

2018

College Teachers' Perceptions about Teaching Global Competency

Izabela Agata Majewska
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College of Education

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Izabela Agata Majewska

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2018

Abstract

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by

Izabela Agata Majewska

MA, Long Island University, 2012

BS, Fordham University, 2010

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Walden University

October 2018

Abstract

National and international organizations emphasize the importance of teaching global competence in American higher education as a way of preparing students for the rigors of a globalized workforce. Lack of nation-wide educational initiatives aimed at providing institutional guidelines for assessing international relations (IR) courses for this skill acquisition requires colleges to rely on their own resources and ingenuity. Presently, no course assessment methods for gauging global competency attainment exist at Florida College. The purpose of this study was to investigate faculty perceptions of instruction and learning of global competence. Mezirow's transformative learning theory was the conceptual framework that guided this study. The research questions for this study focused on teachers' perceptions of global competence instruction and student skill acquisition, their perceptions of the effectiveness of the INR 2002 Introduction to International Relations course in student global competence learning, and course advantages and disadvantages. An explorative case study design was used to capture the insights of 5 INR 2002 instructors, who have taught the course within the last three years, through individual 45-60-minute interviews. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the gathered data. INR teachers expressed moderate to high course effectiveness articulating a need for course improvement. The recommendations included the following: (a) create a departmental definition of global competence, (b) employ more classroom discussions into teaching IR, and (c) publish an international IR textbook communally working with non-American universities. This study may impact positive social change by supporting teachers' and administrators' efforts to advance the course curriculum to better equip students with knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for their professional futures.

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Dedication

I dedicate my doctoral dissertation to my parents, my foundation, Krzysztof and Elzbieta Majewki, who have instilled in me a constant and unwavering drive towards self-betterment and personal growth. I would not have reached the intellectual heights that I have in both my academic and professional careers if it wasn't for your constant words of encouragement and insistence to move forward, especially in times of difficulty. This achievement belongs to me and you both. Dziekuje z calego serca!

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank my committee members for their support over the past few years as I progressed from a general study idea to a completed doctoral research. Special thanks go to Dr. Katherine Garlough, my committee chair, who was more than generous with her expertise and precious time as she spent countless hours reflecting, reading, and encouraging me. Sincere thanks are also due to Dr. Markus Berndt for agreeing to serve as my second committee member and to Dr. Timothy Lafferty, the Walden URR, whose detailed corrections to my study project drafts proved quintessential in completing my doctoral work within a fashionable timeframe.

I would also like to thank my coworkers who took the time and effort out of their busy professional lives to participate in my study and openly share with me their teaching insights. Without your participation, this study would not have been possible.

Words of immense gratitude are also due to two important people in my life, Marek Suchocki and Brian Vaselaros, who have served as my support system throughout this trying endeavor. Thank you for allowing me to chew your ears off listening to me talk for hours on end about my research and helping me in the logistics of juggling work, my studies, and mothering.

Final thankyou's go to my little prince, my son Lukas, who taught me the importance of taking breaks throughout this strenuous process. You were my unwavering source of love, entertainment, and amusement throughout this doctoral endeavor serving as a constant reminder of what is truly most important in life.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

While national and international organizations call for internationalization efforts in the American higher education system as a way of teaching pertinent 21st-century skills in preparing students for the rigors of a globalized workforce, no nation-wide initiatives exist to guide institutions in pertinent to this skill-set program or course assessment efforts (American Council on Education, 2015). Consequently, there is no research-based evidence currently indicating that Florida College (FC) INR 2002 International Relations (IR) course curriculum is contributing to students' growth in global competency. Based on email communications with FC's director of program assessment and strategic planning, the institution's administrators gather data from teachers on learning outcomes at the program level for the purpose of gauging students' critical thinking, communications, and quantitative and scientific reasoning skills, but individual courses have never been investigated for student global competence acquisition. Issues in the teaching of IR at the research site make student global competence acquisition difficult. Instructor reliance on American-authored textbooks and the Western/ Eurocentric/ Westphalian perspective with which the course material is presented have been identified by faculty members at departmental meetings as worrisome teaching trends leading to ethnocentric perspectives of the world and its problems. These gaps in practice, along with the heavily American-driven knowledge formation in the IR discipline that prevents non-Western narratives from being included in theory development, and American hegemony in the international system have been

recognized by scholars as undermining global competence acquisition by preventing students from objectively interpreting the course material (Bertrand & Lee, 2012; Kristensen, 2015; Young, 2014). Furthermore, no direct learning outcomes in the course outline or the syllabus, addressing 21st-century skills as an important learning benchmark, are present.

Identifying whether these curricular and pedagogical issues and possible others are problematic in student learning of global competency was possible by conducting an exploratory research and investigating FC INR 2002 teacher perceptions of course efficacy in student global competence acquisition. The study may impact positive social change by supporting teacher and administrator efforts in improving the course and providing a helpful roadmap for other FC disciplines in doing the same.

Rationale

Scholars and national policy-makers have recognized higher education as a key factor fueling worldwide economic and social development embodied in a strong workforce (Helms, Rumbley, Brajkovic, & Mihut, 2015). A wide range of researchers, industry participants, national and international organizations, as well as professional educators perceive 21st-century skills such as global competence as a driving force in the new millennium (ACE, 2015; International Association of Universities, 2016; Lee, 2014; NEA Foundation, 2012; Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2015). High-level executives of some of the world's leading American-based companies, such as Dan Black, a global recruiting leader at Ernst and Young, have stated that recruiting new talents for companies includes looking for people with *global mindsets* (Schuetze, 2013).

Preparing citizens to live and work in a heavily globalized world and in creating a competitive global workforce means American institutions of higher learning creating and implementing policies and course curricula geared at teaching global competence to their students (ACE, 2015).

Consequently, in recent years, the internationalization efforts of academic disciplines as driven by the need to teach global competence have received much attention in the American higher education system (Acharya, 2014; Acharya & Buzan, 2007; Chen, 2011 Chiu & Duit, 2011). Political science courses such as international relations have been recognized as possessing the capability to transform students into persons with a better understanding of the way the international system works and the complexity of finding workable solutions to global problems (ACE, 2015; NEA, 2012). Yet, even with the extent of support for global education and IR discipline's potential for social change as based on personal communication with her coworker at FC, it has come to my attention that the college administration limits instructor teaching resources to the use of American-authored textbooks. Such a restriction may affect instructors' capabilities of teaching global competence effectively by creating subjectivity in student understanding of IR material by exposing them to only American-centered perceptions of world politics.

Considering the importance of IR courses in student global competence acquisition, scholarly evidence on issues in college-level IR instruction and its effects on students global competence acquisition along with lack of institutional data at the research site gauging the efficiency of teaching the skill set, my aim was to conduct

exploratory research investigating INR 2002 faculty perceptions of the effectiveness of the course as an academic environment where gaining global competence by students is possible. The study yielded informative data on present institutional efforts in preparing students for the globalized world market and with possible recommendations for course improvement was shared with the college administration and the decision-making body at FC. As such, the case study may lead to the need for further research to evaluate the effectiveness of the INR 2002 course.

Definition of Terms

American hegemony: leadership or predominant political, social and economic influence exercised by American as one nation over others (Goldstein & Pevehouse, 2015). The concept of American hegemony stems from the country's superior position in power politics and economic dominance in the world after World War II (2015). Being such a powerful international player, U.S is believed to dominate the theory and knowledge formation in the IR discipline from its Western perspective leading to bias and ethnocentrism in the limited scope in which IR material is presented and written about (Bertrand & Lee, 2012; Kristensen, 2015; Young, 2014)

Eurocentric/ism (sometimes called Western-centrism): the tendency to perceive the world from a European or Western perspective as driven by ethnocentric bias leading to the belief in the superiority of Western culture as compared to other world cultures (Buzan & Little, 2010). Invented in the 1980s, the term pertains to what has come to be known among scholars as European exceptionalism, which describes European dominance during the height of European colonialism in the 18th and 19 centuries. The

widespread use of the term became a norm in the 1990's in discussions on decolonization (Mamdani, 2016). Teaching international relations effectively is hindered by this tendency as the course material is presented from a narrow perspective as it leaves out non-Western viewpoints (Bertrand & Lee, 2012; Kristensen, 2015; Young, 2014).

International relations (IR): an academic discipline which concentrates on explaining through theoretical perspectives the complexity of interactions and relationships between state and non-state actors in international politics, including state and non-state actors, such as the United Nations (UN), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, Amnesty International and non-governmentally affiliated individuals (Shirayev & Zubok, 2016; Goldstein & Pevehouse, 2015). In most institutions of higher learning IR is part of the political science discipline.

Western vs. non-Western: as based on its modern societal meaning, the phrase "Western world" implies Europe and former European colonies with considerable European ancestral inhabitants in the Americas and Oceania (Shirayev & Zubok, 2016; Goldstein & Pevehouse, 2015). The purpose of the phrase is to contrast the European culture and civilization with that of the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the remote Far East (2016). With the United States representing the Western part of the world and its ideas and having dominance over the field of IR, consequentially it is the Western world that has received most of the attention in IR literature which much less emphasis on non-Western perspectives leading to possible skewed knowledge formation about the world (Bertrand & Lee, 2012)

Westphalian: a term originated as a result of the historic Treaty of Westphalia, a series of peace treaties signed in 1648 in the Westphalian cities of Osnabrück and Münster which ended the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) and the Eighty Years' War (1568–1648) between Spain and the Dutch Republic. According to political science scholars, this founding treaty marks the era of sovereign nation-states and thus originates the modern international system (Acharya, 2014; Buzan & Little, 2010). But because this international system geographically only took into consideration European nation states thus the Westphalian narrative, which speaks to formation of present-day international system, is believed by some scholars in the field of IR to be subjectively Eurocentric (see *Eurocentrism*) (Acharya, 2014; Chen, 2011; Buzan & Little, 2010) Furthermore, such a narrative is believed to lead to misinterpretation of present-day world problems and prevents IR academics from effectively hypothesizing about the international system and allowing room for global pluralism in such scholarly activities (Acharya, 2014; Buzan & Little, 2010; Chen, 2011; Vasilaki, 2012).

Significance of the Study

Presently, FC does not possess policies or guidelines for assessing individual courses for efficacy purposes. Considering the emphasis in the new millennium that members of national and international organizations have placed on institutional accountability and internationalization efforts in higher education rooted in teaching global competence in preparation for the demands of the 21st-century global workforce market, it is imperative that higher education institutions like FC collect efficacy data on their INR 2002 IR course to gauge how well it prepares students for their futures (ACE,

2015; NEA, 2012; Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2015). In this explorative study, I provided the local institution with an in-depth look into such efforts by collecting qualitative data gathered in interviews with the course teachers on their perceptions of the effectiveness of the course in global competence acquisition. I used the interview questions to delve into the best practices presently used in this course that successfully teach these skills as well as into instructors' concerns about course curriculum, pedagogy, and overall course formatting and possible solutions to these issues. Feedback from the participants led to recommendations for course curriculum changes, new policy implementation, and follow-up evaluations. These changes could lead to an improved course more suited toward student success in a heavily globalized world.

Research Questions

I designed the research questions for this study to gain an understanding of the perceptions of FC teachers on the effectiveness of the INR 2002 course in student global competence acquisition. In alignment with exploratory research, the focus of this study was understanding the respondents' points of view. Based on this approach, the research questions were as follows:

1. What are the teachers' perceptions about global competence instruction in the INR 2002 course?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the INR 2002 course on student growth in global competence?
3. What are the teacher' perceptions on the advantages and disadvantages of the presently offered INR 2002 course?

Review of the Literature

Conceptual Framework

Acquiring global competence as part of the learning process and its application in the workforce environment can be explained by the transformative learning theory. The new reality of a heavily globalized world highlights the importance of higher education molding young men and women into successful members of the 21st- century workforce (ACE, 2015; NEA, 2012; Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2015). The United States Department of Education has spent extraordinary financial resources in the last 2 decades to fundamentally transform the nation's outmoded, factory-age educational system into one that will adequately prepare students for the competitiveness of the global economy (Jackson, 2017). As most corporations and organizations cognizant of the interconnectedness of the world economy have recognized the importance of global competence and added it to their list of required workforce knowledge-based skills, it has become clear to the American higher education system that producing a competitive American workforce relies on schools producing globally competent students (ACE, 2015; NEA, 2016; Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2015). Global competence describes a set of skills centered around a knowledge base about world geography, cultures, global issues, and the skills and character to engage sensibly and effectively in a global setting (ACTFL, 2014). The development of global competence in students requires individuals to undergo some shifts in their identity in transforming their basic worldviews by challenging their held assumption through self-reflection and critical

analysis (Hart, Lantz, & Montague, 2017; Illeris, 2014a; Hodge, 2011; Mezirow, 1997, Mezirow, 1978).

Transformative learning theory. Mezirow (1997) created the transformative learning theory to explain the way people's perceptions of themselves, each other, and the world, can be tested and transformed to better understand the complexity of the world. In transforming, individuals change their perspectives and ways of perceiving their surroundings through critical reflection on their personal assumptions and beliefs and make deliberate changes to their personal definitions of their world (Illeris, 2014a). The process of perspective transformation, leading to transformative learning, usually comes as a result of some perplexing dilemma brought on by a major problem in an individual's private life or a significant life change (Illeris, 2014a; Mezirow, 1997). It can also happen however, due to a buildup of transformative experiences over a period of time, even less dramatic ones such as those brought on by a teacher posing a thought-provoking question to the class (Illeris, 2014a; Mezirow, 1997). Thus, perspective transformation happens when people go through an experience or come across a perspective that differs from their deeply-held personal values and consequently challenges them, leading to a deep shift in self-perception and in viewing the world (Hart, Lantz, & Montague, 2017; Illeris, 2014a). Thus, whereas childhood learning results from mimicking and repetition of others, adult learning happens as a result of self-criticism and upheaval of earlier learned concepts (1997).

Transformative learning and global competence acquisition. As global competence is an adaptive capacity, transformative learning allows for the possibility of

approaching the concept from a learning perspective, meaning how participants learn to become globally competent (Illeris, 2014b). Learning global competence constitutes a part of that potential transformation as students are often faced with unease as they call into question their habits of mind. For Mezirow (1978), the lack of comfort and even pain associated with this progression is a result of *meaning perspective transformation*. He (1978) defined *meaning perspective* as:

...the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions within which new experience is assimilated to past experience. It is a way of seeing yourself and your relationships. More than that, it establishes the criteria that determine what you will experience—criteria for identifying what you will find interesting, for deciding which problems are of concern to you, for determining what you are prepared to learn and from whom, for determining values, for setting priorities for action, and for defining the meaning and direction of self-fulfillment and personal success. (p.11)

Mezirow (1978) believed that the construction of meaning perspectives largely happen during childhood development, as part of the process of socialization meant to teach us social values and prepare us for our future societal roles. Those perspectives become solidified in adulthood. However, to Mezirow, the same perspectives which are meant to aid us in finding our place in society by simplifying the complexities of our experiences can just as easily limit the lens through which we view the world (Mezirow, 1978). While living our lives without realizing the flaws in our perspective is entirely possible, sometimes new experiences force us to reflect on those views only to uncover underlying

problems within them (Hodge, 2011). Mezirow (1997) posited that it is experiences like these that bring on a ‘disorienting dilemma,’ prompting critical analysis and examination of our personal frameworks of the world (2011).

The immense political, economic, and social interconnection of the world in the 21st century speaks to the complexity of people’s everyday lives as they are presented in their personal and professional environments with people, cultures, views, and values different from their own, any or all of which may trigger self-reflection and criticism (Illeris, 2014b). More so, the phenomenon of globalization reinforces the fact that the world is in constant flux (2014b). This constant change makes transformative learning a necessary component of adult education, as individuals must continuously grow intellectually as a way of keeping up with the changes in the world and their own lives (2014b). The need for constant advancement is very clearly seen in the professional world where the integration of technology, politics, industry, and global trade have forced corporations to search for employees with global mindsets (Schuetze, 2013). Higher education institutions are at the forefront of educating and training future professionals who, as students, are increasingly required to study in multicultural settings and gain a global understanding of the world so as to be better equipped to live, work and thrive in a diverse society (Helms et al., 2015).

Theory application. Rather than merely teaching more of the same occupational skills augmented by a general liberal arts education, learning global competency through transformative learning can only happen with a well-rounded curriculum and organization that supports students “in developing critically reflective, perspective-rich,

and contextually rich global perspectives” (Glisczinski, 2008, p.1). In meeting this standard, colleges and universities should recognize the necessity of regularly assessing their institutional educational initiatives and practices as an investigation of their effectiveness in student learning of global competence. As there has been a lack in assessing the effectiveness of the INR 2002 IR course at the research site for its transformative potential in fostering global perspectives, there was a need to conduct this research in gaining a deeper understanding of the learning process at FC.

Applying the transformative learning theory to the research questions provided a working lens through which I could better understand the research problem. Specifically, it allowed me to investigate global competence acquisition as that of a process of learning new knowledge or skills and getting an in-depth look into the extent of such learning. Employing the theory as way to understand and answer the research questions helped me explore which INR 2002 course characteristics the instructors expressed as helpful in student global competence acquisition as well as which classroom activities were most successful at forcing students to challenge, undermine, and finally transform their personal perspectives as required steps in gaining global competence (Hodge, 2011).

In this qualitative explorative case study, I was allowed an in-depth look into the student global competence learning process in the FC INR 2002 course, by investigating IR faculty perceptions of the course curriculum, teaching and learning resources, the pedagogical approach, and the overall course design. I gathered instructor perceptions of the effectiveness of the course in student global competence acquisition as based on the course transformative potential in student conceptualization of the material through open-

ended interviews. By participating in this study, instructors were given the opportunity to explore their own inner perceptions of course effectiveness, as well as their personal teaching experiences and student learning experiences. They were able to do so by answering unique to qualitative research thought-provoking questions requiring in-depth responses. Providing in depth answers encouraged professional transformations in them, the effect of which may be improved pedagogical practices. I analyzed the data for overarching themes to serve an exploratory role into the global competence teaching practices in the INR 2002 course. I used the research findings to formulate recommendations for institutional stakeholders for course improvement purposes.

Review of the Broader Problem

Search Strategy

I developed the focus of the literature review searching Walden University databases including Academic Search Complete, JSTOR, Political Science Complete, and Soc INDEX, Education Research Complete, and ERIC, with basic searches of competency-based education and curriculum formation and the teaching and learning of global competence in American postsecondary educational institutions. I used Google Scholar to search for scholarly articles pertaining to the focus of the study. A significant portion of the literature review was drawn from peer-reviewed publications dating back 5 years. I presented a small percentage of the research dating back more than 5 years. Nonetheless, the data are still relevant to the discussion of the topics covered under the research problem.

The following literature review includes the current knowledge available about the topics within the local problem. I began the literature review with a general discussion on the importance of competency-based skills like global competence and teaching them to students as part of the internationalization efforts in the American higher education system as a way of providing context on the research topic. Subsequently, I presented a more detailed discourse on competency-based education and its role in American higher education and the workforce, global competence as an example of a competency-based skill, and roadblocks to teaching it in order to make a connection between the research topic and the research problem. I used a combination of terms to research these sections including: *competency-based education, global competence in American college students, teaching and learning of global competence in international relations, curriculum internationalization, 21st-century skills, global competence acquisition, and assessing for global competence.*

It is important to point out that the concept of global competence is relatively new having received most of its attention only in the last 2 decades. The vagueness of the term has led to the creation of many definitions, theories, and models used to discuss and assess global competence. As such, I used various terms to reach for global competence acquisition and assessment in postsecondary education. These terms included: *global competitive intelligence, intercultural sensitivity, cross-cultural communication, and cultural sensitivity.* However, even with this wider spectrum of terms, no scholarly articles relating particularly to the assessment effort of student global competence acquisition in the IR discipline and assessment of global competence acquisition

assessment by instructors specifically yielded results. Thus, I broadened the literature review to a discussion of an educational approach, *competency-based education* having been found a necessary component of effectively teach global competence to students, which has been recognized as a pertinent 21st- century skill intricately tied to American higher education internationalization efforts. The subsequent section of the literature review is related to discussing gaps in practice in the teaching of IR identified in the research problem responsible for deterring student global competence acquisition. This section includes search terms such as *ethnocentrism, bias in teaching international relations, and subjectivity in the teaching of international relations* yielding results pertaining to teacher overreliance on American authored texts and IR being predominantly taught from a Eurocentric/ Western/ Westphalian perspective. The literature review concludes with a short discourse on the need to explore global competence teaching in the INR 2002 class at FC in light of the presented information.

Internationalization of Higher Education, Competency-Based Education, and Global Competence

Much of the literature on the topic of American higher education internationalization efforts has centered around the need to prepare youth to live and work in a heavily globalized world characterized by a competitive workforce on the world stage by teaching them practical 21st-century competency-based skills like global competence (ACE, 2015; Acharya, 2014; Acharya & Buzan, 2007; Chen, 2011 Chiu & Duit, 2011; IAU, 2016). International and national organizations like the International Association of Universities (IAU) and the American Council on Education (ACE) are

responsible for generating data on global education. They have published numerous reports reiterating the vital role that educational institutions play in creating and implementing institutional policies and developing courses geared toward teaching performance-based intercultural competence skills that their students would be able to use to meet their personal and professional need (ACE, 2015; IAU, 2016).

In turn, these reports have generated teaching and learning objectives and matrices helpful to institutions in creating globally competent educational experiences. For instance, the 21st Century Skills Map document identifies cultural, awareness and acceptance, familiarity with global issues, effective working relationship with people from diverse backgrounds, global awareness, communication, and collaboration, ability to build a more cooperative global community, and being able to successfully compete in the world labor market as most essential student learning outcomes for this century (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2015). Similarly, the Ed Steps initiative 13 identifies global competence as a set of skills embedded in being able to fulfill a set of tasks including the capability to examine the world outside of one's national borders, recognize differing viewpoints and talk about them thoughtfully and respectfully, effectually communicate ideas to diverse social groups, and take necessary steps to improve conditions in one's immediate and broader environment (NEA, 2016).

Teachers, higher education institutions and parents alike have recognized the need for today's students attaining global competence. Per the 2011 Survey of the American Teacher: Preparing Students for College and Careers conducted by The MetLife Foundation, 63% of parents and teachers along with 65% of Fortune 1000 executives

believe cultural awareness and knowledge of international issues are essential for college and career preparedness. As much as 55 % of U.S. institutions reported that they currently have initiatives underway to internationalize the undergraduate curriculum, though there was considerable variation by sector ranging from 34 % of special focus institutions to 90 % of doctoral institutions (ACE, 2012). Consequently, ACE reports that recent years since 2011 saw an increase across all sectors nationally from 24 % to 28 % of colleges and universities that require students to enroll in courses addressing global trends and issues (2012).

Competency-Based Education, Higher Education, and the American Workforce

The movement known as competency-based education and training began around 40 years ago (Jones & Olswang, 2017). The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), a long-time advocate for CBE believes that the time and place of learning something is not as important as how and when the learning occurs and whether the individual can demonstrate the newly acquired skill in the particular subject matter in a real-life environment (Share, 2013). Competency-based education originated from educational discourse within teacher preparation and education (2017). Later, competency-based education was incorporated into elementary, high school, and vocational training with an emphasis in curricular development (2017).

Competency-based education (CBE) is a unique teaching and learning approach based on performance-based assessment used in learning concrete skills rather than abstract ideas (Hopecraft, 2010). The approach was originally known in the United States

as performance-based education (2010). The approach differs from other educational approaches in that learning is based on fulfilling learning outcomes, every one of which is tied to mastering a specific skill known as a competency (Ordonez, 2014). Competence implies having the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully do a job in with the task and achievement standards are defined (2017). Directly related to competence is performance-based learning, which ensures that a competency or set of competencies is documented as being achieved by the learner (2010). As Klein-Collins (2013) pointed out, "...a hallmark of CBE programs [is]...an intensive focus on what students know and can do rather than on what is taught" (p.4). The learners graduate from that a particular unit or part of a course only when they have shown the ability to complete the task, implying that CBE is more concerned with the demonstration of learning and not the completion of course hours (2014).

The urgency of creating competent workers has become a national initiative reflected in recent legislative requirements for accountability in higher education. The National Skills Standards Board of the United States was a body created under the Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994. The board oversees the creation and adoption of a nationally wide system meant to assess and certify skill standards (Jones & Olswang, 2017). The National Organization for Competency Assurance develops standards and accredits establishments that meet these criteria under the leadership of The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (2017). Similarly, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology and Vocational Education Act provide funding for career, technical, vocational, and college programs working toward setting program competency

standards (2017). Overall, these federal acts have assisted with the development and standardization of competencies for occupations, have brought more attention to competency standards, and have brought about an extensive acceptance of performance-based learning offered in secondary and postsecondary career and technical programs (2017).

These legislative initiatives driven by the national need to produce a competitive workforce have challenged universities and colleges to pursue different pedagogies that help students learn 21st- century skills (ACE, 2015). Competency-based education focuses on skill sets, since skill development is necessary to live, work, and learn successfully in a changing world. However, due to the autonomous nature of higher education institutions, there is a lack of uniformity across the country as to how such competencies are to be taught and assessed (2013). While steps have been taken by college administration at numerous institutions toward the creation of similar uniform standards, their efforts have been limited in ensuring standard homogeneity and have not led to an adoption of an official national initiative at the higher education level. For instance, in 2013 the Florida College System, comprised of 28 public community and state colleges in the U.S. state of Florida with leadership from the Florida state legislature adopted the general education core course options (General Education Steering Committee, 2013). The general education requirements resemble the national Common Core Standards Initiative (2013). In creating the general education core, the Florida state legislature, under the leadership of the General Education Steering Committee, decided on the disciplines which were to be included in the core (2013). But, unlike the Common

Core State Standards Initiative, the Florida general education core gives the freedom to individual institutions in deciding which courses are to be part of those disciplines and in creating curricula for them (2013). This prevents consistency in educational program planning, delivery, and evaluation. Instead, each college administration belonging to the Florida College System decides when and how such courses are to be taught and evaluated and must rely on their own institutional resources to do so (2013).

The lack of standardization is evident in public records such as the report by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, titled *Measuring Up 2006: The State-by-State Report Card for Higher Education* in which student learning across the United States was not able to be graded (Hunt, Carruthers, Callan & Ewell, 2006). The report, prepared by an independent national panel of experts, graded states on preparation, contribution to student overall college experience, affordability, graduation rates, and benefits (2006). However, every state received an incomplete in students learning, measured by student attainment of an associated degree and again upon receipt of a baccalaureate degree, as well as in the teaching of workplace skills (2006). More recent reports do not show much improvement in student CBE attainment and college assessment of such skills. The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning 2012 report "Competency-Based Degree Programs in the U.S.: Postsecondary Credentials for Measurable Student Learning and Performance, examined the present situation with competency-based higher education in America., outlining the different types of competency-based models that currently exist, how well they measure student competencies or learning outcomes, and to what degree they function outside of a credit-

based college system (Klein-Collins, 2013). The conclusion was that there is still much room for improvement in institutional assessment efforts (2013). Consequently, colleges and universities should take the necessary measures in implementing institutional policies geared toward regular competency-based assessments of the programs and courses offered at their institutions (2013).

There has been a significant shift in discourse on adult education and professional training in the last twenty years (2017). Currently, CBE is talked about in terms of markets, investments, products and employees (Jones & Olswang, 2017). Thus, with the integration of the workforce market in the 21st century, CBE has received much attention from the professional world as companies search for dynamic, flexible, and collaborative employees capable of illustrating high levels of performance in any environment especially when faced with multiplicity of problem-based situations reflective of the complexities of a globalized world (Share, 2013). Naturally, competence and competency have received much attention as a consequence. In the professional context, competence implies specific requirements for an individual to perform a given job (Jones & Olswang, 2017; Review of Vocational Qualifications, 1986) whereas competency is a description of skills, knowledge, experience and other personal characteristics necessary to perform that job (2017). In different terms, competencies are skills needed for the job which one illustrates by explaining what needs to be done and how well and completes the task successfully with high level of performance. Thus, CBE is an educational approach believed to prepare learners for a world in which they are expected to arrive at their job not only with competencies they can articulate, but also to continue to develop and

expand their competencies to meet the changing needs of their organizations, communities, and world in which they work (Jones & Olswang, 2017). CBE is directly linked to success in CBL; helping students learn with competence development in mind via numerous application such as curriculum design, experiential and transformative learning, entry and exit examinations, lifelong learning initiatives, project-based team learning, and partnership programs between the workplace and higher education institutions (2017).

Global Competence and Roadblocks to Teaching

Global competence is defined as a set of particular skills learned, improved on, and demonstrated in examining the world, identifying and evaluating perspectives, obtaining and applying newly-attained knowledge in the IR field, and successfully sharing ideas with peoples of different cultures and ethnicities (ACTFL, 2014). It is the capacity and disposition to understand and act on global issues (NEA, 2012). Being globally competent implies “having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work efficiently outside one’s environment” (Hunter, White, & Godbey, 2006, p. 269). The capability can be acquired within any discipline as well as be interdisciplinary. The global competence matrix (Figure 1), created as part of the Council of Chief State School Officers’ EdSteps Project in partnership with the Asia Society

Partnership for Global Learning helps teachers and students understand global competence and how to apply it to their teaching and learning needs (NEA, 2012).





EdSteps			
MAIN GLOBAL COMPETENCE MATRIX			
Global Competence is the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance.			
INVESTIGATE THE WORLD	RECOGNIZE PERSPECTIVES	COMMUNICATE IDEAS	TAKE ACTION
<p>Students investigate the world beyond their immediate environment.</p> <p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify an issue, generate a question, and explain the significance of locally, regionally, or globally focused researchable questions. ■ Use a variety of languages and domestic and international sources and media to identify and weigh relevant evidence to address a globally significant researchable question. ■ Analyze, integrate, and synthesize evidence collected to construct coherent responses to globally significant researchable questions. ■ Develop an argument based on compelling evidence that considers multiple perspectives and draws defensible conclusions. 	<p>Students recognize their own and others' perspectives.</p> <p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize and express their own perspective on situations, events, issues, or phenomena and identify the influences on that perspective. ■ Examine perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought and identify the influences on those perspectives. ■ Explain how cultural interactions influence situations, events, issues, or phenomena, including the development of knowledge. ■ Articulate how differential access to knowledge, technology, and resources affects quality of life and perspectives. 	<p>Students communicate their ideas effectively with diverse audiences.</p> <p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize and express how diverse audiences may perceive different meanings from the same information and how that affects communication. ■ Listen to and communicate effectively with diverse people, using appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior, languages, and strategies. ■ Select and use appropriate technology and media to communicate with diverse audiences. ■ Reflect on how effective communication affects understanding and collaboration in an interdependent world. 	<p>Students translate their ideas and findings into appropriate actions to improve conditions.</p> <p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify and create opportunities for personal or collaborative action to address situations, events, issues, or phenomena in ways that improve conditions. ■ Assess options and plan actions based on evidence and the potential for impact, taking into account previous approaches, varied perspectives, and potential consequences. ■ Act, personally or collaboratively, in creative and ethical ways to contribute to improvement locally, regionally, or globally and assess the impact of the actions taken. ■ Reflect on their capacity to advocate for and contribute to improvement locally, regionally, or globally.
<p>The Global Competence Matrix was created as part of the Council of Chief State School Officers' EdSteps Project in partnership with the Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning. © 2011 by the Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, DC All rights reserved.</p>			
			
			
2	www.edsteps.org		

Figure 1. Main Global Competence Matrix. Retrieved from Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning website:
<https://education.ky.gov/school/stratclsgap/instruction/Documents/Global%20Competence%20Matrix.pdf>

While, student global competence has been recognized as an important CBE learning outcome by policy makers and college communities, teaching it comprehensively nationwide is one of the biggest challenges facing America's higher education system (West, 2012). According to the 2015 American Council on Education report, *Internationalizing U.S Higher Education: Current Policies, Future Directions*, presently there is no comprehensive national policy in place geared toward internationalization of U.S. higher education. The environment of a decentralized higher education system characterized by institutional and governmental regionalization and autonomy along with the size and diversity of the U.S. higher education system make creating such a policy unlikely (ACE, 2015). Thus, teaching global competence as part of larger internationalization efforts of U.S. higher education remains the responsibility of individual institutions. Yet, institutional internationalization efforts continue to be sporadic and ineffective since systematic integration into classroom practice is still rare (Beelen, & Jones, 2015; West, 2012). As evidenced, the number of institutions requiring students to take courses with a concentration on global issues, various cultural perspectives and/or international events have decreased across all sectors nationally from 37 percent to 29 percent (ACE, 2012). Consequently, researchers exploring the effectiveness of global competency education in American classrooms have found that students are limited in their professional opportunities as they lack in the requisite 21st-century skill of global competence even after receiving higher education degrees (Di Giacomo, Fishbein, Monthey, & Pack, 2013; Li, 2013; Wold, & Moore, 2013).

Public data also reflects the disparities between higher education initiatives and reality in teaching global competence. Results from the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a nationally representative assessment, show that only 38% of U.S. 12th-graders performed at or above proficient in reading, and only 26% performed at or above proficient in mathematics. Consequently, data from The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), through a project called the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), created for assessing and comparing adult competencies and basic skills from around the world reported the United States lags significantly behind 30 other industrialized nations in pertinent 21st century skills (Institute of Education Sciences, 2016). The study focused on millennials between the ages of 16 and 34, observing that they will be the ones to make up the American workforce for the next few decades and reflect the current state of the American educational system (2016). Both literacy and problem-solving ranking are unimpressive with millennials in the U.S. having better reading skills as compared to only Spain and Italy and ranking last in critical thinking coming to a tie with the Slovak Republic, Ireland, and Poland (2016). In this report, the NAEP looked at the capabilities of all adults rather than comparing grade levels, as is the case with many international comparisons, makes the American international ranking even more questionable of the ongoing efforts of teaching toward global competence as this illustrates that an American college degree is no guarantee of a higher international ranking or competing adequately in the world market for that matter (2015). Even students realize the inadequacies in their college education. Based on a recent study conducted by McKinsey & Company,

Education to Employment: Designing A System that Works, less than half of U.S. student survey respondents believed that their college/ university studies enhanced their chances at better employment opportunities (Mourshed, Farrell, & Barton, 2013). Also, as much as half of U.S. employer survey participants stated that there is a clear skills shortage among potential hires that is causing entry-level vacancies (2013).

Subjectivity in the Teaching and Learning of IR

Howard Gardner, a prominent author on global education inferred that instead of preparing young people for lives in the new millennium, teaching today is still a century behind as exemplified by outdated curricula organized around traditional subjects, predominantly lecture-based pedagogy, and educational assessment limited to multiple-choice or short-answer questions (Gardner, 2011). Similarly, the faulty organization and inner formation of the American IR discipline leading to curricular and pedagogical issues stand in the way of possible changes leading to a truly global education that would address skills shortage among today's workforce. The biggest factor preventing global competence acquisition in students is subjectivity in the teaching and learning of IR as caused by overreliance on American authored texts, English being the dominant language of the social sciences, American hegemony in the world over the IR discipline preventing global voices being included in IR rhetoric, and the lack of an interdisciplinary focus due to parochial IR teaching in the teaching of IR.

American hegemony in the world, leading to the way the discipline is organized, formatted and taught globally, may create biased student thinking due to skewed perspectives on how world politics works (Bertrand & Lee, 2012), Consequently, the IR

discipline is described as a semipermeable membrane that allows perspective from other disciplines to filter into IR, but prevents the vice versa from occurring leading international scholars to accuse the field of failure due to America's dominance over it (Buzan & Little, 2010). Such assertions only prove Stanley Hoffmann's nickname for international relations as the 'American Social Science'. Furthermore, English being the dominant language in the science gives an advantage to the American thinking over that of the non-Western world (Chiu & Duit, 2011). The Westphalian narrative has also been found to prevent the rise of a contemporary international system inclusive of voices from around the world the lack of which leads to misinterpretation of global issues facing the world and prevents pluralism from taking root in IR in an increasingly globalized world (Kayaoglu, 2010). Being introduced to the Westphalian narrative in the classroom limited scope of conversation thwarts the efforts of effectively hypothesizing about international matters as well as accommodating global diversity by centering the material on the Western world mostly (2010).

The faulty IR academic infrastructure in America is driven by the interaction of specific social structures, such as that of communication in scholarly journals, global societal knowledge formation, and the connection between these two as influenced by US position in the world and its domination over the field and not by the subject matter alone (Hellman, 2010). Research evidence proves that even though the US no longer dominates in IR scholarly writing, IR's label as 'an American social science' still holds true as the Western world dominates the field's leading journals preventing IR from becoming a truly international discipline (Kristensen, 2015). By creating his own visualization tool,

Kristensen (2015), shed light on IR scholarly journal publication stratification in which there appears to be clear network linkages in coauthorships between the elite institutions of Northeast America and Western Europe. Consequently, the intellectual division of labor symbolic of global knowledge formation prevents such positive change from occurring (Tickner, 2013). The core–periphery dynamics, in which the global South stands on the sidelines of the discipline’s US centrality, where most IR theory formation takes place, further proves the validity of the label (2013).

As most IR journals are flooded with American perspectives, overreliance on American-authored texts in the teaching of IR is not surprising as yet another possible cause for students’ biased perceptions and understanding of IR course material. American- authored textbooks have been found to present the curriculum from a predominantly Eurocentric/ Western perspective (Acharya, 2014). Scholarly research clearly reflects this overuse. For example, US IR programs participating in Hagmann and Biersteker’s (2014) recent study were found to overwhelmingly assign reading assignments developed within the American academic and socio-political context, in effect completely ignoring foreign conception of world politics. But, leaving out other regional viewpoints prevents the creation of a truly global theoretical IR epistemology (Acharya, 2014). As such, the modern international relations theory is unable to produce social good because of its bias resulting from its formation by “western nations by western authors for western readers mainly” (Young, 2014, p. 1). Overreliance on Western texts creates a Eurocentric epistemological framework which in turn prevents

the formation of non-Western theories in other parts of the world such as Asia (Chen, 2011).

Besides the problematic content of IR scholarly writing itself, there is also the issue of how these textual teaching resources are being used in the classroom environment. The American IR discipline is ruled by different kinds of intellectual parochialisms which prevents curricular homogeneity in the American IR discipline in turn raising difficult questions about superior pedagogical approaches in teaching the subject matter (Hagmann & Biersteker, 2014). The parochialism is due to the fact that individual IR course curriculum directly reflects the instructors' choice of preferred topics (2014). As instructors prioritize some perspectives over others, there is no assurance that the IR taught in the classrooms reflects the discipline as it is talked about in leading journals (2014). As such, parochial IR teaching prevents students from being exposed to differing views of international relations and forces them to interpret the complexities of power politics in a narrow manner (2014). Thus, parochial IR teaching creates the risk that students will project biased and historically situated viewpoints onto world events and infer them to be universal (2014).

Parochial teaching may be the result of teacher specializations, where instructors receive their own education with a concentration in a specific topic, approach, or epistemology and consequently teach in a way that reflects that specialization creating bias in student overlooking the need to teach global education through both a disciplinary and an interdisciplinary perspective (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011). While individual disciplines like history or economics can provide a helpful lens through which to perceive

the world, to fully understand the complexities of the global system, students need to be introduced to a multifaceted approach which will allow them to integrate knowledge, theories, and terminology from different disciplines to solve problems and ask novel questions about issues of global importance that would not be feasible with the use of a single discipline (2011). In other words, IR teaching needs to happen through a multi-paradigmatic approach (Hagmann & Biersteker, 2014).

Student subjective understanding of IR material as influenced by the above-mentioned factors can be exemplified by what Marks (2002) coined the 'we' problem in the study of international relations in which the subject matter is analyzed from the perspective of the first-person plural as symbolized by the usage of "we," "us," or "our," in classroom discourse. When students use these verbal expressions, they are in effect personalizing the subject material by attaching their own personal identity to it (Marks, 2002). Scholars have argued that as natural as it may be for adult students to base their knowledge building on their personal observations and experiences in society, such an approach has no place in the study of IR as it lowers objectivity with which students ought to see global events and solve world problems (Hellmann, 2010; Kristensen, 2015; Marks, 2002). Furthermore, personalizing the subject matter creates the false impression among students that they are in agreement over world events and problems and ways of studying them (Hellmann, 2010; Kristensen, 2015; Marks, 2002).

Conclusion

Educators and policymakers wanting to bring about change in the teaching of global competence have not spent enough time delving into the complexities of what it means to educate for a global era and are not unequipped to educate with a global emphasis effectively due to their own limited education (Gardner, 2011). More so, most citizens, including parents and teachers with traditional teaching approaches are not favorable to changes in the type of education that they have themselves experienced and tolerate innovation only as long as it means average results on traditional assessments (2011). Those same assessments are geared toward classical subjects and are not truly reflective of the interdisciplinary thought needed in 21st-century knowledge acquisition (2011). Above all, much of the world's nations, in times of crisis especially, are suspicious of the type of an education that transcends national borders for the sake of exploring cultures and value systems different from their own (2011).

The scholarly research expressing challenges to teaching for global competence in American higher education coupled with public data illustrating the inadequate levels of American college students' global competence should remind colleges and universities of their vital role in educational internationalization efforts. Part of such efforts in higher education is institutions taking the necessary steps of implementing policies geared at gathering informative data on student global competence acquisition in their present programs and individual courses. Such information should guide colleges and universities in implementing necessary course curriculum changes for improvement sake. Only with

courses meeting learning objectives meant to gauge 21st- century skill acquisition, will postsecondary schools be doing their part in educating for the future.

Implications

Based on the findings from the collected data and analysis, I produced a white paper to be emailed to institutional stakeholders. In the paper, I provide an overview of the current state of IR education at FC as based on IR instructors' perceptions of the effectiveness of the INR 2002 course in student global competence acquisition as well as recommendations for improving the course in teaching toward student acquisition of global competence by framing the discussion around the course curriculum and the associated present best course teaching practices and gaps in such practice that need addressing. The FC INR 2002 course is a part of the Florida social sciences general education core. As such, other disciplines/ programs at the institution may also benefit from the research results by utilizing its findings to improve their courses in ensuring that all students are provided an education that will adequately prepare them for their adult lives.

Summary

The phenomenon of globalization is the driving factor behind postsecondary education internationalization efforts in America as rooted in students adopting more worldwide perspectives into their knowledge bases and value systems that go beyond their subjective viewpoints about the world and people in it (West, 2012). These perspectives are encompassed by the term global competence and have quickly become an integral set of skills required by all college graduates to possess in the new

millennium. Courses in political science, like international relations (IR), possess the material helpful in creating global mindsets by teaching global competence. In making sure that they adhere to the present educational and professional demands, colleges and universities should possess institutional policies geared at evaluating such courses. At the present time, no individual course assessments are in place at FC that investigate the INR 2002 IR course in student global competence acquisition. As such, in the sections above, I presented a discussion of the problem at hand including a review of scholarly literature related to the broader problem of teaching for global competence and the purpose of addressing the research problem by conducting this study as driven by its fitting conceptual framework of transformative learning.

In the following sections, I provide insight into the research methodology as the appropriate research design and approach, a discussion of research participants, data collection and data analysis plan as well as study limitations. Using open-ended interviews, I collected informative data about the INR 2002 IR course by conducting a case study to understand FC instructors' perceptions of the effectiveness of the course on students' global competence skills. In the process, I explored concerns that teachers have with the course curriculum and their recommendations for improving the course as to better equip students with 21st- century skills embedded in global competence. I grouped the gathered data into overarching themes and presented them as research findings in the project section to institutional stakeholders for the sake of improving the presently offered INR 2002 course at FC. I discuss the project strengths and weaknesses,

alternative approaches, the importance of the work and implications, applications and directions for future research in the final reflections and conclusions section.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

Through this research, I aimed to gain new insight about a particular phenomenon. I did so by following Creswell's (2012) recommendation of investigating perceptions and experiences of a small group of people intricately involved in the phenomenon. I conducted the study using a qualitative research design and a case study approach meant to serve an exploratory role. I focused on gaining an in-depth analysis of the INR 20002 IR course offered at FC. Creswell (2012) wrote that this was possible by exploring the perceptions and experiences of a specific bounded group, in my case, the course instructors (Creswell, 2012). According to Creswell (2012), an exploratory research means no preliminary data affiliated with a particular phenomenon. The institutional lack of assessment data on the efficacy of the INR course means that this research met the exploratory requirement. I interviewed IR faculty members to acquire their perceptions of the effectiveness of the INR 2002 course in student global competence acquisition. I developed the themes correlated to the research questions based on the gathered data.

Phenomenological research pertains to how human beings experience a certain phenomenon (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Phenomenological qualitative approach would not have sufficed as no specific experiences or events concerning the INR course are the study focus. An ethnographic qualitative design focuses on investigating unique cultural issues (Creswell, 2012). This design was also not applicable because cultural groups are not associated with the course. Finally, grounded theory

research desires to develop a theory surrounding an even (Creswell, 2012). As, there is no current desire to develop a theory associated with the course, a grounded theory approach was not suitable for this research as well.

Population and Sampling

FC, the research site, is a 4-year undergraduate college that is one of several institutions in the Florida College System designated as a state college. It offers a greater number of bachelor's degrees than traditional community colleges. FC currently employs almost 2000 faculty and staff member and about 52,000 domestic and international students. Per communication with the institution's liberal arts department dean, FC currently employs nine instructors, both adjunct and full-time, that are credentialed to teach and have taught the INR 2002 course in the last year, including myself. There are approximately five INR courses offered on a semester basis with each class holding a maximum of 35 students. Eight instructors served as the sample population as determined by a homogenous purposeful sampling. This sampling strategy was best suited for the study as the instructors at the research site teaching the INR 2002 course were most knowledgeable the about the topic of study pertaining to international relations education. Purposeful sampling assumes "that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Merriam, 2009, p. 33). I emailed all eight instructor the initial invitation to participate in the study, with the hope that all of them would accept the offer. This would have provided the most in-depth level of inquiry. However, because the study was exploratory in nature and no INR 2002 course assessment data on student global competence

acquisition presently exists at FC, I conducted the study with a sampling size smaller than eight, due to the valuable data that it yielded. Data saturation, a situation in which the data have been heard before, was helpful in determining the exact study sample (Lodico et al., 2012). I concluded the interview process at the point in data collection when interviewees started providing the same experiences and reflections. Reaching the point of saturation ensures that the depth of inquiry was achieved and there was no longer new information to be shared by the participants (Lodico et al., 2012).

To gain access to the prospective participants, I received approval to conduct research from both Walden University and Florida College, the local research site. The research commenced only after receiving FC IRB approval and Walden University IRB approval, respectively. I emailed both the invitational email and an informed consent agreement to all INR 2002 faculty within the liberal arts department using the college directory, which I have access to as an employee. Volunteers responded by sending an acceptance email that stated their consent to the terms of the informed consent agreement. Upon receipt of the acceptance emails, I began to schedule interviews as part of the data collection process. The participants were asked the interview questions in a face-to-face interview at off school site locations. I conducted semistructured interviews to provide participants with more answering flexibility in expressing their perceptions.

I took the necessary measures to establish a working researcher-participant relationship to encourage the respondents to trust me so that they became more willing to open up and describe their true feelings, thoughts, and intentions. For this reason, I used open-ended interviews. I asked all participants the same questions, but the order of the

questions varied depending on the course of the communication. I also asked questions in a noninvasive tone that made the respondents feel comfortable with providing rich and thorough responses. Furthermore, I formed the questions were in a non-condescending way so that the interviewees did not feel like they were being disloyal to the institution where they work by criticizing the course under question. I used a digital recorder to record the interview data for later analysis. For comfort and to establish rapport, I conducted the data collection outside of school hours at an off-campus site that was convenient and close in distance for prospective participants.

I ensured ethical consideration relevant to the protection of human subjects including the treatment of study participants and research data through several measures. Before expressing voluntary agreement to participate, I informed INR 2002 instructors via email about the purpose and procedures of the study as well as the risks involved. These are necessary precautions to take in research (Rossman & Rallis, 2010). I reminded the participants of this again right before their interviews. They were also assured that they could leave the study at any point without repercussions of any kind and that participation was voluntary. In assuring the protection of collected data, I will store the interview and survey material for 5 years in a password protected computer at my place of residence, after which time the data will be permanently destroyed by erasing it from the computer hard drive. I will store the audio recorded information collected with the use of an audio recorder on a USB drive and on the computer desktop at my home for a period of 5 years from the publication of the study. Subsequently, I will destroy and remove the data from the computer hard drive. I coded the transcribed recordings after

transcription in a Microsoft Word document. I personally transcribed and coded the data and assigned participant numbers. Assigning numbers to study participants instead of using their actual names or any other identifiers is necessary for confidentiality purposes (Creswell, 2012).

Participant Profiles

Through the recruiting process, I found five volunteers willing to be interviewed. I included all five participants in the study as five out of eight possible FC INR instructors was a solid study sample with a return rate of more than 50%. All five participants have taught the course in the last year and were eager to share their perceptions with me. Also, the participants have taught the course across all five college campuses at varying days, times, and teaching environments, on-site and online included. All interviewed participants are credentialed to teach the course and had obtained PhDs in political science in institutions of higher learning across the United States.

Data Collection

I used open-ended interviews, as I believed them to be the best fit for this study due to the nature of the research, particularly the purpose of the research, research design, and research questions. I found that the open-ended interview format provided the best opportunity for the participants to share their perceptions of the INR 2002 course in student global competence acquisition. Through this format, they were also allowed to freely answer the interview questions pertaining to best practices in teaching the course and possible issues with the course curriculum and ways of remedying them. According to Patton (2005), interview questions that pertain to experiences and behaviors, opinions,

and values and feelings provide in-depth data to answer qualitative research questions. These types of interview questions allow participants to expound on their own perceptions (2005). I created interview questions presented in an interview protocol format in order to explore teacher perceptions in a manner that would enable educational professionals to discover how the INR 2002 course at a Florida College is affecting student acquisition of global competency. Each interview question was aligned with one of the research questions. Although, I conducted the interviews directed by prearranged research questions, I still maintained flexibility by asking follow-up, clarifying, and probing questions if necessary so that I could gain a deeper understanding of teachers' experiences teaching the INR course and student global competence acquisition in it.

I contacted the participants via email using the college email system and asking for their participation after receiving Walden University Institutional Review Board approval (IRB # 11-20-17-0471473). Once participants signed the consent agreement and confirmed an interview appointment, data collection ensued. In consideration of teachers' busy professional lives and work schedules, I was willing to drive to locations convenient to the participants such as local coffee shops to ensure that participants did not waste time and effort on such travel. The interviews primarily took place in the morning and afternoon hours during participants' off work days. Based on the number and nature of interview questions the individual interviews took no more than 45–60 minutes each. In keeping track of the data and emerging understanding, I took reflective notes during and after each interview in the form of a data analysis chart.

My role as the researcher was key to collecting meaningful data. This was possible due to my current employment at the same institution that served as the research site. I have been working for this institution for the past 4 years as a political science professor, teaching numerous courses including the INR 2002 course. I perform no supervisory duties and am therefore at the same level of employment as the study participants. I believe my professional background in the same discipline and having experience teaching the course that is the focus of this study allowed me to establish credibility with participants and made them less apprehensive in sharing their viewpoints than if they were to be asked to do so by an outside researcher unfamiliar the institutional culture of the research site. At the same time, it was crucial to the reliability of this study for me to be able to separate my role within the college from my role as a researcher. As an adjunct faculty member, my time spent on site has been limited. This has kept me from personally getting to know the possible participants and preventing a possible awkward situation where a personal connection might have created perceived pressure on participants to take part in the study. I told the participants that they could leave the study at any time, even after data collection. Furthermore, questions may be raised about researcher bias due to my own knowledge, perceptions, and experiences teaching the INR 2002 course. To prevent my own biases from negatively effecting data collection and analysis, I employed member checking by having participants look over the initial research findings to ensure that their perceptions were represented accurately for research validity purposes.

Data Analysis

I taped the interviews on a digital tape recorder and on my Android smart phone voice recorder. Subsequently, they were transferred to my personal laptop. I made transcriptions of the interviews in a Microsoft Word document and saved on the laptop desktop and a USB drive for later analysis and coding. I took field notes during the interview process in order to write down personal observations. These notes provided additional insight into teacher perceptions about the INR 2002 course and about student global competence acquisition. I stored them on a laptop hard drive and a USB in a Microsoft Word format.

In analyzing and interpreting the data on teachers' perceptions of student global competence acquisition, I employed Creswell's (2012) data analysis steps. First, I transcribed verbatim the audio-recorded interviews and made interview notes including actions such as interviewees taking lengthy breaks between their comments or making statements that I could not interpret. By transcribing all that occurs during an interview, a researcher is able to capture the details that provided useful insights for data analysis (Creswell, 2012). Secondly, I conducted a preliminary review of transcriptions in order to develop a broad perspective based on participants' responses to the general research questions. This requires a researcher to look over the interview responses following each interview to verify that they were valid and aligned with the research questions (Creswell, 2012). Third, I divided the transcribed text into segments in order to identify emerging general themes. Fourth, I renamed the text segments as codes followed by selection of

themes that correlated to the study conceptual framework, which followed Creswell's (2012) data analysis steps.

For assigning codes, I performed a textual analysis that involved counting the number of times a certain word or phrase with same meaning appeared (Lodico et al., 2010). I also coded the field notes by finding common objective observations (Lodico et al., 2010). I color coded the data to highlight potential themes, to better process information and locate emerging themes. I used a different color for each participant's data and used those themes to compare to other participants' perceptions. I kept track of the emerging codes and themes with the use of a self-made data analysis chart with research questions and aligning interview questions appearing as main columns and subcolumns. I emailed all the participants the interview transcriptions and initial research findings from the data analysis chart as part of member checking to address any researcher bias by enhancing the study's validity. The discussion of the relationship among research questions, themes, findings, and recommendations appears in the subsequent data analysis section of the report.

To allow for the emergence of themes in answering the research questions through the analysis of data, I organized the data in such a way so as to make the large amount of information manageable. As based on Creswell's (2012) recommendations for analyzing qualitative data, I collected the gathered data, prepared it for analysis, reviewed it for a general sense of the material, and coded it to generate major themes. As part of this process, I developed a system of keeping track of data and emerging understanding of themes in the form of a data analysis chart. This included me jotting down reflective

personal notes and observations. As a way of managing the workload, I transcribed the recordings and coded the data as soon as possible after each interview session in order to ensure that data along with field notes stayed fresh in my mind. Once the data were coded and analyzed, I emailed the initial research findings to participants to ensure that their perceptions and thoughts were captured accurately as part of the member checking process ensuring research validity (Lodico et al., 2010).

I realized the possibility of needing to deal with discrepant cases in the data analysis stage of research. In doing so, the data that did not support or stood in opposition to the emerging research results were searched for and addressed in a detailed discussion in the data analysis section (Creswell & Poth, 2017). This refinement of the data analysis process either confirmed or extend the emerging themes from data analysis and were helpful by providing more depth to the research question responses.

Coding and Theme Development

I gathered data for this research after Walden and research site approval from FC INR 2002 instructors in open-ended, semi-structured interviews. I transcribed and coded the data after each interview. For coding purposes, I used Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis employing the following steps: (a) familiarizing oneself with data to gain general meaning from interviewee responses by reading transcripts several times; (b) generating initial codes by highlighting passages of the transcribed texts and linking them to common ideas and grouping them under initial thematic concepts; (c) organizing participants' statements and grouping them into sub-themes using different colors for each participant, (d) reviewing and renaming the sub-themes into final themes

representing overarching research data ideas; (e) using Mezirow's conceptual framework on transformative learning to organize the sub-themes into five final themes, and (f) producing a final report consisting of an overview of the collected participants' expressions.

Data Analysis Procedure

I was guided in the study's thematic analysis by Mezirow's (1997) transformative learning. Transformative learning is said to occur when individuals change their frames of reference by critically reflecting on their assumptions and beliefs and consciously making and implementing plans that bring about new ways of defining their worlds (1997). The process of *perspective transformation* has three dimensions: (a) psychological, the stage at which the learner changes his/her self-understanding; (b) convictional, the stage at which the learner revises their belief systems, and (c) behavioral, the learned makes appropriate changes to their lifestyle that correlate with the new belief system (1997).

Thematic analysis is best thought of as an umbrella term for a variety of different approaches rather than a singular term (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thus, thematic analysis is a flexible process that mends itself useful to all kinds of qualitative studies. But, as it does not adhere to any particular theoretical approach, thematic analysis does not provide any specific guidelines for its completion. Thus, I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps for thematic analysis, becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming final themes, and producing the report, in such a way so that they would serve the unique characteristics of my case

study. These steps for thematic analysis worked well with my conceptual framework, allowing for a rich description of data.

Step 1 – Becoming familiar with the data. I recorded and transcribed verbatim all of participants' responses. Subsequently, I saved the transcripts on my computer under each participant's identity, labeled 1 through 5. I read the transcripts three times gain a general understanding of the responses. Every time I read them I jotted down any similarities between the ideas expressed by the participants. As participants oftentimes responded to a question with supportive data that answered other interview questions, I had to closely familiarized myself with the data and sift through the transcripts to group the answers to its accompanying questions. I did so by color-coding participants' responses to the various research questions and its accompanying research questions.

Step 2 - Generating initial codes (level 1 codes and level 2 codes). For developing initial codes, I disassembled the data by identifying excerpts from the transcriptions that shared common ideas and organize the texts into groups, each with its own thematic idea around it (Yin, 2011). I performed coding with an analytical rather than a descriptive approach, which meant me reading and rereading the text numerous times in search of common ideas. Most level 1 and level 2 codes were obvious in recognition as certain phrases were repeated by different interviewees'. Sometimes however, the respondents were not direct enough with their answers but instead provided lots of supportive, explanatory data. This meant that I had to figure out what the responded what trying to say and reorganize his/her response into fewest possible words.

Listening to the recorded audio files, reading the transcriptions and my notes, I wrote down the emerging codes. A total of 49 initial codes emerged from the transcribed participants' responses (Table 1). I aligned the codes with Mezirow's transformative learning theory, that addressed the objective of student global competence acquisition in the FC INR 2002 course as based on teachers' perceptions of the course effectiveness founded on their responses about course strengths and weaknesses, best used practices and possible changes made to the course curriculum for improvement purposes. Table 5 is a representation of the initial codes generated during thematic analysis and their alignment to Mezirow's conceptual framework. Alignment of initial codes to the framework indicated that some of the codes cut across more than one dimension of the learning theory: psychological, the learner changes his/her self-understanding, convictional, the learner revises their belief systems and behavioral, the learner makes appropriate changes to their lifestyle that correlate with the new belief system (Mezirow, 1997), particularly the psychological and behavioral. A code could express the learner's potential of going through both the psychological as well as the convictional, the convictional and behavioral dimensions, or all three as a result of taking the INR 2002 course with its presently identified definition of global competence as well as the presently instructor perceived course goals and objectives. The codes also expressed the potential ways that course weaknesses and strengths as well as potential course improvements could affect student transformation.

Table 1

Initial Codes Matrix

Code	Psychological	Convictional	Behavioral
Global competence as teaching societal and global interconnectivity	×	×	
Global competence as creating awareness of the outside world		×	
Student ability to address complexities of today's world as a course goal		×	×
Global competence as teaching social, global and cultural responsibility	×	×	×
Student knowledge gaps in global history and geography as a predictor of GC level		×	
Global competence as teaching awareness of international politics, issues, leaders, governmental structures and personalities		×	
Student understanding of American foreign and domestic policy as a course goal		×	
Student lack of knowledge of current events		×	
Student knowledge of foreign politics and diplomacy		×	
Engaging students in classroom discussions for critical thinking purposes	×	×	

Table 1 Continued

Using students' personal experiences to teach the course		×	×
Teaching IR by building on student knowledge foundations		×	
Making course material relatable to students- "downscaling"	×	×	
Engaging students with creative course assignment and activities		×	×
Utilizing Practices that promote critical thinking	×		
Utilizing practices that foster global citizenry	×	×	
Engaging students with videos and films			×
Engaging students with educational simulations			×
Building rapport with students			×
Engaging students with creative group assignment	×	×	×
Low course effectiveness due to introductory nature of the course	×	×	×
Student reasons for enrolling in the course	×		

Table 1 Continued

Rubric- driven assessments as students GC level predictors			×
Importance of class size in deciding on best teaching tools, practices, techniques	×	×	×
Class makeup and chemistry as a potential hindrance to student GC acquisition	×	×	×
American-centric nature of the course as a course weakness	×	×	×
Lack of identifiable course goals as course weakness	×	×	×
Lack of a standard course description as a course weakness	×	×	×
Student poor reading skills	×	×	×
Student willingness to use newly attained wisdom to engage in the world after course completion as a course goal			×
Poor textbook quality	×	×	×
Use of icebreakers and jokes to build rapport with and engage students		×	×
Course time constraints in teaching GC more comprehensively with the mixture of students	×	×	×

Table 1 Continued

Negative course-curriculum-change faculty perceptions	×	×	×
Need for course curriculum changes in informal institutional contexts	×	×	×
Building on teaching practices that work as course improvement	×	×	×
More teacher engagement in professional development	×	×	×
Student course evaluations		×	×
Sharing ideas with colleagues for course improvement purposes	×	×	×
Need for regionalized perspective of teaching IR for improved students grasp of geography and current events	×	×	×
Need for standard course goals that include GC	×	×	×
Need for a standard definition of GC within department/discipline	×	×	×
Need for an improved/more detailed course description	×	×	×
Need for incorporating cultural event for students to attend into course curriculum	×	×	×

Table 1 Continued

Need for a more engaging textbook	×	×	×
Need for reorienting the IR discipline to focus more on teaching GC	×	×	×
Need to use more globally focused examples to teach the course	×	×	×
Need for more globally oriented course assignments	×	×	×
Need for more professional development engagement by teachers	×	×	×

Step 3 - Searching for themes. In search of initial patterns or themes (level 3 codes or category codes), I engaged in data reassembling. I noticed that certain statements with same meanings were repeated numerous time by different participants. I rephrased these statements into more general categories and grouped the ones with the same meaning together. I discarded the redundant information. What guided me in the reassembling process of developing these meaningful patterns were guiding questions such as: Did the emerging patterns make sense? Were the patterns leading to an important plane? How did the patterns relate to the concepts of my study? Did the patterns become more complicated or expansive when additional items were reviewed from my database? (Yin, 2011). These questions helped me in data reduction as I took careful measures to

decide which information to retain and which information to discard in the effort of drawing and verifying conclusions (Yin, 2011). The process led me to develop 7 sub-themes out of the 49 initial codes illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Sub- Themes

Sub- Theme	Initial Codes
Definition of global Competence	Global competence as teaching societal and global interconnectivity
	Global competence as creating awareness of the outside world
Competence	Global competence as teaching awareness of international politics, issues, leaders, governmental structures and personalities
	Global competence as teaching social, global and cultural responsibility
Course goals and objectives	Student willingness to use newly attained wisdom to engage in the world after course completion
	Student ability to address complexities of today's world
	Student understanding of American foreign and domestic policy
Best teaching practices/ Course strengths	Building rapport with students
	Use of icebreakers and jokes to build rapport with and engage students
	Utilizing Practices that promote critical thinking
	Utilizing practices that foster global citizenry
	Engaging students with creative group assignment
	Engaging students with videos and films
	Engaging students with educational simulations
Engaging students with creative course assignment and activities	

Table 2 Continued

	Using students' personal experiences to teach the course
	Making course material relatable to students- "downscaling"
	Teaching IR by building on student knowledge foundations
	Engaging students in classroom discussions for critical thinking purposes
	Need for course curriculum changes in informal institutional contexts
Course weaknesses	Course time constraints in teaching GC more comprehensively with the mixture of students
	Student poor reading skills
	Lack of a standard course description as a course weakness
	Class makeup and chemistry as a potential hindrance to student GC acquisition
	Lack of identifiable course goals as a course weakness
	American-centric nature of the course as a course weakness
	Low course effectiveness due to introductory nature of the course
	Student knowledge gaps in global history and geography as a predictor of GC level
Possible student GC level predictors	Student reasons for enrolling in the course
	Student lack of knowledge of current events
	Student knowledge of foreign politics and diplomacy
	Rubric- driven assessments as students GC level predictors
Potential course improvements	Need for improved/ more detailed course description
	Need for a standard definition of GC within department/discipline
	Need for standard course goals that include GC
	Reorienting the IR discipline toward teaching GC

Table 2 Continued

	Need for regionalized perspective of teaching IR for improved students grasp of geography and current events
	Need for a more engaging textbook
	More teacher engagement in professional development
	Building on teaching practices that work as course improvement
	Need to use more globally focused examples to teach the course
	Need for incorporating cultural event for students to attend into course curriculum
	Need for more globally oriented course assignments
Context and setting for course curriculum changes	Sharing ideas with colleagues for course improvement purposes
	Negative course-curriculum-change faculty perceptions
	Global competence as teaching societal and global interconnectivity
	Student course evaluation

I extracted the sub-themes from the transcript data. The codes represent the interviewees' perceptions as represented by phrases summarizing central ideas expressed. Being guided by Mezirow's conceptual framework, I organized the sub-themes and used them for final theme reorganization. In table 3, I illustrate the alignment of sub-themes to the various aspects of the transformative learning theory: psychological, convictional, and behavioral. Some sub-themes fall into more than one of the three categories, thus illustrating the multidimensionality of these themes.

Table 3

Sub-Theme and Conceptual Framework Alignment

Psychological	Convictional	Behavioral
Definition of global competence	Definition of Global Competence	
Course goals and objectives	Course goals and objectives	Course goals and objectives
	Best teaching practices/course strengths	Best teaching practices/ course strengths
	Course weaknesses	Course weaknesses
Possible student GC level predictors	Possible student GC level predictors	Possible student GC level predictors
Potential course improvements	Potential course improvements	Potential course improvements
	Context and setting for course curriculum improvements	Context and setting for course curriculum improvements

Step 4 & 5- Reviewing sub-themes and defining and naming final themes. I

further reduced the sub- themes to final themes because the sub-themes were too many. Besides reducing the sub-themes, I also renamed some for clarity purposes. I used simplest terms possible in renaming the themes so that the readers of this research could quickly make sense of the hefty data. Therefore, I organized the sub- themes into final themes addressing Mezirow's transformative learning dimensions of psychology, conviction and behavior (Mezirow,1997). I also renamed the themes so that they would

more closely reflect the research topic thus ensuring alignment to the research questions.

The four final themes that emerged were:

1. Definition of Global Competence
2. Course Strengths
3. Course Weaknesses
4. Course Curriculum Development

Each theme was addressed by all three of the conceptual framework dimensions. Table 4 represent the merging and retitling of sub-themes into final themes as aligned with both the research questions and the conceptual framework.

Table 4

Reduction of Sub- Themes into Final Themes

Sub-theme	Final Theme	Applicable Conceptual Framework Dimension	Research Question
Definition of global competence	Definition of global competence	Psychological Convictional Behavioral	RQ 1
Course goals and objectives Best teaching practices/course strengths	Course strengths	Psychological Convictional Behavioral	RQ 1 & RQ 3
Course weaknesses	Course weaknesses	Psychological	RQ 2 & RQ 3

Table 4 Continued

Possible student GC level predictors		Convictional	
		Behavioral	
Potential course improvements	Course curriculum development	Psychological	RQ3
Context and setting for course curriculum improvements		Convictional	
		Behavioral	

Step 6 –Producing the report / conclusion. The final step of Braun and Clarke’s (2011) thematic analysis led me to compiling a report on the research conclusions/ findings that provided a succinct overview of participants’ expressions in the data. While most researchers believe that true objectivity is highly difficult to achieve in qualitative research and the true meanings of any phenomenon fully explored and understood, though constructed, this case study allowed me the chance to reveal the collective meanings and individual experiences that I constructed as truths. I did so by describing participants experiences in teaching the INR 2002 course with the use of deliberate phrases. It is on the basis of these overarching themes that I interpreted interviewees’ shared ideas as aligned with Mezirow’s (1997) transformative learning theory.

Data Analysis Results

Representing and reporting findings in a qualitative study is mainly done through a narrative discussion in which “the authors summarize, in detail, the findings from their data analysis” (Creswell, 2012, p. 254). Consequently, each research question and their subsequent findings from interviews are outlined using this method. Presenting research findings in this narrative manner allows for a thorough discussion of themes that emerged from the research questions.

This study results from personal communication with FC administration and faculty about the lack of individual course assessments in student global competence acquisition. This is particularly worrisome, as recent scholarship has shown that teaching this skill set in courses such as international relations is vital in preparing students for the rigors of the 21st century. There is a knowledge gap in terms of research literature about global competence acquisition by students in such courses, and this study served the purpose of investigating INR 2002 International Relations course teachers’ perceptions about student global competence acquisition. I asked these instructors to participate in a 45-60-minute interview in which they were asked explorative questions pertaining to their personal insights into the course effectiveness. Three research questions guided my efforts in creating the 10 interview questions. I discuss the findings outlined below with respect to the research questions. I conclude section 2 of the project study by outlining the evidence of quality and discrepant cases.

I derived the following major themes from the interview findings based on the gathered data: definition of global competence, course strengths, course weaknesses, and

course curriculum development. The accompanying tables 6-8 provide samples of answers to each research question and their derived themes.

Theme 1: Definition of Global Competence.

I show samples of participant interview responses aligned with research question 1 in table 5. In the accompanying interview questions, I asked the participants to provide their own definition of global competence, how they believe the course effects the way students learn global competence, how global competence is incorporated into what they teach, and what are some best practices that they use which they believe foster student global competence acquisition in students.

Table 5

Sample Participants' Responses on INR 2002 Course Global Competence Instruction

Participant	Sample Response
Participant 1 Interview Question: How do you define global competence?	...I don't know that I have a definition, but I do kind of think that what we lack is looking outside of our own experience and we have an awful lot of isolationist views in this country and I think that most of our students don't appreciate the fact that things have changed; the world is different.
Participant 2 Interview Question: How is learning global competence incorporated into what you teach?	...For example, at one time when I was teaching the section of the course about the different system, I had cards of different colors and a sheet that said each color is a political party, political party's platform, and these are the political party's preferences- that is to say that this political part will work with this political party- and I would divide them randomly. Some of the colors would produce large parties and some of the colors would produce small parties. And this was a parliament and they had to put together a coalition.

Table 5 Continued

<p>Participant 3</p> <p>Interview Question: How is learning global competence incorporated into what you teach?</p>	<hr/> <p>... It exposes them to a range of institutions, of actors, and processes that are above the level of the nation states so that they gain an appreciation for how countries interact with one another and the differences when states are interacting with each other as opposed to domestic politics, which is something that they are probably much more familiar with.</p> <hr/>
<p>Participant 4</p> <p>Interview Question: How do you define global competence?</p>	<hr/> <p>...I think global competence is any awareness of international politics, issues, leaders, governmental structures and personalities.</p> <hr/>
<p>Participant 5</p> <p>Interview Question: How is learning global competence incorporated into what you teach?</p>	<hr/> <p>... I also sometimes require the students to pick a topic like global environment or global health and write a letter to an elected official. So, that would be another type of an assignment. You know, to me the best practices are the ones that make the students not only think critically about the topics but also ones that foster a sense of global citizenry. And I know that the word is controversial as people start thinking about a global government.</p> <hr/>

Based on participants' answers to interview questions aligned with research question 1, I concluded that instructors' INR 2002 instructors' definition of global competence is limited in scope. Also, their individual understanding of the term informs the way they teach the class and gauge global competence acquisition in their students and whether they have met the course objectives and goals. However, considering that there is both no real uniformity in the definitions of global competence provided and a lack of full understanding of the term, make me believe that evaluating the course for its effectiveness in student global competence acquisition may be a difficult task for the FC Liberal Arts and Sciences Department.

While most participants used words and phrases like *interconnection*, *awareness of*, *understanding of*, no one participant defined the term exactly as any other participant. Most participants provided a definition of global competence similar to the one that is given to international relations, which is known as the relationship between world governments in the international system (Goldstein & Pevehouse, 2015). Thus, the definitions provided did not fully explain the complexity of what the term means.

For instance, participant 2 said:

[Global competence] is not just recognizing that France is in Europe and Brazil is in South America but recognizing the different way that Brazil and France and Japan and Malawi are interconnected and interact.

Participant 3 provided the definition of “awareness and understanding of cultures and systems outside of the United States” and participant 4 said, “any awareness of international politics, issues, leaders, governmental structures and personalities”. One participant even admitted to not having a set definition. While only one instructor, participant 5, gave the most rounded definition of global competence. Participant 5 said:

It is the idea that students learn enough about the international system in order that they understand American foreign policy and U.S actions in the international system. The second is cross-cultural understanding of how we interact with people different from us at home and abroad. ...The third piece, I am not sure how different it is from the second piece would be the ability to interact with people from other counties.

Furthermore, participant 5 mentioned that the institution requires a course description but that that it is “just a general understanding of the international system”. Participant 4 also reflected that the course description is too general and should absolutely include the term ‘global competence’. Furthermore, participant 4 pointed to a complete lack of the term ‘global competence’ in the present INR 2002 course description or course goals and objectives. Participant 4 stated:

I think the course description can also be changed. You have to tell them what you want them to know. The description is very general right now and there is not mention of global competence it is. That needs to be added for sure.

Similarly, participant 3 stated:

Within our own department global competence is not one of our learning objectives, and so it has not really been on the radar so much as me thinking reflectively about what I want the students to get out of the course.

Consequently, participants 3, 4 and 5 mentioned the need to create a uniform definition of global competence along with INR 2002 course goals and objectives that reflect this definition as a way of standardizing the term and making gauging students global competence acquisition easier for teachers and the administration. Participant 3 said:

I think, if we were to reorient ourselves to focus more on let’s say global competence or global awareness, we would see different kinds of assignments and different evaluation techniques. I think our concentration should [have global competence as one of their goals].

Global competence is the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance (ACTFL, 2014). In their global competence matrices, the Council of Chief State School Officers' EdSteps Project in partnership with the Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning provides a much broader understanding and complexity of global competence. These matrices help explain global competence and its application to many subject areas. The Main Global Competence Matrix along with the Global Competence Matrix for Social Studies are most suited for offering INR teachers and students a way to look at global competence through the international relations content area lens (NEA, 2012). It is through the lens of these matrices that I conclude that the INR 2002 teachers' definition and understanding of global competence is lacking. As instructors' definition of global competence is lacking, this may have a negative impact on student global competence acquisition as they are not being guided properly toward the transformative process.

Theme 2: Course Strengths.

I derived the theme of course strengths from a compilation of participant responses to interview questions pertaining to research question 1, 2 and 3. For instance, when talking about the best practices used in teaching the course material (RQ1), instructors expressed the shared belief that engaging students in the course material is vital to keeping their interest. All participants shared concrete examples of course assignment and classroom activities that they employ which they believe fosters global competence acquisition which they in turn believe raises the effectiveness rating of the course. They included individual and group state reports, where students had to pick a

country they knew nothing about and report on its political, social and cultural context and how its effects international relations (participant 1), or group projects where students had to create a political coalition and reflect on coalition's influence in domestic and foreign affairs (participant 2) or assigning articles on global current event (participant 4) However, the most widely mentioned best practice was class discussions. All five participants mentioned, either in answering RQ1 or RQ3, the importance of classroom discussions as a way of drawing students in and making them want to know more about the field of IR. They expressed the belief that thought provoking discussions make students leave the classroom more aware, interested and more likely to pay attention to the world outside of their own. Participant 4 said:

One of the things, especially the INR course that I teach, which is predominantly online, is lots of discussion. And so, students are asked to reply to other students and to comment on the validity of or interest in the others students' posts and that way it kind of allows all ships to rise because it allows the students to point out inconsistencies in other students' posts. And so, what happens is a dialogue emerges where the knowledge that was learned by one student is sometimes contradicted by other student and that way they are kind of working together to work through these concepts as opposed to simply learning about them in isolation.

Two participants pointed out that when engaging students in interesting discussions as a way of focusing them on the course material and making it relevant, teachers need to make use of students' own personal lived experiences as a basis. Participant 1 stated:

Some of the more effective things that I do is take advantage of what I have in the room. If I got somebody in the room that is an immigrant or is from another part of the world, sometimes I have a lot, 7 or 8 students, sometimes one, sometimes nobody. So, then you have to look at people who might have been somewhere else, military people, that sort of thing and I let them just talk. You get to the point where they talk about their life, how come they are here. That kind of thing. That creates interest in other students about the subject that you can't get them to do otherwise, the personal thing.

Classroom discussion that take advantage of the heterogeneity of the class would be helpful in drawing students in and making the course even more relevant to students' own lives. Having students who engage in tourism, who are recent immigrants, serve in the military and travel the world sharing their experiences and perceptions could help them and the rest of the class make a connection between the theoretical and the practical as well as spark their interest in the course material. As participant 3 declared:

I have to constantly think about the age range that I am teaching and their lived experience and what they can relate to the most so that I make it relevant to them as opposed to talking about it when I learned it.

Thus, the instructors have to meet the student where they are, meaning they have to use current examples from their lifetime and not from the past. Also, instructors need to be mindful of their students' demographics when coming up with relevant examples.

Furthermore, using current events to illustrate IR concepts will make the material more

relevant to students and will also inform them of what is presently happening in the world.

Employing teaching and learning tools that rely on using students' own personal lived experiences was also expressed as making the course content more applicable to students' lives. Participant 3 said:

...[what] I do the most often to encourage learning about it is providing personal stories or anecdotes that can allow the students to kind of tie these experiences to someone that they know who can speak intelligently about them and then on the other hand I do also what I call 'downscale' some concept in international relations. So, instead of starting off talking about trade policy or game theory and nuclear proliferation, I will instead talk about going to a restaurant among three friends. And that way they have a frame of reference of how that concept relates to them personally as opposed to starting with a much more abstract or external way in which that concept is utilized. And this is usually the way I begin to discuss a concept that I think may be very unfamiliar to them.

The theme of course strengths also arose as a result of INR 2002 teachers' perception of the advantages of the course as based on their personal course goals and objectives, meaning how they believe the course affects the way students learn global competence. Answers provided were generally reiterations from interview question 3: How is learning global competence incorporated into what you teach and question 4: What are current best practices that you use which you believe foster students GC acquisition. Answers included general goals of the course such as making students more aware of the existence

of the world beyond their own (1 and 4), exposing students to the complexities nation-states around the world and explaining to some degree how those state characteristics influence their domestic and foreign policies (participant 1, 2, and 5), presenting the theoretical perspectives, ideas and concepts within IR (participant 3 and 4).

It is based on these mentioned best practices and advantages of the course that INR 2002 teachers perceive the course as somewhat effective in student global competence acquisition, at the same time recognizing that there is always room for improvement. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the least effective and 10 being the most effective, out of the five participants, one participant gave a rating of 5, three gave the course an effectiveness rating of 6-7, and one a rating of 7-8. Thus, all study participants agree that the course is medium to high effective in student global competence acquisition.

I illustrate a sample of data gathered for research question 2 in table 6. Particularly, these are participants' responses to interview questions pertaining to participants' perceptions of the course effectiveness if rated on a scale of 1 to 10 and their evidence for giving their rating. I provided this range to participants as a follow up statement to an interview question once I realized they had a difficult time answering the question. While subjective in nature, the range helped participants answer the question on overall course effectiveness in a concise way. Range 1-4 was considered low effectiveness, range 5-7 medium effectiveness, 8-10 high effectiveness. The participants rated the overall course effectiveness as medium expressing various reasons as to why and sharing ways for improving the course.

Table 6

Sample Participants' Responses on Overall INR 2002 Course Effectiveness

Participant	Sample Response
Participant 1 Interview Question: What is the course effectiveness in students learning of global competence?	...Maybe 5. And that is generous. That is more my wish than the reality. If you get 1 or 2 you are good. You know, that is one of the things about teaching for a long time. I meet people all the time that are like, "Hey, aren't you so and so?" They say, "I took your class back in 1980 or so and so."
Participant 2 Interview Question: What is the course effectiveness in students learning of global competence?	...I would say the effectiveness of a lower level course is probably a 6 or 7- the scale itself being subjective. Because the 2000 level course I am teaching now, I feel I got more intelligent questions and I've got more students who would not ask questions at the beginning of the semester asking questions toward the end. Not everybody. I told you, it is a class of 60 people. There is always going to be 10 students that always answer the questions, other people are going to be quiet or looking at their cell phones or their computers. But if that core grows, that is a certain sign of success. That means people have bought in. People will say, "Yeah, there is something going on here and I like it or its peaking my interests or I had no idea it could be so interesting". That is happening this semester. So, that is good.
Participant 3 Interview Question: What is the course effectiveness in students learning of global competence?	...I would say a 6 or a 7 because I think many of my examples are largely American-centric. So, students are not oftentimes asked to view an issue necessarily from the lenses of the other country, which is something I can work on. I think understanding the role that the United States plays within international relations is a good jumping off point for understanding international relations in general. Because once we start getting into theories, that required a whole lot of critical thinking and understanding in abstract reasoning. I feel as if I cast the net too far, I lose them.

Table 6 Continued

<p>Participant 4</p> <p>Interview Question: What is the course effectiveness in students learning of global competence?</p>	<p>...6 or 7 maybe. Only because ...[a few seconds of silence]. We're still a community college; they are not majors. If they were political science majors...I have that something you're going to make a point out of in your study. You know, we are teaching a general population of undergraduate students who may not see this....</p>
<p>Participant 5</p> <p>Interview Question: What is the course effectiveness in students learning of global competence?</p>	<p>...I guess like that is a hard question to answer because for some semester and for some students it can be a 9. It can vary hugely and depend on adding a new assignment or a book and it does not work. out though. But, I guess, overall, I would say 7 or 8.</p>

Themes 3: Course Weaknesses.

I developed the theme of course disadvantages by compiling answers to RQ2 and RQ3. When providing answers as to the evidence for course effectiveness, the participants provided numerous reasons as to why student global competence acquisition in the course may not be higher. Two participants pointed to the introductory nature of the INR 2002 course. They stated that global competence acquisition may not be too high because it is an introductory course considering the basic nature of the course curriculum and the limitation of time. For example, participant 2 said:

you don't have as much time as you would like to have in an intro course. It would be nice if you could have a sequence. A one semester course where you are trying to give as much information as possible.

Another reason participants gave for the perceived medium to high effectiveness of the course was the nature of the course curriculum itself, which by two participants was given as being too American- centric/ U.S oriented/ isolationist. Participant 1 said:

I do kind of think that what we lack is looking outside of our own experience and we have an awful lot of isolationist views in this country and I think that most of our students don't appreciate the fact that things have changed, the world is different and we won't always be able to see the economic situation, the educational situation that we have now and I noticed it when I began have students from other countries early in my teaching.

Participant 3 said:

I would say a 6 or a 7 because I think many of my examples are largely American-centric. So, students are not oftentimes asked to view an issue necessarily from the lenses of the other country, which is something I can work on.

A third mentioned hindrance to a higher course effectiveness rating is students' lack of effective learning due to student poor reading skills. Participant 2 said:

They learn ineffectively. I mean, there is always the problem. And this is a growing problem and I think it is a cultural problem. Students don't read. When I was an undergraduate I was reading all the time. And I did not read everything I had to read, but I read most of what I had to read. And even if I skipped around, I read it. And I really get the sense that students don't read.

Yet the most common answer participants gave to the question pertaining to the disadvantages of the course was the one in which teachers expressed the belief that the course did not have intellectually stimulating teaching and learning resources. They said the textbook was too American -centric, focusing too much of international relations from the American perspective due to either examples of current events given to illustrate various IR concepts or the perspective from which the resource was written (participant 1 and 3). The textbooks available are thought by instructors to be too dry and incapable of holding the students' attention and/or they are written in a highly academic language which is too complicated for a novice with no previous background in the field or one with lack of knowledge about world affairs and events to understand (participant 4 and 5). Some teachers believe that this lack of basic knowledge is believed to undermine the potential of achieving higher levels of global competence in students in the INR 2002 course as students are coming into the course with gaps in basic knowledge of world geography, history and current events (participant 1, 2, 3, and 4). Teachers expressed learning the course content as 'building on the foundation' or 'building blocks' (participant 2 and 3). Students first need these basic components before they come into INR 2002 before they can understand more complex ideas introduced to them in the course. Thus, global competence acquisition can be hindered by students' different levels of basic knowledge as they enter the class.

Teachers also perceived the course to be weak due to student characteristics that hinder global competence acquisition. One such obstacle mentioned was students coming into the course with different levels of interest in the course. Four out of five participants

stated that the nature of the students enrolling in the course may be an important determinant of student global competence acquisition at the end of the course. Generally, instructors believe that some students enroll in the course because they chose to major in political science and thus their level of interest in the course material is high, whereas others do so because their academic advisor told them to even though they do not truly know what the course is about or they chose it as either an elective or core curriculum requirement, thus making their initial interest in the course material low (participants 2, 3, 4, and 5). The problem instructors face is how to teach IR in such a way as to engage both the students whose interest in the course is high and those whose initial interest is not high and catering to their specific learning needs. Also, instructors feel that there is not enough time in the span of one semester in an introductory course to teach global competence comprehensively with such a mixture of students, meaning those that are more and those that are less interested in the course material. Instructors worry about keeping the ones that are less interested focused on the material in order for them to be able catch up with those that are interested. Thus, instructors feel pressured to spend time reiterating and holding students constantly accountable for their knowledge acquisition whereas they could use that already limited time to teach the material in more depth. Besides the differing levels of interest in the course as partially representative of the reasons for students enrolling in the course in the first place, participants shared their experiences with the reality of teaching a mixture of student who initially come into the course with different levels of basic knowledge and varying levels of interest in the

course material and use those as possible reasons that decrease global competence acquisition in students. Participant 2 stated:

a student who knows already that she wants to be a political science major, probably the student that come in with more information and so can see the picture better and grab the concepts easier than the student who is not thinking about being a political science major may not be the person who reads the newspaper every day. So, even the very same material can give you different outcomes based on the students. ...So, part of the weaknesses is that you don't have as much time as you would like to have. And also, like I said you have to attend much more to the differences [in student levels of knowledge]. ...It's really hard to get that balance between the more advanced, the more interested and the less interested in any introductory course. Just the way the world works.

However, three teachers (participant 3, 4, and 5) concluded their answers to interview question # 8 pertaining to course weaknesses by reiterating that the INR 2002 course is an introductory course, meaning that students will not learn everything there is to learn about IR and will not attain full global competence, especially since the learning process is a life-long one. Thus, teachers feel accomplished in their role so long as they see heightened levels of critical thinking in students from the moment they walk into class to when they walk out and gradual increase in levels of interest in the course material both evidenced by quality of questions raised throughout the course, engagement in classroom discussions and improved assignment and test grades (participant 2, 3, 4, and 5).

Theme 4: Course Curriculum Development.

I derived at this theme from a compilation of interview questions aligned with RQ2 & RQ3. In table 7 I provide a samples of participants' responses to research question 3 and interview questions pertaining to participants' perceptions of the course strengths and weakness they believe should be addresses in course curriculum development. I also asked the participants if they believe the course should be improved and if so in what ways. Finally, I asked them to reflect on possible course curriculum changes that would align with their mentioned improvements.

Table 7

Sample Participants' Responses on INR 2002 Course Curriculum Development

Participant	Sample Response
Participant 1 Interview question: What kind of improvements would you make to the course? How can the course curriculum be changed to reflect them?	I guess, to try to go beyond our own little environment in terms of educational research. ... More extensive world history and geography would be a good addition. ... Languages [foreign languages].
Participant 2 Interview question: What kind of improvements would you make to the course? How can the course curriculum be changed to reflect them?	When I first started teaching, to answer your second question first, I was thinking to myself, "Ok, what did my favorite teachers do?" My favorite teachers were the ones who were really good at doing discussions. So, I should do discussions. But I could not do discussions. I could not let go of the control of the class. Now I can, finally. But discussions are crucial for learning the material and they need to emphasized.

Table 7 Continued

<p>Participant 3</p> <p>Interview question: What kind of improvements would you make to the course? How can the course curriculum be changed to reflect them?</p>	<hr/> <p>I think doing more kinds of exercises that make students think about an issue through a perspective of let's say a developing country or a country that maybe the United States has had historical animosity toward might be useful because I don't think enough of the course focuses on that kind of perspective taking... And I think that maybe more engaging literature would be helpful.</p> <hr/>
<p>Participant 4</p> <p>Interview question: What kind of improvements would you make to the course? How can the course curriculum be changed to reflect them?</p>	<hr/> <p>I think the course description can also be changed. You have to tell them what you want them to know. The description is very general right now and there is not mention of global competence it is. That needs to be added for sure.</p> <hr/>
<p>Participant 5</p> <p>Interview question: What kind of improvements would you make to the course? How can the course curriculum be changed to reflect them?</p>	<hr/> <p>... Providing a standard definition to global competence. I'm not sure there is a standard definition. If there were, I don't mean inhibiting academic freedom... But if there were more standard understanding of what it is then... Even though I feel like through the textbooks, the standard textbooks, there is a standard understanding of global competence, but within the university or within the field might strengthen our understanding of it.</p> <hr/>

All participants believe that course curriculum development is vital to improving the quality of the course for higher levels of student global competence acquisition. As most participants pointed out, there is always room for improvement in the course especially since the world is in constant flux and if we want to make the course relevant to students then instructors need to stay on top of current events and update them (participant 1, 2, 3, and 4). I summarize how such course improvements could be made in the following table 8.

Table 8

Proposed Course Curriculum Improvements

Course Curriculum Improvement	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
Incorporating a more engaging textbook	×	×	×	×	
Incorporate assignments that force students to look at global issues from a non-Western perspective			×	×	×
Place more emphasis on teaching global history and geography	×		×	×	
Build on teaching practices that have been proven through proactive to work effectively			×		
Employing tactics that keep the students engaged and interested			×		

Table 8 Continued

Using jokes and/or ice breakers to break up the monotony of class and also as a way of building rapport with students		×		×		
Teachers sharing ideas and best practices with colleagues in formal and informal settings	×		×		×	×
Teachers engaging in professional development opportunities on innovative teaching practices/ tools			×		×	

The interviewed faculty pointed out that improving the course curriculum can be hindered by a lack of cooperation from the faculty whether it be due to people vying for their turf (participant 1) or infringement on instructor academic freedom in choosing their own teaching resources and tools (participant 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5). Participant 1 expressly shared a dislike of being told to make changes in what/ how they teach by the

administration whom he perceived as not knowing much about teaching in a classroom setting. The problem may be that change is communicated the wrong way to teachers. He also said that change is presented as something that instructors have to do. Thus, when change does finally come, and teachers are forced to comply, they only adhere to those changes because they do not want to jeopardize their job. As participant 1 said:

My experience sitting down with people, [smirks], and coming up with curricular stuff has never been very, well it has never worked out. I don't know what it is about it, whether people just didn't want to do it or they were vying for their own turf or whatever. But usually, you just wound up with something that people would say, "O.K. We'll do that. Don't bother us with it anymore." And always there's this thing about administration in colleges or universities, upper division or graduate school. At this level, any time you have a push for change or something in the administration and everybody gets a feeling like they are trying to tell us what to do. And so, you're running again that, "We don't want those people doing that. What do they know about it?" And they really don't know anything about it

Consequently, participants do not want to be forced to adhere to curriculum changes proposed by administration whom they perceive as not knowing anything about teaching in a classroom. Instead they believe that change occurs best when teachers are allowed to come together in a more informal context and freely share new ideas with other colleagues (participant 1, 2, 3, and 4). Under such circumstances change is more likely to

be perceived as something good where teachers will be more willing to make appropriate changes and see them as valid improvement to their course. Participant 2 shared:

You know, when I'm talking to other professors in the teachers' lounge or the hallways and they say, "You know, I've been doing this. Really how does that work. Oh. OK". You know, we're always sharing ideas. But you always have to assume that you can do better.

Similarly, participant 1 said:

I think the best things that happened to me about the whole idea of what we were doing [talking about making changed in one's teaching] was just talking to people that were doing the same thing and just making it casual and not imposed. Not that you have to come up with something by a certain date and put something on paper and all that sort of thing. But I know you have to have a system, you got to have accountability, legislators want to tell you what you should be doing and then they want to make sure that you are doing it and all of that.

Evidence of Quality

Throughout the data analysis process, I engaged in necessary steps to ensure reliability and credibility. I established data reliability by reviewing the transcripts against the recordings to identify and correct any mistakes I made during the transcription process. Additionally, I used codes across transcripts to ensure reliability. To improve the accuracy of the gathered data, I implemented member checking. I emailed the interview transcripts along with the initial research findings to all teacher participants to check for researcher accuracy. Four participants responded with no need for any transcript

corrections whereas one participant emailed me back with small grammar/ spelling corrections and additions/ clarifications to some of her initial interview responses. In general, all respondents conveyed to me that my transcriptions and findings were accurate and were found to be fair and realistic (Creswell, 2012).

Summary of Findings

Data collection, hand coding and analysis helped me in re-grouping of the results to find hidden meaning in participant interview responses, the purpose of which was to answer research questions formulated to help gauge the effectiveness of the INR 2002 course as no such course assessment presently exist at FC. The research results are supported by both the conceptual framework for this study as well as the larger body of literature. Mezirow's (1997) transformative learning theory helped in analyzing the data in search of deeper meaning in interviewees' responses. By sharing their personal experiences teaching the INR 2002 International Relations course, which was designed to help with student global competence acquisition, instructor participants communicated their outlook on the effectiveness of the course in preparing students for the global workforce. Scholars illustrate that global competence acquisition in students necessitates that they experience shifts in their self-identity in altering their held assumptions and perceptions of the world through self-reflection and critical analysis (Hart, Lantz, & Montague, 2017; Hodge, 2011; Illeris, 2014a; Mezirow, 1978, Mezirow, 1997). Based on the emergent codes, student global competence acquisition in the INR 2002 course is perceived as medium-to-high effective. All participants agreed that the presently offered INR 2002 course has an effect on student global competence acquisition. The reasons

participants provided for the medium course effectiveness were: the course reflects the current world situation and thus teaches students about the realities of the world they live in by talking about current events (participant 1, 3, and 4); the course exposes students to the institutions, actors and processes that are above the state level and how they affect foreign policy as well as illustrates to students how nations behave toward one another through diplomatic relations (participant 1, 2 and 3); the course introduces them to theory and structure of the international system (participant 4) and; the course helps students understand the positives and negatives of American domestic and foreign policy as well as exposures them to some cross-cultural understanding (participant 4 and 5).

Nonetheless, participants also shared several shortcomings of the course as possible reasons for hindering student global competence acquisition. They believe that course effectiveness in student global competence is hindered by a lack of a more engaging course textbook (1, 3, 4, and 5) and students coming into the course with varying levels of interest and basic knowledge bases on global issues, events, world geography and history (1, 2, 3, 4, and 5). Thus, all participating instructors believe that these obstacles should be addressed in further course curriculum development.

Based on the above-mentioned research results summarized in four themes: definition of global competence, course strengths, course weaknesses, and course curriculum development, I developed a project deliverable in the form of a white paper accompanied by policy recommendations. In the project, I inform pertinent to the research topic FC stakeholders of the present-day instructor perceived effectiveness of the course in student global competence acquisition and will provide them with possible

ideas for particular policy implementation meant to improve the quality of the INR 2002 course.

Discrepant Cases

During the data analysis process, there can be instances where discrepant information may arise. All researchers have the responsibility to address such cases in the findings section by including relevant information regarding such discrepancies in order to properly communicate all findings. Creswell (2017) cited the possibility of disparate, incompatible, and contradictory findings within the broad range of collected data, with attention to such data needing to be given. Thus, I analyzed all data as to address possible discrepant cases.

Throughout the data collection and data analysis processes, I came across only one such case. When asking participants interview questions aligned with RQ# 3 concerning the weaknesses of the INR 2002 course and possible ways of improving the course through curriculum development, four participants mentioned the need for a better suited textbook as they believed the teaching resources available are lacking in style and/or content for the introductory course taught. This shortcoming of the course was mentioned in previous participant answers as well. Yet, participant 5 gave a rather contradictory answer stating that:

There are a lot of textbooks available that are tailored specifically to that course. So, I think in many ways it is a straight forward course and that makes it a strength. And particularly when faculty chose their own resources, as there is so much similarity between the textbooks that you end up teaching the same things

anyway. And that strength means the same ideas, the same material. And you also see that they are doing the same stuff. And so, there is commonality. So, students are coming in at a basic level.

Yet, participant 5 continued saying:

Standard textbook can also be a weakness. Because you go up to the seniors and you ask, “Ok, what can the department be doing better?” I do a senior seminar course and I was shocked to have American Government POS 2041 not have enough basic knowledge to understand the introductory course. I had one student, who was a junior, come up to me and ask me what the UN was. And like I said, I did not realize this until a junior asked me this.

As part of member checking, the participant even added later on,

In the Senior Seminar, we do a focus group of the students, to learn about their experience in the department – what we can do better. It was during one such focus group that students complained POS 2041 was NOT basic enough – that they felt it was too much, too fast for an introductory course. Thus, if students are poorly prepared, even a standard intro textbook may not be basic enough.

Conclusion

In this case study, I examined FC INR 2002 International Relations teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the course in student global competence acquisition. Homogenous purposeful sampling was used as five INR 2002 teachers volunteered to participate in the study that included a 45-60-minute interview with each participant. I transcribed the interviews, hand coded them, and analyzed them for recurring themes as a

way of answering three overarching research questions. Per Walden institutional research policies, I applied ethical protections throughout the course of the study by informing the participants of the purpose of the study and by safeguarding their confidentiality through assigning numbers to them. I addressed research validity with the use of member checking.

After encoding and analysis, I developed four major themes: definition of global competence, course strengths, course weaknesses, and course curriculum development. Participants expressed the medium to high course effectiveness in student global competence acquisition. They acknowledged the need for a standardized definition of 'global competence' within their department. They highlighted the importance of making the course material relevant to students by utilizing teaching and learning techniques that make use of students' personal lived experiences and using instructional examples that illustrate their lived realities. They also talked about certain hindrances to student global competence acquisition such as varying levels of students' knowledge base and interest in the course material when coming into the course. Finally, based on these perceptions all participants expressed a need for further course curriculum development to be found in cooperative work between the department administration and faculty.

In section 1 of this project study, I provided information pertaining to the research problem of this case study. In section 2, I focused on research methodology including participants, data collection and analysis, as well as a summary of findings. In sections 3 and 4 respectively, I explain the project study and its reflective conclusions.

Section 3: The Project

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of INR 2002 course instructors at FC on the effectiveness of the course in student global competence acquisition. In this section, I introduce my project deliverable, a position paper titled “Improving Student Global Competence Acquisition,” pertaining to global competence attainment by students in international relations education at a Florida College (see Appendix A). I developed this project based on the research results, conceptual framework and the literature reviewed. The position paper, otherwise known as a white paper, contains recommendations for future implementation into the course curriculum meant to strengthen the present course. I outline four main recommendations in this paper: (a) implement engaging teaching and learning resources and tools into the course; (b) create a discipline-wide definition of global competence, implement global competence as an actual INR 2002 course goal, and update course goals and objectives accordingly; (c) create and encourage instructors to participate in professional development courses geared at informing them of ways to make the course material more relevant to students; and (d) base course curriculum development as a joint effort between administration and INR faculty.

Section 3 also includes goals of the project, a rationale for choosing this project type, and an accompanying literature review that explains the project findings. The goals of this project are to inform FC institutional stakeholders of the present state of student global competence acquisition in the INR 2002 course and provide them with

accompanying recommendations that could improve the value of the course in this skill acquisition.

Rationale

The project that I developed for this study was a position paper, or a white paper intended to inform local educators and administrators of the status of global competence teaching and learning in an introductory international relations course at FC as based on teachers' perceptions of such student skill acquisition and to provide policy recommendations for further course improvement. Themes of this project were: definition of global competence, course strengths, course weaknesses, and course curriculum development. Policy recommendations are the process of problem solving (Doyle, 2013) These themes informed me of the need to create a position paper in which I objectively educate the target audience on the problem at hand, so they are able to make informed decisions as to its possible solutions. I believe that a position paper with policy recommendations with detail is most fitting for conveying information to FC educators and administrators regarding possible issues in international relations education and adequately addressing them within the context of the institution. My hope is that the policy recommendation report provides practical ways that INR 2002 course teachers and institutional stakeholders can possibly improve the course. Instructors may use this data to ensure that they are provided enough professional development and access to engaging and innovative teaching resources and educational opportunities proven to help students learn global competence to the best of their abilities. Local administrators may use the research findings as a professional guide into curriculum development.

Review of the Literature

In the literature review for this section of the project report, I focused on topics related to the collected data, associated findings, and related recommendations. To establish validity in the recommendations provided in the policy report, I used different search engines and databases within the Walden University library to search for background information supporting the developed research themes. The policy recommendations serve as an informational source of teachers' perceptions and may enhance communication and collaboration between FC educators and administrators. I discuss in light of the themes presented in this literature review aligned with research finding themes.

All five participants mentioned: (a) the importance of using engaging teaching and learning resources geared at global competence acquisition, (2) the importance of providing a department-wide definition of global competence, (3) incorporating engaging teaching and learning tools and resources like classroom discussions and making the course curriculum relevant allow students to use their own and each other's lived experiences as a basis for learning, (4) and the need for curriculum development and a positive institutional atmosphere around it. This literature pertains to these topics and will allow local educators and administrators to recognize and diagnose problems in their discipline and make improvements based on the project study recommendations.

I break down the literature review into several sections. I include information on the white paper genre in the first section. In the second section, I detail the importance of defining global competence within and institutional context. In the third section, I delve

into engaging teaching and learning tools geared toward global competence acquisition. The final section includes information regarding curriculum change implementation in and best strategies for curriculum development. The search engines and databases ProQuest, ERIC, EBSCO, and JSTOR and Google Scholar provided recent and peer reviewed research pertaining to these outlined topics. The search terms variants include *faculty perceptions of global competence, educational simulations, classroom discussions, study abroad in higher education, global competence and study abroad, course curriculum change in higher education, and best course curriculum development strategies* Saturation was reached when search terms returned the same sources and when remaining sources were deemed irrelevant to the study.

White Paper Format

I present the project deliverable in the form of a white paper. The Purdue Online Writing Lab defined a white paper as a document that argues a specific position or solves a problem for its audience (2018). White papers first originated as a type of official government document both authoritative and informative in nature (Purdue Online Writing Lab, 2018). The search terms used to locate literature on the white papers included *white paper, position paper, grey literature, white paper and writing, white paper and education, white paper and curriculum development* and *writing a white paper*. As white papers are considered grey literature, or materials and research produced by organizations outside of the traditional commercial or academic publishing and distribution channels, finding peer-reviewed articles on the subject was difficult (Adams,

Huff, & Smart, 2017). However, Google Scholar returned over 60,000 results about white papers in education published between 2015 to 2018.

Developing a white paper is dependent on its audience and industry. For instance, a white paper in business is meant to propose a solution to an identified problem and discuss expectant profit margins based on the solution, otherwise known as a “soft-sell approach” (Campbell, Naido, & Campbell, 2017). In contrast, in education and the nonprofit sectors, white papers are either conceptual or empirical: conceptual as based on literature and best practices, and empirical as developed around a specific data and analysis (Rotarius & Rotarius, 2016). Regardless of their audience and purpose, all white papers need to provide solutions to a given problem and be visually appealing and easy to understand (Campbell et al., 2017). Visual appeal and the ease of understanding can be achieved through the use of bullets and subheadings as well as describing each major point briefly and precisely (Purdue Online Writing Lab, 2018). In my white paper, I used precise language, subheadings, and quotes from the participants to break up the text and make it more engaging, visually appealing, and understandable.

The structure of conceptual and empirical white papers is different. Conceptual white papers contain the following components: (a) abstract/executive summary, (b) statement and background of the issue, (c) review of the literature about the issue, (d) available options to address the issue, (e) implications for the future, and (f) conclusions and recommendations (Rotarius & Rotarius, 2016). In contrast, components of empirical white papers are (a) abstract/executive summary, (b) statement and background of the issue, (c) methodology of the research, (d) review of the literature about the issue, (e)

data analysis results, and (f) discussion and recommendations. Both types of white papers conclude with recommendations for practice (Rotarius & Rotarius, 2016). Both types of white papers are widely used in higher education. For this project, I developed an empirical white paper.

A literature search for white papers in education revealed that this literary format is a valid tool in implementing education policy. Thus, the white paper was a suitable fit for this project because I was able to clearly and succinctly identify a problem, describe the background of the problem through a theoretical lens, present research results, and propose recommendations to be implemented by FC in addressing the problem. An evaluation report, curriculum plan, or professional development project would not have aligned with the purpose of this project, which was to investigate the perceptions and experiences of FC teachers on student global competence acquisition in the INR 2002 course. An evaluation report would not have been appropriate because the purpose of the study was not to monitor and evaluate a specific program. A curriculum plan would not have aligned with the purpose of the study as the study was exploratory in nature and produced broader findings than what would be needed for a curriculum plan. In addition, professional development would only have involved FC employees, whereas the goal of the project was to suggest actions to improve global competence teaching for instructors and FC administration, as well as global competence learning for FC students. Therefore, I chose a white paper format as the preferred means to address the project goals as clearly and succinctly as possible for clarity purposes to all stakeholders involved in this project study.

Creating an Institutional Definition of Global Competence

In the age of globalization, higher education professionals nationally and worldwide see the importance of defining global competence, also known as global learning, and having institutions share in this definition for clarity purposes. Professional associations like NAFSA: Association of International Educators and The Association of American Colleges and Universities are at the forefront of (AAC& U) redefining learning in the interconnected world of the 21st century. Many of the ideas expressed by these organizations about global learning came as a result of their innovative practices at dozens of institutions and conversations with hundreds of individuals participating in these entities. Hovland (2014), who wrote *Defining Global Learning: Defining, Designing, Demonstrating*, urged educational institutions to provide global competence as a particular skill acquisition with college and university wide succinct definitions of the term, which has been found to be oftentimes misunderstood misused as higher education faculty, staff, and practitioners do not always agree about what it means.

In the lasts 2 decades colleges and universities have created mission and vision statements reflective of their efforts of providing degrees needed for the complexities of a highly interconnected world (Hovland, 2014). While, all such statements illustrate the institutions' implicit and explicit commitments to produce graduated capable of meeting the political, social and economic challenges of the world, none of them share in the same language pertaining to the imperative and a plan of action of how such social change is going to be achieved (Hovland, 2014). This is because all institutions of higher learning evolve within unique institutional contexts shaped by their individual perceptions of their

role and place in the global community as effected by their local community's and state's development in economics, demographics, trade, and cultural relations (2014). Besides lacking in a national definition of global learning, colleges and universities are also lacking in uniform institutional definition as well. Mission statements and are not always products of a well-organized, campus-wide, multilateral stakeholder discussions. This means that different stakeholders have varying interpretations of the rhetoric stemming from their particular professional positions (2014). All staff and faculty need "a shared understanding of how this language relates to actual learning goals and all the practices that flow from them in order to translate that into institutional structures and practices" (Hovland, 2014. pg. 3).

Just like Hovland (2014) pointed out, the purpose of every academic institution should be three-fold. First, academic institutions should align every faculty, staff, and practitioner with the same definition of global learning and a set of associated student learning outcomes or competencies. Second, every college should design educational experiences through which students gain competence and meet those outcomes. Finally, colleges and universities should demonstrate that those experiences help students achieve global learning outcomes, while simultaneously creating projects and assignments that allow students to demonstrate competencies, meaning that they can apply the knowledge, skills, and perspectives that signify their development as global learners.

Having given reasons for the importance of uniformity across American institutions of higher learning in defining global competence, it is as equally important to look at the history of efforts to define the concept and the most nationally recognizable

present-day definition of the term. Looking at past and present definitions can inform the future efforts of American colleges to define global competence for themselves. In 1979, an influential paper by Robert Hanvey, *An Attainable Global Perspective*, called for education to create “modes of thought” within students that bring forth in them a “state of the planet” consciousness and cross-cultural awareness, knowledge of global dynamics, and awareness of human decision-making (Hanvey, 1976). The most pivotal advancements were made in the definition in the first decade of the 21st century as effects of globalization heightened the need to educate with global perspectives in mind. For instance, Mansilla and Gardner (2007) presented “global consciousness” as “the capacity and the inclination to place our self and the people, objects and situations with which we come into contact within the broader matrix of our contemporary world” (Mansilla & Gardner, 2007, p.49). Two years later, Fernando Reimers advanced a view on the nature of global competence, defining it as, “the knowledge and skills that help people understand the flat world in which they live, the skills to integrate across disciplinary domains to comprehend global affairs and events and to create possibilities to address them” (Reimers, 2010, p. 3). Yet the most articulated and thorough definition of global competence was developed by the Task Force on Global Competence, a group of state education agency leaders, education scholars, and practitioners, under the auspices of the Council of Chief State School Officers EdSteps initiative (CCSSOEdSteps) and the Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning. This definition has also framed the U.S. Department of Education International Education Strategy 2012-2016, released in December 2012.

It is this exact definition of global competence proposed in the EdSteps initiative that has been used by scholars since as a model for their own discipline-oriented definitions. For instance, Garneau and Pepin (2014) used the global competence framework to propose a constructivist definition of cultural competence that stems that stems from the connection between the field of competency-based education and the nursing discipline. Similarly, Koehn and Rosenau (2015) developed their term of *transnational-competence*, parallel to that of global competence, using the same EdD Steps global competence framework and illustrated its application across six various professions: teacher education, engineering, business management, social work, sustainable-development, and medicine. Like the framework offered by EdD, the transnational competence framework offers higher-education faculty and staff around the world useful ideas for enhancing and transforming professional and educational programs so that graduating practitioners will be prepared with the skills needed to manage global challenges that connect people, ecosystems, and fields of study (Koehn & Rosenau,2015).

Need for Engaging Teaching and Learning Tools and Techniques

Teaching and learning political science, which international relations is a subbranch of, is difficult considering the complexity of the curriculum and the unengaging manner in which many such courses are conducted (Cohen, 2009). Additionally, political science holds a poor reputation among political scholars and politicians alike (2009). This is attributed to a lack of relevancy in the discipline and the research that it engages in (2009). The desire of most political scholars to be precise in

their research has taken away the impulse to be relevant (2009). Consequently, a divide is created between real-world concerns and influencing policy through research (2009).

This lack of relevancy has also affected the students' attitudes towards political science courses (Seidelman, 2015). Much too often, they are simply regarded as unimportant. In most institutions of higher learning students are forced to take such classes as International Relations or American Government as part of the core curriculum which dissuades students from actively participating in them, having deemed the experience, even before entering the first session, to be a waste of time (Seidelman, 2015). This lack of relevance in the discipline is an extension of a deeper societal problem in America as statistics show that young people are becoming increasingly detached from politics due to being put off by the process of it (Seidelman, 2015). The National Public Radio reported on this apparent apprehension making a clear correlation between the economic, social and political problems riddling the nations ending in American's discontent with the political system to the low turnout at the voting booths (Liasson, 2014). Such headlines fool the young American citizenry into denying the discipline of political science the gravity and respect it deserves. Yet still, colleges across American fight the good fight and continue making political science courses a must in an effort to instill in the future generations the knowledge and skills necessary for them to become responsible citizens of this world.

Global competence acquisition via classroom discussions and participation.

Little has changed since Oulton, Dillon, and Grace (2007) reported that political science courses like international relations are criticized for being a mile wide and an inch deep.

So much information needs to be covered in a matter of one semester that there is very little time for in-depth class discussions and analysis deprived of in-depth class discussions and analysis needed for a meaningful class experience (2007). Teaching theory is still the priority and explaining through present day examples an afterthought (2007). However, students need knowledge to be practical, approachable and applicable and not consisting of convoluted theoretical explanations that seem to have little to do with the real world and their lives (Pauli & Reusser, 2015). Ultimately, students do not know what to do with such impractical content once tests and the class is over and the theories are quickly forgotten, only to be "relearned" and "retested" later on (Oulton, et al., 2007, p.1).

Consequently, classroom discussions are vital to global competence acquisition. Connecting intellectual concepts with everyday examples through classroom discussions aids in the implementation of their new knowledge into practice (Pauli & Reusser, 2015). This in turn prevents the mundane task of memorizing definitions and formulas and replaces it with thinking critically in every area of adult life by encouraging creative problem-solving skills (2015). Secondly, class discussions allow students to have a voice in class while also benefiting from peer-to-peer learning, as thoughts and beliefs are constantly exchanged (Murphy, Firetto, Wei, Li, & Croninger, 2016). At times of disagreement, students are encouraged to partake in constructive criticism, which teaches to respect the opinions of others. This way, discussions create a safe and collaborative atmosphere that supports the learning process (Godfrey & Grayman, 2014). A judgment-free environment also promotes the adult psychosocial

development in creating meaningful relationships, many of which have a potential of lasting a life-time (2014). In summarizing Erik Erikson's developmental stages Harder (2002) wrote that young adulthood is characterized by intimacy and solidarity. It is at this time that college students seek friendship (Harder, 2002). Classroom discussions allow for that in getting to know others through their opinions, beliefs, and ethics and growing in citizenry together (2014).

Furthermore, class discussions allow adult students, along with the instructor, to take on the double role of teacher/ learner (Rotellar & Cain, 2016). They lead their learning process by creating the course material. Thanks to such discussions adult learners form their own curriculum with personal experiences and wisdom (2016). This self- acquired learning resource allows them to be self- directed in their learning process (2016). By the sheer fact that they have lived longer than children and as a result accrued a wider gamut of life experiences to be used as learning references placed them in a superior position to think more deeply about their environment and use their own live experiences as models of explanation (2016). Engaging classroom discussions that foster a deeper level of understanding about the complexities of the world can often times begin by mentioning global controversies. Kello (2016), implored teachers not to shy away from teaching through examples, even controversial ones when teaching via in-depth class discussion instead of simply worrying about covering the material. Oftentimes, these provocative examples best help illustrate academic points as there is a better change that students are aware of these issues through the media. Even though teaching using controversial issues is not an easy feat, they inspire constructivism and reflective

teaching, which are like magic in an academic environment as they add life, inspiration, and even help solve the controversy itself (Kello, 2016). Finally, it must be said that much can be achieved in terms of teaching and learning IR from a globalized perspective simply by a policy of inclusiveness, in which the instructor allows opportunities for students from all social and cultural communities to make an input (McLeskey, Rosenberg, & Westling, 2017). For example, if the course concerns a history of ideas on certain social issues, through simple class discussions students could be encouraged to bring forward histories that have evolved in their own social or cultural traditions and place them alongside the predominant national culture (2017).

Global competence acquisition via educational simulations. As college and universities look for viable ways of internationalizing their curricular and cocurricular efforts on campuses, technology- based teaching and learning resources such as educational simulations, have received much attention from scholars as means of student acquisition of global competency skills (Glazier, 2015). Social scientists are ultimately driven to use simulations in their teaching environments by the intangibility of concepts taught in classrooms like IR where replicating social phenomena is a must (Asal, Kollars, Raymond, & Rosen, 2013; Glazier, 2015). Thus, IR instructors particularly, have been using such the teaching tool for decades in trying to convey a fuller understanding of the international system and its many complex issues to their students (2015).

The most widely accepted definition defines an educational simulation, or reality gaming, as learners engaging in interactive, pretending with either a computer or each other in a virtual representation of some aspect of the real world (Merchant, Goetz,

Cifuentes, Keeney- Kennicutt, & Davis, 2014) Thus, when students use a model for the sake of better understanding of a phenomenon, they are participating in a simulation (2014). To Asal and Kratoville (2013), what makes an effective simulation is students' ability to use simulations as a way to judge the effectiveness of the theories they learn about to be applied to current events with the use of role - playing tactics. (2013). Such a simulation is considered to be instructional when it includes elements that help a learner discover and gather more information about a given environment that cannot be attained from experimentation (2012). Thus, Paige and Morin (2013) emphasized the importance of high quality simulations with superior gaming characteristics such as fidelity and cueing. They believe simulations with those characteristics to be the most effective in preparing players for actual circumstances by placing them in real-life scenarios and engaging them with as quality apparatus and avatars as well as providing them with timely feedback on their learning experience (2013).

Numerous advantages of teaching with simulations make it apparent why social science teachers are driven to using the teaching tool. Firstly, simulations have the potential of bringing complex political concepts and processes to life in ways that traditional learning resources and methods like textbooks and lectures cannot (Giovanello, Kirk, & Kromer 2013). Secondly, simulations have been found to foster active learning where students are driven to formulate their own knowledge. Rutten and van Joolingen, 2015) argued that with the use of such hands- on activities, computer simulations teach involving *doing*, found to increase retention levels as compared to learning via listening, reading, or seeing (2012). Also, if played often and regularly

throughout a course, simulations can also help develop social bonds between members of a class (2013). Consequently, Kafai and Burke (2015) pointed out that future discussions on educational gaming need to include constructionist approaches for the sake of not only teaching students technical skills but also connecting them to each other. Simulations have also been pertinent to realizing the potential of the constructivist theory as students are forced to self-regulate their learning by being able to overcome the internal struggles between their current frameworks of viewing the world and contradictory to them newly gained understandings from reality gaming leading them to making new models of the world (Asal, et al., 2013). Finally, simulations help instructors in directing their clarifications and further instructions by providing them with a clear assessment of students learning through timely feedback on students' learning experiences and understanding of the material as well as their levels of engagement and participation in the learning activity (Cook et al., 2014; Willis, Greenhalgh, Nadolny, Liu, Aldemir, Rogers, & Oliver, 2017).

Outside of the general teaching and learning advantages applicable to the use of simulations, scholars have also concentrated on the specific rewards they bring to the overall IR discipline. Simulations have been found to be a powerful learning tool in attaining negotiation skills as they allow for iteration, essential to learning what is at the heart of IR, which is diplomacy (Druckman & Ebner, 2013). Reality-gaming allow the players the chance to experience 'walking in someone else's shoes' also makes educational simulations a powerful tool in cultivating important predispositions for global learning, like empathy, while encouraging political awareness and civic engagement

(Bridge & Radford, 2014; Cuhadar & Kampf, 2014; Zappile, Beers, & Raymond, 2016), Multicultural experiences like the ones offered in educational simulations have also been found to significantly lessen the effects of in-group bias and foster respect for other cultures (Roberts, Warda, Garbutt, & Curry, 2014).

Global competence acquisition via study abroad. Providing students with greater employment opportunities comes with universities and colleges developing curricula that encourage and teach stronger student global awareness (Tarrant, Rubin, & Stoner, 2014). International educators recognize study abroad as an easy-to-use pedagogical intervention to effectively foster such a skill set (2014). The past two decades saw a significant increase in student study abroad participation. According to 2011 estimates by the Institute of International Education only 75,000 students studied abroad in 1990 as compared to 270,000 in the 2009-2010 academic year (NAFSA, 2015). Half of these were social sciences (22%) and business students (21%) (2015).

The prevailing body literature on study abroad centers on the discussion of its effects on concepts that have been used interchangeably with global competence; intercultural competence, global citizenry, and intercultural communication competence. (Stoner et al., 2014; Tarrant, Rubin, & Stoner, 2014). Studies like the one conducted by Salisbury, An, and Pascarella (2013) illustrate that studying abroad is educationally beneficial to levels of intercultural competence regardless of the student's socio-economic status, educational ambitions, or college experiences. Furthermore, Li's (2013) illustrates the potential of intercultural interaction as an easily accessible teaching and learning resource to be used by teachers and students alike to develop student global

competence. Whereas Stebleton, Soria and Cherney (2013) also believe in the added value of this high-impact practice, through their study they highlighted the greater value of formal college study abroad programs in the acquisition of such skills as compared to other international travel opportunities outside of an official college setting. Similarly, Stoner et al. (2014) posited that study abroad programs foster global citizenship only when accompanied by sound instruction.

Other research questions the previously gathered empirical evidence pointing to the value that study abroad brings to the academic experience in attaining global competence. In determining the extent to which overseas teaching experiences impacted intercultural competence, Cushner and Chang (2015) concluded that study abroad teaching alone without a rigorous effort to address intercultural growth is insufficient in bringing about a change in intercultural competence. Similarly, Tarrant *et al.* (2014) suggested that study abroad must be combined with a specific location, preferably abroad, and emphasize an educationally experiential experience gained in the field to be able to cultivate global citizenry in students. Furthermore, they point out that it cannot be assumed that students become interculturally competent due to traveling abroad. Instead, international education is enhanced in an instructional environment with clearly established study abroad educational objectives. Soria & Troisi (2014) altogether identify other campus-based activities such as enrollment in courses that foster global/international perspective, interactions with international students, and participation in global/international cocurricular activities, as viable means of student learning of such set of skills besides just official study abroad programs.

Curriculum development. At the heart and soul of all educational institutions, regardless of their size, type or origins, is curriculum (Ayub & Law, 2015, Meral, 2016). Even though the exact definition of what curriculum means varies from scholar to scholar, the consensus has been achieved in the general perception of curriculum as a compilation of all the learning activities which are planned and guided by educational institutions and carried out by learners either as a group or individually, in actual or virtual classrooms (Ayub & Law, 2015). Curriculum is believed to be crucial for the short and long-term well-being and effectiveness of higher education as it is considered to be the foundation for high quality programs and services, regardless of the type of educational programs and institution (2015). The purpose of higher education is about developing a whole person, so the approach to curriculum management (designing, implementing, assessing) should encompass both technical skills and the development of the learner as a whole person (Fish, 2013). While developing curriculum, all institutions should consider issues including institutional environment, pedagogical strategies to be used to implement the learning and teaching activities envisioned in the curriculum, graduate competences to be developed and educational institution leadership that is required for implementation (Ayub & Law, 2015).

The education environment involves internal and external circumstances. The internal environment or institutional environment implies the people, culture, strategies, operations and structures of the college or university (Ayub & Law, 2015). The external environment is divided into the education/industry and general/macro levels (2015). The educational/industry level is concerned with the number of institutions involved in a

particular sector, the frequency with which new institutions enter the sector, how often are new programs offered and changed, creating new academic standards and introducing new academic models (2015). The general/ macro level looks at the extent of collaboration and competition between different schools at an institution, structural and strategic changes, level of support from the college or university for new programs, new educational models and academic standards (2015). All of the internal and external circumstances are equally important for curriculum development.

Pedagogy is a term used to define a systematic way of teaching and learning using a particular method (Meral, 2016). Ayub and Law (2015) divide pedagogy into two categories; the informal and formal. The informal or less systematic method includes classroom activities such as open classroom discussions, lectures, field visits or study tours, whereas the more formal or systematic method involves collaborative learning, problem-oriented learning or research-based learning. College and university courses should be designed and taught using any one or combination of these methods (2015). Teacher training through professional development opportunities and teacher evaluations are key to successfully adapting these methods in the classroom. Regardless of which pedagogical methods are used their application and implementation should be strictly student-centered, meaning that students and not teachers should be at the center of educational policies and programs (2015).

Having knowledge alone is not sufficient in today's society. Students need to adapt to change and to apply their knowledge to solving problems in the real world (Meral, 2016). When considering curriculum development, the age of globalization requires educators to

develop lifelong learning competencies in their pupils which they can use on day-to-day basis in more than one area of their lives (Ayub & Law, 2015). Today's employers look for skills like, "professionalism/work ethics, oral and written communication, teamwork/collaboration, and critical thinking/problem solving" (Casares, Dickson, Hannigan, Hinton, & Phelps, 2012, p. 3). Besides those, employers also look for competency in skills like leadership, creativity, innovation, information technology applications, self-direction/lifelong learning, social responsibility and diversity (Casares et al., 2012). Mastery of any academic profession requires that students attain at least three competencies (Ayub & Law, 2015).

This new postmodern atmosphere highlights the importance of certain teaching and learning objectives in leading students to develop competencies such as global competence. For instance, by taking courses like IR students ought to come to numerous realizations. Students should understand that they have a double citizenship, one given to them by their country and then the one in which they identify themselves as inhabitants of Earth (Matthews & Callaway, 2014). Also, social, political, and economics problems as well as opportunities of America, as the global hegemon, are no longer confined to the fifty states but effect the entire world (2014). Furthermore, the ability to communicate instantly across the globe, along with the relative ease and low cost of moving people and products around the world has resulted in a highly globalized world (2014). According to the present FC Course Catalog and Description the INR 2002 is intended to acquaint students with the theories, actors, and dynamics of international relations (Course Catalog, 2018). By the end of the course, students should have a better understanding of

the nature of the international political system, causes of war and peace and the function and role of international organizations as well as the knowledge and skills to better understand the immediate world around them as well as the one beyond their own national borders (Course Catalog, 2018). Learning about the immense impact that America holds on world development should emphasize to students how the magnitude of their own intellectual, professional, and economic growth affects not only their immediate community and their nation but the world as a whole.

Even though globalization is an undeniable global phenomenon, this study has shown that world diversity and the multicultural aspects of the course material which may lead to the development of social responsibility have not received enough attention in the study of IR. Similarly, IR scholars feel that even though globalization has led to a world more interconnected than ever before, cultural, ethnic, and racial differences do persist, and this diversity is something that should be respected, celebrated but also closely examined as it leads to many world challenges (Lasswell, 2017). Implementing this learning objective in the curriculum, would naturally require a syllabus change, which in turn would potentially incur a double effect. First it would align the syllabus more closely with the institutional mission by teaching about the diversity of Jacksonville's own community and how this social differentiation creates positive and negative social, economic and political ripples that ultimately affects national and global trends and beliefs. The key here is to first make international relations local in order to make it more understandable and real to students. As Kim Hill (2002) pointed out, "...the social sciences have a remarkable role in every day-to-day life in the modern world. These

sciences... whether for good or ill, they are widely employed for policy and administrative decisions in the public, private and non-profit sectors of modern society worldwide” (Hill, 2002, p. 113). Secondly, the syllabus change would better address the needs of the student population at FSCJ, which happens to come from this very diverse community mentioned above. Discussing their own diversity and the pros and cons created by it would aid in their learning process by helping them connect complex concepts with their own personal experiences, which would show them that their problems are the problems of the world.

Implementing curriculum change can only happen successfully with the existence of supportive, conducive and dynamic leadership (Meral, 2016). As Ayub and Law (2015) expresses educational institutions, regardless of their size, types and nature of educational programs, “require leadership which is not traditional and theoretical, but rather dynamic, pragmatic, participative, strategic, and most importantly, future oriented, socially inclusive and maintains high ethical standards (p.71). At the institutional level, the dean, associate dean, department chairs, and possibly team captains constitute the organizational leaderships. However, faculty members’ participation is essential to course curriculum development and implementation because it is team members themselves, rather than the leaders, that take responsibility for decisions, monitor their own performance, work toward goal attainment, and adapt to environmental changes (2015). However, as most faculty today do not see a need for change or development believing that teaching skills will be attained while working, perceive their improvement efforts as unappreciated and unrewarded and think that such efforts cost too much time and could

hinder their chances for tenure and promotion, it is vital for educational leaders need to wear many hats including that of a coach, teacher, counselor, facilitator, director, and sometimes parent (Ayub & Law, 2015; Casares, Dickson, Hannigan, Hinton, & Phelps, 2012).

Conclusion

The effect of globalization on American higher education is undeniable. Due to this phenomenon the discipline of political science and courses like international attention are more important than ever. The ultimate goal of the higher education system is to develop a high turnout of skilled individuals ready to compete in the rigorous environment of the worldwide marketplace by ensuring their academic completion at the lowest possible cost to them. College teachers are at the heart of making this plan a reality. Through the utilization of interactive and engaging teaching and learning methods and open mindedness to the classrooms diverse population, they are the ones to encourage the development of students' personal and professional competencies that will better prepare them to meet the demands of a changing world.

Project Description

This project is a white paper with policy recommendations provided to administrators and educators within FC. In this white paper, I update the stakeholders about the present state of global competence education at the institution through the inclusion of teacher perceptions about teaching of this skill set to students enrolled in the INR 2002 course. I suggest that INR teachers be provided with professional development opportunities on the inclusion of innovative and engaging educational tools such as

education-based simulations and globally oriented and engaging teaching and learning resources, all of which could be used to teach global competence with more improved results. I also recommend that the college invest more time and financial resources for revamping its study abroad program as yet another valuable educational tool in the efforts of providing students with hands on opportunities for learning global competence through travel and interaction with people different than them. Finally, I advise that any course curriculum development should come as a result of cooperative work between both the INR faculty and the department administration and model institutional leadership.

The white paper includes both interview excerpts and pertinent research illustrating the effectiveness of the above-mentioned educational tools. Additional research focuses on the general intellectual conversation among scholars in the United States and the world on the importance of teaching global competence in IR courses and the creative ways of doing so. My hope is that both the invaluable feedback from IR teachers as well as the supportive research presented in the literature review will provide FC stakeholders the insight and encouragement needed to recognize the importance of teaching global competence effectively at the local level and its impact on the larger contexts.

The FC institutional IRB board, department chair, and department dean fully supported the project and allowed access to participants for interviews. Participants who volunteered for interviews were open and thoughtful in their responses and provided valuable data for analysis. I received support for member checking from the participants themselves who looked over the preliminary data report to check for data validity. I used

the institutional website to access policies, contact information, and institutional history that were valuable in formulating the research findings and policy recommendations.

Upon final project study approval by the doctoral chair committee, I will disseminate this recommendation report to local educators and administrators including the liberal arts and sciences department dean, chair and teachers as well as any other stakeholders found pertinent to institutional course curriculum development such as the FC Office of Course Curriculum Services. I will email a copy of the white paper to all of these INR educators and administrative staff as a way of properly informing them of the research findings and recommended course of action pertaining to global competence education development at FC. Providing study stakeholders at varying levels within the institutional with the policy recommendations will convey the complexity of the local problem and the importance of working together in addressing. Improving the international relations course through the incorporation of more engaging educational strategies, tools, resources and opportunities for the sake of heightened results in student global competence acquisition can only come with all stakeholders' collective efforts. Policy implementation details are included in subsequent sections.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

Numerous resources and supports are needed for policy recommendation implementation. As outlined above, policy implementation will involve several entities at varying levels within FC. In such a situation, it is essential to establish clear governance and accountability measures. Everyone needs to be clear as to who is 'in charge'. Nonetheless, as all stakeholders in this project study share the dedication to and

responsibility for educating the youth in a manner that serves the local and extended community by instilling global competence in them, governance needs to be underpinned by a commitment to work cooperatively. Also, to be successfully implemented, the policies would need enabling of resources including well-established stakeholder engagement and communication channels between the administration and faculty, financial resources for the creation and provision of new faculty professional development opportunities geared at informing teachers about innovative teaching tools and techniques and for building up the FC study abroad program, feedback and complaint handling mechanisms and review and evaluation techniques geared at measuring global competence in students.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

Funding may present the most significant barrier to disseminating policy recommendation. Presently FC is in financial trouble which is causing the institution to impose budget cuts resulting in full-time faculty layoffs and organizational restructuring. This financial hardship can potentially create major problems for policy implementation. Nonetheless, this potential barrier may be addressed with accurate planning in advance. Policy makers at educational institutions must realize that financial constraints should not negatively impact the quality of education but rather they should take precautionary measures in planning ahead, prioritizing initiatives and allocating funds where necessary. If an existing financial problem prevents global competence from being properly taught, then all stakeholders need to work together at reserving those funds for the content area

and the professionals aligned with the recommended policies who contribute to improving the quality of student global competence at FC.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

The particulars concerning project recommendation implementation would need to be decided on by all stakeholders individually and then as a group. Considering that all stakeholders would have at least a month to review the recommendations and provide their own feedback and that the necessary logistics and finding finances needed for implementation may take time, the actual implementation of all recommendations, short, medium and long-term, would probably take anywhere from six months up to four years. The implementation would be complicated by the fact that other institutions such as foreign colleges and universities along with other departments and FC staff would be involved in implementation of all recommendations. Considering that revamping a study abroad program and publishing a truly international textbook would have to cater to the uniqueness of colleges' institutional cultures and involve many logistics, this would probably push back the implementation timetable even further. Also, as book publishing and study abroad programs are costly educational endeavors, funding may also present a potential barrier to disseminating policy recommendations and prevent the policy implementation to be disseminated in its completeness. Nonetheless, even if those particular recommendations cannot be carried out due to budgetary constraints, this should not prevent other more financially feasible recommendations from going into effect. Also, publishing an internal relations book with instructors in the field from other

parts of the world may present logistical problems due to language and time differences.

For this reason, I allot sufficient time (up to four years) to such an ambitious project.

Roles and Responsibilities

My responsibility as the researcher is to present the results of the research in an understandable fashion to the stakeholders mentioned above. I can provide additional background, ideas, and information as requested. Furthermore, future local studies on student global competence acquisition should focus on a larger study population in order to provide institutional stakeholders with an even deeper understanding of the problem at hand as a way of making improvement to international relations education. The responsibility for putting recommendations into action will fall to the liberal arts department chair and dean, budget management team, Academy for Teaching and Learning responsible for professional development, Office of Curriculum Services, and INR teachers.

Project Evaluation Plan

The overall goals of the white paper are to provide the research stakeholders with a present-day overview of student global competence acquisition in the INR 2002 as based on the course instructor perceptions and to provide them with policy recommendations on how to improve the international relations education at FC for the sake of student global competence acquisition. As a way of evaluating the study project recommendations, the white paper will be formative in nature, intended to communicate integral information to the stakeholders meant to modify the learner's thinking or behavior for the purpose of improving learning (Stufflebeam & Zhang, 2017). My goals

are to make the feedback multidimensional, nonevaluative, supportive, timely, specific, credible, infrequent, and genuine (2017). I will base the relayed feedback on teacher perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of the present INR 2002 course meant to teach global competence to students. I will make the feedback analytical, having looked at the data from various angles, making it as objective as possible but supported by the data collected and thus specific to the local problem (2017). I will communicate the feedback shortly after study project completion for relevance purposes (2017). I will address the recommendations to institutional stakeholders, including the Liberal Arts and Sciences Department dean, dean and chair, the INR 2002 teachers as well as the Office of Curriculum Services to ensure that all are aware of the present global competence students acquisition situation and are provided with new and innovative ways to teach this skill set to students.

Project Implications

The research implications stated in the white paper better inform educators and administrators at Florida College about possible ways of improving the course in teaching toward student acquisition of global competence by framing the discussion around the INR 2002 course curriculum and the associated present best course teaching practices and gaps in such practice that need addressing. The local stakeholders, including the liberal art department chair and dean at the college as well as the instructors teaching the course will be most impacted by the significance of this project as they are the ones to create and implement an improved course curriculum as based on the project recommendations.

The importance of the project can also be seen in a larger context. The INR 2002 course is an offered elective course as part of the Florida social sciences general education core course option. Consequently, other disciplines/ programs at the local institution as well as other Florida colleges may also benefit by utilizing these findings in order to improve their own international relations courses. The project recommendations may create positive social change within these institutions of higher learning by providing viable ideas for revamping courses that have been proven to provide an education integral to adequately preparing students for their adult lives. As those same students will one day become an active part of the global workforce, getting them ready for that role means the project bringing about positive social change even at a national context.

Conclusion

This exploratory case study resulted in a final project comprising of a formative white paper that centers on recommendations for providing professional development opportunities and resources to instructors teaching the introductory international relations course at FC. The teachers' perceptions on student global competence acquisition obtained in interviews will guide institutional stakeholders in their efforts of improving international relations education and students obtaining the above-mentioned skill set. The intent is for these recommendations to support these educators in opening channels of communication between them and those administrators at the systemic level by making them aware of possible drawback to the presently offered international relations course. An improved IR education result in higher student global competence necessary

for a future life in a highly globalized world. Thus, educators should be given the necessary administrative support and help needed to implement the required policy recommendation.

The final section of this research contains study reflections and conclusions along with project strengths and weaknesses. In section 4, I provide an analysis of myself as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. I also include the project's potential impact on social change, as well as implications, applications, and directions for future research.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

The strength of this project is that it is centered on teachers' perceptions within the institution of higher learning within which I am employed at, thus an examination of a local issue. No research has been done on gauging student global competence perception in the INR 2002 course gauging its effectiveness in preparing students for the globalized world. In this project, IR teachers were given the opportunity to convey their thoughts, ideas, and concerns regarding this important matter. As a result of this exchange, in this project deliverable I provide guidance to liberal arts administrators as well as IR instructors on ways to improve international relations education at FC.

The research study I conducted was limited to an investigation of an international relations course at a single site which prevents the findings of this study to be generalized to other institutions of higher learning. I limited the interviews to instructors of the course only and did not involve the actual program participants, the students, or the course directors and accreditors, such as the college president and the Liberal Arts and Sciences department dean. Additional insight related to course efficacy in student global competence acquisition could be gained from the data gathered through these different perspectives. Another limitation to this study was my reliance on a single data type, interviews, to evaluate course effectiveness. Furthermore, the quality of this evaluation depended on my skills and experience level, which may be limited in capacity to gain an even fuller understanding of the case being studied. Finally, the project did not have the potential to capture a large number of participant perceptions. I am not too familiar with

the institutional culture at FC as I have been working for the college for a few years but only as an adjunct professor. As my time spent at the research site interacting with the faculty and staff has been limited, I was not able to develop the proper rapport with those working there that would allow me to encourage more subjects to participate. Also, my potential study sample was small. Due to these two project limitations, participant recruitment became a problem early on in the data collection process. Participants took months to respond to the initial study invitation from the time Walden IRB granted approval for the study. I needed to email them weekly reminders throughout that time. I also contacted the chair committee members and the research site liberal arts chair for recommendations for study participant recruitment. As a response to my request the FC Liberal Arts Department Chair contacted the participants and encouraged them to participate. The chair contacting the participants met with a gradual response and I was able to conduct interviews with more than 50% of the study sample.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

A mixed-method research approach composed of a quantitative-qualitative research sequence could provide a confirmation of the existence of the research problem and a deeper understanding of it than either method alone (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Mixed methods research takes advantage of the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative methods provide data that can show comparisons, trends, frequency, probabilities, and other statistical information, whereas qualitative data such as interviews and observations provide perspectives, opinions, and reflection. A mixed method approach could potentially confirm the existence of the problem and provide

more conclusive data on the issue if INR 2002 teachers were substituted for INR 2002 students and asked to take a global competence assessment and then asked for a follow up interview thus yielding both quantitative and qualitative data.

The extent to which the INR 2002 course is helpful in student global competence acquisition may not be based on instructors' use of innovative and engaging teaching resources and tool or a lack of a workable study abroad program for students to participate in. Thus, an alternative problem definition could be possible. A different problem statement could be: A lack of adherence to an institutional policy regarding the importance of teaching global competence in all liberal arts and sciences classes illustrated by achievable course goals and objectives has led to the need to investigate the level of effectiveness of the INR 2002 course in student global competence acquisition. The underlying issue would still be a lack of individual course evaluation at FC, but the focus would be shifted from placing individual responsibility on teachers to teach global competence to an institutional responsibility of not making it pertinent of a teaching and learning goal in the liberal arts and sciences department. This evaluation would require involvement of higher level stakeholders as well as multiple site-level stakeholders, resulting in a completely different perspective of global competence acquisition at FC.

Scholarship, Project Development, and Leadership and Change

Being part of the Walden doctoral program has given me the opportunity to engage in a higher level of thinking, writing and researching than I have even done as a bachelors or a masters candidate. Truth be told, I learned most of my research skills in this program. I was not aware of the extent of the academic research world until I started

researching peer-reviewed journals for my course assignments. And even still my research skills deepened when I started building my bibliography for my own doctoral research. What I have come away with from those countless hours of internet searches and sleepless nights reading other scholars' published works is that improving higher education cannot happen without conducting academic research. If we are to solve the problems plaguing higher teaching and learning, then we first need to accurately identify and articulate the problems in the field. Thus, research affords all members of academia the opportunity to be part of the solution by either initiating or becoming active participants in academic studies.

This having been said, I was excited to be able to play my role in bringing about possible social change by improving the teaching and learning experience at my own workplace, which I have grown fond of in the five years that I have been working there. I dove into my research venture with enthusiasm and even though I encountered a few hurdles along the way before finalizing my doctoral topic and receiving IRB approval, I knew that my struggles were worth the time, money and effort as I was planning to conduct an actual study and one that would positively influence on my own community. While I pride myself on being a diligent worker, what has proven to be most challenging in my own doctoral research journey was managing the personal, professional, and academic aspects of my life. Time management and financial concerns forced me to work beyond the point of physical and mental exhaustion.

Collecting and analyzing my data proved to be the most enjoyable parts of my research. I believe myself to be a personable and open-minded person who genuinely

likes communicating with others. As I am adjunct professor at FC who spends limited time on various campuses, the interview process gave me an opportunity to meet my coworkers for the very first time. I am also a deep thinker. Thus, delving into the meaning of my colleagues' perceptions was both pleasurable and fruitful. In terms of the writing process, I was oftentimes discouraged by iterative nature of the doctoral committee's feedback which lengthened the process for me extensively. But I tried my best to keep a positive attitude while staying dedicated to finishing my doctoral work.

As the project has come to an end, I am mentally equipped to reflect on my experiences as a doctoral researcher. I can say with confidence that this demanding program has taught me much about myself as a person. I have learned the importance of patience, perseverance and trust in God. Also, as a five-year Walden University student, I was given the opportunity to immerse myself in the study of countless theories and approaches to teaching and learning in higher education, all of which have taught me the skills necessary to be a better adult educator and a role model to both my students and colleagues.

Project development. Throughout the data collection part of project development, I was pleasantly surprised by the depth of feedback provided by my colleagues during the interviews. Most participants were comfortable with sharing their personal perceptions about the INR 2002 course. As a result, I came to the important realization that a significant number of my colleagues find global competence an important skill set that they believe should be adequately taught to students. To those participants who answered the interview questions less thoroughly, I felt inclined to ask

follow-up questions not included in the interview protocol with the hope that they would provide me with more details. However, I was concerned with the phrasing of my questions fearing that I might impose my own personal biases on them by probing them into answering a specific way that may not be truly reflective of their own views. Thus, to prevent researcher bias I used member checking by providing each participant in a study with a copy of initial findings, having them review those findings, and providing each an opportunity to discuss those findings with me.

The analysis process was concluded without major hurdles. Coming up with codes and themes for the data was not overly difficult as most participants were open in sharing their views on the importance of teaching global competence. The one main area where they did not all agree, which led to the development of two separate themes was the perceived disadvantages of the INR 2002 course in teaching the skill set and possible ways they believed the course could be improved. Nonetheless, I used my training and scholarly research on qualitative data analysis to reflect all participants perceptions in an accurate and concise manner.

Leadership and change. The results of this study illustrated that there is a legitimate problem in the teaching of global competence in the INR 202 course at FC. In order to address this problem, all stakeholders must be willing and ready to bring about positive change. Changes to the INR 2002 course will require collaboration between various level college personnel which may strain working relationships. Leaders will need to initiate the change and those below will need to follow through with the initiatives believing that the required changes are for the best. For instance, individual

INR faculty members may at first feel like their personal freedoms pertaining to how to teach the class are being infringed upon by new administratively decided course curriculum and/or teaching tool requirements. My hope is that positive institutional transition can occur with trust, communication, and shared goals among all stakeholders.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

Due to globalization, the world is becoming politically, economically, and socially smaller with each passing day and also more complex in terms of human interaction. This means that running into people from different cultural backgrounds at work or in school has become an inevitable part of our existence. Therefore, it is of vital importance to foster skills encompassed by the term global competence in all areas of our lives and make those skills an integral part of our daily existence. Cultural diversity is defined as cultural awareness in workplaces, schools, businesses and politics that gives each of us the grace and the good manners to indicate, “I see you. I honor you. I celebrate what makes you unique”. Especially when we are interacting with people who seem different than we are culturally, being able to remember the answer to, “Why is cultural diversity important?” gives us all the insights we’ll ever need to honor those differences and interact in ways that facilitate understanding and cooperation (Advanced Global Connection, 2013). Consequently, global competence is a nationally and globally recognized skill set needed by young adults to successfully navigate the waters of professional and personal lives.

However, based on my research, the term global competence seems to be missing from our schools’ vocabulary at a time when the classrooms are becoming more and

more complex and national problems are becoming world problems (Hovland, 2014). In today's globalized world it is a necessity however to teach those skills. The hope for a better future lies in the youth and adults of today. There is untapped power in teaching global competence in formal setting of higher education levels. This power comes in the form of teaching and learning educational resources and institutional initiatives all of which can be used at the local level for making the world a better place by injecting cultural understanding and tolerance into the hearts and minds of all adult learners. As a result, American institutions of higher learning have been rigorously going through internationalization efforts by making necessary changes to their curricula in making them more suitable for this skill set acquisition in students.

This white paper project contributes to the work on student global competence acquisition and has far-reaching consequences for FC and American colleges and universities. Particularly, in this project, FC stakeholders are provided with an understanding of student global competence acquisition in an introductory international relations course both for political science faculty and administration. The research findings contribute to the limited information on student global competence assessment at the institution and the local community. The importance of the findings also confirms that global competence acquisition in students does occur through transformation in personal perspectives and beliefs (Mezirow, 1997). The findings and recommendations give insight into how incorporating more innovative and engaging teaching and learning tools and resources like classroom discussions, education-based simulations and study abroad opportunities into the INR 2002 course could foster global competence in students.

By conducting a study to fulfill my doctoral degree requirements, I was able to put knowledge about research into actual practice. While, I went through a few hurdles along the way, I learned that I am capable of bringing about social change by not only teaching in the classroom but also by conducting research, bringing to light pertinent local issues in higher education, and coming up with viable solutions.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Walden University (2014) defined social change as “involvement in activities that improve the lives of individuals and communities locally and around the world” (p. 1). This project revealed several implications concerning social change and future research. The research data and theory reviewed in the project deliverable illustrated that among students enrolled in international relations courses, global competence acquisition need to be improved. Although, college courses can always be improved for higher quality purposes, this project’s focus on international relations courses, meant to foster global competence in students, has provided a more in-depth look at the course strengths and weaknesses in terms of the skills set acquisition. The project has the potential to significantly improve the INR 2002 course curriculum in preparing students for their lives in a highly globalized world.

Creating this project gave me the opportunity to engage in positive social change by recommending actions to be taken by FC to improve global competence acquisition by INR 2002 students. This is possible by implementing the white paper project recommendations. The short-term recommendation calls for creating a departmental definition of global competence, updating the course goals, objectives, and curriculum to

reflect global competence as a priority, as well as implementing a better suited textbook for the course. The medium-term recommendation suggests revamping and putting more effort into advertising the FC study abroad program. Finally, the long-term recommendation proposes that FC political science faculty, under the guidance of departmental administrators, collaboratively with other political science professors from higher education institutions worldwide publish an International Relations textbook.

Another important implication of this project is its contribution to the limited body of literature that exists on global competence acquisition by students in international relations courses in America. Having done extensive research on the topic, I was able to find only limited data on teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of such a course in teaching this skill set. After receiving FC college approval of the project, I plan to disseminate it nationally by publishing it in higher education academic journals. While the study results cannot be generalized beyond the research site, the project does contain information helpful to other institutions as well as educational organizations in the country. For instance, one of the most widely mentioned weaknesses of the INR 2002 course was a lack of engaging and relevant learning and teaching resources and tools. To address the problem, I suggested medium-term recommendation of FC political science faculty implementing more classroom discussions and educational simulations into the INR course and a long-term recommendation of collaboratively with foreign colleges and universities publishing their own course textbook. Although, the solution is partially local, the recommendations could potentially be used by other colleges and universities in the United States and abroad.

The scope of this research was limited to INR 2002 teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the course in student global competence acquisition. Further research could explore students' perceptions on the topic to see the extent to which teachers' perceptions about the course effectiveness in student global competence acquisition matches that of students' perceptions of the course effectiveness in terms of their own personal acquisition of that skill set. Another possible area for further research is investigating how the classroom setting effects global competence acquisition in students, meaning those enrolled in an online INR course as compared to those in a traditional brick-and-mortar classroom environment. Potentially, future research should also measure the effects of the project recommendations on INR 2002 student global competence acquisition. Investigating these topics could lead researchers and practitioners to gaining a deeper understanding of INR 2002 student global competence acquisition and suggest further course improvement opportunities.

Conclusion

Throughout the course of this project I was given the opportunity to investigate student global competence acquisition at my own institution in the form of analyzing faculty perceptions about an international relations course offered as part of the core curriculum. International relations courses have been identified by scholars as rich in educating students for a life that is increasingly globalized and intercultural. Considering that program evaluation at the research site does not involve looking at individual courses, the INR 2002 course was never evaluated for its effectiveness in teaching global

competence. Thus, the research results provided stakeholders with new information needed to assess their capabilities of educating the future of our country and the world.

The new reality of a heavily globalized world highlights the vital role that education plays in preparing students for success in an interconnected world. The United States has invested unprecedented resources in education in the last two decades with the hope of fundamentally transforming the nation's outmoded, factory-age system into one that will adequately prepare students for the rigors of a global economy. As most corporations and organizations cognizant of the interconnectedness of the world economy have recognized the importance of global competence and added it to their list of required workforce knowledge-based skills, it has become clear for the American higher education system that producing a competitive American workforce relies on schools producing globally competent students. Global competence is used to describe a body of knowledge about world regions, cultures, and global issues (regardless of discipline), and the skills and dispositions to engage responsibly and effectively in a global environment. Considering the importance of teaching global competence to our students' future lives and the wellbeing of this country and the world, all institutions of higher learning should be obligated to teach this skill set adequately. Thus, gauging their present efforts in doing so should be prioritized.

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Appendix A: The Project



**Improving Student Global
Competence Acquisition**

Izabela Majewska

Executive Summary

National and international organizations emphasize the importance of teaching global competence in American higher education as a way of preparing students for the rigors of a globalized workforce (ACE, 2015; IAU, 2016; Lee, 2014; NEA, 2012; Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2015). Due to a lack of nation-wide educational initiatives aimed at providing institutional guidelines for investigating courses like international relations (IR) for this skill acquisition, colleges must rely on their own resources and ingenuity. This study addressed the problem of a lack of data on the effectiveness of the INR 2002 course in student global competence acquisition as a result of no existing course assessment methods at Florida College (FC). The purpose of this project is to present the findings and recommendations based on a doctoral research study conducted on the perceptions and teaching experiences of five FC INR 2002 course instructors. Guided by the transformative learning theory, the research questions for this exploratory qualitative study focused on teachers' perceptions of global competence instruction and student skill acquisition, their perceptions of the effectiveness of the INR 2002 course in student global competence learning, and course advantages and disadvantages.

Four themes emerged as a result of the analyzed data: **(a) definition of global competence, (b) course strengths, (c) course weaknesses, and (d) course curriculum development.** These findings, coupled with theory and best practices discussed in the

literature, led to the following **recommendations** to improve student global competence acquisition in the International Relations course:

Short-term recommendations for course curriculum development to be completed within 6- 12 month include:

- departmentally deciding on a definition of global competence and including global competence in the course description, course goals and objectives;
- implementing more engaging teaching and learning resources and learning tools/ activities into the INR 2002 course.

Mid-term recommendation for course curriculum development to be completed within 18-24 months asks for

- revamping and advertising the FC study abroad program to all FC students.

Long-term recommendation for course curriculum development to be completed within 24-48 months asks that

- FC political science professors and administration work collaboratively with foreign higher education institution at publishing an introduction to international relations textbook.

The Problem

This white paper addresses the problem of lack of data on INR 2002 course effectiveness in student global competence acquisition at FC. While the American government as well as national and international organizations call for internationalization efforts in the American higher education system as a way of teaching pertinent 21st-century skills in

preparing students for the rigors of a globalized workforce, no nation-wide initiatives exist to guide institutions in pertinent to this skill-set program or course assessment efforts (ACE, 2015, NEA 2016). Based on email communications with FC's Director of Program Assessment and Strategic Planning, the institution's administrators gather data from teachers on learning outcomes at the program level for the purpose of gauging students' critical thinking, communications, and quantitative and scientific reasoning skills, but individual courses have never been investigated for student global competence acquisition (A. Browning, personal communication, May 4, 2017). Consequently, there is no research-based evidence at this time indicating that Florida College (FC) INR 2002 International Relations (IR) course curriculum is adding to students' growth in global competency.

There is no research-based evidence indicating that Florida College (FC) INR 2002 International Relations (IR) course curriculum is adding to students' growth in global competency.

Issues in the teaching of IR at the research site make student global competence acquisition difficult. Instructor reliance on American-authored textbooks and the Western/ Eurocentric/ Westphalian perspective with which the course material is presented have been identified by faculty members at departmental meetings as worrisome teaching trends leading to ethnocentric perspectives of the world and its problems (D. Washington, personal communication, September 12, 2016). These gaps in practice, along with the heavily American- driven knowledge formation in the IR

discipline which prevents non-Western narratives from being included in theory development, and American hegemony in the international system have been recognized by scholars as undermining global competence acquisition by preventing students from objectively interpreting the course material (Bertrand & Lee, 2012; Kristensen, 2015; Young, 2014). Furthermore, no direct learning outcomes in the course outline or the syllabus, addressing 21st-century skills as an important learning benchmark, are present (D. Washington, personal communication, September 19, 2017).

Transformative Learning Theory

Mezirow's (1997) transformative learning theory informed the study and the recommendations presented in this white paper. Mezirow (1997) created the transformative learning theory to explain the way people's perceptions of themselves, each other and the world, can be tested and transformed to better understand the complexity of the world. In transforming, individuals change their perspectives and ways of perceiving their surroundings through critical reflection on their personal assumptions and beliefs and making deliberate changes to their personal definitions of their world (Illeris, 2014a).

Researchers in education have applied the theory to explain global competence acquisition. As global competence is an adaptive capacity, transformative learning allows for the possibility of approaching the concept from a learning perspective, meaning, how participants learn to become globally competent (Illeris, 2014b). The immense political,

economic, and social interconnected of the world in the 21st century speaks to the complexity of our everyday lives as we are presented in our personal and professional environments with people, cultures, views, and values different from our own, any or all of which may trigger self-reflection and criticism (Illeris, 2014b). Thus, learning global competence constitutes a part of that potential transformation as students are often faced with unease as they call into question their habits of mind. More so, the phenomenon of globalization reiterates the fact that the world is in constant flux (2014b). This constant change makes transformative learning a necessary component of adult education as individuals must continuously grow intellectually as a way of keeping up with the changes in the world and their own lives (2014b). The need for constant advancement is very clearly seen in the professional world where the integration of technology, politics, industry, and global trade have forced corporations to search for employees with ‘global mind-sets’ (Schuetze, 2013).

Mezirow’s 10 Phases of Transformation

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. A Self- examination with feeling of fear, anger, guilt or shame
3. A critical assessment of assumption
4. Recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and action
6. Planning a course of action
7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plans
8. Provisionally trying new roles
9. Building competence and self-confidence in new role and relationships
10. A reintegration into one’s life in the basis of conditions dictated by one’s perspective

The transformative learning theory was appropriate for this study as it explained the perspective transformation in students as a requirement for global competence acquisition.

Purpose and Design

Considering the importance of IR courses in student global competence acquisition along with scholarly evidence supporting the existence of issues in college-level IR instruction and its effects on students global competence acquisition doubled with lack of institutional data at the research site gauging the efficiency of teaching the skill set, this study's purpose was to conduct exploratory research investigating INR 2002 faculty perceptions of the effectiveness of the course as an academic environment where gaining global competence by students is possible. The research questions for this study were designed to gain an understanding of the perceptions of FC teachers on the effectiveness of the INR 2002 course in student global competence acquisition. In alignment with exploratory research, as the chosen case study design, the focus of this study was understanding the respondents' points of view about student

Research Questions

1. What are the teachers' perceptions about global competence instruction in the INR 2002 course?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the INR 2002 course on student growth in global competence?
3. What are the teacher' perceptions on the advantages and disadvantages of the presently offered INR 2002 course?

transformative learning process in global competence acquisition. The research questions were formulated bases on this approach.

Open-ended, semi-structured, one-on-one, 45-60-minute interviews were conducted with 5 FC INR 2002 instructors. Homogenous purposeful sampling, as the instructors at the research site teaching the INR 2002 course were most knowledgeable the about the topic of study pertaining to international relations education. The sample included all adjunct and full- time instructors employed at FC that are credentialed to teach and have taught the INR 2002 course in the last year. All participants signed the informed consent form before being interviewed expressing their willingness to participate in the study. The consent form informed them of their voluntary participation, the study's background, payments, confidentiality and contact information. IRB approval to conduct this research was obtained from both Walden University as well as FC, the research site.

Results

The data gathered in interviews was analyzed using Creswell's (2012) steps of: transcribing the data verbatim, conducting preliminary review of transcripts, dividing transcribed texts into segments for general theme formation, renaming segments into codes and grouping codes into themes aligning with the study's conceptual framework. The research questions informed the coding and theming of data. The narrative process yielded the following four themes:

- Definition of Global Competence

- Course Strengths
- Course Weaknesses
- Course Curriculum Development

Definition of Global Competence

The first theme directly correlates to the first research question pertaining to teachers' perceptions of global competence instruction. From the gathered insight it can be concluded that instructors' INR 2002 instructors' definition of global competence is limited in scope. Also, instructor individual understanding of the term informs the way they teach the class and gauge global competence acquisition in their students and what their personal course objectives and goals are and whether they have met them. However, considering that there is both no real uniformity in the definitions of global competence and a lack of full understanding of the term among colleges and universities and even within institutions as scholarship like the one by Hovland (2014) proves, indicates that evaluating the course for its effectiveness in student global competence acquisition may be a difficult task for the FC Liberal Arts and Sciences Department.

While most participants used words and phrases like *interconnection, awareness of, understanding of*, no one participant defined the term exactly as any other participant. Most participants provided a rather short definition of global competence similar to the one that is given to international relations, the relationship between

“I don't think I have a definition [for global competence]”.

world governments in the international system (Goldstein & Pevehouse, 2015). However, as bases on scholarly writing on global competence and internationalization efforts in higher education posit, global competence is a multidimensional concept that cannot be defined in just one sentence (ACE, 2015; IAU, 2016; NEA, 2012; Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2015). Thus, the definitions provided by INR 2002 faculty members does not fully explain the complexity of what the term means. One participant even admitted to not having a definition. While only one instructor, gave the most rounded definition of global competence.

Course Strengths

This theme was derived from a compilation of participant responses to interview

<hr style="border: 1px solid black; width: 250px; margin-bottom: 10px;"/> <p>“Some of the more effective things that I do is take advantage of what I have in the room. If I got somebody in the room that is an immigrant or is from another part of the world. ...you have to look at people who might have been somewhere else, military people, that sort of thing and I let them just talk. You get to the point where they talk about their life, how come they are here”.</p> <hr style="border: 1px solid black; width: 250px; margin-top: 10px;"/>	<p>questions pertaining to research question 1, 2 and 3.</p> <p>For instance when talking about the best practices used in teaching the course material (RQ1), instructors expressed the shared belief that engaging students in the course material is vital to keeping their interest. All participants told concrete examples of course assignment and classroom activities that they employ which they believe foster global competence acquisition which they in turn believe raises the effectiveness rating of the course. They included</p>
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individual and group state reports, where students had to pick a country they knew

nothing about and report on its political, social and cultural context and how its effects international relations, or group projects where students had to create a political coalition and reflect on coalition's influence in domestic and foreign affairs or assigning articles on global current event, However, the most widely mentioned best practice was class discussions. All five participants mentioned, either in answering RQ1 or RQ3, the importance of classroom discussions as a way of drawing students in and making them want to know more about the field of IR. They expressed the belief that thought provoking discussions make students leave the classroom more aware, interested and more likely to pay attention to the world outside of their own. Classroom discussion that take advantage of the heterogeneity of the class have been found to be helpful in drawing students in and making the course even more relevant to students' own lives. Some participants even made a self- critical analysis of their own teaching in admitting that they should employ this teaching tactic more frequently considering the many advantages that classroom discussions have been found to bring to the learning environments. Employing teaching and learning tools that rely on using students' own personal lived experiences was also expressed as making the course content more applicable to students' lives.

Course Weaknesses

The course disadvantages come to light in combination of answers to RQ2 and RQ3.

When providing answers as to the evidence for course effectiveness (RQ 2) the participants provided numerous reasons as to why student global competence acquisition

in the course may not be higher. Two participants pointed to the introductory nature of the INR 2002 course. They stated that global competence acquisition may not be too high because it is an introductory course considering the basic nature of the course curriculum and the limitation of time. Another reason given for the perceived medium to high effectiveness of the course was the nature of the course curriculum itself, which by several participants was given as being too American- centric/ U.S oriented/ isolationist as well as students' lack of effective learning due to student poor reading skills. Yet the most common answer given to the question pertaining to the disadvantages of the course (RQ3) was the one in which teachers expressed the belief that the course did not have intellectually stimulating teaching and learning resources. The textbook was said to be presented as too American -centric, focusing too much of international relations from the American perspective due to either examples of current events given to illustrate various IR concepts, or written predominantly from that outlook. The textbooks available are thought of by instructors as too dry and incapable of holding the students' attention and/or they are written in a highly academic language which is too complicated for a novice with no previous background in the field or one with lack of knowledge about world affairs and events to understand. This lack of

“...a student who knows already that she wants to be a political science major, probably the student that come in with more information and so can see the picture better and grab the concepts easier and the student who is not thinking about being a political science major may not be the person who reads the newspaper every day and can tell you that the prime minister of Canada is Justin Trudeau or whatever the case may be. So, even the very same material can give you different outcomes based on the students”.

basic knowledge is also believed by some teachers as undermining the potential of achieving higher levels of global competence in students in the INR 2002 course as students are coming into the course with gaps in basic knowledge of world geography, history and current events.

Perceived weakness of the course were also those student characteristics that teachers believed create hindrances to global competence acquisition. One such obstacle mentioned was students coming into the course with different levels of interest in the course. Four out of five participants stated that the nature of the students enrolling in the course may be an important determinant of student global competence acquisition at the end of the course. The general belief among instructors is that some students enroll in the course because they chose to major in political science and thus their level of interest in the course material is high, whereas others do so because their academic advisor told them to even though they do not truly know what the course is about, or they chose it as either an elective or core curriculum requirement, thus making their initial interest in the course material low. Besides the differing levels of student interest in the course participants shared their experiences with the reality of teaching a mixture of student who initially come into the course with different levels of basic knowledge and varying levels of interest in the course material and also used those as possible reasons that decrease global competence acquisition in students.

Course Curriculum Development

 “I think the best things that happened to me about the whole idea [of curriculum change] was just talking to people that were doing the same thing and just making it casual and not imposed”

Participants’ responses to interview questions pertaining to participants’ perceptions of the course strengths and weakness as well as their perceptions of course improvements and some concrete examples of lead to the formation of this last theme. All participants agreed that the course needs to be improved. Answers as what particular improvements are needed related to the need to find a more suitable textbook, create course assignments that force students to look at issues from a non-Western or American-centric view, place more emphasis on teaching world history and

geography, have instructors build on teaching practices that have been proven through practice to work, employing tactics that keep the students interested and engaged like offering extra credit or incentive points, and/ or have teachers make jokes and use ice breakers that relate to the course material as a way of breaking up the monotony and creating rapport with the students, sharing ideas with colleagues either in formal setting like a departmental meeting or informal ones such as a casual conversation in the teachers’ lounge, as well as taking advantage of professional development opportunities to become better informed about innovative teaching and learning practices.

However, all faculty also pointed out that improving the course curriculum can be hindered by a lack of cooperation from the faculty whether it be due to people vying for

their turf (participant 1) or infringement on instructor academic freedom in choosing their own teaching resources and tools. The problem may be that change is communicated the wrong way to teachers. He also said that change is presented as something that instructors have to do. Thus, when change does finally come, and teachers are forced to comply, they only adhere to those changes because they do not want to jeopardize their job. Consequently, participants believe that change occurs best when teachers are allowed to come together in a more informal context and freely share new ideas with other colleagues. Under such circumstances change is more likely to be perceived as something good where teachers will be more willing to make appropriate changes and see them as valid improvement to their course.

Recommendation 1 (Short-Term)

Departmentally defining global competence and including global competence in the course description, course goals and objectives

Global Competence has been found to be oftentimes misunderstood and misused as higher education faculty, staff, and practitioners do not always agree about what it means (Hovland, 2014). While, all such statements illustrate the institutions' implicit and explicit commitments to produce graduates capable of meeting the political, social and economic challenges of the world, none of these institutions share in the same language pertaining to the imperative and a plan of action of how such social change is going to be achieved (2014). This is due to the fact that all institutions of higher learning evolve

within unique institutional contexts as shaped by their role and place in the global community as influenced by their local community's and state's development in economics, demographics, trade, and cultural relations (2014). Besides lacking in a national definition of global learning, colleges and universities are also lacking in uniform institutional definition as well. Mission statements are not always products of a well-organized, campus-wide multilateral stakeholder discussions, meaning that different stakeholders have varying interpretations of the rhetoric stemming from their particular professional positions (2014).

Thus, FC INR staff and faculty need “a shared understanding of how this language relates to actual learning goals and all the practices that flow from them in order to translate that into institutional structures and practices” (Hovland, 2014. pg. 3). Such shared understanding can be provided by having the FC Liberal Arts and Sciences administration and faculty working together in a shared definition of global competence. Having the concept defined and agreed upon departmentally could improve global competence acquisition by: **(a) making alignment of the term with associated student learning outcomes easier, (b) designing educational experiences through which students gain competence and meet those outcomes, and (c) demonstrating through empirical data gathered in institutional evaluations that those experiences actually help students achieve global competence outcomes, while simultaneously creating projects and assignments that allow students to demonstrate competencies.**

Recommendation 2 (Short-Term)

Implementing more engaging teaching and learning resources and learning tools/
activities into the INR 2002 course

Teaching and learning political science courses, of which international relations is a subbranch, is difficult considering the complexity of the curriculum and the unengaging manner in which many such courses are conducted (Cohen, 2009). Additionally, political science holds a poor reputation among political scholars and politicians alike (Cohen, 2009). This is attributed to a lack of relevancy in the discipline and the research that it engages in (Cohen, 2009). This lack of relevancy has also affected the students' attitudes towards political science courses (Seidelman, 2015) Much too often, these courses are simply regarded as unimportant. In most institutions of higher learning students are forced to take such classes as International Relations or American Government as part of the core curriculum which dissuades students from actively participating in them, having deemed the experience, even before entering the first session, to be a waste of time (Seidelman, 2015). Yet, implementing more engaging teaching and learning resources and learning tool/ activities into the INR 2002 course such as **(a) classroom discussions and student participation and (b) educational simulations** can improve student global competence acquisition.

How can classroom discussions and student participation improve student global competence acquisition?

Classroom discussions are vital to global competence acquisition. They aid in the implementation of their new knowledge into practice by connecting intellectual concepts with everyday examples (Pauli & Reusser, 2015). This in turn prevents the mundane task of memorizing definitions and formulas and replaces it with thinking critically in every area of adult life by encouraging creative problem-solving skills (2015). Secondly, class discussions allow students to have a voice in class while also benefiting from peer-to-peer learning, as thoughts and beliefs are constantly exchanged (Murphy, Firetto, Wei, Li, & Croninger, 2016). At times of disagreement, students are encouraged to partake in constructive criticism, which teaches to respect the opinions of others. This way, discussions create a safe and collaborative atmosphere that supports the learning process. A judgment-free environment also promotes the adult psychosocial development in creating meaningful relationships, many of which have a potential of lasting a life-time (Godfrey & Grayman, 2014). Furthermore, class discussions allow adult students, along with the instructor, to take on the double role of teacher/ learner (Rotellar & Cain, 2016). They lead their learning process by creating the course material. As a result of such discussions, adult learners form their own curriculum with personal experiences and wisdom. This self- acquired learning resource allows them to be self- directed in their learning process (2016). Finally, teaching global competence through classroom discussions can happen simply by a policy of inclusiveness, in which the instructor allows opportunities for students from all social and cultural communities to participate (McLeskey, Rosenberg, & Westling, 2017). For example, if the course concerns a history of ideas on certain social issues,

through simple class discussions students could be encouraged to bring forward histories that have evolved in their own social or cultural traditions and place them alongside the predominant national culture (2017).

In short, classroom discussions and actual student participation in them make knowledge practical, approachable, and applicable and not consisting of convoluted theoretical explanations that seem to have little to do with the real world and their lives (Pauli & Reusser, 2015).

How can educational simulations improve global competence acquisition?

Firstly, simulations have the potential of bringing complex political concepts and processes to life in ways that traditional learning resources and methods like textbooks and lectures cannot (Giovanello, Kirk, & Kromer 2013). Thus, simulations allow for the rare opportunity of connecting the theoretical and the practical by immersing students in educational exercises directed at replicating reality where they must respond to the complex and dynamic political situations when given a specific set of circumstances (2013). Secondly, simulations have been found to foster active learning where students are driven to formulate their own knowledge. Rutten and van Joolingen (2015) argued that with the use of such hands- on activities, computer simulations teach involving *doing*, found to increase retention levels as compared to learning via listening, reading, or seeing. Also, if played often and regularly throughout a course, simulations can also help develop social bonds between members of a class (Barko & Sadler, 2013). Besides active

and experiential learning, simulations have also been pertinent to realizing the potential of the constructivist and transformational theories as students are forced to self-regulate their learning by being able to overcome the internal struggles between their current frameworks of viewing the world and contradictory to them newly gained understandings from reality gaming leading them to making new models of the world (Asal, Kollars, Raymond, & Rosen, 2013). Hence, simulations help students acquire an entire spectrum of perspectives allowing for a deeper and more meaningful understanding and analysis of problems (Asal & Kratoville, 2013; Asal, Kollars, Raymond, & Rosen, 2013). Simulations have been found to be a powerful learning tool in attaining negotiation skills as they allow for iteration, essential to learning what is at the heart of IR, diplomacy and conflict resolution skills (Druckman & Ebner, 2013). Finally, educational simulations a powerful tool in cultivating important predispositions for global learning, like empathy, while encouraging political awareness and civic engagement (Bridge & Radford, 2014).

Recommendation 3 (Medium- Term)

Revamping and advertising the FC study abroad program to all FC students International educators recognize study abroad as an easy-to-use pedagogical intervention to effectively foster such a skill set (2014). The past two decades saw a significant increase in student study abroad participation. According to 2011 estimates by the Institute of International Education only 75,000 students studied abroad in 1990 as compared to 270,000 in the 2009-2010 academic year (NAFSA, 2015). Half of these

were social sciences (22%) and business students (21%) (2015). In spite of the growing number of participants and the scholarly literature on the topic, the total percentage of American students who travel abroad for academic credit remains surprisingly low with only 1.6 % of all American college and university students participating in the 2014-15 academic year (2015).

Only 1.6 % of all American college and university students participated in study abroad opportunities in the 2014-15 academic year.

To improve these statistics FC needs to make more effort in revamping and advertising its study abroad program to all of its students. This is an especially worthy goal considering that study abroad opportunities have been found to have manifold advantages for global competence acquisition in students. International interaction has been found to **foster global citizenship, global citizenry, intercultural competence and communication, and global awareness** (Lee, 2013; Stoner et al., 2014; Tarrant, Rubin, & Stoner, 2014).

Recommendation 4 (Long-Term)

FC political science professors and administration work collaboratively with foreign higher education institution at publishing an introduction to international relations

textbook

There is a problem with IR literature presented to students in American college and university classrooms. Most IR literature is flooded with American perspectives of world dynamics. Overreliance on American-authored texts has been found to be a significant hindrance to student global competence acquisition (Acharya, 2014). American-authored textbooks have been found to present the curriculum from a predominantly Eurocentric/Western perspective creating biased perceptions and understanding of IR course material (2014). Scholarly research clearly reflects this overuse. For example, US IR programs participating in Hagmann and Biersteker's (2014) extensive study involving over 5 dozen colleges and universities study were found to overwhelmingly assign reading assignments developed within the American academic and socio-political context, in effect completely

ignoring foreign conception of world politics.

Overreliance on American-authored texts has been found to be a significant hindrance to student global competence acquisition.

Besides the problematic content of IR scholarly writing itself, there is also the issue of how these textual teaching resources are being used in the classroom environment. The American IR

discipline is ruled by different kinds of intellectual parochialisms which prevents curricular homogeneity in the American IR discipline in turn raising difficult questions about superior pedagogical approaches in teaching the subject matter (Hagmann & Biersteker, 2014). The parochialism is due to the fact that individual IR course curriculum directly reflects the instructors' choice of preferred topics (2014). As instructors prioritize some perspectives over others, there is no assurance that the IR taught in the classrooms reflects the discipline as it is talked about in leading journals

(2014). As such, parochial IR teaching prevents students from being exposed to differing views of international relations and forces them to interpret the complexities of power politics in a narrow manner (2014). Thus, parochial IR teaching creates the risk that students will project biased and historically situated viewpoints onto world events and infer them to be universal (2014).

To combat the skewed perspectives of the world presented in IR textbooks along with the dry, static nature of these texts, as this research pointed out, FC is being encouraged to connect with foreign colleges and universities in Asia, the Middle East and the Pacific for a joint project in working collaboratively at publishing a textbook for teaching an introductory level course in international relations. While, such a feat is admirable it is recognized that much time and effort would go into working toward this ‘global’ in scope project thus up to four years is given toward its completion.

Concluding Thoughts

At the heart and soul of all educational institutions, regardless of their size, type, or origin, is curriculum (Ayub & Law, 2015, Meral, 2016). Curriculum is believed to be crucial for the short and long-term well-being and effectiveness of higher education as it is considered to be the foundation for high quality programs and services, regardless of the type of educational programs and institution. The purpose of higher education is about developing a whole person, so the approach to curriculum management (designing, implementing, assessing) should encompass both technical skills and the development of

the learner as a whole person (Fish, 2013). It is imperative that while developing curriculum, FC should consider issues including institutional environment, pedagogical strategies to be used to implement the learning and teaching activities envisioned in the curriculum, graduate competences to be developed and educational institution leadership that is required for implementation (Ayub & Law, 2015). The internal and external environmental circumstances of the institution, such competition between different schools at an institution, structural and strategic changes, level of support from the college or university for new programs, new educational models and academic standards need to be given equal attention. College courses should be designed using both formal and informal pedagogical methods (Meral, 2016). Curriculum development plans must consider which and how many competencies are to be developed in students which they would be able to use on day-to-day basis in more than one area of their lives (Ayub & Law, 2015). Finally, FC must be cognizant of the fact that implementing curriculum change can only happen successfully with the existence of supportive, encouraging, and dynamic leadership (Meral, 2016).

At the heart and soul of all educational institutions is curriculum.

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Appendix D: Approval to Conduct Research



October 23, 2017

Dear Izabela A. Majewska,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled College Teachers' Perceptions about Teaching Global Competency within Florida [redacted] College [redacted].

Faculty members' contact information including email addresses are available via the FIC [redacted] website. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: allowing you access to FIC [redacted] faculty email addresses. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

The student will be responsible for complying with our site's research policies and requirements as outlined in Administrative Procedure Manual 10-1104 and the FIC [redacted] IRB Handbook.

I understand that the student will not be naming our organization in the doctoral project report that is published in Proquest.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Carrie E. Henderson', is written in black ink.

Carrie E. Henderson, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness & Accreditation