling for their chosen vocation and career. An aspect that is true of Evangel and apparently true for the students interviewed is that faith is integrated into all aspects of life. Since the research was conducted at a Christian university with students who identify as Christians, my findings are specific to the Christian faith. However, spirituality in this research also addresses sense of purpose, passion, and external inspiration and does not disregard the significance of other faiths in regard to spirituality.

With a professed sense of faith in God, specifically a Christian faith that has been maintained since before entering college, 88% of the participants weave elements of their faith throughout the interview. It is as though their faith is the most foundational element of their lives, whether or not their parents demonstrated an active Christian faith. In addition to food, music, and language, students mention how faith played a role in their culture. Many students recalled attending church services with and without their

⁴⁴ Group Interview, 1:49:34.

families. They described worship services with singing and music and emphasized how prayer plays a significant role in their decision-making. These rituals indicate a strong sense of the Christian culture in their lives.

Attending a Christian university, students interviewed automatically felt comfortable and connected to the spiritual aspects of the Evangel University culture. The most commonly shared elements manifest as prayer, journaling, worship through music, engaging with a local church, and attending the university's chapel services. These shared spiritual expressions unite students from a variety of Christian denominations. For the first and second generation students, their identity as Christians unites them with other students no matter other cultural differences. As one student puts it, "when we get to heaven it's none of this going to be black people over here...Spanish people over here, Asians all that, no! it's not!" another student chimes in, "we're all going to be in the same place." "...exactly, worshiping God."⁴⁵

Spirituality motivates students to engage in all other areas of thriving since it offers a sense of passion and purpose and serves as a cross-cultural bridge with others who share their faith or regard for the spiritual. Understanding the avenues through which first and second generation immigrant students practice their faith and enhancing the university's support of these methods will positively impact the capacity of this student population to thrive.

Significance of Expressing Culture

Culture provides the context of an individual. It determines the framework from which a person perceives the world, relationships, faith, family, education, health, and

⁴⁵ Group Interview, 46:44.

celebration. Connecting with students on their cultural level affirms the value and worth of the student and, from the standpoint of the university, would bring honor to God by celebrating and valuing the quality of people's lives.

While culture plays a significant role in the identity of all student participants, seventy-five percent of students interviewed explicitly expressed the desire for opportunities to practice various manifestations of their varied cultural contexts while attending Evangel University. These expressions of culture were most often tied to music, movement, language, and of course, what every college student wants, good food. Students appreciate when music from a variety of cultures and languages, especially their own, are present at school functions, opportunities to dance, and moments to enjoy traditional foods because these elements affirm their cultural identity. Administering these elements sends the student body a message that their culture and the cultures of others are important to the university and that the university accepts the students themselves.

The Schreiner rubric for thriving outlines key elements that indicate the overall well-being of college students and has the potential to transcend culture. However, cultural context plays a role in the means by which a student experiences a given key element of thriving. With explicit awareness of cultural context for this rubric, I believe that first and second generation immigrant students of Evangel University will be better served and set up for, not only success, but a heightened, personal sense of thriving.

Cultural elements can be weaved throughout each element of the rubric. Shared language, space, and time to practice a student's first or second language (most often Spanish among those I interviewed) have the potential for fostering community with

others who share this language gift. Practicing language also has great potential to enhance scholarship across the campus. Literature that has not been published in English holds merit and could contribute to a greater knowledge base for students and faculty.

Music is often an expression of experiences. Playing a variety of music at events or in the classroom presents an opportunity for voice and diverse citizenship. Several students note that they would enjoy hearing diverse forms of music at school-sponsored events and during worship in the chapel. Exposure to culturally influenced music often includes exposure to new languages that could, again, contribute to scholarship. Music also provides opportunity for physical expression--dance.

Many students who are first or second generation immigrant mention dance in the interviews (no matter the region of the world from which their parents immigrated). Dance is a significant part of their lives and allows them to feel connected to their culture and others students. One student notes that her mother expected her to know how to dance beginning at a young age.⁴⁶ Another student attended a performance art school and was exposed to a variety of dance forms at school in addition to the traditional dances learned in the home.⁴⁷ Dance styles mentioned in the interviews included: hip-hop, ballet, tap, modern, salsa, jazz, and African dancing.

The university does provide a platform for dance groups to develop. While all forms of dance mentioned in the interview are not equally represented within the handful of dance clubs on Evangel's campus, the groups are student lead—leaving space for students to decide on the styles of dance and music used. Dance and music

⁴⁶ Student Five, 51:00.

⁴⁷ Student Eight, 2:43.

are aspects of student's family and culture. Continued encouragement and added awareness of opportunities for students to showcase these aspects of their respective cultures would further the sense of community and support from the campus.

Food, as noted already, has the ability to not only nourish the body but foster growth within the community. Providing opportunities for students to use traditional ingredients to prepare traditional meals from their culture is an opportunity for the student to feel a connection with and pride in his or her heritage while also fostering community. The students wouldn't eat these meals alone; the students would share the meal with peers; allowing others to experience a delightful taste of their culture.

Benefits of Supporting Culture

Cultural elements are manifestations of a deeper cultural context and carry significant weight. Cultural context significantly impacts perception of communication given and received. Interpretation of a lecture style, idiom, action, or reaction is based on students' experiences, values, and cultures. In a university setting, clear communication is paramount.

In an effort to better understand the needs and cultural contexts of the individuals in this student population I asked direct questions about their experience at Evangel. Their stories reveal how they interpret the actions of the university. The article *An Afrocentric Approach to Building Cultural Relevance in Social Work Research* concludes: "They need to engage and validate the voice of the people in question to

partner and create a culturally relevant research agenda.”⁴⁸— my question to students is “how can Evangel be better?” Students’ answers vary. They shared the following:

“Just being culturally aware, it’s just something that Evangel could do without throwing it at us either, you know.”⁴⁹ I do not believe she was accusing Evangel of forcing students to be culturally sensitive, but her comment serves simultaneously as an encouragement and a caution. She desires an increase in cultural education that respects all persons.

This student notes that simple exposure and patience are needed to effectively educate people about differences between cultures and develop compassion for people of diverse backgrounds. One example is from her relationship with her roommate. This student’s roommate is willing to express her curiosity. Because of her roommate’s inquiries the interviewee has to be just as willing to share. The same student mentions EUnite (a one-time event during the 2015-2016 school year that served as a platform to begin dialogue about diverse identities), but that it is not just about making Evangel better it is about making every place and group better. She could have said anything, but she chose to reference the dialogue about ethnicity and diversity on campus. She believes that everyone should educate themselves about people from different backgrounds and cultures.

Another student shares that EU is addressing the diversity issues.⁵⁰ EUnite type of dialogue is a great start, but she believes the school needs to do more than this event. She comments that multiple events are needed to evoke change and believes

⁴⁸ Davis, et al., “An Afrocentric Approach to Building Cultural Relevance in Social Work Research.” 348.

⁴⁹ Student One, 38:21.

⁵⁰ Student Two, 47:27.

that a spiritual revival would benefit the student body because deepening one's relationship with God would improve cross-cultural relationships. People leaving their "comfort zones" would benefit the campus, bringing connection and unifying students.

The only male student interviewed struggled to provide a suggestion that would improve the university. Instead, he interjects that choosing to attend this school was the best decision for him. This declaration is sourced from satisfying relationships.⁵¹

I did not prompt one student to tell me what would make the school a better place. Her suggestion for the university is more about access to practical resources like a reliable beautician, beauty products, familiar foods, and more.⁵² This student mentions that she and others often struggle to find the basic resources needed for personal grooming and food preferences.

When I asked another student what would make Evangel University a better place for students, she mentions the differences in social categories and how some people stay in their tight social circles on campus. Ideally, all people could transcend the social barriers across campus. It is not so much about ethnicity as it is about the social barriers stimulated by the cool factor. She relates this to her Christian faith (the same faith as the rest of the campus) and she desires that people were more accepting of one another—that people would not be marginalized at Evangel. This student mentions a "celebrity culture" that, in her words, should not exist.⁵³

⁵¹ Student Three, 19:24 and 7:47.

⁵² Student Four, 38:32.

⁵³ Student Five, 1:00:44.

Another suggestion from a student is to assign juniors and seniors as mentors to freshmen.⁵⁴ She had an organic version of this experience and it benefitted her greatly. Within the mentoring relationship this student also taught her mentors; which provides her with a sense of partnership in the relationship.⁵⁵ The student offers suggestions on how to resolve the tension: listen and work to understand others. She also thinks that an event focused on diversity should not be voluntary because she believes that students do not know what opportunity they are missing by opting out. The student interviewed made the case that these issues need to be addressed and that this school is a “comfortable” and “safe” place to have these conversations. Later we discussed the option of assignments in a required class that requires students to ask questions of someone who is different than they are as an exercise to assist in breaking down assumptions.⁵⁶ “If research ignores cultural realities and needs and if it fails to acknowledge the voice of the people, policy will follow suit.”⁵⁷ This quote is sobering. If the university is not listening to the voice of its students, its policies will become irrelevant and could harm the institution more than help.

The university benefits when its students benefit from its practices, policies, and the interpersonal interactions on campus. The student participants in this research can also be identified as Third Culture Kids. Significant research exists on the benefits of being a TCK. As can be assumed, the TCK experience does involve many challenges. Students from immigrant families also face challenges. In the college experience, this

⁵⁴ Student Seven, 48:05.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 43:20.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 46:21.

⁵⁷ Davis, et al., “An Afrocentric Approach to Building Cultural Relevance in Social Work Research.” 348.

student population, just like all students, individuals are seeking to benefit and develop professionally, intellectually and interpersonally. The student quotes listed above and notes below are ways in which students hope to receive benefits from the university.

In addition to benefitting from Evangel University, this student population, like all students enrolled, possess the potential to improve the campus for all students.

Research indicates that TCKs offer benefits to the community. According to Tracey Tokuhama-Espinosa, these benefits include skills in observation, social, cross-cultural and linguistic.⁵⁸ Through the interviews with students and the staff member, benefits mentioned by other researchers reflect what is occurring on Evangel's campus. Since TCKs offer great insight into culture and community investing in this student population, personally and in regards to their own cultures, would possibly maximize the potential of not only this student population thriving, but, as mentioned previously, the thrivability of the entire school.

If Evangel invested more time, energy, and finances into supporting the various cultures with which students identify, students would feel supported. Schaetti and Ramsey find that individuals identified at "cultural hybrids," such as TCKs, struggle when surrounded by individuals who lack the openness that they practice. Throughout the research students repeatedly voiced the microaggressions they encounter and how they choose to practice grace and kind correction. When the leadership explicitly demonstrates open-mindedness and embraces diverse cultures this student population

⁵⁸ Tracey Tokuhama-Espinosa, "Third Culture Kids: A Special Case for Foreign Language Learning," In *The Multilingual Mind: Issues Discussed By, For, and About People Living with Many Languages*, ed. by Tracey Tokuhama-Espinosa (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2003), 167.

would experience greater support and comfort despite feeling marginalized when encountering tension.⁵⁹

The presence and active support for first and second generation immigrants would contribute to the greater good of the entire university because all students would gain exposure to a wider variety of cultures and approaches to life. Benefits of cross-cultural experiences include: cultural sensitivity, adaptability, tolerance of diversity, feeling comfortable with others, and readiness to understand cultural rules.⁶⁰ These benefits are available to Evangel community members who intentionally interact with those who identify differently. Many students seek these types of cross-cultural experiences overseas without considering the opportunity to learn and grow as individuals and professionals through interaction with and celebration of the diverse cultures represented on campus. Intentional celebration of the cultures students represent not only affirms the students identifying with those cultures, but also informs others how to relate, respect, and admire those with a different cultural context. Diversity is beneficial, especially in a university atmosphere because “diversity is not a sign of misunderstanding or disagreement, but rather a reflection of various approaches.”⁶¹

Evangel students and staff increase in sensitivity to culture and diversity through engagement with all students, especially when students engage with individuals from

⁵⁹ B. F. Schaetti and S. J. Ramsey “The Global Nomad Experience: Living in Liminality,” *Mobility*, 20 no. 9 (1999), 40-45, quoted in Joe Greenholtz and Jean Kim, “The Cultural Hybridity of Lena: A Multi-method Case Study of a Third Culture Kid,” *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 33, (2009): 393, Accessed September 13, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.05.004>.

⁶⁰ Hoersting, et al., “No Place to Call Home: Cultural Homelessness, Self-esteem and Cross-cultural Identities,” 18.

⁶¹ Evelyn Jacob, “Clarifying Qualitative Research: A Focus on Traditions,” *Educational Researcher* 17, no. 1 (1998): 24, <http://www.indiana.edu/~educy520/readings/jacob88.pdf>.

cultural contexts different from their own. Students participating in the college experience and engaging with others from a variety of backgrounds helps in the deconstruction and reconstruction of their worldview and this can often include greater appreciation for the ideals of others. While the Melles and Schwartz study on prejudice focuses on the TCK experience, the exposure to multiple cultures no matter one's own history or location may also aid in lowering one's levels of prejudice.⁶² Evangel's campus hosts a vast number of ethnic, linguistic, and denominational cultures. Increasing opportunities for students to delve into cultural identities represented across campus will positively shape the student body.

Naturally, the intentional interaction between students of diverse backgrounds increases organic dialogue about culture and diversity, which can lead to a more unified campus. Through ongoing conversations about identity and culture, students' minds are opened to the perspectives of their peers. The relationships built have strong potential to result in support, appreciation, and unity. The inverse is also true. If the presence of TCKs is not backed with support of healthy dialogue about diversity, division will ensue and pockets of students will feel marginalized—damaging the Evangel experience.

With this said, students who identify as first and second generation immigrants should not be placed in uncomfortable situations. While these students present beneficial perspectives, they should not be viewed as an expert on diversity or always used as the only speaker about diversity because this reinforces a sense of "otherness." Instead, this student population should be celebrated as individuals, speak as often or as little as they like, and engage as a participant, not the headliner.

⁶² Melles, et al., "Does The Third Culture Kid Experience Predict Levels of Prejudice?" 265-266.

As found in research on Third Culture Kids, this student group has already embarked on growing their capacity towards openness and cultural sensitivity. This student population deserves further investment because they have the capacity to enhance the university and, most importantly, because these students are members of the Evangel community.

Praise and Recommendation

Praise

Early in my research I assumed that the extent of my praise would be limited. Having personally experienced culture shock when I first arrived at Evangel University from a large, diverse suburban area on the East Coast, and having family members who are first and second generation immigrants, I understood Evangel's services and support for students from a variety of cultures as minimal. This student population, I thought, has access to the same services and support as all other students. As a student, I had the opportunity to participate in a few culturally themed dinners and several missions events on and off campus. To my knowledge the university still offers these events. Through my research this year, though, I learned how the university is making steps towards diversifying services and opportunities that would better serve this student population.

The interview with the staff member was the most enlightening in this area. Since students are less aware of the behind the scenes discussions and decisions on top-down initiatives and, since it was my final interview, I was more prepared with the

questions to ask specifically about diversity on campus and support for it. Through this interview, I learned that the university participates in dialogue with other local colleges and universities on how to best serve students who identify as ethnic minorities. One such initiative has provided training for Evangel staff on “Tough Talks,” a dialogue series addressing numerous issues affecting students, including racial and cultural reconciliation. Some students are attending these intercollegiate dialogue sessions as well. Participation in these events provides a sense of agency for the students. One of the students interviewed was knowledgeable about this initiative because she has been able to join those discussions. In the group interview and staff interview the development of a diversity club was noted. Students and staff are working together to increase awareness and celebration of the diversity found at Evangel University. Through the diversity club, staff and students hope to provide platforms through means of events where respectful dialogue can take place. They hope to maintain a sense of celebration throughout the events.⁶³

Students at Evangel are open to talking about diversity and issues surrounding it. Openness is the first step to action. Close-mindedness prevents the conversation from moving forward, so having open-minded students indicates fertile ground for positive momentum and change. In a conversation with student leaders, the staff member interviewed discovered that students are open to talking about diversity but do not feel prepared.⁶⁴ The recommendations section will address the latter, but staff members witnessing the openness and willingness of the students to learn how to facilitate dialogue on differences is a win for Evangel University.

⁶³ Staff Interview, interview by Celia Duncan, September 21, 2016, 6:14, transcript.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 11:37.

The current support offered has developed organically and is heavily based in peer-to-peer relationships. Evangel provides platforms on which friendship can be formed. Through the orientation events, events within residence halls, campus-wide events, and the atmosphere of the academic halls spaces are created for and an expectation is developed that quality friendships will form. In the group interview, students shared that they gravitate towards students with similar experiences. Students also network within the Evangel community—connecting students who identify with one culture to another student of a similar background. In this community that students build for themselves, they find comfort and space for cultural celebration. One student mentions an evening when her group of friends talked about their cultures and listened to music from their various cultures.⁶⁵ Community is a core value of the university. The sense of community is evident in nearly every aspect of Evangel and is especially evident in the types of healthy relationships the students form with their peers. The intense focus of healthy community throughout all aspects of the university is likely a strong factor in the organic development of support systems for first and second generation immigrant students despite occasionally encountering microaggressions.

Evangel students not only build positive relationships with peers, but also with professors. Aside from a handful of negative experiences, faculty and staff at the university are generally warm and serve as mentors to students who identify as first and second-generation immigrants. The students interviewed expressed their gratitude for the faculty who serve as mentors to them and believe in them. When asked about academic satisfaction, students quickly weave in their experiences with the faculty. Most

⁶⁵ Student Four, 35:30.

students interviewed, particularly the upperclassmen, mentioned the names of faculty members that are actively encouraging them. Respect and care for students by professors transcends cultural differences.

The ratio of ethnic minority students to Caucasian students at Evangel is the same at Missouri State University (MSU).⁶⁶ I found this information surprising because Missouri State University is known for attracting a number of international students due to its global partnerships. During off record conversations I have heard and have personally expressed the assumption that MSU has a greater amount of cultural and ethnic diversity compared to Evangel University. I thought the MSU percentage would be greater than that of Evangel students. While both schools could do more to increase enrollment of students identifying as ethnic minorities, knowing that both institutions attract and maintain the same percentage of minority students alludes to external influences (such as the size of the city, companies present, and accommodations) as a reason for limited enrollment of students from diverse backgrounds.

As an employee, I notice that the university began highlighting issues that students face on campus and in the world through a series called “Courageous Conversations.” While my knowledge on the series of talks and panels is limited, I find it incredibly inspiring to know that the university is moving toward embracing the hard hitting social issues that students are currently facing or will encounter in the future. I also find that this series aligns with a practical theory of “brave spaces.” As noted above, Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens suggest that the term “safe” hinders individuals from fully addressing issues or presenting opportunity for resolution because the term

⁶⁶ Staff Interview, 20:02.

“safe” communicates that everyone will remain comfortable.⁶⁷ Many of the issues surrounding diversity are uncomfortable for all engaged in the conversation. Issues of privilege, racism, history, culture, language, attitudes, and assumptions must be addressed in the diversity dialogue. There is very little that is safe about these issues. However, using language such as “brave” and “courageous” communicates a very different experience. These words tell participants that they will have fears and discomfort within the conversation. However, it will be worthwhile to engage despite the discomfort experienced because positive change will emerge.

Recommendations

While the scope of this research is limited, the findings inspire several recommendations for enhancing thriving of all students at Evangel University. In the following set of concise recommendations, I identify what works for students, gaps in cultural understanding, and possible areas of tension. The institution may use the information gathered throughout the interviews as it sees fit to best serve all students, present and future, of Evangel University.

Provide Platforms for Students to Share Cultural Stories: The students interviewed expressed great interest in presenting their stories and cultural frameworks with the student body. One of the questions asked in the group interview is if the student participants would like to share about their experience on a student panel. The four students in the group interview enthusiastically stated that they would enjoy being a part of a student panel that spoke in a chapel service. The students recognize such a panel

⁶⁷ Arao, et al., “From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces: A New Way to Frame Dialogue Around Diversity and Social Justice,” 135.

should include students from a variety of backgrounds, including students of the majority national, racial, and cultural backgrounds present on campus. On this student panel the students would like to dialogue about the issues they face as ethnic and cultural minorities.

After speaking with the students and staff member, I became aware that a diversity club is forming at Evangel. At the time of writing this manuscript, the club is in its early stages, but to my knowledge, the students and staff plan to create a space that celebrates all cultures through a series of events focused on dialogue between students. Continuing support for student and staff initiatives that welcome and praise a variety of cultures is another platform opportunity. Since this format is already developing, I recommend providing consistent support for its members and sponsors.

Another platform I have seen developing is the leadership's decision to host an alumni panel during the homecoming week to specifically discuss race and reconciliation. Choosing panels like these have immense potential to educate all members of the Evangel community and further dialogue about diversity. Opportunities like these are beneficial, but they should expand beyond racial tension and into identity, including cultural identity.

Not only will these platforms inform the Evangel community, but also they provide potential inroads for relationships to be built between students—developing a community of individuals with shared experiences. Vivero and Jenkins found that having family and friends with similar exposure to cross-cultural experiences helped “reduce negative effects of cultural homelessness.”⁶⁸ While all students interviewed have at

⁶⁸ V. N. Vivero and S. R. Jenkins, “Existential Hazards of The Multicultural Individual: Defining and Understanding ‘Cultural Homelessness,’” In *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 5, (1999),

least one family member with whom they share a cultural identity, their families live hundreds of miles away from Evangel. All students interviewed shared that they have developed reliable friendships at Evangel, thus no student could be classified as culturally homeless as Vivero and Jenkins state. However, by providing opportunities for this student population to deepen relationships with others who relate to their experience as a first or second generation immigrant is a great way to cultivate an expansion of their support systems.

Develop Culturally Minded Events for Students: Experiences offer the opportunity for expression in addition to an education. During the group interview students reflected on opportunities they had to learn about other cultures in elementary school. In fact, all participants of the group interview recalled participating in some form of a multicultural event where many families in the school set up a booth with food, décor, and other expressions of their cultures. The students would like to share more about their cultures including foods, music, and language with the Evangel community.

Through his work in community building, Tom Borrup has found that artistically curated cultural events draw in a diverse group of community members and that these events often serve as onramps to deepen friendships within the community, even across cultural boundaries.⁶⁹ Borrup also shares that “by attracting people of all types and from all communities, cultural events reduce social isolation and build connections

6-26, quoted in Raquel C. Hoersting and Sharon Rae Jenkins, “No Place to Call Home: Cultural Homelessness, Self-esteem and Cross-cultural Identities,” *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 35 (2011): 20, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2010.11.005>.

⁶⁹ Tom Borrup with Partners for Livable Communities, *The Creative Community Builder’s Handbook: How to Transform Communities Using Local Assets, Art and Culture* (Saint Paul: Fieldstone Alliance, 2011), 84-85.

across divides of ethnicity and social class.”⁷⁰ While this quote specifically refers to a community in a town or city, I believe that the same principle applies to the Evangel community. A number of the students interviewed referenced artistic expression (music and dance). Since this student population already has interest in the arts (along with a large number of their Evangel peers) cultural events would be within their scope of interest. I recommend referring to students when deciding on the length and frequency of these events.

The staff member interviewed shared about highlighting different worship styles and languages in chapel.⁷¹ Events that include music would offer significant meaning to this student population. Many students vocalized that variety in the worship teams would be positive and fun. One student shared that while she appreciates the occasional Latin song, she’d like to hear more than one at an event.⁷² Sharing music from various cultures presents an opportunity for the student to feel connected to his or her culture while also connected to other members of the student body since he or she is sharing the enjoyment of the music with the Evangel community. Students playing the music or choosing the music variety for an event also offers a sense of ownership of the event and can serve as another positive memory with the university.

Increase Access to Cultural Foods for Student Body: As can be imagined, food is important to college students. This student population is no exception. Actually, all students interviewed expressed a longing for the foods from their cultures.

Unfortunately, TCK students rarely have access to familiar foods or ingredients. Many

⁷⁰ Ibid., 84.

⁷¹ Staff Interview, 22:58.

⁷² Student Four, 14:54.

are nervous about the food provider at the university preparing mass amounts of their familiar foods because the intense catering style could compromise the quality of the foods they idealize. After sharing this concern, the students mentioned that if they had a kitchen space that they would take advantage of the opportunity to cook. In this moment, students began to dream of all they would cook, how often they would access the shared kitchen facility, and how they would share their treasured meals with their friends.⁷³ A kitchen space would offer a meaningful cultural experience for students.

Prepare Students and Faculty for Deeper Dialogue: Dedicated to empowering and educating students, the leadership and faculty of Evangel University presently take steps to model a professional and faith-centered life style. Through the Courageous Conversations series in Evangel's chapel services and alumni panels students witness leadership boldly addressing tension and embrace differences. As students continue to witness the leadership facing complex issues and celebrating differences the student body will likely follow suit. These macro events are a step in the right direction, but how does this dialogue translate to an interpersonal level? Students are asking for guidance on how to dialogue about their cultures in a way that honors their heritage and respects the identities and ideologies of others.

Many students complete the Global Connections course during their junior or senior year. Surprisingly, none of the students interviewed mentioned this specific course in their individual interviews and over half of the participants are upperclassmen. I brought up the course to one student and she indicated that she was exempt from taking the course. I understand that the Global Connections course aims to equip students with knowledge and skills in respectfully interacting with people from a variety

⁷³ Group Interview, 1:32:27.

of cultures. The student's exemption from this course is concerning because she is excluded from this particular opportunity to grow a critical skill and she is unable to contribute her knowledge and experiences. Since the students expressed concern with comments, particularly microaggressions, that they and others face, Evangel may want to evaluate exemptions from this course, the content of this course, or the appropriate timing of the course within students' program plans.

Adjusting the timing of the course may be of benefit because many of the upperclassmen interviewed mentioned that the offensive comments became less frequent or less intense over the course of their time at Evangel. This could indicate maturity in the student and how he/she handles the offensive comments or treatment. The decrease of these scenarios could also indicate a deepening of respect between the students of ethnic minorities and the rest of the campus or the course taken during the junior year is positively impacting students in a way that increases their awareness and sensitivity to people of various cultures and ethnicities.

In addition to providing the Global Connections course, training students to facilitate dialogue would benefit the entire campus on a number of sensitive matters, including diversity. My recommendation is to expose students to this training early on in their Evangel career. This exposure could occur in a freshman seminar course, Essential Christianity, or the leadership forum. Dialogue training could, but is not limited to, take the length of a three-credit, full semester course. Evangel could develop a short series of lessons within an already constructed course. From personal experience, after I participated in a course on dialogue I am better prepared to facilitate and engage in provocative dialogue that ushers positive change. If the student body were equipped

with skills and tools to facilitate healthy and respectful dialogue, we may see an increase in student leaders modeling respect and kindness at deeper and expanded levels. Students would not only be prepared to engage in dialogue on issues of diversity on campus, but also within their communities and workplaces after graduation. The exposure of new ideas and sorting through complex issues will further reveal to Evangel students that genuine curiosity will transform themselves and their communities. Students are the product of a university and their skills and sensitivity should be of great concern since they influence society.⁷⁴

Offering similar trainings to faculty members will empower them to model gracious conversation with Evangel students. Two students interviewed mentioned having a negative encounter with a faculty member that was based on racial or cultural assumptions. While the students did not share if they reported the incidents or confronted the faculty members, their lack of response does not negate the fact that these events should not have occurred on Evangel's campus—a community in which they trust for their education and for the respect of their identities. Providing opportunities for faculty and staff members to face their own biases and assumptions and empower them to facilitate healthy, meaningful dialogue will positively impact the Evangel community.

Diversify Faculty and Approach to Learning: This may be the most challenging recommendation to implement. Students come from a variety of cultural backgrounds whose value systems may be different than those of faculty and staff members of the university. Seeking to understand those values students hold and the

⁷⁴ C.P. Show, *The Two Cultures and The Scientific Revolution. The Red Lecture 1959*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1959) quoted in Jussi Valimaa, "Culture and Identity in Higher Education Research," *Higher Education* 36 no. 2 (1998): 122.

cultural identities they carry will inform instructors how to best set expectations for assignments, participation, communication styles, etc. in ways that best honors each student's identity and approach to scholarship. Granted, the students must also learn to work with other cultural expressions and expectations, that is part of this learning environment. Faculty and staff are looked to as models for learning with a diverse group of people. The classroom is a great place to start with understanding a student's cultural identity and values. For example, one trend found throughout the interviews with this TCK student population is that tension exists between student and family members concerning their degree choice and education. Their families expect them to be high achievers in college and choose careers that will provide deep respect and financial security for their future. Understanding this tension or pressure placed on students could inform the way faculty members teach in various classroom settings and how they communicate with students about their future goals. Advisors will need to know the student's cultural values and implications to better serve the student in advising sessions. Asking the student questions about his or her family, values, and talents will serve as a guide. The advisor would then need to walk the fine line of serving the student and honoring his or her culture and family.

One of the greatest assets of Evangel University is the quality of the faculty. While students who identify as ethnic minorities are able to establish rapport and connect with faculty members, these students express a desire to connect with faculty members on ethnic and cultural grounds. Knowledge often transcends the cultural or ethnic backgrounds of students. However, knowledge sharing can be enhanced through mutual experiences and shared worldviews. Students participating in the group

interview expressed that they would like to have professors that look like them and relate to them beyond faith and academia.⁷⁵

Diversifying faculty would provide this student population with additional mentors. Currently, this student population flocks to a small number of staff and faculty who also identify as ethnic minorities when they need support in regards to culture. The student dependence on a few people could become unmanageable and unhealthy for those staff members. I'm confident that these staff and faculty members truly enjoy investing in students, but these mentors, staff members, and faculty personnel should not be expected to sustain a mass level of mentorship in addition to their responsibilities at the university. Diversifying staff and faculty would spread the weight of these mentoring relationships and expand the knowledge base provided at the university to better serve students and members of the Evangel community.

In addition to increasing the number of faculty members from diverse cultures, expanding approaches and pedagogy will benefit this student population. "When the curriculum from the first year through graduation incorporates multiple cultural perspectives and includes the history, traditions, and intellectual contributions of people from all ethnic and racial groups across the world, feelings of ownership among students of color are likely to be strengthened."⁷⁶ Expanding the diversity within the university's pedagogical structure and texts affirms the cultural heritage of more students, thus developing an inclusive academic environment. Diversifying academic approaches enhances the educational experience of all students because their

⁷⁵ Group Interview, 1:03:53.

⁷⁶ Allison N. Ash and Laurie A. Schreiner, "Pathways to Success for Students of Color in Christian Colleges: The Role of Institutional Integrity and Sense of Community," *Christian Higher Education* 15, no. 1-2 (2016): 55, doi:10.1080/15363759.2015.1106356.

understandings of diverse thoughts and experiences mature and affirms the academic merit of great thought and literature. The exposure a wider range of scholarship and ideas will also instill use of inclusive language and open-mindedness for students and for faculty.

Engage With Students: Ultimately, to best understand what students experience and desire during their time at Evangel, one must engage with representatives of the entire student body. Student focus groups with representatives from all demographics would expand insight into a number of aspects of student life. While this research includes a group interview with students who assisted in developing recommendations (as were listed above), the recommendation most critical is to provide time and space for staff, faculty, and students to consistently collaborate on moving forward with cultural conversations. Students are the experts as to what they want and quite possibly what they need. Keep students engaged with and leading the dialogue on their identity, culture, and needs and you will learn about your clientele and deepen their trust.

Implementation Strategy

Implementing the highlighted recommendations begins with the final recommendation: engage with the students. The university has the authority to initiate focus groups. These groups already form for a variety of purposes. The purposes should expand to include all types of concerns the students and administration face. Intentionally inviting students from a range of backgrounds and diverse cultural identities for a variety of purposes would help shape a more inclusive approach to solutions. In addition to how a student relates to the subject of the focus group, those

organizing the group should also ask in which ways students' approaches may differ on the same subject and find representative from multiple approaches.

Based on my findings, if the university were to form the following focus groups students' cultural needs would be better met:

- Foods offered on campus, cultural events (frequency, purpose, involvement of student body, involvement of staff, involvement of outside groups)
- Chapel services (worship music styles, guest speakers, topics)
- Campus events (appeal of cultural events, authenticity of cultural events, access to cultural events, guest appearances, student involvement, student expectations, broad audience or intimate group)
- Academic (faculty's awareness of diverse approaches to study, students' educational values, family influence on degree choice and approach to study)
- Support structures (who are students' relying on for support, strengthening support, students use of university programs).
- The development of a cultural committee at Evangel (function of a committee, student responsibilities, faculty and staff responsibilities, frequency)

Whether the university uses a student focus group to inform the formation of a cultural committee or not, a cultural committee would prove beneficial for the university. This committee's function would be to ensure that the cultural identifies of all student, faculty, and staff members are respected in administrative and academic practices and within the culture of the university. Members of this committee should include at least one member of the following departments: Student Life, the Provost's office, Enrollment Management, and the Center for Student Success. Additional cultural experts who may

help the dialogue and decision making would include: faculty members from the Behavioral and Social Sciences Department, Intercultural Studies Branch of the Department, Music Department, and the Humanities Department. External expertise could also be drawn upon from time to time.

To address curriculum content and faculty approaches to pedagogy and dialogue, a survey among all faculty members should be sent. The survey should include questions gauging how the faculty evaluates students (if their strategies are diverse) and how faculty learns individual students' learning styles and cultural contexts as it relates to learning. To better understand which courses address cross-cultural issues and which curriculum elements prepare students for deeper dialogue the survey should also include questions focused on how often the professor intentionally and unintentionally facilitates a cross-cultural learning moment in a given course, if and how they instruct students to engage in dialogue, if dialogue of diverse ideas occurs in the classroom, and how the faculty member facilitates a dialogue that is respectful and creates space of all opinions and experiences.

Reaching out to the student body to assess the curriculum context and the cultural sensitivity of faculty will strengthen the internal research. Questions similar to the faculty survey can be used in the student survey. However, several additional questions should be added to the student survey. I suggest asking questions about how student prefer to be instructed and evaluated, when they feel most supported by their instructor in a course, and about their greatest learning moments concerning cross-cultural interaction and dialogue in a diverse context. The questions should leave room for students to evaluate their experiences outside of the classroom.

Evangel students want to address tension; however, they do not feel prepared.⁷⁷ The university has the agency to develop programs through leadership courses or integrating dialogue curriculum into pre-existing general education courses to equip students with tools necessary in cross-cultural experiences and conflict resolution. It may need to be more evident throughout the courses that what is taught should be applied in student's every day lives, including on Evangel's campus since a single student did not mention the Global Connections course. I brought it up in one interview and the student said that she did not have to take it. Before administering dialogue trainings for students, faculty members should also engage in these opportunities to enhance their ability to manage potential tension in their classrooms and improve their skills in flourishing the dialogue to a healthy and inspiring state.

Conclusion

The nature of higher education is that universities have an interdependent relationship with their students. The institution relies on students to fill their classrooms and shape their campus culture and the students rely on the school to prepare them for their field and care for their well being. Students are looking to Evangel University to shape them into effective professionals while also affirming their unique gifts. The university already does this through several effective means inside and outside of the classroom. However, this research encourages the university to step closer to the identities and cultural expressions of students.

⁷⁷ Staff Interview, 15:31.

The student population in focus for this research demonstrates that despite facing challenges like microaggressions and limited platforms for cultural expression, they are leaning towards thriving as students at Evangel University, mostly in the areas of spirituality and community. Evangel University is progressing towards improving support for students identifying as minorities and would maximize the potential to better service this student population through engaging with and listening to students' needs in culturally relevant ways.

While this research is specifically focused on students from immigrant families, the tools implemented and recommendations given can be utilized for any student group or individual student. The university's mission demonstrates a desire to care for students, as one student pointed out when asked about having a positive view of herself: there is always room for growth. Moving forward, the university can utilize the recommendations and implementation strategies offered as well as internal and external expertise in the areas of cultural affirmation and student development.

Personal Reflection

Journey

With a basic understanding of the ESL programming at Springfield Public Schools and a curiosity for cultural relevance, my initial Capstone proposal focused on the current tools and strategies used by Springfield Public School (SPS) employees at two elementary schools (Holland and Mark Twain elementary) operating an English as a Second Language (ESL) program to educate English Language Learners (ELL) in

effective, meaningful, and culturally relevant ways. The inspiring question for this capstone was “how are resettling refugees and immigrants primarily from Mexico, El Salvador, Vietnam, Myanmar, China, and Saudi Arabia set up for success within their new community?”

Through conducting ethnographic research, I hoped to uncover the ways in which the Springfield Public School’s ESL program is culturally relative for ELL students, how instructors prepared lessons that are culturally relevant for each student in the classroom, and how ELL students are culturally prepared and confident to thrive in this educational setting. I hoped to learn from the ELL community if the current programming meets their educational needs so they can fully develop and thrive. The product would have been a written report on the research findings that included a list of recommendations for SPS with opportunities to incorporate greater cultural knowledge within the ESL programming.

Unfortunately, my initial plan of research fell through. I had connections with several ESL specialists in the SPS system, support from Goucher College’s Institutional Review Board, and of course, had received guidance and support from my Capstone committee. Springfield Public Schools was the remaining organization to grant approval of my research in two of their schools. Once I submitted the project proposal to the SPS research review committee, I waited a month (as requested by SPS) before contacting the organization. While they affirmed that a project like mine would be beneficial, they declined my request to conduct research on the basis that my research would interrupt the classroom and they did not approve of my wanting to speak with families. When I

inquired about adjusting my research strategies to accommodate, they did not return my e-mail.

Shortly after this denial, I spoke with a colleague about my dilemma. She graciously suggested that I work with the international students at the institution at which we work, Evangel University. At first, I was hesitant. I was hoping to conduct research in a community with whom I was not already connected. After deliberating the idea of working with Evangel students with a few trusted colleagues and friends, everything came together for me to conduct research with Evangel students who are first and second-generation immigrants to the United States and I realized the value of working with a community with which I already held rapport. While the community and some central ideas are different, the essential element of new community members thriving in an educational institution is the same.

At Evangel University, I was able to quickly receive approval from their Research Review Board, cooperation of staff and students, and Goucher College's IRB swiftly approved my change in research. The only element requested that was not approved by Evangel's Research Review Board was a survey of senior class students because by the time I requested the opportunity to add questions to an existing senior survey or send my own, many had already completed the senior survey along with submitting their Senior Papers the previous semester. I did acquire an overview of the results from the Senior Major Survey from Spring 2016. The results indicate that most seniors are satisfied with their investment in Evangel University. Those who completed the survey indicated that in addition to receiving a quality education within their academic

department they are very happy with the support received from faculty members and peers.⁷⁸

Once approval was granted, I reached out to a student who I knew was a first-generation immigrant. She agreed to participate in my capstone research and help me identify several other students whose parents also immigrated to the United States. The student first requested permission from other students to share their e-mail addresses and names with me. For those who obliged I sent an e-mail as seen in Appendix I.

Several students agreed to an interview, while a few ignored the request. I was able to interview four students within the final two weeks of school during the spring semester. During the summer, I interviewed one student via Facetime and another student at a coffee shop since she was in Springfield over the summer months. My remaining two interviews were conducted early in the Fall 2016 semester along with a group interview of half of the student participants and one staff interview.

Personal Impact

Through my reflections of the interviews, I learned about the ethnographic process, the beauty of partnership, the art and importance of asking questions, how we humans surprise ourselves, and a lot about myself.

Since first learning about ethnography, I have been fascinated by the process of gathering narrative through observation and inquiry and then developing a comprehensive story of a community because similar tools can be utilized with nearly every community and in almost any circumstance. Ethnography is a transcendent tool that can work with any culture. I deeply appreciate this process because of its

⁷⁸ "Senior Major Survey," *Evangel University Senior Assessment*, Accessed April 20, 2016.

transferable strategies and because it still provides enough freedom for that community to communicate how members identify, what they are about, and rally support if and how they want to for the cause(s) they are pursuing. The freedom within the structure of ethnography activates passion and joy inside of me.

I have always been a casual people watcher; curious of their stories and empathizing with them while knowing little more than their appearance, current state, and surroundings. When friends ask about ethnographic fieldwork, my colloquial definition stands as “glorified people watching.” Ethnography though has much more purpose to me than for my own entertainment and satisfying my own curiosity.

Ethnography is a way for me to understand and then be transformed. This personal transformative process is threaded throughout my reflection, so I’ll touch on it lightly here. Gathering facts and stories from individuals in a community provides me with a glimpse of life in another person’s worldview. My compassion is stretched and strengthened by the sheer act of listening. Learning the details of another’s life opens my eyes to other possibilities in life and seeing them as valid. One might think that hearing story after story would numb my soul to the community or social issue—the opposite is true. The multiple stories from the community and about similar issues intensify the realities that a particular community faces and shatters many assumptions that I held about that community. Ethnography also teaches how to better love and serve people. Through their narrative, I learn how they prefer to be asked questions, approached, and shown kindness.

Technically speaking, one would take immense amounts of field notes when studying a community. Unfortunately, I did not have this luxury. Aside from my

interactions in the interviews, I did not actively take field notes of participating students. Unless I was granted permission to observe the students or was invited by students to spend time with them while they went about their normal day there is not a way (that I am aware of) that would grant me sufficient field notes. Granted, I jotted a few field notes on some students after interviews. These were generally impressions I got from students. As I revisited the interview during transcribing, I jotted reflections and notes about our interactions. My general interpretation and questions developed from the time spent with the student during that specific interview event.

Interviewing student participants was the greatest gift of this capstone. Hearing their stories and building trust with them was a great honor—one I will forever cherish. I am indebted to each participant for the completion of my degree, but also for how he or she impacted my personal life with his or her story. I approached each interview with a set of questions in mind. I had them jotted in a notebook and generally followed the questions I outlined for myself (I will cover the specific questions asked and development of my question asking later on in the reflection). In most interviews, I asked for clarification when a student brought up something I thought was interesting or would add to the research. For example, one student mentioned the ethnicity and religion of her grandfather. In the same interview the student shares that she studied abroad in the same country of her grandfather's culture. After I asked for her to share more about her trip and how it enlightened her on her grandfather's culture, she indulged. Through her story I gained insight into the connection of visiting a place of

cultural, spiritual, and familial significance and was given the gift of hearing her experience.⁷⁹

Each individual interview was unique. Some of the student participants and I had already established a friendship. I had interviewed one student before for another project, a couple of students and I were familiar with each other's names and faces but did not have a relationship yet, and one student I did not know at all. The preceding knowledge of the student and his or her knowledge of me impacted the level of comfort as the interview started. However, throughout all of the interviews, I believe that the students became increasingly comfortable sharing their stories with me and I with them.

From my transcription notes I notice that I use "um" more often in the earlier recordings and more often with students I did not know as well. In the interviews in which I had a budding friendship with the student I found myself more comfortable, used "um" less often, transitioned from question to question with a general ease, and laughed more often. In the recording I found my laughing annoying, and yet I continued to laugh with the students in the interview. The laughter, I think, built a connection with the student. Maybe my laugh is really loud and in interview settings I should be more mindful of how I express my joy and connection with a student. Also, I think it was fascinating to observe and is important to note that with each interview I developed better questions before the interview began and while the interview took place. Two things that stayed the same were how I awkwardly began recording each interview and how many times I said "awesome" or "cool" when acknowledging a segment of the student's stories.

⁷⁹ Student Six, 1:22:23.

With the majority of interviews I asked the students where they wanted to meet. The two times I met with students in the cafeteria was challenging. In the second interview, the student and I met during her lunch. She snuck in bites of her meal while I tried to elongate my questions—giving her enough time to eat. I also felt distracted by the number of people that sat near us as the dining hall filled throughout the hour. One of the professors on the institution's Research Review Board sat a table away. Through part of the interview, I wondered if he was observing us and if he approved. I never asked because I felt uncomfortable at the thought of potentially being observed—although we were the ones who probably sat near his typical spot. Aside from trying to allow the student to enjoy her meal, the noise was distracting while I asked questions. I couldn't tell if the noise and people surrounding us impacted her answers to my questions, but I found myself distracted. The other time I met with a student in the cafeteria, we interviewed in a side room of the dining hall. It was much quieter, but the student still needed to take time to eat. While interviews during meal times worked well for the students' schedules and allowed me to observe the foods they ate and how they ate, I also felt a few drawbacks from being in a distracting environment.

Most interviews were conducted in quieter areas. My favorite space to interview was my office. This could be because I am familiar with the space already and it was always quiet. No interruptions occurred during any of the interviews conducted in my office, aside from a student taking a call during the group interview (which was completely acceptable).

One student interview was conducted in the library at the student's request. This student thought it would be quiet, and it was. But it was quiet with many people around

who could easily overhear our conversation. I felt as though the topic was too vulnerable to have in such a space. I credit this to why the interview was only twenty minutes long. At first, I ascribed it to having already interviewed the student for a previous project and the student only providing simplified answers. As I reflect more on the location choice of the interview, I now realize that I cut the interview short. I did not ask clarifying questions as often, and I did not present my questions in a way that allowed for much depth from the student. In my opinion, changing the location of this interview would have provided greater detail for this research, especially since this interview is the only one with a male student.

The Facetime interview went well. It was as if we were simply catching up. People typically only Facetime with certain friends and family members who they care for and miss. Having a friendship with this student made it easy to Facetime. Naturally, we caught up about our summer activities before commencing the recorded interview. I was nervous about how the external recorder would pick up a Facetime conversation, so a day or so before the interview I asked my husband to Facetime with me and I recorded our short conversation. It worked well that time, so I took a chance and recorded my interview with the student participant. It worked well. I was able to transcribe most of the conversation. Occasionally, I was unable to understand what the student said, but in the context of the interview, I don't believe I missed anything critical to the themes or ideas.

Another interview was held at a coffee shop that neither of us frequent. This interview was the longest individual interview. The setting played a part in our ability to converse over a longer period of time because I think we are both used to meeting with

friends at coffee shops or similar environments with little agenda in mind. This was also the only Saturday interview conducted. Neither the student nor I had any pressing obligations to attend to that Saturday afternoon, so we took as much time as we both wanted to talk through the details of her life. At other coffee shops, I would not have been surprised if people we knew would have walked by or talked with us. Since this shop was one neither of us visited often, we did not see anyone else we knew during the interview. While the recording echoed at times, the setting and time allowed for this interview to be incredibly fruitful despite the imperfect audio quality.

One indicator that the interviews were my most treasured aspect of the processes is the sense of feeling short on time for most of the interviews, especially the group interview. Despite the group interview lasting nearly two hours, we only covered a handful of the questions I wanted to ask the students while so many were in one place. In the group interview some students did mention stories that they personally shared with me in the individual interview. That reveals consistency in their stories. A few times when the students re-told a story they would acknowledge that they had already mentioned it to me, but maybe they recounted the entire story for the sake of the group and in an attempt to prove it germane to the point. Other times the student did not reference the repeated story, but these reasons are not pertinent to this research.

Once an interview was recorded, I saved the interview as '2016.CAPSTONE.[STUDENT INITIALS].V001.AUD.MP3.' After a couple of students opted for confidentiality I changed all recordings to '2016.CAPSTONE.S[CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF INTERVIEW].V001.AUD.MP3.' This change allowed me to remember which interview recording belongs to each

student participant without compromising his or her name. For the group interview, I labeled the recording with 'GI' for Group Interview instead of 'S4,' for example. For the one staff member interview the adjustment is 'STAFF1.' If I were to add any other staff interviews the number would increase in chronological order.

After the interview was appropriately labeled for reference, I began the transcribing process. I decided to keep all transcriptions confidential because some students reference other student participants in the interviews. However, all non-confidential log notes are included in the Appendix II. The transcriptions from interviews are on a single document. The groundwork information outline for all transcriptions is seen in Appendix III.

After the Introductions line, each sentence by both the student participant and me are notated. "S:" indicates that the student was speaking, and "C:" indicates that I was speaking. Every several minutes in the transcribing process I noted the time in bold font between comments. This time notation is a tool to assist with log notes and quotes that were used in the final work. Notating time during transcriptions saved time when alluding to a segment of a student story or using a student quote. This bold notation also breaks up the interview dialogue well. Filtering through the details to identify key themes and log notes was easier to accomplish in segments. All transcriptions were documented as 'Capstone Transcriptions_Student#.docx.'

As mentioned previously, I took time to reflect on the interview while transcribing. In the past, I have found that the transcription process allows for additional, and potentially, thoughtful time with the interview. In an attempt to maximize my time with the interview, I decided to reflect while transcribing. While this strategy lengthened the

transcription period, it also provided much of the insight and thoughtfulness you see in this personal reflective piece.

Each reflection is documented as 'Reflections of interview with Student #.dox.' Reflections will not be included in the appendix since they reference student's personal information as noted in the transcriptions; however, as I mentioned, segments and matured thoughts from these reflection notes are seen throughout this specific document and in some log notes. The majority of notes in the reflection documents are chronological in order of my thoughts while transcribing. I wrote a handful of fieldnotes about student interviews before I began transcribing. Some of these fieldnote comments are scattered through other reflection documents as they came to my mind during the transcription. These reflections were a place for me to highlight interesting comments from interview participants, further develop my interpretations of the interview content, analyze my abilities as an ethnographer, and develop further questions and wonders. For example, after the first interview, I asked myself, "What are ways students could be exposed to cultures and their unique attributes?"⁸⁰ After the fourth interview, I asked, "how could the school serve students who need a specific resource (beautician, beauty products, foods)."⁸¹ The sheer act of writing these questions kept them fresh in my mind and so I could later use as a filter to better identify themes and understand the general narrative.

After the long, arduous process of transcribing I began to compile log notes from each transcription document. The function of the log notes aided me in identifying the themes found within a particular interview and piecing together quotes and ideas that tie

⁸⁰ Student One, 38:21.

⁸¹ Student Four, 38:32.

in with that theme discussed. At times, I added my ideas and made connections within the log notes. This practice was one of the best tools in helping me make connections throughout the series of interviews and literature review.

The log notes are labeled as 'Capstone Log Notes_Student#.docx.' and, as mentioned previously, the non-confidential documents can be found in Appendix II.

The thought of teasing through numerous documents several times to identify themes overwhelmed me. To lighten the load of analyzing documents, I developed a shorter document that listed out some general and some specific themes found in each interview. Over time, I would comb through log notes and mark with the correlating student interview number if that student also mentioned that theme within his or her individual interview. This document can be found in the Appendix IV.

I believe the power in the ethnographic process is shared. It is a power that should be respected. While the community itself is the ultimate authority on who they are, it's up to me to how I interact and respond. If I react in an unfavorable way to a statement, then that may obstruct my ability to continue learning about the community. When I am vulnerable or ask a question with kindness, I gain trust. While I learn about the community, the community also has the opportunity to further refine their definitions. In our shared agency, the community and I both learn about the community. The community has the power to choose, though, how they define and how they refine, while, I, the ethnographer, have power over how I interest my life with the community and power over my own questions.

I have never been one to question. I don't have a stubborn personality in the typical sense. Since I was young it was ingrained in me not to question authority in the

household, in school, or in the church. I obliged because I was a “good girl.” This not only led to internal frustrations and shame when I doubted, but also developed a sense of pride within myself. In school and in the church my mental process turned into, “if I do not have questions then I will be perceived as already knowing the answer.” I was left feeling confused or worse yet, assuming I knew the answer. I still struggle with this, but I now find myself deconstructing all that I assumed I knew—what was modeled for me and what I didn’t question—in the household, in school, and in the church. While I have many moving pieces still levitating, I find myself full of peace as my feet are firmly planted on the small, but strong stones that have been refined through questioning.

Diving into a discipline that requires me to develop questions and grants me freedom to ask any question I want and forces me to combat my resistance to question. Throughout the past six months of interviewing for this capstone, I have come to grips with the reality that I am not very good with questions. I get distracted or my questions are too direct or too complicated and leave my interviewee (and me) confused. I over analyze my questions hoping that the perfectly crafted question will produce the most accurately detailed answer that will help me develop the best capstone research ever released.

Those over analyzed questions were too complicated for me to explain to my interviewees. My direct questions did not take into account that the student may have a different definition than I. My complicated questions were a buzz kill, especially when the interview was getting fun. Sometimes, I would feel disappointed that I did not get to ask all the questions I had planned. I only think that I asked all the planned questions a couple of times within the ten interviews. Typically, new questions arose as the

interview progressed. I am now grateful that I gave myself space to ask those unplanned questions because great stories came from that allowed margin.

Over the past six months, the types of questions I asked from this specific community have morphed. Listed in Appendix V are the majority of questions asked during each individual interview. One marked difference between the first interview and most of the remaining individual interviews is when I ask the student how he/she identifies himself/herself. Because the direction of the interview changed slightly after a comment by the interviewee, I pushed back the question of identity later to gather more information about the student and her family. In the remaining individual interviews, I tried to ask the identity question sooner, as was my original plan for the first interview, to set the stage for the interview and help me and the student focus on his or her identity.

Despite thriving being the central question to my research, I only began to directly ask students how they understood thriving at Evangel University and to evaluate their own lives half way through the individual interviews. Two students, who were not asked about thriving directly in the individual interviews, were asked about thriving in the group interview. In all interviews, I attempted to understand how their individual lives met the criteria set by Schreiner's thriving rubric. However, after four interviews I decided to additionally ask the students about thriving. The first question I asked was for a description of a thriving student at Evangel University. Immediately after the student answered I would ask if the student considered himself or herself to be thriving. Each time the student seemed surprised that he/she fits with the definition he/she offered. One student did not match her answer perfectly, so she adjusted it slightly to show that

she either does believe, she wants to believe, or she wants me to believe that she considers herself as thriving.

The interview questions (Appendix V), posted in chronological order, reveal the variation in student stories as well as my developmental processes from the beginning to the end of this specific project. They also track my personal progress in developing questions during the interview. This tells me a few things: 1. I improved in question development. Practicing interviewing refined my skills as an interviewer. 2. My ability to listen to the student enhanced. 3. Finally, the deeper an ethnographer is in a particular community (through time, circumstances, etc.) the more natural it is to think of quality questions in those particular terms.

Implications for Cultural Sustainability

The benefits of this research include: platform for student agency, informing institution of student cultures, inspiring positive change for the school and student body, and advancing scholarship for thriving among first and second generation immigrant students. This list is not exhaustive, and the cultural implications of this research are vast and complex.

Cultural sustainability is enhanced through this research. This study takes the stories of first and second generation immigrant students from a wide variety of ethnic and cultural identities to distinguish general themes of understanding and supports the first and second generation immigrant student population in the United States. Other studies focus on a single population or ethnic populations from a specific region or are focused on students identifying as third culture kids, adult third culture kids, college students, students who identify as an ethnic or racial minority. My research focuses on a

group of students whose identities intersect with the aforementioned sub groups and yet other research conducted does not provide a full picture of the cultural identities of this specific population of young adults. This research takes time with student stories from the first and second generation immigrant population to better understand the cultural identities and tension felt by students who identify with the culture of their parents, culture of their current community, students who are multilingual, students who relate to a wider range of styles in musical expression and dance, and students who are culturally sensitive at an exceptional level due to their personal experience. While this study does not present in depth details on specific cultures, it highlights general themes of shared experiences of the first and second generation immigrant students and their sense of thriving at an American university located in the Midwest.

This research supports that each student is unique among sharing qualities within their ethnic culture and with sharing qualities with the general college student population at Evangel University. Students interviewed identify that they would like to be approached as individuals, not as a representatives of an entire race or ethnic group; thus, further supporting Franz Boas' work with cultural relativity and promotion of diversity within every culture. Student participants represent the general population in the concept of individualism; however, these students encounter more vocalized assumptions than other college students. This research addresses the tension between college students and between students and the institution particularly when students experience offense. A number of colleges and universities are now acknowledging the real tension students are facing. This research can serve institutions of higher education to inform and encourage positive change, dialogue, and cooperation.

Other institutions or movements may use this research to further support the call for celebration of cultural identity and connection through language, food, and art while also evoking a challenging response to the American and global public to empathize with all individuals regardless of citizenship and cultural background. While people carry cultural contexts which impacts worldview and preferences, it is critical to remember that individuals who “do not look like us” are not necessarily a representation of a culture. The person is an individual with a unique narrative, agency, and intellect.

The work of cultural sustainability is primarily focused on sustaining the identity and expressions of communities. Cultural workers are dedicated to the communities with which they work. The means by which cultural workers interact with, obtain relevant information from, and implement culturally minded strategies determine the tone and level of partnership. In an academic setting, positive change and education of cultural sustainability issues must be addressed at all levels and maintain students as top priority. The work of this research reflects seeking out student stories in regards to cultural identity and thriving with hopes to inform the leadership and entire community of the university. This information equips leadership to make informed and sensitive decisions and elicits understanding and compassion from the greater community.

Through this work I have learned how to partner with communities in the ways that are true to them. Cultural sustainability provides tools for partnership and critical analysis for developing and instituting social initiatives for good. I partnered with students by re-presenting their stories to the campus leadership. While I only obtained one interview with a staff member and received permission from the Research Review Board, the crux of my partnership with the university leadership occurs as I submit the

manuscript (provide the research and analysis) to them. As a partner the changes cannot and should not be dictated by me alone. The act of submitting my part of the work is a demonstration of trust that the leadership will move forward in light of the student stories. The manuscript provided sends a message that students are concerned about sustaining their cultural identities while thriving in college and will, hopefully, spark greater interest in the leadership.

This work addresses cultural sustainability in a sector that is known for fostering growth and change—education. Universities are hubs of innovation and self-discovery. Students find themselves questioning more than answering in this season of life. They also interact with a large number of people, people potentially from a range of backgrounds. The support of cultural identity expression provides students with greater access to ideas, practices, and lifestyles that they otherwise would not have encountered. Supporting exposure to an array of cultures not only affirms the identities of the students, but also sensitizes all students to diversity. Students who are exposed to more cultures have less xenophobia and are less likely to hold prejudice ideals.⁸² In a globalized society, respect for other cultures is not only critical in the workplace, but also in the community.

Residing in the intersection of identity, practices, spirituality, community, partnerships, and event coordination, this research is ripe for potential in the cultural sustainability world. I have yet to come across research that intersects these exact aspects. While helpful for cultural workers, further research on the intersection of personality and culture and the experience of TCK's who are living in the United States should be conducted. My research was limited, and I believe additional research would

⁸² Melles, et al., "Does The Third Culture Kid Experience Predict Levels of Prejudice?" 265-266.

serve cultural workers and communities to a greater degree because most TCK research is about US or western European individuals living abroad. The students participating in this study are TCKs who are living in the US and whose parents are from a nation outside of the US or Western Europe.

Near the end of my research I came across a new article. I almost did not request the research because I was two weeks away from completing the capstone. The title captivated me: "Pathways to Success for Students of Color in Christian Colleges: The Role of Institutional Integrity and Sense of Community." With a title that addressed almost exactly what I am focusing on I chose to review the research by Allison N. Ash and, the muse for my thriving understanding, Laurie A. Schreiner. I wanted to know what they would say about students who identify as minorities racially and culturally thriving at a Christian college. I was shocked to finally find research that was so similarly focused on what I have spent nearly a year investigating. As I began to flip through the article, "why didn't I find this at the beginning?" repeated in my head. I wish I had known how to better prepare for my questions. However, upon reviewing their findings and recommendations, I felt affirmation more than regret. Why? Because their research findings obtained through traditional quantitative surveys and analysis reflected my findings and recommendations gathered through ethnographic interviews.

While I cannot say that this is the case for every study, through review of the 2016 Ash and Schreiner article, my hope that ethnographic research was as strong as statistical analysis was confirmed. Granted, my research had its limits, but so did theirs. Cultural sustainability tools are effective for understanding the community, enhancing the community, and, unlike statistical research, connecting with the community.

Cultural sustainability is premised on communities thriving. This work touches on thriving of a specific community and offers insight into how all communities thrive. Schreiner's rubric could inform how to understand and gauge thriving in other types of communities; however, I find that the affirmation of cultural identity and expression to be a stronger gauge of thriving—sense of fulfillment and grasp of individual and group value. Affirming cultural identity asserts that the community offers something beneficial to the world. This statement is not meant to be capitalistic in nature, but instead articulate that individuals and communities have inherent value by existing.

My understanding of cultural sustainability has shifted through the capstone process. This new knowledge and skill also informs my definition of cultural sustainability, one that I will carry with me in future work. I define cultural sustainability as affirming the agency a community has in establishing and adjusting its preferences, definitions, and traditions in a way that ushers peace and creativity throughout the world and empowers the community and individual to thrive.

Appendix

Appendix I

E-mail to prospective participants:

Hello!

[A fellow Evangel student] shared your name with me as a potential participant in my graduate research.

My name is Celia Duncan! You may have seen me around campus (or maybe not ;) that's totally cool). I'm an Admissions Counselor at Evangel.

I'm also nearing the end of my master's degree in cultural sustainability at Goucher College.

For my capstone project I am conducting ethnographic research among 1st generation American and permanent resident undergraduate students at Evangel. Through interviews and literature reviews I aim to develop an ethnographic report on the cultural identities of students to share with the student development office in hopes of ensuring that all students are served well.

What this means for you.. I would love to interview you! I would like to hear your story and ask you seemingly random questions. We can meet at a coffee shop, Skype over the summer, meet on campus, etc.

Are you available for an hour over the next few weeks? If not, maybe we can Skype over the summer, or meet over the summer if you are in Springfield or next semester. Fridays are very open for me, but I'm pretty flexible other days too.

Attached you'll find the consent form that sheds a little more light on my project. This form provides an outline of what to expect and some options for confidentiality. Feel free to decline the invitation to interview as well.

Thank you so much!

Appendix II

Non-Confidential Capstone Log Notes:

Log Notes Student One

Interview with: Bianca Cubillos

Project: Where All Can Thrive: Tools for Sustaining Inclusive Communities

Media Name/type: Digital, Audio file, 2016.CAPSTONE.S1.V001.AUD.MP3

Researcher: Celia Duncan

Date Recorded: April 25, 2016

Duration: 50:46

Interviewees: Bianca Cubillos

Location: Evangel University, Joust Balcony

Subject: Personal Narrative

Key Words: Spanish, Family, Latina, Christians, Challenges, Listen, Rude, Minority

Significant Moments During Interview:

Time	Content
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Themes:

Spanish Language: Significant use with family, Ties to family and homes, Enjoys using it, First language, blurts it out on accident (after 10:45) or uses it when talking with

people (possibly family) over the phone. After 30:23, the student mentions struggling in classes and that she's worked hard this first year of college with her professors. She has to hear, translate, and then think. It's an extra step. She's connected with an English teacher who is fluent in Spanish and grew up in the Caribbean/Central America (Cuba and Costa Rica, respectively). That's comforting to her.

English Language: Mastery of it and yet still does not understand all idioms or nuances (after 10:45)

Diversity within Community: Enjoyed the place where the ratio of people groups and culture were the most equal in number, for her it made for an accepting place. She viewed it as very accepting—a seemingly important attribute for this student. The new town where her family lives sits in contrast. Since they moved to a place categorized as “wealthy” and “mostly Caucasian” this student points out that it is a “challenging” place to be even though this student no longer has to face that challenging place herself.

Diversity of culture and language allows this student to feel more comfortable?

Speculating, here, but I wonder if it reminds her that she's not the only one who is different than the majority culture. After 15:03 and just before 17:25 the student notes that she has friends from all sorts of background, but her first days at college felt isolating. Her friend and mentor back home encouraged her to stay. She really just wants someone to connect with—which is challenging for anyone their first weeks at a college. After 18:58 and just before 21:55 she mentions how she appreciates the opportunities she's had to get to know people from all over the country (ethnically, geographically, etc). It appears that she's learned much about the human experience through this.

Students without range of knowledge of other cultures: After 27:00 I ask how she thinks others on campus view her culture. She notes that she doesn't feel like she is viewed different by people until race or nationality or ethnicity is brought up in conversation (I think she misunderstood my question, she made it personal, but that's okay. Her answer sheds light on how she feels about both she, individually, and her culture, corporately, are viewed). The musings continue to include statements that many people immediately assume that if you are Latino then you are "either Mexican or Puerto Rican" "there's no in-between" she says. She is knowledgeable about the diverse Spanish speaking cultures and nations. That's not just at EU. After 30:23 but just before 35:42, she mentions that the campus isn't cliché and everyone hangs out everywhere. She notes that the size of the campus is a reason for that.

Questions fielded: After 27:00 are you Mexican? Are you Puerto Rican? Are you a citizen?

Learning about others/more than meets the eye for others: After 15:03 her roommate, Hannah is curious about her life. She recognizes that other people are curious and want to get to know her too. Provides the example of her Brazilian friend. In her reflections she notices that people make assumptions about him, inaccurate assumptions. Despite the frequent assumptions she likes this place. After 21:55 she shares two amazing, detailed stories about discipline in her culture and how she explained them to her roommate.

Learning about others/ more than meets the eye for her: After EUnite event assumptions she held about others were corrected, and now she and those students connected and talk to one another

Personal Identity with Either Or: The student references her brother's struggle with fitting in to the new town because he doesn't look nor sound fully Latin nor "straight American"

Personal Identity different from the majority population: Student identifies as Hispanic, yet she attends a university where the majority of individuals are not Hispanic.

Family: Grandmother lives with the family. She is very involved. References the church when talking about family. Seeing individuals as "family" based on a shared faith instead of just biological connections. Support system may equal family (noted just at 10:45). After 35:42, shares about her mother's journey. This story about her mom started with the comment "especially when you grow up very um heavy in that culture because you could be Italian, but know nothing about your heritage. You just have that title because that's where your ancestors are from. Um, but for kids like me who um my mom came here when she was 15 knowing nothing of English." Seems that she is proud of her mom and proud that she is knowledgeable of her family's culture (culture meeting/matching ethnicity as opposed to culture with little to no ties to ethnicity/those who share a similar ethnicity are similar to those have similar cultural ties and experiences).

Choosing Spiritual Beliefs : Was raised in the Catholic church, but only attended mass on occasion. When her mother decided they were going to attend (what I assume to be more protestant) church more frequently, this student and brother chose to dedicate their lives to the Christian faith, ultimately leading her to a Christian university.

East Coast: This student connects with the "East Coast" culture. It's mentioned throughout the interview. After 10:45 it's mentioned in reference to interpersonal

communication. She practices the blunt communication styles of those from the east coast. Yes she's mindful of who she is interacting with. A personal thing, not sure if it connects with any culture, but the student is aware of how she operates as well as the culture/perceptions of others. After 27 just before 30:23 she says "I've never been treated any differently on campus just because of where I'm from. Um, I think people have, like I said, because of being from the East Coast thing, people are very taken aback from how forward I am, but not because of me being Latina or anything like that." After 30:23 her friend group is diverse and some are from East Coast or big city (like Chicago). After 40:20 she misses the beach it is her "safe zone"

Friends allow her to be herself: after 10:45 she mentions that now that she has friends, she is able to be her loud, boisterous self. She has the confidence because of those relationships. Even with noticing people staring at her or whispering around her, she still feels confident and as though she can really be herself. After 17:25 and just before 18:58 she describes her friend group as the most "diverse group of people you'll meet." Then she goes on to describe them. Many of them look a certain way that is misleading of their heritage. She also connects best with another latina. The connect over language. After 30:23 She mentions friends with whom she connects. Two are from big cities, New York and Chicago and both have parents who are not American. Another friend mentioned at this point is from her home church. The familiarity of people with similar background.."home church" "city" those whose parents grew up abroad seem to help her connect with these other students well. They also connect via language.

Isolation: mentioned after 15:03. I assume it is because so many people are from different cultures, not as many share her upbringing. Felt alone the first few days of college, but was encouraged by her youth pastor/friend/mentor to stay.

Assumptions: Students assume people are of a certain heritage or culture, and are shocked to find out otherwise (15:03). Doesn't seem to harm dialogue, but it would be good to investigate that further. After 17:25 recognized in herself the assumptions that she held, but once those assumptions were corrected she found friends/acquaintances with those people.

Steps towards improvement: After 35:42 I ask what would make EU better? She mentions EUnite, but that it's not just about making Evangel better it's about making every place and group better. She could have said anything, but she chose to reference the dialogue about ethnicity and diversity on campus. She believes that everyone should educate themselves about people from different backgrounds and cultures. After 38:21, "just being culturally aware it's just something that evangel could do without throwing it at us either, you know." I don't think she was accusing Evangel of doing this, but as a caution that the school shouldn't get to this point. She relates this to the need to our shared faith and the desire to expose people to the gospel of Jesus without being pushy. She notes that simple exposure and patience are needed to effectively educate people about differences within culture and develop a care for people of diverse backgrounds. She notes that when her roommate is willing to be curious that she, the interviewee, has to be just as willing to share.

Connection to her culture/the uniqueness of a culture: After 35:42, just before 38:21, "eating the food and speaking the language and knowing what it's like being out there

because we've taken so many trips to South America, and learning how our parents grew up and where they grew up and um, so I think it's just really nice when people, like I said, aren't has ignorant or naïve to the concept of, um, you know, just for example if you're African American, um, that could mean anything. You could be from Nigeria. You could be from um Ghana. It doesn't, like Africa is not a country, it's a continent. There's very different, like that's another thing that people are just very naïve about." She references food, language, place, stories from parents as factors in connection with her culture as well as pointing out how having those experiences with the cultures increases her knowledge of how they are unique. She references that other people do not recognize how unique each culture is and don't seem to know/they assume or maybe they don't take the time to learn about the differences between cultures and just end up assuming and assigning certain characteristics to an entire group of cultures. She goes on to note that it's important to her that other people recognize differences between cultures not just race. She notes that it's not offensive, it's more so "tiring" when she feels the need to explain the differences. I wonder if it's also frustrating. (after 38:21).

Music: After 40:20 she'll listen to salsa music while doing homework outside. She gets responses that she considers to be funny (friendly banter probably).

Getting Comfortable/Goals: after 40:20, it took time. She attributes the difficulty of adjusting to Evangel to it being her first year, but now, at the end of her freshman year, she shares that she is comfortable everywhere on campus. Part of her new found comfort is attributed to how she decided to be intentional and build friendships. Just before declaring her newfound confidence to be comfortable in this environment so notes that she and another friend (who also comes from Latin heritage) are both very

loud on their floor. She notes that it's nice to have that comradair and "everyone enjoys it." After 43:10, she goes into more detail about how this adjustment was difficult (away from home for the first time, finances, passing of her brother, eldest of three and has a single mom). However, her mom was encouraging to her. Earlier in the interview (after 15:03) her mentor encouraged her to stay. The Director of Comm Life (after 43:10) directly comforted her when her brother passed and her RA and RD took care of telling her professors. These people demonstrated care for her as a person. Additionally, this student possess a desire to live a good life, she notes "my mom pushed me to strive to do everything that she could do. And that's something that I'm really honored to do because I want to be able to break certain chains and um lead *my* family on a better road than what we grew up on." She had to give a lot of effort to stay, but to her it's a step towards her goal.

Welcoming/Responsive: After 43:10, her brother passed away on the first day of class and a staff member (Gina R. who oversees community development) came to her dorm room and gave her a hug to comfort her. She found it strange at first

Goals: After 43:10, to have a better life than how she grew up. She came to school intending to be a pre-med major. She earned her CNA while in high school. She wanted to be a pediatric oncologist. After her brother passes away and progressing in classes she felt God tell her to work with survivors of domestic and sexual violence. She received confirmation from people who didn't know her story and after she prayed about it she changed her major and direction for her career. She can take care of herself on her own.

The Evangel Experience: After 43:10 people confirming her calling that God's spoken to her. She is able to grow spiritually on campus. The connections to people who are in her desired field. She feels called to EU. This campus has become a "home" to her. Finds herself using that term when referring to campus when she and her friends are off campus.

Benefits of being a first generation American: After 49:19, "being a first generation student, I think it, it's kind of hard, but it's also such a blessing. You get a lot of benefits from it. Because, you know, you're kind of leading this new legacy for your family and your family gets so proud to know that you're going off to college. It's also like this really bit thing on your shoulders. Like, "I gotta do this!" you know, "It's not just for me. It's for my family." And I think, sometimes people take that lightly."

Place: visiting the country where her mom (maybe dad) grew up helps her feel connected to the culture even more.

Ties her identity to her Christian faith: uses faith as an example of how people should not force culture upon another. She notes that it's just like how Christians should not force their faith upon other people.

Log Notes Student Two

Interview with: Anneli Lofgrin

Project: Where All Can Thrive: Tools for Sustaining Inclusive Communities

Media Name/type: Digital, Audio file, 2016.CAPSTONE.S2.V001.AUD.MP3

Researcher: Celia Duncan

Date Recorded: April 29, 2016

Duration: 57:05

Interviewees: Anneli Lofgren

Location: Evangel University, Crusader Dining Hall

Subject: Personal Narrative

Key Words: East Coast, family, Spanish, Swedish, Hispanic, Biracial, Culture, God, Ministry, Campus, Ignorant

Significant Moments During Interview:

Time	Content
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Themes:

Swedish language: first name means honesty and mentions the meaning without prompting. Dad tried teaching her, but she didn't pick it up very well.

Spanish language: learned it at home. Spent significant time with grandma (only speaks in Spanish) and great grandmother. After 21:33, will blurt words in Spanish (or Swedish) if she is shocked or finds something funny. It's a home habit, she's not sure why she does it. I find that beautiful. She does that just because it's what they do "at home." It doesn't seem like she's trying to change that or alter that subconscious habit. It's a piece of her. Speaking one of three languages when feeling certain emotions.

When she practices this at Evangel, people ask her the reason she does it. It seems like the questioning hasn't stopped her from doing it or shamed her. I wonder if all students would begin to realize that they themselves have home habits and celebrate their home habits along with those of others. Not sure how to facilitate that dialogue or if that even needs structure to encourage a change in perception, but it's a thought.

Identifying with parents: dad Swedish, mom El Salvadorian

East Coast/Manhattan NY: After 21:33 she realizes that NY has influenced her dress and the slang terms she uses. She hasn't stopped using either. She's also "forward." She does get asked about what some of her mannerisms or slang terms mean since moving to Missouri "because they're just not used to seeing someone like who operates the way I do." She says, "physically I am away from home, but at the same time it's like I never left because I still operate as if I was home." After 36:31 she notes that the New York and East Coast friends "understand" her culture because it is a shared culture.

Bi-Racial identity: attributes literal meaning to it. Mentions other people's attribution as to how they are "a bit of everything too." She says that it's difficult to explain that her heritage is literally half and half because other people have ethnic heritage from a variety of cultures.

Indicating race: on formal documents that ask for race/ethnicity she struggles. She wants to put bi-racial and mark both "white" and "Hispanic" but she can't, so she marks "other" on those forms. She doesn't want to say one over the other. This is very interesting to me because how I understood the forms is that if an individual identifies as Hispanic at all, that identification is supposed to be indicated above any other. I never exactly knew why, or how I know that (is this an even accurate piece of "common knowledge"??) but it is interesting that she would rather be indicated as "other" on formal documents instead of formally choosing one aspect of her ethnicity over the other. After 2:20 I ask her how she prefers to be addressed when talking about ethnicity. She answers that she doesn't get offended and doesn't really care since people get it wrong anyways or choose one over the other when addressing her anyways. Her ability to overcome the potential offense speaks to a few things: 1. It seems like she is so used

to how other people address her that she notes it as common 2. Her character is gracious. Another interesting aspect is that she, like student four, state that she identifies herself the way other people identify her. Part of me wants to say, “no! you identify yourself the way you want to identify yourself!!” (this is upon first hearing this statement, I needed more thought about the context in which she is speaking) but at the same time is this necessarily wrong that she allows others to tell her what her ethnicity is in a given conversation? Now, I don’t think that this student is deeply moved by the opinions of others, however, in each moment she allows each person to have their own opinion of her while she’ll be herself. In her case, it may be healthy and it may really be about her interpersonal communication about her ethnicity and if people get it wrong, then she’s okay with that, but she knows who she really is. I guess maybe she doesn’t feel the need to correct people is what she’s really saying here, but if people ask or the time is right for correction, maybe she will mention how she truly identifies herself. After 8:29, she further explains that while she identifies more with the Hispanic culture she is equally affectionate towards both countries of her ethnic heritage. “at times I do identify more so with the Hispanic side and at the same time I can’t say that I prefer this country over the other. People do ask me that and I say, “I can’t because I love both of them equally.” And it’s made me who I am. It’s the reasons why I look this way, you know.” Her mention of physical attributes is so interesting. She mentions her hair and skin very often. In a way, it’s like she’s wants affirmation that she does physically appear to be of both ethnicities, and more so Hispanic (the dark hair is important to her). The physical attributes are also permanent things (well, unless she changed her hair color). It’s as if

she's saying "I'm am forever El Salvadorian and Swedish!" She exudes a sense of pride and self love in loving both cultures and nations equally.

Hispanic Identity: She mentions after 3:47 that she feels closer to her Hispanic side. Her grandma and great grandmother(mom's mom and grandma) have lived with them her entire life (her great grandma more recently moved to a nursing home). So growing up she ate the foods her mom grew up on and learned the language (grandma doesn't speak English). Being without siblings, this student drew close to her grandma and great grandma. They were her playmates and that's how she learned Spanish so well(after 15:58) This student mentions that the color of her hair (dark brown) makes her feel closer to the Hispanic side as well. Her features resemble the Hispanic ethnicity more than the Swedish ethnicity. I find this fascinating since she doesn't formerly identify as "Hispanic" on formal documents.

Place: Visited El Salvador and Sweden 3 times each place. Experienced culture shock the first time she went to El Salvador because of the poverty. The two other times she visited El Salvador her mom explained more the culture to her. She got to experience/ see the country and people first hand while also hearing the stories of her mother's life and experience as an El Salvadorian woman growing up in El Salvador. The beauty of both places were mentioned. ES – tropical. Sweden – clean air. After 8:29 she shares that she identifies as being from one specific culture within the Latino community, but she is able to "identify with all the Hispanic cultures." In her experience many of the Hispanic cultures share a number of characteristics and expressions.

Places on campus: tree by Krause is sacred to her. She prays and writes there (after 44:12). The study room on her floor, it's warmth is inviting to her. The library is a favorite

place because it helps her focus. When it's a nice day outside she will sit outside on the quad. Many of these places she finds nice because of the campus culture. She attributes people's ability to leave one alone because they assume one may be having "quiet time" because of the Christian context of the school. Very interesting that she uses this to her advantage and perceives this culture of accommodation of spirituality.

Parents experience as a shaping experience: After 3:47 while talking about visiting El Salvador she mentions that she felt like by visiting ES that she came to understand the culture better and her mom better. When her mom moved to the US as a teenager, she didn't know any English, had to learn and then was "made fun of constantly" The stories of her parents probably sensitize her to the experience of others traveling/moving and having to learn a new culture and language. After 8:29 recognizes that if her parents identified and connected with another culture then she would have a different worldview. Her understanding that many other countries, besides America, are great is attributed to her parents being from other countries.

Sharing about her cultures with others: After 3:47 and just before 8:29 she mentions that once people's assumptions about her cultural identity are corrected then she has the honor of sharing about El Salvador and Sweden with them. Throughout the interview she comments that "it's hard for people to understand." For one example see comment make after 8:29. I wonder if the bar for understanding is set high in an ideal place. No, those who don't share the same experiences as you will understand 100%, however are others listening and adjusting their perceptions of who you are and the cultures you identify with based on an encounter with you? I didn't ask that, but I'm now wondering if that is a general question we (society) can use as a framework. Do I

recognize my cultural identity (ies) and do I share about what is important to me with others? Are others listening and learning about me and my culture(s)? Am I willing to listen and learn about the culture(s) of others?

Simplified cultural connections: after 8:29—food, physical trait, “deeper understanding”

Media: After 8:29 she mentions general Facebook videos about “if you grew up in a Spanish household..”

Recognizing her lack of knowledge: This student doesn’t pretend to be an expert on the countries where her parents grew up. She says, after 8:29, “I think often times people without realizing it speak with a lot of ignorance about other cultures and just assume that they know, but at the end of the day we don’t know. And I essentially don’t know even, my parents, my mom, my grandma could tell you more about what’s going on in this, in their country, but you know it just it opens your eyes a lot too.”

Ties her identity to her Christian faith: after 8:29, she begins to talk about how if God were to direct her to live a certain place that He would give her a heart for that place. Her experiences have “opened her eyes” and inspired her to “be a light.” Since she has connections to the ES and SDN cultures, she notes that she already has affection for those people groups. After 15:58, mentions that grandma and great grandma are Christians. She describes their love as “unconditional,” but also “strict.” Spending so much time with them must have influenced her faith in addition to language.

Sound: Mentioned the house being loud, even with it just being 5 people (after 15:58).

Meals: mentions that the food (El Salvadorian) is delicious. After 18:12, her family has fun together when they gather for a meal and converse. They’ll talk about fun topics or serious issues facing the country/world. Dialogue and sharing in meals appears to be

very meaningful to her. Interestingly, she chose to have the interview in the cafeteria while she ate lunch and at the end indicated that she had a pleasant time. I wonder if this practice of sharing meals with others is one that she practices often and finds fulfillment in/builds relationships with people on campus through meals.

Home remedies: After 21:33, Vicks for colds, coughs, and acne (and more that were not mentioned, just alluded to additional symptoms). When asked how it works by her friend, “And I was trying to explain it, but it’s just like, it’s just a thing that we do. I don’t know. But it honestly works.”

Diversity at Evangel: After 21:33 and 27:17, EU isn’t very diverse, especially when compared with NY. The school is attempting to bring light to diversity through various conversation platforms on the campus. She thinks it’s challenging for students to think in terms of diversity because most are not from diverse areas. A challenge for sure in having those conversations, but recognizing where the student body is in relation to dialoguing about healthy relationships across cultures and backgrounds, in my opinion, allows the staff, faculty, AND student body to know where to start in that dialogue. This student doesn’t believe that people will always understand, which is likely often because of lack of exposure. She notes mixed impressions of EUnite event. Some students were attracted to it and wanted to participate. Others didn’t see it as necessary or saw it as uncomfortable. Others felt like it was it would be awkward to be so open and are hesitant towards certain conversations. This student states that people shouldn’t feel like they need to be cautious around her with their questions. She’s open to answering any questions. I’m certain not everyone is as open as she is, but from my interviews, most of these students expressed comfort with answering questions about their culture.

Obviously they are comfortable with it. If they were not then they would not have agreed to the interview. However, I'm certain that their sentiments are echoed throughout a good portion of the community of students who are first generation Americans. After 36:31, she's learned that not everyone thinks like a city person, so she herself has learned about diversity of thought and culture.

Tension: After 27:17 she mentions that she's open to questions, but sometimes conversations prove tense. The student has come to the personal realization that she needs to be okay with other people misunderstanding her or her opinion. For her, this approach allows the tension to dissipate. I feel as though her sentiments are more so about political opinions since she mentioned presidential candidate Trump. She desires unity on the campus, "I don't always feel comfortable explaining that to people because it's just one of those things that I just kind of have to leave alone and I can't, I can't get into an uproar about because it's just not worth it. I mean we're here to be together on this college campus not to create more, like, segregation, not that there is, but I mean, you know what I mean. So, yeah. That's where I've encountered some problems, but not like. It's not a lot. It's not terrible." This students' openness to sharing and answering questions is complicated because she recognizes that some people will not respond in a positive way to how she identifies (including her opinions). She realizes that she doesn't have to share everything and appears to use discernment in what she shares. Opinions are sometimes tied to identity because our opinions are shaped by our worldview, which is shaped by our experiences, which is culminated into our identity. Identity is solid and fluid all at the same time, which complicates things even further.

Career as identity: feels a calling to be a worship leader and has experience in this role (after 27:17). She's felt this calling since she was 14. (after 47:27) notes that finishing the semester (SP16, second semester of college) was an accomplishment for her. She wanted to quit a few times, didn't mention exactly why, but she didn't quit. Keeping her desire of leading worship professionally helps motivate her. Her experience at Evangel thus far has been invaluable. She notes that she could have started her career without a degree, but she has learned things she never would have otherwise. She sees her time at Evangel and college in general as preparation for her career. Her time at college then is somewhat related to her identity.

Perspective of parents on career choice: After 47:27, "it was hard for them, mostly my mom. My, whether she wants to believe it or not. She's like my grandmother a lot. And they were very um you know culturally like, "this is what I want you to do and so you should pursue it." And my mom has always looked at me and said, well you could use your intelligence to be a doctor or you could use it to be a lawyer." Her mother is now much more supportive of her career choice. Her dad has been supportive the whole time. Her mom's concern was of a financial secure future.

Music: deeply connects with music before EU and while at EU (after 36:31)

Evangel as a connection between students: After 27:17, just before 36:31 she notes that everyone's genuine love for the school is what drew her to it. A shared appreciation for the school.

Friends: diverse friend group. Spends time with lots of different individuals and groups at EU (after 36:31). Has a group of friends in the "East Coast people." She'll hang out with them, but "at the same time I've been challenged to step out of that comfort zone

and also, to, you know, out of that culture, um, in a way.” Interesting how she engages with the group she culturally identifies with—the east coast culture—as well as intentionally spends time away from them in an effort to diversify her friend group. She mentions a best friend on campus who is also in the music department as well as her roommate and suitemate. She hangs out with people on her floor (typically of most students at EU). She has a friend group in a different residence hall as well. She mentions a friendship with professors too.

Improving EU: After 47:27, she believes that EU is addressing the issues. EUnite and Synergy dialogues are a great start, but she believes they need to do more than just these two events. She notes multiple events are needed. I’m wondering if some classroom integration and activities at orientation could also benefit the culture of acceptance of diverse people and backgrounds. She also feels that a revival would benefit the school. People leaving their “comfort zones” would benefit the campus, brining connection and unifying students.

Already great things: after 47:27, briefly side notes that the professors and courses are “great!”

Log Notes Student Three

Interview with: Paul Lee

Project: Where All Can Thrive: Tools for Sustaining Inclusive Communities

Media Name/type: Digital, Audio file, 2016.CAPSTONE.S3.V001.AUD.MP3

Researcher: Celia Duncan

Date Recorded: April 29, 2016

Duration: 22:34

Interviewees: Paul Lee

Location: Evangel University, Kendrick Library

Subject: Personal Narrative

Key Words: Bridge, Church, Korean, American, Friends, Parents, Different, Respect, Calling, Music, God, Diversity, Ministry.

Significant Moments During Interview:

Time	Content
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Themes:

Korean: attends a Korean church with his family in Florida, after 00:00, practices high respect for adults while comfortable around friends.

Honor: honoring adults, after 00:00. Honored his parents by following through on their request that he pray about attending Central Bible College (now Evangel), after 7:47.

He says, “And being a good son I was like “okay I will” but um I didn’t want to go ‘cause it was like a place where people skip rocks and tip cows and stuff hah, and I didn’t know anyone, but I prayed about it and God really put it in my heart, like, this is where I want you just to grow your faith and um you, you’re like a new Christian sorta this is where you can grow and be more. And then I took that chance and it was the best thing I’ve ever done.”

Bridge: “I’d say a bridge between different worlds.”, after 00:00

American: After 2:02, he shared that he identifies more as American than Korean.

Personal Identity: After 2:02, “I guess, more American than Korean, but um, I’d say both are pretty strong in me, and wherever I go people can see, “oh, he’s Korean by the way

he acts.” Or um, like “oh he’s more Americanized than the Korean’s that we know.” So both ways.”

Friendships: When hanging out with friends who are also American, he notices that he treats individuals who are older than them a little differently. He’ll be more reserved around that individual and refer to them with a Mr(s). in front of his or her name to show respect. The inverse happens when he is with his friends who identify as Korean. This student will reach out to the elder individual while everyone else is quiet around them. After 7:47, he shares that he can really be himself when he is with friends. Absolutely, anywhere friends are. I guess friends can be a sort of courage booster and sight of them brings affirmation of who a person is. The friendships are developed based on common goal: seeking God’s call on one’s life. In an organic way, he found friends through being a student in the music department. “it’s just awesome to share each others hobbies and work together and play together.” Also hangs out with friends from his residence hall. Residence and academic department seem to be the main places that provided friendships for him. Feels very connected to them. All of his friends also share the same faith. After 14:02, really been active in the worship teams. While a lot of his friends are from the dorm and department, this student is intentional about forming friendships with people all over campus. He tries to do more than just say, “hello” to people. He does have friends from other residence halls and other classes.

Family tradition over Korean tradition: After 3:41, Parents raised him to speak to them in more relaxed and friendly terms. The traditional tones and language used by Korean children was not instilled to this student and his brother by his parents, who were both born and raised in Korea until teenagers (after 4:42). In the interview he mentions that

for a while he didn't know that Korean children were supposed to speak to their parents a certain way (adding a "o" at the end of a sentence or word..unsure but adding the "o" is important). His parents never shared that with him and his brother. Because of this, he feels "more of a personal" connection with his parents. After 4:42, he shares how other people comment on how this student doesn't speak to his parents in the traditional way. His parents simply share that they don't want their children to speak to them in the traditional way. The student is uncertain why, but he just speculates that his parents simply wanted to interact with their children differently. After 19:24, his parents were always supportive of his career choice (being a worship leader). He was anxious to share his dream with his parents because many families in the Korean-American community encourage their children to pursue medicine or law. Both of his parents work at a church too, so that could play into them placing priority on what their son felt "called to do" over what is expected/practiced by others in their ethnic group.

Faith themes: After 4:42, his brother was born on his 7th birthday. His mother said "here's a gift from God!" and the student laughed as he shared that. While it was said more in fun/jest, it alludes to the faith he shares with his family.

After 7:47, when asked what he loves about his family, this student first answers with grace. He's able to be open with his parents and they always accept him, even if he does something that is disappointing they are open to talking about it with him. After 7:47 and just before 14:02 he shares that it is in the chapel that he feels the most affirmed. The ability to worship and "seek God" with others affirms his calling . After 14:02, he speaks to the diversity on campus and the welcoming attitude of the school to all races. He compares that to heaven since all people groups are welcomed to this

faith. After 16:59, his goals of being a worship pastor and mentoring others in the faith are directly tied to his faith as a Christian.

Celebration: honoring others above oneself. After 7:47, his parents encouraged him to pay for everyone joining him for his birthday celebration. They told him “treat them better than they would try to treat you.” Because it’s “not about you, it’s about the people around you.” Special soup (Korean broth) that he enjoys at New Years with his family.

Impact of CBC/EU: says it’s “the best thing I’ve ever done”, after 7:47. He met his girlfriend at school along with friends and mentors. He’s also grown academically and spiritually. After 19: 24, he expresses gratitude to the school and for “stepping out in faith” to attend because his life would be completely different otherwise.

Humor: he inserted jokes into the interview. After 14:02 when I asked if he had ever felt any resistance he answered that he feels resistance in the dining hall because he cannot eat all the food he wants. After 7:47 he mentions that his friends are “crazy...funny...outgoing.”

Diversity on Campus: After 14:02, “Evangel welcomes diversity.”

Accomplishment of degree: After 16:59, he expresses gratitude for his degree. Will now be a worship pastor at a church. An opportunity granted to him after he completed his degree.

Goals: in addition to degree, he answers after 16:59, that he aims to continue to “make disciples”/ mentor others in the faith through a gracious approach.

Log Notes Student Four

Interview with: Isandra Martinez

Project: Where All Can Thrive: Tools for Sustaining Inclusive Communities

Media Name/type: Digital, Audio file, 2016.CAPSTONE.S4.V001.AUD.MP3

Researcher: Celia Duncan

Date Recorded: May 4, 2016

Duration: 42:53

Interviewees: Isandra Martinez

Location: Evangel University, Side Room of Crusader Dining Hall

Subject: Personal Narrative

Key Words: Latina, Hispanic, Dominican, Food, Music, Race, Assume, Girls, Floor, New Jersey/New York, Mom, Sister, Family, Dominican Republic, Proud

Significant Moments During Interview:

Time	Content
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Themes:

Name: After, 00:00 People call her by her nickname “because nobody can actually say my name.” Her family and a few close friends call her by her first name. Everyone else calls her by the nickname because it’s easier to pronounce and if you pronounce her name incorrectly, she’ll want you to call her by the nickname instead. She actually introduces herself by her nickname since that’s what most people end up calling her. Since starting college, peers are better at pronouncing her name correctly. A few friends at Evangel do say her name correctly and call her by her first name. This student has a special affection for those who can call her by her real name because it makes her feel like she’s at home.

East Coast/ New Jersey/NYC: After 00:00, she grew up living in NJ and then going to NYC every weekend. After 35:30, She hangs out with a group of girls sometimes who

are also from the East Coast (not all, but a number of them) and have different cultural backgrounds (she noted that most of them are black). They'll dedicate an evening once in a while to play music that expresses their cultures and it makes them a little less home sick.

Family: After 00:00, blended family, closest to mom and the sister she grew up living with at her mom's house in NJ, but she doesn't call her half siblings her "half" sibling because she sees them as her family.

Personal identity: After: 3:15, Described herself as "responsible but laid back...well people say I'm outgoing, positive, tryin' to think of what else people say, um, full of life or like energy um, and, but the same time like strong, and um observant of like other people's needs and stuff like that. So I'd go with what other people say. I'd stick to that. After 35:30, positivity is one of her signature strengths. She's able to look at the benefits of what could be perceived as straining.

C: What other people say?

I: yeah! I agree, I agree." She identifies herself through character traits and bases their validity off of what other people have told her about herself. After 5:16 she visited Dominican Republic without her family or people she already knew. She took the approach that you'll make friends anywhere you go.

Cultural identity: After 3:15, Latina is her immediate answer. Dominican and Hispanic are also terms that she uses to describe herself. They are her "roots." She also identifies as American, but states that she wasn't really raised like an American. She says " I didn't realize how... un-American I was raised until I came to college." I am American, but there's so many things that I didn't even like think about that people that

were raised with the American culture here and when I went to my country for missions trip, like “these are my people!” like there was no difference and they actually thought that I was born there and then came to America.” Certain things are so normal and natural for her that she didn’t realize they were different from others until she came to college and saw the differences/visited the Dominican Republic and realized the strong similarities.

Perception of the identities of others: After 3:15, she shares that she doesn’t connect people’s actions so much with a certain culture but just for who they are.

Home habits: after 5:16, disposing of toilet paper. Adding spice to foods and eating heartier meals for breakfast. Had never eaten a baked potato with the fixings before. Loves to play volleyball. Her mom was a volleyball champion. Speaking quickly, and not having to explain jokes. Strong physically and emotionally. Females are built with more strength and girth.

How home habits connect with Evangel: After 5:16 new sand volleyball court coming for Fall 2016 is important to her because of her love of volleyball and the connection it carries with her mother.

Family dynamics: After 5:16, her mom didn’t want her to go to the Dominican Republic because it could be dangerous and the person leading the group had only taken small groups twice before. The student went anyway. Her mother was okay with it before she left. While there and then after returning her entire family was very “proud” that she was experiencing their country and culture. Her trip deepened her connection with her family. Her family is loud and fun. Leaving her home (with her mom and one sister) was very challenging because they are so close.

Place: After 5:16 her family was so proud of her for visiting the DR. After 3:15, she notes feeling such a cultural connection when visiting the DR because she was raised as part of the DR culture. Visiting the DR was very meaningful to this student. After 12:20, the student shares that she hopes to take her mom back to the DR. They've never been there together. Because her sister cannot afford to go they will wait. Her mom wants the three of them to be able to go together. This makes the student nervous because by that time she may have already begun working and may not have the vacation time to go with her family. Her family loves spending time together, whether they are shopping, watching movies, or having long, meaningful conversations, they love to be together. This student desires to spoil her mother. The "adventures" together will not be limited to her mom and sister, but she'll also spend time with her dad and other sisters at the beach, bowling, ice cream, movies, etc. After 26:25, she realizes that no matter where she is, she cannot think that bad things won't/can't happen. This was after the gun incident in the park. She's from NJ/NY, but even in Missouri people can do horrible things.

Gifts: After 12:20, the student expresses a desire to spoil her mother with gifts while at home during the summer break. Despite her mom's hesitation with the gifts, she seems to still really want to bless her mother. Uncertain if this is due to a giving back to her mother or a generous spirit that the student personally possesses or if it is culturally practices to give many gifts to one's parents. She doesn't mention spoiling her father, just her mother. With many of these potential gifts, the student mentions that she'll use discounts to get them. A thrifty and financially creative thread is seen here.

Spanish: After 5:16 and a little before 12:20 she notes that she had to learn a lot on her own because her parents were still learning the language. At times they couldn't read documents that she needed help with. Parents are fluent in the language, so is she. After 12:20, uses the Spanish language when with family, even uses it on the phone when speaking with them. Student mentions that she's used to being stared at while at college when she's speaking in Spanish or when she participates in things that are distinctly part of her culture. After 34:02, she notes that she wishes she could speak Spanish more often. She longs to do that.

English: After 5:16 and a little before 12:20, her parents understand the language well and her dad speaks it well. Her mom can too, but can get "tongue tied" with it at times.

Music: After 14:54, when music plays she'll begin to dance. If a Spanish song plays, she notes that people look at her because they know she'll definitely be dancing to that song. After 38:32, expresses that she wishes they would play more than 1 Spanish song (the one that half English anyways) at school events. She wants to see the school embrace mixing in other cultural elements because "someone in there will enjoy it."

Physical features: After 14:54, her curly hair receives lots of attention and many people touch her hair, sometimes without even asking and at very awkward times (while this student is eating). Her hair can be a conversation starter with individuals who she doesn't know well. Sometimes people hit on her and mention her hair when they start to comment on her beauty/hit on her. She finds it uncomfortable and wonders if she needs to appear to be mean to avoid receiving those comments (changing herself and attitude to change people's comments towards her..i wonder if this could lead to a further

conversation about “walls” people build because they’ve received so much unwanted attention due to x,y,z.”

Dialogue about culture: After 14:54, people turn to this student whenever a conversation about culture or diversity is occurring.

Race and assumptions: after 14:54 student mentions that she’s experienced multiple occasions when people have assumed her race. Many people comment that she is black. One time another student was adamant that this student was black and even said it in a way that was as if this student was wrong about her own race. In that incident, her boss (an employee of the university) encouraged her to ignore the indignant student because the boss recognized that that student was unaware of what the reality was. I don’t know if this boss stood up for the student interviewed or not. But the boss’ response seemed to appease the student interviewed. The two students are now friends. This student mentions that the female student who made the ignorant comment apologized later and is very embarrassed by how she acted and regrets it. I’m uncertain how that was resolved or how the tense conversation turned into a positive relationship. Just before and after 18:07, the student mentions a time when a professor would obviously single out this student and another student when talking about folk tale stories about creation/origins. The student said it was funny at first, but it continued and then no longer was funny, but felt inappropriate. Not just this occasion, but during other occasions whenever the black race was mentioned the professor would look at this student and her friend (who is black). Once the professor referenced this student when talking about the black race and the student verbally responded with “I’m not black.” The entire class began to laugh. And the student really wanted to indicate that the professor

was wrong for assuming her race or anyone's race. This professor no longer works at the school. Another incident just before and after 20:09, was with the campus pastor. In a message in the chapel (in front of a good portion of the student body). He apologized to students about the race issues white people have caused (he is white). Then he stepped down and went directly to this student and apologized directly to her. Everyone was watching. She felt very awkward, and so did her friends, because she's not black. She felt like she couldn't tell him in that she wasn't offended and that he didn't need to apologize to her or her people because he was so emotional. He later apologized when he found out that she wasn't black and felt awkward in that instance. This student shares that she believes that his heart was in the right place, just directed to the wrong person. (could this lead to a further discussion on intentionality and awareness. Not just doing what one thinks is right, but putting in extra effort and giving thought and consideration to how the other individuals or groups need and want). Many assumptions and comments made by people assuming she is a different race than she is. Sometimes she'll say something in Spanish to confuse/correct those people. Then they'll assume she's Mexican. She reflects on the issue of assuming: "I just realized that ... if you don't know other things you only pick out of what you've seen. Or, or like, hear whatever. Like what they portray on tvs either characters either black or Mexican. They're like "she's obviously not white." Another time someone thought she was going on a trip because one person they knew going was also Dominican and from NJ. She notes that she doesn't think it is every malicious, people are simply unaware. She also notes that she never received this comments until she moved to Missouri for college. She's never experienced anything maliciously racist at Evangel, but did experience a

few instances while off campus in Missouri. These instances hurt her and scared her. The first was when an elderly lady would not receive help from her at a food pantry. The other instances was when one guy pulled a gun from a glove compartment and was obviously nervous about it while she and a friend were sitting in a car next to him (these two blatantly racist incidents were noted right before and after 26:25).

After 26:25 she mentions that one time she was heading to her roommate's place for Thanksgiving and her roommate mentioned that her grandma might be racist. This student comments that, "people of culture needs to be careful who they go home with..." It seems like her roommate was nonchalant about it, while this student could have been really impacted. "you do get treated a little bit different if people aren't used to you. Like they might assume what kind of music you like, although you listen to everything that they do and probably prefer that over other things"

Learning about others: After 26:25 she notes that she is often the first Dominican people are encountering so she wants to be patient with them as they learn. People are generally very nice about everything. After 26:25 and just before 34:02, she mentions that on campus people are simply curious and are excited to learn about her culture. Off campus she has to be a little careful. After 34:02, I asked if she felt worn out by people's curiosity. She shared that at first it did wear her out.

Singled out: After 34:02 she mentions that people make comments about her being on a lot of the school's marketing material. They say she's only pictured because she looks like she can be identified with many other races. She is okay with being a model for the school because she realizes that the school "needs brown people" and she does attend here. She realizes that these comments are more out of jealousy. She also wishes that

more people from diverse backgrounds attended the school. She notes that “The numbers have grown at Evangel. Um, I think that there’s more people now, or maybe I’m just more aware of those people now. And so, I mean, there are moments where it does wear ‘cause I want to speak Spanish.” After 35:30, she’s the “token... Spanish friend.” But she doesn’t mind that, she says it’s easier for people to know her, for her to be social. She focuses on the positives of being unique. After I asked her if positivity was one of her signature strengths, she confirmed and then said, “coming here wasn’t like too hard.... I don’t ever feel like I’m the only brown person in the room. I mean until someone pin-points it out.”

Friendships: After 35:30, friend group has shifted since taking leadership role on campus. This year she’s focused on spending time with her floor mates. She hangs out with “everybody and everybody kind of knows that.” She’ll hang out with “all the huddle of all the black girls...they’re...from all different cultures...it’s the only place where we can ... always talk about our stories or...culture....” Sometimes they dedicate an evening to hang out and play their favorite music where they can express their own cultures. She finds that refreshing and it makes them all less homesick (most are from the East Coast). She notes that when they all do hang out they stand out, but they all have other friends too. This isn’t their only group of friends.

Meals: After 35:30, she describes herself as a table hopper. The Cafeteria is a place to spend time with people and make friends. After 38:32, expresses desire for healthier food options.

How to make Evangel better: After 38:32, I didn’t even prompt student to tell me what was needed. She says, “I’ll tell you one thing: at Evangel the biggest thing people,

especially for like black or like have just different kind of hair, their biggest struggle has always been “I need to find someone who can do my hair.” Having trouble finding her foundation too. She also misses DR styled food, but when the campus food service attempts any type of Spanish cultural food, it ends up being Mexian style. She mentions that she’d be nervous for the food services to make DR specific food because if it did not turn out correctly she wouldn’t want people to think all DR food was bad. Being on campus, awareness of what is in Springfield (food and beauty product, wise) is challenging.

Log Notes Student Five

Interview with: Peace Asiogun

Project: Where All Can Thrive: Tools for Sustaining Inclusive Communities

Media Name/type: Digital, Audio file, 2016.CAPSTONE.S5.V001.AUD.MP3

Researcher: Celia Duncan

Date Recorded: July 1, 2016

Interviewees: Peace Asiogun

Location: Via Facetime

Subject: Personal Narrative

Key Words: New York, Nigerian, Community, Food, Family, Interpersonal

Communication, Celebrity Culture

Significant Moments During Interview:

Time	Content
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Themes:

Nigerian: (from start to 6:45) Lived in Nigeria first several years of life (she was 7.5 when they moved to the US). Parents are Nigerian. She sees the Nigerian culture played out in the following: academic drive, honoring elders, selectivity in community, awareness of class, commitment to attending the Christian church. After 24:20 Christians shouldn't have tattoos, was what she grew up thinking, but later became friends with Christians with tattoos. After 49:07, Nigerians are light hearted. They laugh at everything. Relaxed. Relaxed about time. Present self well and be consistent. Repeat foods, has lots of soups and rice. A child is expected to know how to dance.

Family: After 51:00, family is "optimistic" Nigerian culture bleeds into family culture (throughout interview). Eldest of her family. After 51:49, mother expects her and her siblings to dance and to be confident.

New Yorker: (from start to 6:45) Lived in New York since she moved from Nigeria. Considers herself to be more of a New Yorker than Nigerian. She sees the New Yorker culture played out in the following: hard work, expecting to get out of something what you invested into it, easy going, laughing at life to cope with the stress, things take time, expecting long days, and paradoxically, impatience. (after 6:45) When she and her mom visited Evangel, they walked from their hotel to campus, unaware that most people in the Midwest drive. After 22:01, she admits to assuming that she understood many cultures because she is from a culturally diverse city, but later developed skills in listening to others and truly learning about them. After 40:16, exclaims that she is excited for her roommate next year, but is surprised by how well they get along since she is from NYC and her roommate is from Arkansas. After 41:48, New Yorkers are very aware of socio-economic status and they have certain mindsets and traditions

based on class (not sure the best term for this). The student points out that many people will dress well but not have enough money to eat well/healthy. After 58:40, since she grew up in NYC, she only really knows her part of New York, she hasn't explored much outside of her neck of the woods. After 58:40, actually from NYC, not just a nearby town. Easier to understand other who are actually from NYC.

Academics: (from start to 6:45) strong work ethic from a young age. She was held back when she moved to NYC since the education systems were different. Had applied to over 20 colleges. Was not planning to attend Evangel. Felt a "calling" to attend this university. Took many honors and AP courses in high school

Evangel: After 7:40, before 10:57, more fun than expected it to be. Learned more about interpersonal relationships and personal things while at school than academics. She thinks she got "sweeter" while at Evangel. Didn't focus as much on academics as she thought she would during college. Regrets not putting more effort into classes. Does view EU as an academic experience so much as a personal/relational one. After 26:29, she feels supported at EU through prayer and all the ways that students, staff and faculty pray with each other all the time. She feels comfortable praying for others now too. Recognizes that the amount of times that people pray together is rare. After 31:42, student notes that people at Evangel will go out of their way to pray for one another and are very open to prayer. They offer prayers and accept offers for prayer. After 53:49, she was involved in clubs and orgs but not so much now. Was active in her academic department and in discipleship. She states that she was open to all opportunities, but now she's been more selective. She's now working in a residence hall. After 1:00:44, asked what would make eU a better place for students. She mentions the differences in

social categories and how some people stay in their social categories on campus. She relates this to her Christian faith (the same faith as the rest of the campus) and she desires that people were more accepting of one another. That people would not be marginalized at Evangel. Mentions a “celebrity culture”

Evangel Employees: after 26:29, she has a friendships with several faculty and staff members. One staff member “took a chance” on her and hired her. It wasn’t her favorite job, but she appreciated how he gave her that opportunity, leader her and the team spiritually, invested his personal time with the team, and had fun. He was a role model to her. After 1:03:07, the student’s final comments are about a single campus employee: Todd Lanning, Food Services Director. He’s open to suggestions and honesty.

Community: After 7:40, before 10:57, Deep appreciation for relationships. After 10:57, she feels safe talking about important issues with people who have proven to be trustworthy. She prefers to have meaningful conversations one-on-one. Doesn’t view the classroom or a public setting as a good place to talk through challenging issues because of potential misunderstandings. In group settings it’s more challenging to control perceptions. She’d rather not offend and wants her side to be understood. She believes that groups just want to have fun. After 13:15 Whenever a tension filled conversation begins in a group setting she feels stressed. After 17:14, she felt as though everyone was nice to her and knew who she was, but people didn’t include her necessarily. She felt like her name and personality were known by people, but she wasn’t sought out as a friend. Through this she further developed her intentionality. It took some time, but she later realized that other people felt the same way. She and others now feel like then have authentic friendships. After 20:14 doesn’t need to be bff’s

with everyone, but has authentic friendships. After 22:01 she notes that listening is a big key to developing authentic friendships. Breaking assumptions of what she thought she knew. She also took a chance on an opportunity to talk to someone new about something personal, and realized that she and that person had similarities, they connected. After 31:42, feels heard if and when she wants/needs to share a message. She values being heard when she feels like those listening are engaging and a positive change will occur because of her voice. (also noted in "heard"). After 31:42, struggled to connect well with roommates. Pride was an issue for her in truly connecting this roommates or actually doing what was best for her in these situations. (after 41:48 for this next sentence) She needs to be *respected* by her roommates since she was older. And was afraid that her RA would be upset if she left so she stayed on her floor/res hall so she decided to stay instead of changing to a better fitting hall.

Transformation: After 7:40, before 10:57, Grew in understanding how to maintain and deepen friendships. Deepened her faith. Uses the term "journey." After 31:42 and before 40:16, overtime learning that she is an introvert and what it means. Learning interpersonal communication skills, and how to be self-aware (all through roommate experiences). After 40:16, recognizing changes in self since college when she visits her family. After 41:48, finding balance with appearance. After 46:48, adapted approach to wardrobe and fitness after exposure to other students.

Being Black: After 13:15, another student commented that she wouldn't need to worry about getting married young because it doesn't happen for black girls. Another student told her that they want her to meet a great, black football player at the school and fall in

love because the interviewee is such a great person. Interestingly, she doesn't like football and didn't think he has to be black and the conversation was very random.

Social Politeness: After 15:13 and continues through 17:14 took her sometime to realize that socially polite culture of the Midwest. She thought people really wanted to be her friends, when they were simply engaging in small talk. This theme connects with community/relationships. At Evangel she had to learn the difference between people being friendly on a surface level (since everyone is friendly) and people being authentically interested in developing a friendship. After 20:24, she admits becoming socially polite and learning how to text well.

Spirituality: After 31:42, student notes the openness on campus to pray. To make requests for prayer in the classroom, in the dining hall, wherever. People may sense that another "needs" prayer and so they will ask if they can pray with that person. It's often welcomed. Other students ask God how they can serve others. Seeking to bless other people. After 53:49, The chapel services, her church, and being active in smaller, community groups have helped her get to a place where she feels like she is thriving. These are spiritual and social connections. The social connections are within spiritual settings.

Heard: After 31:42, feels heard if and when she wants/needs to share a message. She values being heard when she feels like those listening are engaging and a positive change will occur because of her voice. She suggests that everyone has the opportunity to be heard if the content of speech makes sense. Very interesting thought, that the ability to be heard is based upon content not reputation or person. She does also note

that the situation needs to be the right context. If the overall mood isn't receptive or ripe then the likelihood of someone to be heard is low.

Food: After 41:48 at home her family eats traditional Nigerian food more often. Didn't grow up eating fruits and vegetables. Instead, they eat carbs and meats. The eldest child receives the most meat in the meal. This definitely alludes to her feeling entitled to respect from roommates and other students when she was the eldest in the situation. After 46:48, never questioned nutrition before college and now considers it. After 51:00, repeats foods at home. Soups are medicinal and mom administers (connection to mom).

Interpersonal interactions: After 41:48 Africans are less sarcastic. Experienced sarcasm at Evangel. She was gullible at first. Was concerned when someone said a "bad word."

Body Image: After 41:48 piercings and tattoos are okay at Evangel, but multiple piercings and tattoos in Nigerian culture wasn't normal and looked down upon. The student has her nose pierced. I wonder when she got her piercing, how she perceives her piercing, and how her family perceives her piercing. NYC socio-economic class puts more emphasis on dressing well and not repeating outfits more than saving money or eating well. She is trying to find balance with this. After 46:48, formerly made fun of people for working out and now she respects it (she even tried hot yoga with me some months back).

Thriving: After 51:49, when asked student exclaims that Evangel has changed her answer. It would have been about being the best and now it's about being trustworthy and respected. It's also about being true to oneself, connected to the community, doing one's best but not having to be the best (beat everyone else). After 53:49, "if you're just

trying to beat people out all the time, no one wants to hang with you. That's kind of, that's kind of sad." Student believes she is thriving and has learned to thrive. The chapel services, her church, and being active in smaller, community groups have helped her get to a place where she feels like she is thriving.

Personality: After 55:55 she notes that people don't often immediately associate her with being a New Yorker or Nigerian, they know her for her personality. Other students may be known by the places they are from. "And I know some people who that is and that's a big pride for them and I guess my pride is that I'm weird."

Log Notes Student Eight

Interview with: Lydia Amissah

Project: Where All Can Thrive: Tools for Sustaining Inclusive Communities

Media Name/type: Digital, Audio file, 2016.CAPSTONE.S8.V001.AUD.MP3

Researcher: Celia Duncan

Date Recorded: August 30, 2016

Interviewees: Lydia Amissah

Location: My office, Riggs Administrative Building, Evangel's Campus

Subject: Personal Narrative

Key Words: Family, Friends, Gospel, Music, Science, Health, Dance, Chicago, Ghana, Missions, Christian Faith, Church

Significant Moments During Interview

Time Content

Themes:

Chicago: place where student grew up (before 00:36). Student lived in Illinois all her life. Split between Chicago and Peoria.

Ghana: (just before 00:36) her parents are from Ghana. The first thing she shared when I asked her to share about her self “well, my parents are from Ghana, West Africa.”

(after 7:40) she visited Ghana when she was very young with her family, but she remembers a lot about the trip. They visited due to the death of her grandmother. There, she met everyone in her family. The grieving events included attending a church and a funeral. It was like a festival, she recalls. It lasted days. The trip was cut short due to her getting malaria. She would like to return, maybe as a graduation present from her parents. (after 11:03) she is still in communication with her family in Ghana. (after 18:48) she would like to return to Ghana to build hospitals. Notes that children born with disabilities in Ghana are not taken care of well because many people believe that the child was cursed and so they are neglected. This broke the student’s heart. (after 21:00) she notes that her parents care well for her brother, despite the cultural norms in Ghana to view the child as cursed. They still took it to heart and grieved for a short period, but they decided trust God and “bounced right back”

Language: (after 11:03) the student clarifies for me that the national language in Ghana is English, which makes communication easier with her extended family. The older generation, though, does not speak English. One grandmother speaks fanti (sp ?). Ghana has over 250 languages. Her mom knows five or six. The student does not speak French, but she knows about three of the tribal dialects in addition to English. In the home English was spoken along with one of the tribal languages. So she

understands the tribal language, but her younger siblings do not understand it as well. Her parents mainly use English with their children.

Missions/Faith: (after 00:36) parents were missionaries to the US. They were very active in the church. (after 4:57) her parents are no longer missionaries. After 9/11 something happened with them being missionaries or with the organization, so they are no longer missionaries. She thinks it was a bankruptcy, but she doesn't remember exactly what happened. Even after they were no longer missionaries they were active in ministry. (after 17:03) her father is no longer really participating in the church/with their faith. Although it appears that her mom does. This is strange for her because growing up she would go to prayer meetings and church activities with her father. (after 23:31) although her parents handled her brother's diagnoses with a determination to make the most of it, the student recently learned that the church they attended at the time that isolated her family. She learned this year that rumors circulated "what did they do to their child that he ended up like this." That was challenging for her mother. "because she was like, "yo, we've been there for the church, but now ya'll can't even be there for us during this one thing that we're going through." 'cause my parents did a lot. So it was just very hard. And I think that was one of the reasons why it was so hard because people were saying like stuff like that. So, but my mom she was just like, "God told me not to say anything, so I'm just not going to say anything. I'm always going to treat people with love and respect and just going to keep moving on.'" (After 36:49) faith is incorporated into the classrooms.

The Arts: (after 00:36) grew up attending a performing arts school (after 1:04). (after 2:43) she is the head color guard at Evangel. Dance is a part of her life. When she was

younger she wanted to dance professionally. Has practiced all sorts of dances. Also leads a gospel worship team and assists with the worship team at her local church. She remembers that dance and music was always a part of her life. She recalls music being playing in the home and her mother dancing in the home. (after 4:57) her favorite dances are hip-hop and African. She shares that the African dancing is “more fluid, more free just, you can, I don’t know, you can do more moves with it and express yourself, especially even with the music. The music goes with like the dance. So you have the drums in the background and then sometimes you dan, with African dancing there might be a chant or like a song that goes with this so you can do all that together, so I think that’s what I like...” she also enjoys dancing as worship, she calls it praise dancing.

Medicine: (after 1:04) she is a biology, pre-med major. (after 2:43) Has wanted to be a doctor since she was young. (after 4:57) her mom is a nurse. (just before 7:40) she mentions that her brother was diagnosed with autism and that put a pause on her dad doing ministry. It was to help her mom since she was going back to school at that time. (after 7:40) she recalls being sick with malaria from her time in Ghana. (just before 18:48) her parents are very excited that she is studying medicine. (after 18:48) she mentions that “African parents want their children to either be doctors, lawyers, accountants, like that’s it.” She mentions “they’re just fortunate that they never had to force me to do that because I’ve always...loved science.” Watching her brother be diagnosed with autism and frequenting doctor and therapy visits she became comfortable with and even desired to be a part of the healing process and healing

professionals. She also “feel in love with kids in general.” She notes that her brother inspires her.

Education: is very important to her family. Her mom went back to school when she and her siblings were younger to pursue a degree in nursing (just before 7:40).

Family: (after 7:40), she is the eldest and has a younger sister and her brother is the youngest of the three. (after 11:03, just before 14:28) she notes that she misses her family, but finding friends at Evangel who also have African heritage helps make missing her family easier to cope with. (after 14:28) she shares that when she met friends from Ghana and Nigeria they were able to understand her and her culture (including music and food and how she was raised) and that made missing home easier to cope with. She notes that they became “our own little club.” An organically developed group of students who shared those aspects of life. She easily found common ground with them. Connecting with these other students connected her with her family and her culture—the familiar. Having opportunities for students to share aspects of their culture could build connection with other students who may not have grown up with similar symbols, rituals, or practices, but when one student shares her culture it becomes a shared experience with others which could deepen a bond with them as well. Another friend would cook for her. She’d make a large meal for this student and it had many elements that reminded this student of her home, and that was meaningful to her. She was seen, her culture was valued, and she was given a gift by another student. (after 14:28, just before 17:03) she shares about her parents. Her father pushed her academically. Her mom was the encourager. (after 17:03) her father is no longer really participating in the church/with their faith. Although it appears that her mom does. She

and her dad no longer have an active relationship, but she is close to her mother. She notes that financial hardship could have been the tipping point for her dad. However, she is confident that her family will have her back. (after 36:49) notes that her mom is very warm and welcoming to her friends. Her family appreciates that her friends are in church and college (noting their values of Christian faith and higher education).

Food: (After 11:03) misses the food from home. They eat a lot of African food. She does not know how to cook African meals. The challenge is finding the right ingredients and a place to cook.

Evangel: (after 25:03) she notes that her time at EU has been good and she is surprised by it because she initially didn't want to attend evangel. She came to EU because everything worked out for her financially to attend and she already had friends at the school. (just before and after 26:21) she notes that she "had to get used to people here." This is because people come from a different background than her. She loves all people, but being at a "predominately white school" was different. (after 26:21) she notes encountering racist comments at the school: classroom, cafeteria, residence halls. This was more of a problem when she first arrived at EU. She recognizes that people are imperfect. After 28:38 "I've really enjoyed my experience here at Evangel. I've grown a lot since I've been here. A lot of doors have been opened since I've been here. So just to like do stuff like the gospel worship team just like that right there, that, that was God, like, definitely! Like the opportunity to be able to lead a group like that, since my freshman year, like it's been awesome!" (After 36:49) most vulnerable conversations have been held in the caf and the residence halls. Usually happens organically. She does feel like classrooms are brave spaces, this is based on her

positive experiences in the classrooms though. In sociology class is when she felt like she and the class could really talk about tension/issues. She feels like she's part of a family with her academic department, which makes it easier to open up and be "close" to other members of the department. Faith is incorporated into the classes. (after 41:29) student references that she personally feels like she'll engage in topics of tension no matter where she is. (after 43:23) when I asked for any last comments, she spoke of staff and faculty members who have taken time to get to know her, who have seen her at both her best and worst, they took time to be honest with her, to pray with her, to include her in their vision/plans—and how all of that means so much to her. She is valued at the campus not only by her peers but also by those with authority on campus. This could also help her feel a sense of agency on campus too, being included in "the know" and having her opinion requested by those in leadership.

Racism: (after 26:21) she notes encountering racist comments at the school: classroom, cafeteria, residence halls. This was more of a problem when she first arrived at EU. She recognizes that people are imperfect. She handled the comments in two different ways. When she first arrived at EU she used to "go off" on people and other times she wouldn't say anything. The most productive times were when she corrected someone and informed them that what they said was hurtful. "because sometimes people don't know that they're ignorant so they just like, I mean, like say like they just come from a place where like all the people just look like them. They've never dealt with people of like color or people who are different from them, so I understand like people, those are some people's situations and I can't get mad at them. That's the way they were raised." (after 28:38) the student explains that she tries to think before she speaks and attempts

to avoid offensive comments. I asked when the responses were to her corrections, and she said people received it well because their intentions were not to harm. (just before 33:21) student notes that she is usually the only black person in her classes. While she doesn't mind, she is aware and it does drive her to spend much of her time with people who look like her. She notes a friend's experience: ", she said that in one of her, one of her classes the teacher's always asking her like "what would you do?" and "how would, like, from a black person what, how would you say this? Or do this?" and she be looking like, "are you seriously asking me this question? Like, and they'll like single her out and stuff and I've had that done to me too, so like it's just kind of hard." The student makes another interesting comment that highlights some of the tension she and others feel on the campus: "I know like the stigma with us is like, well, I feel like with me I've always had to like make sure that um I could do the best in everything that I can do because I feel like sometimes people may look at me like, "oh, she's like the ghetto, ratchet person." Or like "she's like, she's very loud. And all this." Or like, um, I don't know, "she doesn't know anything." Or just like, "she's not smart." So that's something that I've had to deal with until like, I just want to get away from all of that and just hang out with people who just understood what I was going through." It's not an exclusion of others per say, but it's a drawing near to those who have a similar experience.

Friends: (after 25:03) having friends at the school helped her transition well. (after 30:15) she shares that her friends are "a handful" she loves them and they are diverse. Many grew up with parents who are not American. She has many friends from the Caribbean. One friend highlighted is described as strong and independent and can talk a lot. Many of her friends are black. These are her closest friends, the ones that she can

turn to for spiritual matters and hangs out with them the most, but she has many friends and acquaintances. She also has friends who speak Spanish. “that’s something that I had to like be like okay so since I’m here I need to, I needed to find, I wanted to be around people that kind of like look like me because like it was hard ‘cause in my classes I’m usually like the only black person in my class.” (after 33:21) friendships developed in the cafeteria and through her connection of already having friends at EU from living back in IL. She also developed friendships from seeking out people to participate in her gospel choir. She and her friends became so close that she will stay the night with them in their dorms for several days. She and her closest friends go off campus together sometimes to shop and attend church (but most do not regularly attend the same church as the interviewee). Some of her friends have visited her home on school breaks. Her family likes her friends (before and after 36:49).

Thriving: (after 41:29) she describes someone who thrives at EU as “someone who’s very involved in the classroom and outside of the classroom.... they’re in different settings meeting different people and stuff like you get to know a lot of people when you’re involved and like you get to meet people, you get to network, you get to do all that and like they’re just very well rounded people. ‘cause I know some people just don’t have time for like the extra curriculums but I feel like you can like find, I don’t know, find yourself in like certain groups or activities like you get to meet your closest friends or like get to do something that you love doing at school so like I don’t know I guess...” (just after 43:23 is when she shared the last part of that quote). She has participated in much at the school (just before 43:23). (after 43:23) when asked if she is thriving at EU she said, “I hope so. I think I am.”

Log Notes Staff One

Interview with: Ramsey Jeanty, Staff Member

Project: Where All Can Thrive: Tools for Sustaining Inclusive Communities

Media Name/type: Digital, Audio file, 2016.CAPSTONE.STAFF1.V001.AUD.MP3

Researcher: Celia Duncan

Date Recorded: September 21, 2016

Interviewees: Ramsey Jeanty

Location: Ramsey's office in Krause Residence Hall

Subject: Personal Narrative, Reflecting on the University's Services

Key Words: Students, Leaders, Multicultural, Diversity, Organic, Informal, Platform

Significant Moments During Interview

Time	Content
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Themes:

Roles at EU: early on in the interview the staff member shared that his primary role is to oversee students in the residence hall. He's picked up a few other roles while serving at Evangel. He's on a committee for customer service, staff sponsor for the soon-to-be diversity club, programing all multicultural, diversity services, and he is on the MODES Committee. The MODES committee is a gathering of representative from local colleges and universities that specifically focuses on retention of multicultural students and services for them. Unlike other, larger, schools in the area, we do not have a full-time individual working to serve students in this way, so this staff member has taken on the responsibility for it along with one other staff member.

Diversity at EU: Requested data from the retention office about the number of students who identify as non-white (after intro). Last year was the first year this information was requested. (11:37) I ask about the dynamic and openness to diversity on campus. He shares that it can feel like “a daunting issue” because “you’re...wondering about how comfortable people are with it.” Then he shares that the students are willing and open to talking. He’s had conversations with the students about where they are at now concerning diversity. They said “we’re aware and we’re willing to talk. We just don’t have a platform.” They recognize that they need a platform to begin these conversations. I’m inferring that they want this platform because they don’t have a level of relationship with other to where these conversations can happen organically and they can enter into these conversations with ease. They don’t just want to randomly ask other students heavy and loaded questions and surprise the students with the questions. A shared space where everyone knows and is aware that they will dive into this conversation will be helpful and, in fact, a more fruitful conversation because everyone is entering into the conversation with similar expectations and a willingness to learn and grow. I once had a mentor say, in life you need to be two things available and teachable. I think “willing” is the combination of those two words. (after 20:02, just before 21:23) Evangel has the same percentage of students who identify as ethnic minorities as Missouri State University. This was surprising to me. I thought MSU percentage would be great than that of Evangel students.

Organic Development of support: (after intro, just before 6:14) students find each other informally. Usually these connections are made over a shared language or elements of traditional costume from the student’s culture or parent’s culture. There’s a deep

connection instantly made when these conversations happen. Some students choose to room together because of it or express an interest in hanging out instantly. (after 9:35) students also connect if they are from the same part of the country or play a similar sport. Many people meet during the Launch event each year. Launch is the kick-off for the year, the new student orientation that provides them the time and space to meet friends and build that support structure before classes begin and to learn about Evangel. Many organic friendship are built during a very formalized, traditional event on campus. Same with igNIGHT which is a traditional event where students will organically meet each other. The staff member shared that one person will find out that they share an ethnic culture with someone new and then they will introduce that new friend to everyone else who shares that ethnic culture. The students themselves serve as a platform for support. The students have a welcoming spirit that desires to build a support structure. This organic way reveals their intention and that they are passionate enough about it to take responsibility to build that network. The staff member also practices this. He will share about where he grew up and his ethnic culture in an attempt to connect with other students who may share a connection with his hometown or culture. (after 20:02) He encourages students to address moments when other students share something "very incendiary and wasn't helpful" on social media. This is a call for student leaders to keep other student leaders or students in general accountable for what they say on social media and, I think, probably spreads its fingers into interpersonal interactions off-line. (just before and after 26:46) He mentions how a student brought traditional clothes but never wore them because he didn't want to be the only one wearing the clothes. He would wear the traditional clothes if more people

were wearing it with him. This could be a cultivated movement, but it would need to be organic. (after 26:46) the staff member shares a story of when he was in college, and he is a second generation immigrant to the US, how he was affirmed by a professor to not “Anglo-cise” his last name, but to say it however he would say it traditionally. He was empowered by the professors permission for him to proudly express his cultural heritage that involved his name. He desires for other students to have a similar experience. He then suggests training for professors for that would empower them to empower students who are first or second generation immigrants. A training that would inform professors of what these students walk through.

Developing formal support: (after 6:14) the school is developing an actual platform this year. Gleaning from MSU’s program called “Tough Talks.” This program is an open forum to dialogue about a variety of issues. EU wants to cater it to be more about celebration of diversity. Here is how they plan to build this platform: “what we want to do is really tailor that to celebration. And so brining all these different students and getting their perspectives on a very wide array of topics and just, uh, this being, hopefully, we’re going to start off with once a month invite everybody to come and talk and share their perspectives and through that, that already fosters the natural relationships that were already built up, but it also creates a platform um a university sponsored platform.” They plan to make this an ongoing event. Planning the kick-off event in November (mid-end of the month). (11:37) after talking through the student panel option, I’m wondering, what is the point of the diversity club? And will ALL students feel welcome to join? Or will it feel like it is exclusive to only ethnic minorities? Diversity is about celebrating all not saying one student population is more significant than another, yet for those who

are most often marginalized, an organized group is a great way to build support for these students. I see the tension here. There is tension and balance is needed. I anticipate that the diversity club will draw a great number of students of ethnic minorities along with a number of students of an racial majority. Similar to what I experienced at another faith based field site in the Springfield area. (after 20:02) I ask if the diversity club would be the formal platform for students to share their ideas with the Evangel community. He shares that he thinks it would be that. He then points out that MSU has a similar percentage of ethnic minority students as Evangel. That surprised me. While the percentages are the same, the shear volume is great at MSU, so students receive official support through Latino Student Union, Black Student Union, etc. Since the numbers are not as great at EU the school isn't looking to set anything like that up right now. However, they will try to develop the diversity club to offer a similar type of support of celebration, sharing ideas, and stories. (just before and after 22:58) another idea on building formal support is diversifying the faculty. While diversifying staff can be beneficial, he thinks that having a diverse staff is important. It builds another support structure in the classroom and "faculty is just such a big part of their lives." He mentions international faculty would be a big deal. (after 26:46) he shares a personal story of how a professor empowered him. He then in turn would like for professors at EU to have training on what this student population experiences so that they receive the support needed to thrive at Evangel. He thinks some professors may be resistant because they are educated, but he thinks it would be a good thing for all. I agree that it would be a good thing, and I actually think many professors at Evangel would be open to a training on how to better empower their students who identify as ethnic minorities because the

professors at Evangel care deeply for their students. This manuscript could lead into a training. The professors already receive an awareness document of sorts that helps them understand the psychology of students in each grade level of undergrad. Training could alleviate microaggressions in the classroom.

Former Events: (after 6:14) Last year they held a one-time event called EUnite. It focused on microaggressions and how to better learn from one another and respect each other. But students wanted more time to talk. Hence the organic formation of a formal, ongoing platform (mentioned above).

Brave Spaces: (after 6:14) I brought up brave spaces. He's open to the idea and had never heard of this concept before, but the "tough talks" jogged my memory of the articles I had come across and had to share it with him. This reveals his openness to how to best serve students. I'm underlining "openness" because I think this is another significant theme. I think the openness of this staff member is a reflection of the university (or at least I hope is a reflection of the university) to navigate through the best way to serve their unique students. (after 15:31) he shared about an activity they did (not sure at which event) last year that helped students see all the multicultural threads and connections in their lives. He said one student who is now actively on one of his teams said that her eyes were opened to the racial diversity through this exercise and since she joined his team I infer that she is passionate about reconciling racial divides and celebrating diversity.

Additional platforms: (after 11:37) I shared the idea of student panel and how the students wanted to participate in a panel in the main chapel. We talked about this option for a few minutes. He thinks it's a good idea, but it needs to be thought through some

more, like which topics to talk about. It would have to be specific. He brought up that it would present an opportunity for other students to feel officially recognized and represented by Evangel. He notes that it would need to be “as diverse as possible” and include even people from the local area. He mentions that students have said that white students feel like when diversity is addressed that it excludes them, but it shouldn’t. He doesn’t want it to be exclusive of anyone. (just before and just after 18:04) we begin talking about an idea that I brought to the student group interview and, now, to him about training students in dialogue. He seemed to affirm that that would be a good idea, but highly suggests it to be voluntary. My thought was to have it as part of a standard University seminar class, something that every student has to take their first or second year. I didn’t say that specifically in this interview, but that’s what I was thinking. I did, however, mention the possibility of training student to facilitate healthy dialogue in the leadership forum. This forum is required of all students who would like to take on a leadership role on campus. He was open to that idea. He mentions that he has the resident assistant students that he oversees are reading “Courageous Conversations” and that’s been great at empowering the student leaders he works with directly. (after 22:58) additional support through diverse faculty (actually, just before 22:58, but the next part is after) he mentions that once the support is built and more students have buy in it will be easier to implement ways of celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and more. He would also love to see the celebration enter into the chapel space. He mentions using flags, music, singing praise music in different languages. Similar to an experience he had at the Assemblies of God Centennial celebration a couple of years ago where many countries were celebrated during the worship service. (after 25:21) I mention the

students' love for food and suggest that that be a big part of the celebration he is speaking of.

Resistance: (after 11:37) he recognizes that no matter what they do, there will be backlash and resistance from some students who do not understand, that miss the point of why we are talking about diversity. They received backlash when they did EUnite.

Appendix III

Groundwork Information For Transcriptions:

Celia Duncan

Date: *Date of Transcription Work*

Capstone Fieldwork

Transcriptions

Interview with: *Student Name*

Project: Where All Can Thrive: Tools for Sustaining Inclusive Communities

Media Name/type: Digital, Audio file, 2016.CAPSTONE.S#.V001.AUD.MP3

Researcher: Celia Duncan

Date Recorded:

Duration:

Interviewees: *Student Name*

Location: *Interview Location*

Subject: Personal Narrative

Key Words:

00:00 Introductions

Appendix IV

Overlapping Themes by Student Interview:

Note that if a student's number is placed next to the theme then that means it was noted in the interview. Because a student's number is missing from a theme does not mean that it is lacking in their life, we were limited in time and questions.

Personal/Self:

Mispronounced Name: 4, 7

Personal Identity through character traits: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6

Personal identity through signature strengths: 4

Hygiene habits different at college than at home: 2, 4

Physical strength: 4

Emotional strength: 4, 6

Thrifty/ frugal: 4

Worship Leader/Faith: 3, 6 (not so much the worship leader), 7, 8

Name associated with culture (student shared the meaning of name): 2

Stays true to self while away from home: 2, 8

Uses other people's identification of self as part of self-identity: 2, 4

Vocalized openness to questions: 1, 2, 6

Sensors opinions sometimes because of noted difference in EC culture vs. Midwest culture: 1, 2

Feels a sense of pride in being a first generation college student: 1

Physical Features:

Curly hair: 4, 6

Dark hair: 2

People wanting to touch hair: 4

Receives unwanted attention/comments due to appearance (hair): 4, 5, 6

Others assume the student's race or ethnicity: 2, 4, 6

Singled out by professor or staff member because of assumed race: 4

Mentions being asked to be in the school marketing material (and enjoys it): 4

Doesn't feel as though she is different until someone points it out: 4

Identifies with culture through physical features: 2, 4

Student subscribes to physical features as significant to cultural identity and teases others about it *in a non-malicious way*..(Mention of sibling's struggle with identity because he doesn't "fit" a race perfectly): 1

Place:

Grew up on the East Coast/North East: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7

Diversity within community that student grew up in: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8

Felt connection to country of ethnic identity when visiting: 1, 2, 4, 8

Was born in country of ethnic identity: 5, 7

Realizing the bad things can happen anywhere: 4

Uncertain where to find beauty products or where to go for hair styling in SGF: 4

Uncertain where to find foods from her culture in SG: 2, 4, 6, 7, 8

Family:

Family is not always biological: 1, 4

Protective parent(s): 1, 4, 6, 7

Family expresses pride when student visits country of parent's birth: 4, 8

Loud family: 2, 4

Fun Family: 2, 3, 4

Challenging to leave home: 1, 4

Challenging to adjust to college (experienced many new things/ new responsibilities/ expectations of others/ understanding self): 1, 5

Quality time “adventures” with family: 4

Family developed own customs rather than following all cultural customs for social interactions: 3

Family is supportive of degree/career choice/academics : 2, 3, 6, 8

Parent took time to warm up to degree/career choice: 1, 2

Sibling viewed as gift from God: 3

Family is accepting and communicates well with each other: 3

Family custom to honor others on one’s birthday: 3

Parents have different cultural backgrounds from one another: 2, 6

Parents have same cultural background: 3, 5, 7, 8

Identifies with a culture based on family relationships: 2

Grandmother(s) live with family: 1, 2

Grandmothers were playmates: 2

Sensitive to the plight of others because of the experiences of the family: 2, 6

Family Influenced faith: 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8

Uses language other than English to include others and connect with family: 1, 2, 4, 7

Cultural:

Latina as cultural identity: 1, 4

Feels “un-American” : 4

Perceived as expert on cultural topics: 4

Fielded assumptions about one’s race, ethnicity, or culture: 1, 2, 4, 6, 8

Sometimes labeled as “Mexican” or “Puerto Rican” because she is Latina: 1, 2, 4

Did not encounter this level of assumptions until moving to Missouri: 4, 6

Notes cultural differences between East Coast/ big city and Missouri: 1, 6, 7, 8

Notes that they thought they understood all cultures because they grew up in a diverse area: 5

Does not feel like people view them as different culturally/ethnically: 5

People assume students preferences: 4

People are curious and ask questions: 1, 2, 4, 6

Felt worn out by the curiosity of others at first, but no longer feels that way: 4

Unoffended by questions, but offended at how questions are asked: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6

Sometimes feels worn out by questions: 1, 6

Feels uncomfortable talking about deep things in large groups: 5, 6, 7

Desires that more students were from diverse cultural backgrounds: 4, 6

Desires that more students sought opportunities to get to know other students better: 7

Since starting at the school has noticed an increase in students from a variety of cultural backgrounds (could also be that she’s simple noticed more students, not that the number has actually increased): 1, 4

Since starting at EU the student noticed a decrease in offensive comments: 8

Identifies as the “token” friend: 4

Identifies as a bridge between different cultures: 3, 8

Identifies more as American than any other cultural/ethnic identity: 3

Identifies more as New Yorker than any other cultural/ethnic identity: 5

Believes that others see both the “American” culture and other culture (of parents) expressed by the student because student notes that he/she operates slightly different than other US Americans or other’s from parent’s culture: 3

Identifies as American in addition to other nationality: 1, 3, 7

Does not always understand American idioms or cultural elements and gets poked fun at because of it: 1

Knows more about Hispanic culture and history than US American culture: 1

Formally identifies as Hispanic: 1

Degree/Career choice does not align with other young adults from ethnic background: 1, 2, 3

Notices the diversity among the student body: 1, 3

Notices lack of diversity among student body: 2, 4, 6, 8

Notices difference in number of students from variety of backgrounds when compared to hometown of student: 2, 5, 6

Notices that student is working towards bringing light to cultural differences: 2, 8

Notes that the school is welcoming to all races: 3, 8

Culture from where student grew up in US is significant: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8

Identifies as bi-racial: 2

Marks “other” on formal documents when asked about race: 2

Does not want to place one cultural identity above another on (formal documents): 2

Identifies more as Hispanic at times (because of physical traits), but has equal affection towards both cultural identities: 2

Identifies both as from one specific culture in the Latino community while also identifies with all the Hispanic cultures because of some shared characteristics: 2

Better understood family and culture by visiting the home country of parent: 2, 6

Feels honored to share about culture(s): 2

Student admits that he/she is not the expert on her parent's cultures: 2

Discipline from family: 1, 2

Expressed gratitude that student was knowledgeable about his/her ethnic culture(s): 1, 2, 4

Will play culture's music around other students: 1, 4

Food:

Spice in foods: 4

Hearty breakfast: 4

Introduced to new foods at college: 4, 5

Desires healthier options/cares about nutrition: 4, 5

Meals are used as a time to connect with people, and many different people: 2, 4, 7, 8

Nervous about food service serving her culture's traditional foods: 4, 7

Traditional soup during New Years: 3

Traditional soups used for medicinal purposes: 5

Carbs and meats are common in home meals: 5

Cultural significance in foods/serving sizes: 5

Enjoys traditional foods: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8

People and Cultures:

Vocalized perception of other's identities based on character traits, not color of skin or ethnicity: 4, 6

Recognizing that people are encountering the student's culture for the first time through the student: 2, 4

Patient to educate others about culture: 1, 2, 4

Recognizes own assumptions/ limits in knowledge: 1, 2

Activities:

Volleyball/athleticism: 4

Dance: 4, 6, 7, 8

Physical Traits of Campus:

Significance of sand volleyball court on campus: 4

Chapel is significant place: 3, 5, 6

Writes under a large tree by Krause Hall (sacred to student): 2

Quad, place for quiet and to write: 2

Study room on floor: 2

Library to focus: 2

Size of campus helpful in intermingling friend groups/ people from different backgrounds: 1

Dining hall/ table-hopping: 4, 5, 7

Residence Hall: 7

Art Department Lobby: 7

Actions of Campus:

Desires more Spanish music played at events: 4

Desires more variety of cultural elements on campus: 1, 2, 4, 8

Subject of incorrect assumptions that were not perceived as malicious: 1, 4, 6, 8

Welcomes students from all backgrounds: 3

Positive impact on student: 3, 7

Questioned about some of “home habits” but doesn’t quit doing them: 2

Notes mixed reviews about the school’s attempts to facilitate dialogue (EUnite and Synergy): 2, 6, 7, 8

Appreciative of school’s attempts to facilitate dialogue (EUnite): 1

Enjoys the professors and courses/friendships with faculty and staff: 2, 5, 6, 7, 8

When speaking in a language other than English on campus student receives startled looks or comments from other students: 1, 2, 4

Initially felt isolated on campus, but remained at EU due to support structure back home and the growing support of staff on campus: 1

Felt welcomed on campus after a few significant events that occurred early on in the semester/ school staff responded to student’s personal needs: 1

Cultural awareness and respect shouldn’t be forced, but it is very necessary: 1

Cultural awareness and respect should be mandatory: 7

Recognizes that students need to be willing to ask questions and be just as willing to share: 1

Notes division between “social” groups/classes on campus: 5

Appreciates the spiritual environment/willingness to pray throughout campus: 2, 5, 7

Trouble with roommates: 5

Actions off Campus, but in Missouri:

Experienced racism while volunteering: 4

Experienced racism while at a park: 4

Felt in risk of physical danger because of race: 4

Had assumptions about Missouri that created resistance to moving: 3

Language/ Communication:

Sense of speaking quickly: 4

Wishing they did not have to explain jokes: 4

Spanish as first language: 1, 2, 4

Learned a lot about English (and official documents or official systems in the US) on own: 1, 4

Helped parents read and understand documents while growing up: 4

Uses first language when speaking to family/on phone with family: 4, 7

Desires to speak in native language more often: 1, 2, 4

Does not use customary language and terms with family or friends: 3

Prefers personal communication more than formal: 3, 5

Interpersonal communication has improved since attending EU: 5

Bi-lingual: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8

Speaks three languages: 2

Learned Spanish by speaking time with grandparents who are monolingual: 2

Parent or parents speak Spanish: 1, 2, 4

Only Spanish is spoken in the home: 1

Participated in an ESOL program: 1, 5

Struggles with English language sometimes because student is translating before processing information/ needs additional assistance in some courses: 1

Community:

Hangs out with everyone and everyone knows student: 2, 3, 4, 5

Feels as though name is known but people don't pursue friendship as often (at least during the first part of student's time at school): 5

In a leadership role and so invests in other students within that realm: 4, 8

Once in a while exclusively hangs out with students from the similar geographical area but from different cultural backgrounds: 4

Feels challenged to not only hang out with students from similar geographical location: 2

Practices high respect/honor for elders: 3

Comfortable around friends/can truly be oneself around friends: 1, 3

Notes difference between "social politeness" and "authentic politeness": 5

Has developed authentic friendships/relationships: 5, 6

Friendships developed organically: 1, 3, 7, 8

Friendships developed through academic department: 2, 3, 8

Friendships developed through residence hall: 2, 3, 4, 7

Friends share faith: 3

Diversity within friend group: 1, 2, 3, 4, 8

Seeks friendships with people who look like student: 8

Friendship with faculty: 2, 5, 6, 7, 8

Traveling home with friends as opportunity: 1

Traveling home with friends as potentially awkward: 4

Connects well with others who share first language: 1

Connects well with others who are from big cities: 1, 2, 6, 8

Connects well with others whose parents grew up abroad: 1

Connects well with individuals from "home church": 1, 8

Spiritual:

Attends a church with people of same ethnicity: 3

Practices prayer: 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8

Senses that God directs him and listens to that direction: 2, 3, 5, 6, 7

Feels most affirmed during chapel services: 3, 5

Career goal is in ministry: 2, 3, 7

Writes prayers: 2

Spiritual threads weaved throughout interview: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8

Identifies as a Christian: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

New to the Christian faith: 1

Degree:

Degree/Career goal connected with spiritual identity: 1, 2, 3, 7

Grateful for degree: 3

Education at EU is invaluable to student/ student mentions growth: 2, 6, 7

Relationships built at EU are more significant to student than academic rigor received: 5

Degree choice is meaningful for student's future career: 1, 2, 3, 7, 8

Student believes he/she is better off with the degree/education: 2, 6

Goals:

Student has set goal(s) beyond degree: 1, 3, 6, 7, 8

Faith focused: 2, 3, 6, 7

People focused: 3, 6, 7

Completing semester was challenging, but rewarding: 1, 2, 7

Believes thriving is more about relationships and honesty than achievements: 5

Believes thriving is a combination of passion for scholarship and relationships: 6, 8

Believes that thriving is about dedication to scholarship and following the leading of God: 7

Appendix V

Interview Questions:

Some questions have been simplified. These questions were slightly edited to protect the identities of the student participants as well as for ease of understanding the question outside of the context of the interview.

First Interview:

- Do you mind sharing your name?
- What are you studying?
- Did you take both or either (French or Spanish) in high school too?
- Do both of your parents speak Spanish? Or does one of your parents speak Spanish?
- You said all of us, do you have siblings?
- You're the eldest?
- Do your parents also speak English as well?
- So that's their rule too...?
- How do you identify yourself? Culturally?

- Describe home to me.
- Tell me a little more about your family and your dynamics.
- Could you share with me some of the things that you notice that , if you ever do, that you feel like you need to change how you are or who you are..at Evangel?
- Do you think you've found that now (friends who understand her and where she comes from)?
- Tell me about them (friends).
- Can you share a little bit or give me an example or two of what you mean by lifestyle (reference different lifestyles amongst students)?
- How do you think your culture, you being a Latina, is viewed by people on campus, whether it's staff or faculty or students?
- Is there any other place or space or person on campus where you feel like you can just totally let your guard down and be, be yourself?
- Is there any place on campus or any persons on campus, and you don't have to name specifically, that you want to just avoid?
- What would you do to make Evangel better?
- Where do you spend most of your time at Evangel?
- How do you feel about...your progress towards your bachelor's degree?
- Anything else that you...want to share?

Second Interview:

- Do you want to share your name with me?
- A family name, so are you named after...?
- Where did you grow up?

- How do you identify yourself?
- What's the preferred, well, how do you prefer to be addressed, or do you even care? (in regards to race)
- How do you...culturally identify yourself?
- Have you ever been to the countries in which your parents grew up?
- What was that like? When you visited, how did you feel traveling to those places?
- What do you love about it?
- Maybe you can share a little bit about what is most important to you about your heritage and your culture and being connected to them. How you think or how you see the world, how you speak or what you wear or how you eat.
- What are some of your favorite things about each?
- It's your parents and a grandparent at home?
- Do you have any other siblings?
- Can you describe home?
- How do you guys have fun together?
- What are some habits that you carry with you that you notice, "oh, I do this differently!" that you've brought to Evangel or just carry with you wherever you go?
- Have you ever felt hindered in any way from expressing who you? Like resistance towards it?
- Being at college you feel freedom to just be yourself?
- What drew you to Evangel?
- Who do you spend a lot of your time with on campus?
- What groups are you a part of on campus?

- Where are some of your favorite places to be on campus?
- Are there any places that you intentionally avoid or that you never end up visiting?
- How are you feeling about working towards your bachelor's degree at this point?
- What are your family member's responses to your pursuing this degree?
- Do you have other goals that you are pursuing right now?
- What would make Evangel a better place?

Third Interview:

- Please share your name, so I know I have the right interview.
- How do you identify yourself, culturally or non-culturally at this point?
- What cultures do you identify with?
- Tell me more about that or any other cultures that you identify with.
- What are some examples of when people said, "oh is that like..." or when you've said to yourself, "this is what I do, this comes from my cultural heritage or from the American part of me?"
- Describe home to me.
- Do you have siblings as well?
- Why do you think your parents taught you to speak differently than others from your ethnic heritage?
- Did your parents also grow up in the state where you grew up?
- Where all have you lived?
- Do you mostly identify with the state you mainly grew up in?
- What do you love about your family?

- What kind of home habits, things that are unique to you and your family and you feel like you carry them with you everywhere?
- Any other cool traditions?
- What was your journey to Evangel?
- Why is attending Evangel the best thing you've ever done?
- In what places or situations on campus do you feel like you can truly, totally be yourself?
- How have you made friends? What were those situations like?
- Describe your friends to me, what are they like?
- Where have you felt really affirmed in who you are at Evangel?
- Are there any places or situations on campus where you ever felt resistance to you being yourself?
- How do you think other students or staff at Evangel views your culture?
- What groups or clubs have you been a member of while you were a student?
- How do you feel about the accomplishment of just completing your bachelor's degree?
- What are the next steps for you?
- What other goals are you working towards?
- How does your family feel about your degree and career choice?
- What do your parents do, professionally?
- What do you think would make Evangel a better place?
- Have you ever notices other people feeling like they are not comfortable or confident or restricted?

- Anything else you would like to share about your story or time at Evangel?

Fourth Interview:

- Do you mind sharing your name?
- Do people call you [nickname] back home too? Like your family?
- Do you have some friends at Evangel who would say your name correctly?
- What's your middle name?
- Where are you from?
- Do you have siblings?
- How do you identify yourself?
- What would you say contributes to your identity?
- How do you identify yourself culturally?
- What are some things that make you think you were raised differently than a lot of kids at this school?
- What are some things that when you visited [your mom's birth country] you were like, "yes! I relate here!"
- Tell me more about your family?
- How are you and your family going to spend time together this summer?
- When you're with your family do you usually use [your first language]?
- What is something that reminds other students of your culture?
- Who do you hang out with the most on campus?

Fifth Interview:

- Do you mind sharing your name?
- Do you mind sharing a little bit about how you identify yourself?

- How do you feel like your cultural identities express themselves in your everyday?
- How old were you when your family immigrated to the United States?
- Do you mind sharing a little bit about your story as to how you came to Evangel?
- You've been at Evangel for how many years?
- What are some things that come to mind when you think of your time at Evangel?
- Where do you feel the most safe, or what places do you feel safe to talk about tension or just issues that you're facing?
- Why do you feel comfortable with people in a one-on-one setting to talk about issues?
- Have you had an experience where while in a group setting a dialogue was starting about a deeper kind of tension filled issue and it left you feeling negative?
- Do you feel like you are at a place where you're able to have authentic connections with people at Evangel?
- What do you think contributed to your ability to start to feel like you are having authentic connections with others?
- Describe some of the people or situations where you may have assumed certain things about someone and then you were shocked by their reality.
- Do you mind sharing a story about a time that a faculty or staff member impacted you?
- What other ways do you feel supported at Evangel?
- When do you feel the most heard?
- Do you mind sharing a story of when you felt misunderstood at Evangel?
- Did you ever share a room with your siblings?

- Do you mind elaborating a little bit on how the differences that you've now noticed coming back from school? Like how your family thinks or approaches things or does things?
- Does that [habit] still work at home?
- So how did you learn to dance?
- What does it mean for a college student to thrive?
- Do you feel like you're thriving at Evangel?
- Was there any event or a series of events that helped you get to that place of honesty with yourself?
- Are you part of any clubs or organizations right now?
- Do you feel like anyone ever assumes things about you because of where you are from or your ethnicity?
- What do you want people to assume and be correct about?
- What would make Evangel University a better place for students?
- Anything else that you want to share about you or about your experience?

Sixth Interview:

- So share your name.
- Where are you from?
- What time in life did you move to ...?
- What cultures do you identify with?
- So [your mom] grew up in [the country of her birth]?
- When did she move to the [US]?
- Did she move with her family?

- How else do you identify yourself?
- What kind of foods do you enjoy?
- Do you enjoy dancing and have you been able to while in college?
- Do you know the language?
- Do you mind sharing a little bit about your story to Evangel?
- Share a little more about your mom's influence in your college decision?
- You know several people in [a country that you want to visit, not one that you have a ethnic relation to already]?
- What are some things you love about your family?
- What are some home habits you carry with you?
- What are some things you've left behind, that you said, "I don't want to carry that with me?"
- Do you think that came from the culture she grew up in or do you attribute that to her personality?
- Do you feel like you're still able to continue with the food aspect?
- What else has your Evangel experience been like?
- What has your academic experience been like?
- Is education really important to your family?
- How has your speech changed since attending college?
- Have you been a part of any clubs or organizations at Evangel?
- Do you feel like your voice is heard on campus?
- Where do you feel safe to talk about the deeper issues?
- Do you ever feel tension on campus?

- Can you share an example of someone being “petty?”
- You’ve experienced people sending a message of their superiority using body language while on Evangel’s campus?
- In an ideal world, how would you like someone to ask you about your culture or about you?
- Have you seen people work through stereotypes while at Evangel? Or trying to work past them?
- When you look at students at Evangel, what would you say is a thriving students at EU? What is it to thrive at Evangel?
- Do you feel like you are thriving at Evangel?
- What would make Evangel feel more like “home” to you?
- Do you feel like there are people whose hearts are in good places too?
- Do you feel like the trip you took with Evangel abroad helped you better understand your family?
- While traveling were there things that happened that connected with your family or culture?
- Have you ever visited [the country of your mother’s birth]?

Seventh Interview:

- if you don’t mind first sharing your name with me and where did you grow up?
- How do you identify yourself?
- So you were born in [the country of your ethnic identity]?
- When did you move to the US?
- Your parents have the same ethnicity and citizenships?

- What was the process of becoming a US citizen like?
- Do you mind sharing a little bit about your journey to Evangel?
- What year are you in school?
- What is your major?
- What inspired that passion and dream?
- Tell me about your family?
- Do you use your first language when speaking with your parents over the phone?
- How old were you when you learned to cook?
- Do you think that if you had a kitchen area that you would be able to cook and take advantage of that?
- Have you ever taken advantage of the cards for the food services director to make suggestions?
- What are some things that you really miss about home?
- What are some places or people that feel like home?
- What is it about them that makes them feel like home?
- So many of your friendships are from your residence hall?
- What are the places and spaces where you've felt like you can have those quality conversations?
- Where do you attend church?
- Are you a part of a small group at that church?
- Are you involved in any organization or club at EU?
- Did you grow up dancing and singing as well?
- Do your parents sing and dance?

- What has your experience in the classroom been like?
- Where do you see the need that you will fill with your career?
- Do you feel challenged in the classroom?
- Have you ever had an unfavorable experience with a professor?
- How has your experience at Evangel been like overall?
- What do you wish people would ask you about your life?
- How would you describe a student that is thriving at Evangel?
- Would you say that you're thriving at Evangel?
- You had positive experiences with students on campus?
- Have you ever felt tension on campus?
- What would be your wisdom as to how to address tension on campus?
- What other ideas do you have that would bring restoration?
- Do you have any other comments or thoughts of what would make Evangel better?
- Did you have a mentor your first semester?
- Do you feel like you have opportunities to share about your cultural identity at Evangel?
- Do you wish that there were opportunities to share about your cultural identity?

Eighth Interview:

- Do you mind sharing your name with me?
- Where did you grow up?
- Tell me a little about yourself.
- What are you studying at Evangel?
- How do you feel about [the major exam you just took to get into graduate school]?

- Did dance have a huge part in your life?
- Are you active in Evangel's choirs in addition to dance?
- What church are you a part of?
- What got you into dance at such a young age?
- Which style of dance is your favorite?
- Were you born in the US or in [the same country as your parents]?
- Are your parents still [in the same profession that moved them to the US]?
- What is your family structure?
- Have you and your parents ever visited [the country of your ethnic heritage]?
- You remember all those details from an experience that occurred at such a young age?
- What language does your grandmother speak?
- What other languages do you speak?
- While growing up, what language did your parents speak in your home?
- What are some things that you usually miss about home?
- How does meeting students with a similar ethnic background make life easier at Evangel?
- How do your parents feel about your [degree choice]?
- What do your parents love about your [degree choice]?
- So you chose one of the three options [for acceptable careers]?
- Since the cultural approaches to this situation is different in your parent's birth country and in the United States, how did your parents process this situation your family found itself in?

- Maybe share a little bit about your experience at Evangel?
- How did you handle the tension brought on by assumptions about you?
- Describe some of your friends.
- How did you develop friendships with these people?
- Where are some places on campus where you feel comfortable having more challenging or personal conversations?
- Do you feel like the classrooms can be places where you feel like you can be brave and talk about or address tension, misunderstandings or assumptions?
- Describe the student who thrives at Evangel?
- Would you say that you're thriving at Evangel?
- Anything else that you want to share about your experience at Evangel or your culture?

Appendix VI

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