Cross-Cultural Competence Assessment Instruments for the U.S Military Academy's Semester Abroad Program

Scott E. Womack
Seton Hall University

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Cross-Cultural Competence

Assessment Instruments for the U.S. Military Academy’s
Semester Abroad Program

by

Scott E. Womack

Dissertation Committee

Dr. Joseph Stetar
Dr. Martin Finkelstein
Dr. James Forrest
Dr. Richard Wolff

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctorate in Educational Leadership, Management, and Policy
Seton Hall University

2009
Acknowledgements and Dedication

I am grateful to my parents, Darwin and Mary Womack, for their guidance and selfless service as educators. I thank my wife, Rebecca, for her patience, devotion, and friendship. My sons, Josiah and Samuel Womack, have inspired me with their reflexive and effortless quest for knowledge in its many forms. They have all made their love manifest to me in their own way. Thank you.

I dedicate this study to the members of the Armed Forces of the United States, as they uncomplainingly execute their mission in a complex and chaotic operating environment. May it make some contribution, however slight, to the establishment of a just peace where they serve.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview

Among the many transformation efforts initiated by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) in the wake of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001, was an attempt to significantly alter how its four services – the Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force – train, assess, and manage their foreign language and cultural awareness programs. The result of this transformation effort, the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap (DLTR), published in January 2005, included several mandates related to enhancing language proficiency, cultural awareness and regional expertise (U.S. Department of Defense [DoD], 2005). The 2006 DoD Quadrennial Defense Review subsequently stated, “developing broader linguistic capability and cultural understanding is critical to prevailing in the long war and to meet 21st century challenges” (DoD, 2006).

At the DoD Culture Summit in Washington, DC in June 2007, the chief architect of the DLTR, Dr. D. Chu (2007), Undersecretary of Defense for Readiness and Manpower, indicated the need to develop a roadmap similar to the DLTR specifically addressing cultural and regional expertise. In a white paper produced by the summit, Dr. Chu states, “The stakes are extremely high. We must begin immediately to address the challenges the Department is facing in building the regional and cultural capabilities we need for the defense and security of the Nation” (DoD, 2007).

The U.S. Secretary of Defense, Mr. Robert Gates, subsequently noted the U.S. military’s shortcomings in the area of intercultural competence in a speech to the Association of American Universities in April 2008: “Too many mistakes have been
made over the years because our government and military did not understand – or even seek to understand – the countries or cultures we were dealing with” (2008). He later described the contemporary operating environment responsible for the challenges to which Dr. Chu alluded in an article appearing in *Foreign Affairs*. He states, “No one should ever neglect the psychological, cultural, political, and human dimensions of warfare” (Gates, 2009). In order to address these oft-neglected dimensions of warfare, he places a premium on the skills necessary to “... address adequately the dangers posed by insurgencies and failing states,” arguing, “... the kinds of capabilities needed to deal with these scenarios cannot be considered exotic distractions or temporary diversions” (Gates, 2009). Among these capabilities are foreign language proficiency and intercultural competence.

At least three of the military services were already focusing on the training and assessment of cross-cultural competence (3C) prior to DoD’s increased interest in the matter. The U.S. Air Force created a Culture and Language Center within its Air University in early 2006, dedicated to developing, implementing, and assessing curricula in the areas of culture, 3C, regional studies, and languages (U.S. Air Force Air University Culture and Language Center [USAF], 2007). As such, it serves as a clearing house for the U.S. Air Force Education and Training Command, validating the cultural content of USAF training at all levels. Likewise, the U.S. Marine Corps created a Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning in 2005 to deliver culture and language instruction to Marines and subsequently published a textbook on the subject entitled *Operational Culture for the Warfighter: Principles and Applications* (U.S. Marine Corps Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning [CAOCL], 2007).
The U.S. Army established its own culture center in February 2006, which developed an education and training strategy and training materials for 3C, and sent mobile training teams to “train the trainers” in instructional delivery of the materials (U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Culture Center [TCC], 2007). The Army also began a cultural understanding and language proficiency project in its Center for Army Leadership that promulgated standards for 3C and language proficiency for officers and enlisted personnel at every level from pre-entry to senior leadership (U.S. Army Center for Army Leadership [CAL], 2007). It also took the additional step of engaging a research psychologist and four research assistants to conduct a formal study to construct a model of 3C and to review assessment instruments (Abbe, Gulick, and Herman, 2007). The considerable financial and human resources expended by the services in the area of 3C are another indicator of its importance, and the Army’s effort in this area particularly informs this study.

The emphasis on 3C exhibited by DoD and the services have as their source the U.S. military’s ongoing counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and other, smaller-scale military operations against terrorist organizations around the world. Anecdotal evidence in the form of testimonials from these operational areas places great value on 3C (Casey, 2007; Israel, 2007; Hernandez, 2007; Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, and Smith, 2006). The commander of U.S. Central Command and architect of the U.S. military’s current counterinsurgency doctrine, General David Petraeus, published guidance to coalition forces serving in Iraq that implicitly require 3C (Petraeus, 2008). Examples include statements such as:

1. “The Iraqi people are the decisive terrain.”
2. "We cannot kill our way out of this endeavor."

3. "Map the human terrain and study it in detail. Understand the local culture and history. Learn about the tribes, formal and informal leaders, governmental structures, religious elements, and local security forces."

4. "Relationships are a critical component of counterinsurgency operations. Together with our Iraqi counterparts, strive to establish productive links with local leaders, tribal sheikhs, governmental officials, religious leaders, and interagency partners."

In addition to anecdotal evidence and guidance from the Combatant Commander, there is some preliminary quantitative data showing a correlation between employment of human terrain teams offering cultural and regional expertise to Brigade Combat Team commanders and lower levels of use of force in their areas of operations (U.S. Department of Defense Human Terrain System Assessment Team [HTT], 2007). General George Casey, the current Army Chief of Staff and former commander of all coalition ground forces in Iraq, specifically expressed a desire for leaders who are "at home in other cultures and can make the most of this understanding in pursuit of their objectives" (U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command [TRADOC], 2007). In an address to the Brookings Institution in December 2007, he specifically noted that the U.S. Army needed to design training and education experiences to "expand our cultural awareness" (Casey, 2007). Thus 3C, or the affective, cognitive, and behavioral capacity to effectively operate in an unfamiliar culture (Abbe et al., 2007; Selmeski, 2007), is consequential from the tactical level of the battlefield to the strategic level of DoD and the services.

The United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point is one of three major sources of commissioning for U.S. Army officers, graduating approximately 1,000 new second lieutenants annually from a four-year undergraduate program. Each of these new
officers will begin his or her career leading a platoon with an average of thirty soldiers, thus directly affecting up to 30,000 American men and women, many in combat zones. Further, many of these same graduates will remain in the Army for a career, leading increasingly larger and more complex units as they progress. Lane and Brown (2003) note that “the service academies continue to be a vital component of the higher education system, as well as both the military and political landscapes of this country, producing some of the most well-educated and successful members of American society.” In spite of its fame and the success of many of its graduates, West Point has been the subject of little research (Forest, 2003), perhaps due to the highly specialized nature of the institution.

The very purpose of USMA’s academic program is to prepare its graduates for service as commissioned officers in the U.S. Army, making its curriculum dynamic, challenging, and interdisciplinary to meet the Army’s needs (Forest, 2003). The applied nature of USMA’s academic program and the professional orientation of its student body, therefore, offer a unique environment for studying experiential education such as its semester abroad program. Indeed, USMA enshrines programs of this nature in its curriculum and overtly links them to the development of a multi-cultural perspective on the world (Galgano, 2007; Wolfel, 2008).

As a result of the future responsibilities its graduates will shoulder immediately upon completion of the program, USMA has noted the Army’s emphasis on 3C and included the domain in a separate section of its capstone document describing the academy’s academic program: Educating Future Army Officers for a Changing World (U.S. Military Academy [USMA], 2007). Further, USMA formed a culture goal team
within its curriculum committee to review the Military Academy's core curriculum to ensure that cultural awareness, communication skills, and an understanding of human behavior were adequately addressed by the academic program (Galgano, 2007; U.S. Military Academy Culture Goal Team [CGT], 2007). USMA also created a Center for Languages, Cultures, and Regional Studies (CLCRS) to conduct applied and theoretical research into instructional design and delivery and assessment of language proficiency, intercultural competence, and regional expertise (U.S. Military Academy Center for Languages, Cultures, and Regional Studies [CLCRS], 2007; Wolfel, 2008). Lastly, USMA formed an International Intellectual Development Division and placed it under a Vice Dean. These efforts, plus a significant increase in the number of students sent abroad to gain increased language proficiency and 3C, demonstrate the importance of this topic to USMA.

The apparent enthusiasm exhibited by DoD, the services, and USMA belies several tensions in the field, however. The concept of 3C in the military setting is a relatively recent one and has as a result not yet gained complete acceptance either within the military or academia (Abbe et al., 2007; Porter, 2007; Selmeski, 2007; USAF, 2007). In fact, the very term joins a long list of others attempting to describe the same or similar phenomena: cultural awareness (TRADOC, 2007), operational culture (CAOCL, 2007), cultural savvy (Selmeski, 2007), intercultural competence (CLCRS, 2007), Cultural Competency (MacFarland, 2005), and cross-cultural success (Harris, 1975; Lysgaard, 1955) among others.

Exacerbating the tension is the debate over the relationship between culture and language. Some view language as a "necessary but insufficient" component of 3C
Others view 3C as a general set of strategies theoretically independent of language and as a “first among equals” dependent on language proficiency and regional knowledge to some degree for effective application (Abbe et al., 2007; CAOCL, 2007; Selmeski, 2007). A third view is that language proficiency and regional knowledge are a subset of 3C, which need not be present in all cases (Hammer, 2007; TCC, 2007; USAF, 2007).

The extent to which an undergraduate institution can “teach” 3C and the role of study-abroad programs, particularly those of semester length, is another area of tension and terra incognita (Vandeberg, 2001; Whelan, 1996). The Association of American Colleges and Universities (2002) issued a report suggesting that students can develop intercultural competence in the course of their studies if they learn to appreciate and accept differences in a wide range of potential categories, such as race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and class. Although anecdotal evidence and “common sense” have posited a link between study-abroad programs and the development of intercultural sensitivity, this is not a sufficient basis on which to make meaningful policy decisions (Fowler, 2004; Achilles, 2002). In spite of the lack of empirical data supporting the efficacy of study-abroad programs, Harvard University has pressed forward with an initiative to ensure that all of its undergraduate students participate in one (Golden, 2004) and USMA is pursuing a SAP for all foreign language and regional studies majors and some kind of overseas immersion program for all cadets, regardless of major, as well (USMA, 2007).

Much of the research that has been done in this area has focused on foreign language immersion experiences of a short-term nature rather than semester-length ones.
Thus, study-abroad programs suffer from a general lack of assessment (Rubin & Sutton, 2001), and in particular of their relationship to 3C (Gillespie, 2002). One study of 120 institutions revealed that 95% of them assessed student satisfaction with regard to study-abroad programs, yet less than half evaluated academic achievement and only 15% considered 3C (Sideli, 2001). Therefore, some preliminary research on the relationship between study abroad and 3C is warranted.

Finally, measurement of 3C is one of the most controversial aspects of the phenomenon, and it has generated literally dozens of instruments from various fields with varying degrees of reliability and validity. These instruments come from a like number of academic disciplines as diverse as education, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and management (Ang et al., in press; Abbe et al., 2007; Fantini, 2006; Hammer, 2007; Schultz, 2006; Selmeski, 2007; Wolfel, 2008).

However, the literature is largely silent on the topic of 3C assessment for military personnel (Abbe et al., 2007; Ng, 2007; Selmeski, 2007; Wolfel, 2008). As a result, all of the DoD entities currently teaching and studying 3C, and USMA in particular, have noted the lack of assessment instruments tailored to their unique population and operational environment (Abbe et al., 2007; CAOCL, 2007; CGT, 2007; Selmeski, 2007; TCC, 2007, USAF, 2007; Wolfel, 2008). Therefore, due to the high human, political, and fiscal stakes in a time of war and the resulting senior-level attention devoted to 3C, assessment instruments that measure it are of great interest to both the educational and military communities.
The topic featured prominently in the DoD Culture Summit white paper, which concluded that DoD should, “Develop and implement a measurement process and assessment tools for managing regional and cultural readiness in different areas of the world. . .” (DoD, 2007). Lastly, USMA had not formally adopted any assessment instruments to measure 3C at the start of this study, but has since adopted the ones used in this study on a trial basis (CLCRS, 2007; Wolfel, 2008). The field of 3C assessment in the military in general and at USMA in particular, then, is one that is ripe for study from the viewpoint of educational administration and leadership.

Statement of the Problem

How can USMA assess the impact of cadet participation in a semester-abroad program (SAP) on 3C?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate two assessment instruments for 3C being piloted by USMA in the affective and cognitive domains for cadets participating in a SAP. It approaches 3C using a modified version of the draft framework for intercultural effectiveness used by the Army Research Institute (Abbe et al., 2007). This study’s theoretical construct posits that 3C, language proficiency, and regional knowledge are distinct skills that are inextricably linked, but to varying degrees depending on the context in which they are employed. In USMA’s educational setting, Bloom’s affective and cognitive taxonomies (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, 1973) serve as an effective framework to describe the overlap area between the three disciplines: At the receiving and knowledge levels 3C can operate with near independence from language
proficiency or regional knowledge, but as one approaches the internalizing and evaluation levels the required overlap area approaches totality (Figure 1).

A conceptual framework for the interaction of cross-cultural competence, language proficiency, and regional expertise

Thus, at the tactical level of the private soldier, sailor, marine, or airman in a conventional war, the requisite level of language proficiency, 3C, and regional awareness is relatively low, while at the strategic level or in irregular wars it is higher. DoD has consistently expressed interest in employing “analytical abilities, cultural awareness, language skills, and the ability to conduct joint operations and include diplomatic, economic, and political tools of power” in its operations, tacitly acknowledging the varying levels necessary for success by noting that “these skills require substantial training for recruits, and, at the senior level, a depth of knowledge to establish effective military doctrine, planning, and budgeting” (Kay, 2009).
Bloom’s Taxonomy is also a powerful analytical device in 3C because it addresses the domains in which 3C must operate: affective and cognitive (Ang, 2007; Abbe et al., 2007; CAOCL, 2007; Culhane, 2004; Hofstede (2005); Kitsantas, 2004; Schultz, 2006; Selmeski, 2007; TCC, 2007; Wolfel, 2008). This study does not address the psychomotor domain, because the physical dimensions of 3C do not generally require special psychomotor skills, but the knowledge and motivation to know how and when to use commonplace ones. This study treats Bloom’s affective domain as the driving force for 3C that puts the cognitive domain into action to produce appropriate behavior. Thus, effective intercultural behavior is a result of combining the affective and cognitive domains at the appropriate levels in 3C, language proficiency, and regional knowledge, rather than a separate domain. Although this is a unique use of Bloom’s domains, research has amply demonstrated the importance of the affective, or motivational, component in 3C (Ang, 2007; Abbe et al., 2007; CAOCL, 2007; Culhane, 2004; Hofstede, 2005; Kitsantas, 2004; Schultz, 2006; Selmeski, 2007; TCC, 2007; Wolfel, 2008).

This study explores and evaluates two assessment instruments for 3C being piloted by USMA in the affective and cognitive domains for cadets participating in a SAP. USMA does not formally assess 3C at this time; and its Center for Languages, Cultures, and Regional Studies is in the process of piloting these instruments in cooperation with the Army Research Institute. One of the instruments this study examines is quantitative: the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer, 2007). The other is a scenario-based assessment (SBA) similar to those used by the U.S. State Department to select its foreign service officers (U.S. Department of Defense Language
Office [DLO], 2007). USMA’s Center for Languages, Cultures, and Regional Studies (CLCRS) has already developed the SBA with advice from the U.S. Army Research Institute, U.S. Army Culture Center, U.S. Air Force Culture and Language Center, and the U.S. Marine Corps Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning. The SBA appears as Appendix A. This study examines the IDI and SBA with respect to their validity, reliability, and feasibility as defined by the U.S. Army in Field Manual 5-0, Army Planning and Orders Production (U.S. Department of the Army [FM5-0], 2005) to assess 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP. It adds feasibility to the commonly used standards of reliability and validity due to the unique military sample and intended military audience, which must consider the financial and temporal costs associated with any assessment instrument. It also looks beyond statistical validity to attempt to shed light on the “consequential validity,” or the “value of the consequences of the particular assessment practices and interpretations” (Johnson, 1990), to ensure that both instruments make a contribution to student learning and do not merely measure 3C. Other assessment instruments considered but not selected for this study include portfolios, which are too time-consuming for use by USMA cadets and faculty and a cultural quotient test, which measures an antecedent trait rather than a competence level and whose creators have indicated is not ready for use by a military audience in any event (Abbe, et al., 2007; Ang, 2007).
Guiding Questions

This study addresses the following guiding questions regarding two assessment instruments for 3C for USMA cadets participating in a SAP:

1. How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

2. How valid is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

3. How reliable is the IDI for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

4. How reliable is the SBA for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

5. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the IDI for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?

6. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the SBA for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?

This study looks at the assessment instruments independently, but also as they relate to the semester-abroad program, previous overseas experience, gender, and academic major to gain valuable insights into both. The methodology section includes a table depicting the instruments, criteria, and domains that this study addresses.

Significance of the Study

This study sheds some light on the reliability, validity, and feasibility of two assessment instruments for 3C being piloted by USMA in the affective and cognitive domains for cadets participating in a SAP. It is, thus, a vital first step in the important
task of developing 3C assessment instruments for use by all West Point cadets and, potentially, at other Service Academies, elsewhere in the military, and possibly at civilian universities. Reliable, valid, and feasible 3C assessment instruments can provide valuable feedback to cadets participating in a SAP and their leaders for future operational use. They may also prove useful to relevant USMA faculty, informing the design and delivery of 3C instruction and giving the SAP managers unique insights into the impact of the program. Lastly, this study of 3C assessment instruments may also be useful as a starting point for other educational institutions and military organizations.

Limitations of the Study

This study does not attempt to independently characterize the quality of a particular USMA cadet’s semester-abroad experience, which could impact the results of either assessment instrument. Further, the IDI was not designed for a military audience and was not used at USMA prior to 2007. The SBA is based on an instrument used by a civilian agency, because DoD has nothing relevant to 3C available at present. Lastly, this study limits the testing to self-reporting and individual completion of the SBA. It does not attempt to address any cadet’s personality type, emotional quotient, intelligence quotient, or family constellation.

Delimitations of the Study

This study delimits its use of 3C assessment instruments to two: one qualitative and one quantitative. It also delimits its sampling population to USMA cadets participating in a SAP and cadets in their third and fourth years at West Point. Therefore, representatives of the foreign culture in which the cadets studied do not have input into the study.
**Definition of Terms**

*Acceptance.* One of the scales used in the IDI, which “involves an acknowledgment that identifying significant cultural differences is crucial to understanding human interaction” (Hammer, 2008).

*Adaptation.* One of the scales used in the IDI, which “involves a more proactive effort on the part of an individual to use cultural differences and intercultural skills in ways which maximize his/her understanding and relationships with people from other cultures” (Hammer, 2008).

*Cross-cultural competence (3C).* For the purposes of this study, 3C is “a set of cognitive, behavioral, and affective/motivational components that enable individuals to adapt effectively in intercultural environments” (Abbe et al., 2007). This is the working definition of 3C currently being used in a U.S. Army Research Institute study of developing 3C in military leaders.

*Defense.* One of the scales used in the IDI, “which refers to a more explicit recognition of [cultural] differences coupled with more overt attempts at erecting defenses against them” (Hammer, 2008).

*Denial.* One of the scales used in the IDI. “Denial is the most basic stage of ethnocentrism and reflects an orientation which assumes there are no real differences among people from different cultures” (Hammer, 2008).

*Feasibility.* For the purposes of this study, feasibility refers to the degree to which the 3C assessment instrument fits within available resources, chiefly time and
money in the case of USMA. This is the definition of feasibility contained in U.S. Army problem-solving doctrine (FM5-0, 2005).

*Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI).* “The IDI is a statistically reliable, cross-culturally valid measure of intercultural competence. [It] is a 50-item, theory-based instrument that can be taken either in paper and pencil form or online” (Hammer, 2007). It includes the following scales from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativity: denial/defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, integration. This is the definition used by the creator and proprietor of the test. This study addresses the IDI in greater detail in the methodology section.

*Integration.* One of the scales used in the IDI, which “describes the effort to integrate disparate aspects of one’s cultural identity into a new whole” (Hammer, 2008).

*Minimization.* One of the scales used in the IDI, which “acts as a kind of transition between the polarization of difference in Defense and the nonevaluative recognition of difference in Acceptance” (Hammer, 2008).

*Reversal.* One of the scales used in concert with Defense in the IDI. It is “the denigration of one’s own culture and an attendant assumption of superiority of a different culture” (Hammer, 2008).

*Scenario-based assessment (SBA).* For the purposes of this study, a SBA is one or more hypothetical scenarios designed to test one’s situational judgment with respect to 3C. SBA’s are currently used by the U.S. Department of State to evaluate foreign service officer candidates (DLO, 2007).

*Semester- Abroad Program (SAP).* For the purposes of this study, the SAP is a program administered by USMA’s Department of Foreign Languages (DFL) that sends
cadets abroad to study in a foreign undergraduate institution for a semester, and CLCRS is responsible for administering pre- and post- SAP assessment. Because the goal of the program is to enhance the cadets’ foreign language proficiency, 3C, and regional knowledge, the program occurs in locations where the seven languages taught by DFL - Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish - are spoken.

Outline of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 describes the relevance and significance of the study and the problem it addresses. It also outlines the study’s purpose and theoretical framework and lists the guiding questions that frame the research. Lastly, it describes the limitations and delimitations of the study, and defines terms unique to the study or those with multiple possible definitions.

Chapter 2 includes a review of the relevant literature on the parameters of 3C, 3C in the current military operational environment, development of higher education students as “global citizens,” pedagogical approaches to developing 3C, and assessment of 3C. It opens with a review of the literature on 3C in general, to include the various definitions and approaches to it. Next, it discusses the context in which the U.S. military is currently operating and the role of 3C therein. It then explores some of the debates surrounding the preparation of higher education students for success in an increasingly globalized society. Following this section, it addresses 3C development programs in general use and those currently employed by the military and at USMA in particular. Chapter 2 ends by addressing approaches to learning assessment with respect to 3C in particular.
Chapter 3 covers the research methodology used in the study. It thus describes the observed sample, the data collection and assessment instruments employed, and the process of data collection and analysis. It also includes a matrix matching the guiding questions with sources of data and the techniques used to gather it.

Chapter 4 describes the findings of the study. It, therefore, elucidates the outcome of the research by describing the results of the qualitative and quantitative instruments employed and how they address each guiding question.

Chapter 5 answers the study's guiding questions and describes how it compliments other research in the field to include the topics covered in Chapter 2. It also makes recommendations relevant to USMA's educational leadership and administration in the areas of policy and practice relating to development and assessment of 3C and proffers some ideas for further research.
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Overview

This chapter includes a review of the relevant literature on 3C in general and, in the current military operational environment, preparation of higher education students for an increasingly globalized society, 3C development programs, and learning assessment strategies for 3C. It opens with a review of the literature on 3C in general, to include the various definitions and approaches to it. Next, it discusses the context in which the U.S. military is currently operating and the role of 3C therein. It then explores the role of higher education in developing “global citizens” capable of successfully negotiating an increasingly interconnected world. Following this section, it addresses 3C development programs in general use and those currently employed by the military and at USMA in particular. Next, this chapter addresses approaches to learning assessment with respect to 3C.

Parameters of 3C

The literature on culture and cross-cultural competence comes from disparate academic fields and is often confusing and contradictory. As early as the 1950s, a study revealed over 300 definitions of culture in current use (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1954). A more contemporary study found multiple definitions for and approaches to culture in literature from fields as diverse as anthropology, intercultural communication, organizational research, psychology, and sociology (Rentsch, 2007). The end of the Cold War and rise of globalization have made culture an increasingly important concept, even as debate rages over what it is and how it affects society in general (Friedman, 2007), and in the field of education in particular (Hoffman, 1999). One important distinction in the
literature on culture is that between deep and formal culture. The latter refers to the artistic and historic achievements of a particular society, while the former refers to the fundamental characteristics of a society: its thoughts, values, superstitions, beliefs, etc. (Richards, 1976). Some definitions are broad enough to encompass both deep and formal culture, such as Linton’s (1936) expansive definition of culture as “the total social heredity of mankind.”

The U.S. Army Culture Center has settled on the following definition, “Culture is the set of distinctive features of a society or group, including but not limited to, values, beliefs, and norms, that ties together members of that society or group and drives action and behavior” (TCC, 2007). The various definitions of culture are often contradictory at a micro level, due to the diversity of approaches to it. However, at the macro level all of them attempt to describe “the ways of a people” (Lado, 1957) in both their material and non-material manifestations, or “how one gets things done around here” (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p. 4).

One basic anthropology text eschews defining it outright but lists its characteristics: It is based on symbols, learned by individuals, shared within a group, and integrates a group’s political, economic and social aspects (Haviland, 1975). Closer to the U.S. Army definition is another description from anthropology, which ascribes three components to culture: material objects, behavior patterns, and ideas, values, and attitudes (Ferraro, 1995).

Psychologists Berry, Poortinga, Segall, and Dasen (1992) describe it as “the shared way of life of a group of people,” and Hylmō (2002) as “the glue that connects people together.” Further, it is a subjective construct whose constituent parts are closely
interrelated in a nonlinear way (D'Andrade, 1984). Culture is, thus, more of a dynamical process resembling a shifting pattern (Jewett, 2005) than it is a static “thing,” and its inherent humanity makes it a chaotic phenomenon in the mathematical sense of the term (Ruelle, 1991). Attempting to reconcile the various approaches to, and definitions of, culture is beyond the scope of this study, thus it works with the broad one in use by the U.S. Army offered above.

3C has also generated its own share of contradictory and confusing definitions, again due to the variety of academic approaches and professional fields attempting to achieve it for their own ends. One author identified no fewer than eleven different terms with some equivalence to 3C: cultural savvy, astuteness, appreciation, literacy or fluency, adaptability, terrain, expertise, competency, awareness, intelligence, and understanding (Selmeski, 2007). Another found another five: intercultural competence, intercultural sensitivity, cross-cultural adaptation, cross-cultural effectiveness, and cross-cultural success (Pierson, 2008).

Organizations from fields as diverse as business, health care, government security and development-aid agencies, academia, and non-governmental organizations have all sought to leverage 3C in one guise or another, often with poor results due to a lack of rigorous study of the phenomenon and reliance on “common sense” approaches based on the culture developing the 3C models in the first place (Selmeski, 2007). All of the definitions come from a pluralist tradition, which approaches culture from the point of view that cultures are and will remain diverse, as opposed to a convergence tradition, which see diverse cultures inevitably moving towards one shared by all humanity (Pearson, 2002). Proponents of the pluralist tradition include Isaacs (1975), who argued
that cultures would remain distinct even as political changes affected them, and Horowitz (1985), who argued that culture was a necessary but insufficient factor to explain conflict between ethnic groups.

One concept shared by a variety of researchers in the field is the notion of competence in an intercultural setting, particularly in one that is goal-oriented such as business, government or the military. Heginbotham (1997) notes that knowledge of local culture, language, and history clearly enhances the effectiveness of interactions with individuals and institutions of other societies. Spitzberg (1987) equates competence with the ability to achieve one’s goals in an intercultural situation. Koester, Wiseman, and Sanders (1983) add a dimension of social judgment, appropriateness, to this effects-based definition of 3C. Hofstede (2005) contends that 3C is developmental and occurs in stages: awareness that cultures are distinct from one another, knowledge of specific components of a culture, and skills, or the synthesis of awareness, and knowledge that produces action. Carbaugh (1993) adds an additional level of detail and contends that the specific contextual nature of the intercultural exchange is an inherent part of 3C. Similarly, Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell’s (1999) cultural proficiency model posits a continuum from cultural destructiveness, through cultural incapacity, cultural blindness, cultural precompetence, and cultural competence, to cultural proficiency based on an individual or organization’s ability to see “inside-out;” i.e., to not view other cultures as outsiders who must do all of the adapting.

These definitions reveal one of the major tensions in the field of 3C: the degree to which it is a general competence or one that is inherently tied to specific knowledge of a particular culture. Some, such as Imahori (1989) and Carbaugh (1993) focus on the latter
and argue that 3C does not exist in a theoretical sense; i.e., separate from its actual application in a practical intercultural context. Pollack (1996) describes a typology of enculturation that transcends particular cultures and describes four reactions to intercultural settings: the mirror (total enculturation), the adopted one (acculturation), the hidden immigrant (cultural stranger), and the foreigner (physical and cultural stranger).

Heginbotham (1997) notes a shift in emphasis since the end of the Cold War from knowledge of specific regions and cultures to a more general knowledge of how language and culture shape political and economic interactions. In this tradition researchers such as Selmeski (2007), Abbe, et al. (2007), Millhouse (1993), Bennett (1986), Hammer (1989), and Gudykunst (1993) assert that 3C is fungible and can operate in any intercultural context. This study uses a definition of 3C that falls in the latter category because of its relevance to military professionals, the bulk of whom must remain cultural generalists due to the global commitments the U.S. Government maintains.

This project, therefore, uses the definition of 3C proposed by the U.S. Army Research Institute: “A set of cognitive, behavioral, and affective/motivational components that enable individuals to adapt effectively in intercultural environments” (Abbe et al., 2007). It relies on this definition because it is based on an ongoing, rigorous study of the phenomenon in the context of the U.S. Army and is the most likely one to become the accepted definition used by the Army and, therefore, by USMA. This study does not, however, treat behavior as a separate domain, but as the product of the cognitive and affective domains applied in a cross-cultural situation; an approach similar to that employed by Hofstede (1980, 2005). Heginbotham (1997) notes that the field of regional studies, from which much of the 3C literature comes, has its roots in a deliberate
U.S. Government attempt to address a perceived weakness in its response to national security challenges rather than "disinterested scholarly inquiry." The ongoing study by the U.S. Army Research Institute is a more overt attempt to do the same, and using its definition of 3C for this study is all the more appropriate, given the institution it examines.

There are several models attempting to explain what this study calls "3C": each with its own approach. The Intercultural Interaction Model combines integrative- and instrumental- learning behaviors, based on the work of R. Gardner and W. Lambert (as cited in Culhane, 2004), with J.W. Berry's acculturation attitudes (as cited in Culhane, 2004) to argue that the affective component of 3C is of primary importance (Culhane, 2004). Another is the Multicultural Perspective-Taking Model, which is a series of competencies in the domains of self-awareness, personal and interpersonal communication, and regional expertise that result in an empathetic approach to dealing with other cultures (Rentsch, 2007). A third is the Intercultural Development Continuum, based on M. Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1986). It is a scale of intercultural development along a continuum from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism with the following stages: denial, defense, minimization, acceptance and adaptation (Hammer, 2007). A fourth approach is Earley and Ang's concept of cultural intelligence (CQ), which argues that functioning in culturally diverse settings occurs in four loci of intelligence: metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral (as cited in Ang, et al., 2007). The last framework considered in this study is under development by the Army Research Institute and proposes a model of 3C that considers the influence of antecedent traits and environmental and experiential factors to combine with varying
levels of language proficiency and regional knowledge to contribute to effectiveness in professional, interpersonal, and personal domains (Abbe et al., 2007).

This study uses the Army Research Institute's model for two reasons. First, none of the other models account for multiple dimensions of 3C as the Army's model does. The Intercultural Interaction Model focuses solely on the affective component of 3C, without adequately considering the cognitive domain (Culhane, 2004). The Multi-Cultural Perspective Taking Model, on the other hand, is a list of competencies that appear to leave out the affective component altogether (Rentsch, 2007). The Intercultural Development Continuum simply describes the various stages of development and their implications for 3C, without explaining the how they are made manifest (Hammer, 2007). The Cultural Intelligence approach conflates competence with intelligence, implying an inborn aptitude rather than an achievable status level (Ang, et al., 2007). Selmeski (2007) notes the difference between competence, or a status level, and competencies, or a set of skills, arguing that 3C is the former. Further, several researchers in the field of 3C have indicated the need for some combination of affective and cognitive competence for successful adaptation to an intercultural environment (Ang, 2007; Abbe et al., 2007; CAOCL, 2007; Culhane, 2004; Kitsantas, 2004; Li, in press; Lievens, Harris, Van Keer, & Bisqueret, 2003; Schultz, 2006; Selmeski, 2007; TCC, 2007). The Army Research Institute model, in addition to addressing all of the relevant domains, also enjoys consistency with the definition of 3C used in this study and is, therefore, the most appropriate approach to take.
3C in the Military Context

The relevance of 3C in the military context is a topic that has waxed and waned with its perceived importance in the contemporary operating environment. Proponents of a conventional approach to war; i.e., as a continuum of increasing levels of violence employed to obtain a political end, do not so much debate the utility of 3C as ignore it. This quantitative approach to war, in which concentrating military force in time and space to decisively defeat an enemy on the battlefield is the key to success, simply does not consider 3C of sufficient value to address. Thus, the Cold War-era policies, such as the so-called Weinberger and later Powell Doctrines (Womack, 2007), the writings of military strategists of the time such as H. Summers, Jr. (Summers, 1982, 1992), as well as contemporary U.S. Army doctrine (U.S. Department of the Army, 1986) either leave the subject out entirely or dismiss it as irrelevant.

However, an approach to war as a qualitative phenomenon that exhibits the characteristics of either a conventional or irregular war to varying degrees leads one to a different conclusion about the utility of 3C. This approach likens war to a chaotic mathematical system composed of a finite set of interacting, dynamical, nonlinear variables to create a pattern that reveals the nature of a particular war, rather than placing it on a continuum of violence (Beaumont, 1994; Womack, 1995; 2007). Thus, wars will qualitatively differ and tend towards the ideal types of purely conventional or purely irregular and can change natures in mid-course with little warning.

In the latter type of war, 3C gains great importance because the key to victory is securing the support of the local populace by providing them meaningful security and convincing them to become invested in one's side of the conflict (Cable, 1986;
Krepinevich, 1990; Womack, 1995, 2007). Failure to do so can be catastrophic at both the tactical and strategic level, as the U.S. Army discovered in Somalia in 1993, when a lack of local knowledge, let alone cooperation, led to the deaths of several of its soldiers and subsequent temporary withdrawal from the world stage (Wallace, 1997). Without either local proxies or a significant level of 3C, external intervening forces will, therefore, have enormous difficulties in obtaining this support and “buy-in,” even if they are using textbook counterinsurgency (or insurgency) doctrine (Andrade, 1990; Bergerud, 1993; Cable, 1986; Krepinevich, 1990; Womack, 1995, 2007). General Casey noted in his remarks to the Brookings Institution in December 2007, “no major power has ever won a counterinsurgency without a capable indigenous partner, none. We have to put ourselves in a position where our soldiers and leaders are comfortable operating with these forces with enough cultural understanding to be able to leverage them to help us accomplish our objectives” (Casey, 2007). The ability to effectively communicate across cultures to win the support of the populace and indigenous forces depends on one’s ability to penetrate a cultural border (Pearce, 2002), which is another way of describing 3C.

The current operational environment, in which U.S. Forces are engaged in irregular wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere in the world such as the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, and the Philippines, has again brought 3C to the fore in military circles after a period of relative dormancy since the end of the Vietnam War. U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates describes this environment and warns against seeking simple, quantifiable solutions to the problem of war thusly, “War is inherently tragic, inefficient, and uncertain, and it is important to be skeptical of systems analyses, computer models, game theories, or doctrines that suggest otherwise” (Gates, 2009). Forest (2003) notes,
"The new worldwide security environment requires leaders who understand both the military profession and various cultural and historical contexts of areas in which the military is deployed." As described in the introduction to this study, the high-level attention paid to 3C and the resources devoted to it across the services are ample evidence of its importance (Abbe et al., 2007; CAL, 2007; CAOCL, 2007; Chu, 2007; DoD, 2005, 2006; HTT, 2007; TCC, 2007; TRADOC, 2007; USAF, 2007; USMA, 2007). The very use of the term "irregular war", long out of vogue, has re-entered the official lexicon of the U.S. military and is evident in professional literature, often in concert with some notion of 3C by a different name (Abbe et al., 2007; CAL, 2007; CAOCL, 2007; DoD, 2005, 2006; Hernandez, 2007; HTT, 2007; Selmeski, 2007; TCC, 2007; TRADOC, 2007; USAF, 2007; USMA, 2007).

The U.S. military's senior leadership has recognized the importance of addressing the unique problems posed by irregular warfare. General Casey's remarks to the Brookings Institution in December 2007 underscore this conception of irregular war and the requirement of interacting with the civilian population: "We're operating in the people, and the people are the prize" (Casey, 2007). General Petraeus (2008) notes, "Realize that we are in a struggle for legitimacy that will be won or lost in the perception of the Iraqi people." Secretary Gates (2009) highlights the need to institutionalize skills such as 3C, noting "for decades there has been no strong, deeply rooted constituency inside the Pentagon or elsewhere for institutionalizing the capabilities necessary to wage asymmetric or irregular conflict." To address this need, he argues, "In the end, the military capabilities needed cannot be separated from the cultural traits and the reward structure of the institutions the United States has: the signals sent by what gets funded,
who gets promoted, what is taught in the academies and staff colleges, and how personnel are trained” (Gates, 2009). Thus, the concept of 3C remains highly relevant to military operations in general, and USMA cadets in particular, and will remain so as long as irregular war is part of the U.S. Army’s operational environment.

*Higher Education and Global Citizenship*

The contemporary military operating environment is but a reflection of the greater societal changes wrought by globalization, and, like the military, higher education must respond to these changes to retain its relevance. Social commentators such as Friedman (2007), Ringen (2007), Diamond (2005), and Pink (2005) argue that the revolution in information technology has created an increasingly interdependent world, and one to which emerging leaders must adapt if the United States is to maintain its comparative advantage. Inasmuch as undergraduate institutions produce the greater part of these emerging leaders (Altbach, 1998), they too must adapt if they are to continue to fulfill this role. The American Association of Colleges and Universities (2007) has noted this shift and argued that a liberal education, once viewed as “non-vocational” and “an option for the fortunate,” was now “essential for success in a global economy and for informed citizenship.”

In addition to producing critical thinkers with the ability to communicate clearly, then, universities are now faced with the requirement of forming “global citizens” capable of flourishing in the “flat” world (Friedman, 2007). Although ill-defined, the term “global citizen” would be recognizable to educational philosophers such as Dewey (1959), who overtly argued for the role of education in moral development via social intelligence, social power, and social interests. If globalization demands increased
effectiveness at interacting on an international level, expanding these ideas from the national to the international level is a logical extension of Dewey’s work. Likewise, intercultural competence is a *sine qua non* for global citizenship, just as the capacity to operate in one’s own culture is necessary for success as a citizen. In this respect, becoming an informed global citizen is similar to becoming an informed citizen of any particular culture, just in a qualitatively different way.

Although there appears to be fairly broad consensus that post-secondary educational institutions must focus on producing “global citizens,” the means necessary to do so are a point of controversy. One approach is internationalization of curricula, which entails attempts to adapt the university experience to as wide a range of global cultural and knowledge systems as possible (Marginson, 2000). Universities generally manifest this approach by adopting a culturally inclusive curriculum that attempts to expand student horizons beyond the shores of their homeland (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997). Musil (2006), however, warns that institutions of higher learning must take care to place their multicultural curricula in the context of their overall goals and objectives to avoid diluting the impact they have on students.

While few argue against expanding student horizons, there are critics of internationalization of curricula who go beyond Musil’s cautions. As early 1998, a study of fourteen international universities noted that, “as the world has become increasingly interdependent and national academic boundaries have been blurred, science and scholarship are becoming increasingly international” (Altbach & Lewis, 1998). The blurring of these academic boundaries across national lines and the relatively homogenous makeup of academic faculty globally (Altbach & Lewis, 1998) naturally
lead to this internationalization, but the perceived imperatives of globalization can hasten and deepen it, leading to the “Taylorization” of academic work (Schapper, 2004). Critics of internationalization of curricula so conceived argue that imposing a multi-cultural course of study actually undermines the goal of producing global citizens by introducing a level of relativism so pervasive that critical thinking skills are undermined (Schapper, 2004).

Another approach to producing global citizens in higher education is a re-emphasis on liberal education, defined by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (2007) as “an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g., science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest.” Hovland (2006) and Schneider (2008) argue that global learning is a natural byproduct of a true liberal education, and that all that is necessary is for institutions of higher learning to ensure that their curricula is adequately thorough to encompass global citizenry. Curricular theorist W. Doll (1993, 2005) would agree with this sentiment, as long as any particular curricula designed for the post-modern world was sufficiently dynamical to make a classical liberal education something of relevance to the student rather than a collection of esoteric information.

In addition to curricular changes, postsecondary school institutions have increasingly turned to study-abroad programs as a means to give students a global outlook (Institute of International Education, 2008). Once reserved for the fortunate few, study-abroad opportunities have increasingly become main stream (Lewin, 2009). Inasmuch as “common sense” might indicate that they contribute to the desired end, all
too often they can become merely a means of tourism if not managed carefully. Some research has shown the demonstrable value of study-abroad programs in the development of intercultural competence (Anderson, et al., 2005; Culhane, 2004; Kitsantas, 2004; Lessard-Clouston, 1997; Lievens, Harris, Van Meer, & Bisqueret, 2003; McMurtrie, 2007). Other research, however, has been less conclusive (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Patterson, 2006). Lewin (2009) argues that collegiate study-abroad programs must be placed in context via a dialectic of theory and real-world experience, with the former providing a lens through which to view the latter, and the latter placing the former in context. The following section will describe pedagogical approaches to development of 3C such as immersion experiences in more detail.

Pedagogical Approaches to 3C

The development of 3C is another controversial topic in the field, because there is disagreement over whether it can be taught at all, or if so in which domains. There is general agreement, however, that antecedent traits, or those innate or acquired features of one’s personality and schema, have a major impact on 3C but do not prevent its development in a pedagogical setting (Abbe et al., 2007; Lievens, Harris, Van Meer, & Bisqueret, 2003; Selmeski, 2007). Research indicates that teaching 3C is effective to varying degrees in both the affective and cognitive domains (Abbe et al., 2007; Culhane, 2004; Kitsantas, 2004; Li, in press; Lievens, Harris, Van Meer, & Bisqueret, 2003). The use of Bloom’s Taxonomy has proven useful in the context of training and education in the military in general and specifically in terms of 3C (CAL, 2007; CAOCL, 2007; TCC, 2007). Thus, teaching 3C is feasible in the affective and cognitive domains.
Pedagogical approaches to developing 3C parallel those used in an educational setting generally, and at USMA in particular. Piaget's (1937, 1964) concept of equilibration, in which learning occurs as a child incorporates new, challenging pieces of information into his or her schema, is one useful analogy for the process of developing 3C. Although his work was focused on children and adolescents, the principles apply more generally because viewing the world empathetically rather than ethnocentrically demands a schema that can take in the point of view of others (Abbe, et al., 2007; Selmeski, 2007). Strauss (1992) locates cultural information in an individual's "cognitive schema," evoking the work of both Piaget (1937, 1964) and Bloom (1956). Weinreich (1989) views threats to one's cognitive-affective consistency via encounters with the unfamiliar as one means of readjusting all three of Bloom's domains (Bloom, 1956; Krauthwohl, et al., 1973). Geertz (1994) argues for the deconstruction and subsequent integration of other cultural worldviews in yet another evocation of Piaget's concept of equilibration (1937, 1964).

Situated learning theory (Hoffman, 1999) views the very process of education itself as a socially embedded phenomenon, in which social interaction is the main vehicle of learning. Van Hoof (2005) notes the importance of personal interaction, a form of experiential learning, in intercultural settings as means of developing an empathetic, open attitude towards differences. However, another study noted the ease with which American students could avoid exposing themselves to the type of situations that might add to their intercultural schema (Engle & Engle, 2004). Attachments formed with "referent others" (Keats, Keats, Biddle, Bank, Hague, Wan-Rafaei, and Valantin, 1983) in the course of experiential learning such as a SAP provide the "scaffolding" (Bruner,
or “framework” (Vygotsky, 1962) vital for effective interaction in an intercultural setting. These attachments are the result of a series of social interactions, or episodes (Harré, 1974, Vygotsky, 1962) of social interaction, that routinely occur in an intercultural setting but rarely in a classroom.

Other research indicates that developing 3C, as with learning a foreign language, is best done as a combination of theoretical (classroom) and authentic, experiential methods (Culhane, 2004; Lessard-Clouston, 1997; Li, in press; TCC, 2007). Selmeski (2007) recommends a combination of 3C experiences, training, and education as a way to develop it. The U.S. Army Culture Center also employs a combination of classroom and authentic instruction in 3C (TCC, 2007). On a larger scale, Wax (1993) notes that the intellectual growth of societies does not occur when they are isolated, but when they begin to interact with other cultures.

Some research has shown the demonstrable value of study-abroad programs in the development of 3C in the affective and cognitive domains (Anderson, et al., 2005; Culhane, 2004; Kitsantas, 2004; Lessard-Clouston, 1997; Lievens, Harris, Van Keer, & Bisqueret, 2003; McMurtrie, 2007). Other research, however, has been less conclusive (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Patterson, 2006). Heginbotham (1997) notes that American students who study abroad return with “greater awareness and knowledge of foreign lands and cultures, and become more capable citizens as a result of the ‘broadening’ of their experience and perspectives.” Ongoing research includes a three-year study at four different undergraduate institutions to shed light on the relationship between study abroad and foreign language acquisition and 3C, although there are no results available from this research yet (Vandeberg, Balkcum, Sheid, & Whalen, 2004).
Interestingly, there is no research to indicate that study-abroad programs have a deleterious effect on 3C (Pierson, 2008).

Inasmuch as these programs allow the student to learn 3C by actually doing it, they align with Dewey’s (1938) ideas about experience in education, which can be paraphrased as “experience equals education, and education equals life.” Less philosophically, they also align with Piaget’s (1964) assertion that learning takes place via interaction with the environment, rather than by mere exposure to knowledge. Gardner (1983) supports this view of experiential learning with his theory of multiple intelligences, noting that interacting with authentic content takes students to a deeper level of understanding than merely transferring knowledge. This theory is, itself, based on Bruner’s (1961) work, which focused on sequencing learning experiences in an appropriate way. General Casey, the U.S. Army Chief of Staff, has called for an increase in experiences designed to broaden the experience of officers, evoking immersion experiences as one possible approach (Casey, 2007). For undergraduate students, Boyer (1989) argues that a liberal education, such as that offered at USMA, must establish a connection between theory and reality to be effective. USMA’s approach to educating its students is itself a combination of theoretical and experiential methods, so an approach that includes the latter is an expected part of the curriculum (USMA, 2007).

Lastly, using Bloom’s levels of educational objectives are useful and appropriate for a pedagogical approach to teaching 3C to USMA cadets (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1973). On a general level, curriculum theorists such as Doll (1993), Wiggins (1993), and Gardner (1983) acknowledge the relationship between affect and knowledge and the importance of authentic context in developing both of them. Research
on adolescents who have lived abroad has demonstrated a higher self-reported rating in the areas of cultural acceptance and openness to learning a foreign language than their counterparts who live in the U.S., (Gerner, Perry, and Moselle, 1992), demonstrating at least one link between affect and experience abroad. As indicated in the introductory section of this study, the U.S. Army already employs Bloom’s Taxonomy in several settings, and with respect to 3C in particular (CAL, 2007; TCC, 2007). The Center for Army Leadership has already developed a set of 3C standards for various levels of Army personnel, including pre-commissioning (officer cadet or candidate), and these standards use Bloom’s Taxonomy for both the affective and cognitive domains (CAL, 2007). See Appendix B for the complete list of 3C standards. Thus, the SAP at USMA is part of an accepted method for 3C development, and it can contribute to 3C in both domains of learning in a military setting.

Assessment of 3C

Assessment of 3C is another field rife with controversy. One survey identified eighty-six assessment instruments for 3C (Fantini, 2006). The Army Research Institute study narrowed the list down to ten quantitative instruments for further exploration into their reliability and validity (Abbe et al., 2007). Of the ten on the list, only three had or granted access to reliability and validity data: the IDI, the Cultural Intelligence Scale, and the Multi-cultural Personality Questionnaire (Abbe et al., 2007). USMA is tentatively using the IDI on the recommendation of ARI because it is reportedly reliable and valid, addresses 3C, and may be feasible for use at USMA. The Cultural Intelligence Scale is also reliable and valid, but its creators have indicated that it is not yet suitable for a military audience (Ang, et al., 2007) and it measures inherent traits rather than a
developmental competence as in the case of the IDI (Abbe, et al, 2007). The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire is also reliable and valid but is more complex than the IDI, measuring dimensions such as emotional stability and social initiative that are antecedent traits rather than purely 3C- oriented (Abbe et al., 2007). Thus, this study will use the IDI as its sole quantitative measure of 3C for the sake of clarity and focus, and because USMA has adopted it on a trial basis and will, therefore, support the study.

Departing from the Army Research Institute study, this study will also employ a qualitative assessment of 3C, which is as close to an authentic assessment as USMA can currently manage. Wiggins (1993) argues that effective learning occurs when students apply both skills and knowledge in meaningful tasks in an authentic, “real world” context, and assessment should occur in the same milieu. Johnson’s (1990) notion of consequential validity also militates for the use of a qualitative instrument to compliment the quantitative one. Qualitative assessment tools such as SBA’s have proven valuable in poorly defined areas such as 3C (Davis, 1993; Doll, 1993; English & Larson, 1996; Palomba & Banta, 1999). Research in the area of 3C assessment, while thin, also underscores the value of qualitative instruments in concert with quantitative ones (Kitsantas, 2004; Lessard-Clouston, 1997; Lievens, Harris, Van Keer, & Bisqueret, 2003). This study will use a combination of the IDI and a SBA, due to the added rigor it will bring to the field of 3C assessment, and because the quantitative and qualitative instruments will shed light on each other in the context of an evaluative case study.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Overview

This study employed a summative evaluation case study design with quantitative and qualitative techniques to evaluate two assessment instruments for 3C being piloted by USMA in the affective and cognitive domains for cadets participating in a SAP. This chapter describes the overall design and context in which the study took place, and the population and sample, data sources, and collection techniques. It also discusses the instrumentation, its reliability and validity, and data analysis strategies with regard to the guiding questions.

Research Design and Context

This study is a mixed-method summative evaluation case study employing both quantitative and qualitative methods to evaluate two assessment instruments for 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP. Use of a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data was intentional and was designed to take advantage of their symbiotic relationship: The latter place the former in context to give it meaning (Campbell, 1988; Janesick, 1994; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003), while the former help identify what is generalizable about a particular phenomenon (Fern, 2001; Merriam, 1998). Use of quantitative data also helped guard against the subjectivity inherent in purely qualitative information (Miles and Huberman, 1984). The context in which this study took place affected it, due to the unique environment at USMA (Forest, 2003) and the lack of previous research in 3C in the military generally, and particularly at USMA.

The paucity of previous research in 3C in the military lent itself well to a case study approach (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005; Merriam, 1998). A qualitative component to
the research design can help place the USMA SAP experience in a pedagogical context, allowing for a more useful, rich interpretation of the quantitative data (Clifford, 1986). Further, the relative lack of research on assessment instruments for 3C in the military, either quantitative or qualitative, underscores the use of this methodology.

The unique environment in the military in general, and specifically at USMA, also called for the use of a case study, as well as the addition of feasibility to reliability and validity as criteria. The experiential nature of the SAP called for a qualitative component to the research design (Van Manen, 1990) to help establish how the program and the assessment instruments affect the student, not just that it simply does so. This expands the idea of validity for the two assessment instruments to include the idea of consequential validity (Johnson, 1998). Lane and Brown (2003) specifically address the need for balance between qualitative and quantitative research in studying institutions such as service academies, stating, “The primary concern is that a heavy reliance on either type of data may fail to present a full picture of the institution being investigated. . . Quantitative assessment is beneficial for identifying general trends and characteristics, and for effective comparative analysis. When there is limited analysis on a particular segment of higher education, qualitative analysis is needed to identify the specific characteristics or probable variables of the demographic under study.” The particularity of the SAP at USMA, its relative newness (the current, expanded program began in 2006), and the very recent attention placed on 3C by the U.S. military were all further reasons to take a mixed-method approach (Miles and Huberman, 1984).
Population and Sample

This study used three purposefully chosen samples in an attempt to triangulate data sources to help assure external validity (Patton, 2002). One of its samples was a group of eighteen USMA cadets in their third year participating in a SAP during the spring semester of academic year 2007-2008. They studied in both military and civilian undergraduate institutions in Chile, China, Egypt, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, and Spain and provided the pre- and post- SAP IDI results, as well as SBA’s. Most of those attending civilian universities lived with host families to maximize their immersion in the local language and culture and avoid potential isolation in American enclaves abroad (Tyler, 2002). A second sample consisted of 125 USMA cadets, of whom fifty-six participated in a SAP during academic year 2006-2007 or 2007-2008 in one of the following countries: Austria, Brazil, Chile, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, Russia, and Spain. This sample provided both IDI and SBA results. A third sample consisted of fifteen USMA cadets, ten in their last year at the Academy and five in their second year. These cadets participated in semester abroad experiences in the People’s Republic of China, Chile, Egypt, France, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, and Russia, and provided IDI, SBA, and focus group data.

The choice of these samples was purposeful and provided the most compelling data possible to evaluate the instruments for several reasons. First, the samples represent an example of critical case sampling (Patton, 2002), because one can apply their experiences more generally to those of other USMA cadets due to the regimented nature of the West Point experience and relative homogeneity of the U.S. Corps of Cadets (Forest, 2003). Furthermore, the available alternatives: USMA faculty, random sampling
of USMA cadets, and recent graduates, lack the experience of a USMA-sponsored SAP, the effectiveness of which the academy is attempting to assess with the IDI and SBA. Without the SAP experience, random samples alone, no matter how qualified in terms of 3C development, are irrelevant because they cannot adequately address the study’s original research problem or guiding questions, due to the potential lack of SAP participants drawn from a random sample. Cadets who have no SAP experience, both foreign language majors and non-foreign language majors, do offer important comparative data that enhanced this study’s validity when used in combination with SAP participants, however (Patton, 2002; Hoffman, 1999). Lastly, the Army’s leadership will give more weight to the SAP participants’ perspectives than those of researchers or faculty due to the institution’s strong preference for personal experience over observation, an important political consideration (Bolman and Deal, 2003; Patton, 2002). Thus, the chosen samples offered more significant insights into the IDI and SBA and were more representative of, and relevant to, the target population, which consisted of all cadets that participate in a SAP, expected to be up to 100 per year in either their second, third, or fourth years, beginning with the 2007-2008 academic year. USMA cadets are unmarried and between 18-31 years of age. Both the sample and population demonstrated unique features that will impact this study.

First, USMA cadets are all volunteers and come from a demographically selective field, with higher than average scholastic aptitude test scores and class rankings. This results in a higher proportion of motivated and intelligent students than might be found elsewhere (Forest, 2003). For example, 70% of the entire class of 2009, from which both the first sample and population are drawn, graduated in the top 20% of their respective
high school classes (USMA Library, 2007). Further, 75% of the class scored over 1,000 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and over 50% of them scored over 1,100 (USMA Library, 2007). For the class of 2005, the average SAT score was 1,248, and 80% of them were varsity athletes. Not surprisingly, they are driven and goal-oriented and are used to succeeding at any endeavors they attempt. Academic and professional success continues after graduation: West Point has produced fifty-five Rhodes Scholars and numerous well-known military, political, and business leaders (Forest, 2003). Their level of self-confidence, therefore, may have colored their responses to both quantitative and qualitative instruments based on self-reporting.

Second, the academic program at USMA is a demanding mixture of the humanities and mathematics, science, and engineering for each of the four years. Additionally, the cadets spend a significant amount of time performing military duties and must participate in athletics. As a result, the number of cadets and time available for them to participate in the study was limited. Further, some critics of the service academies contend that the overwhelming demands placed on students result in a tendency to simplify information to its bare essence, leaving little room for ambiguity or nuance (Forest, 2003). Some of the SAP cadets in the first and third samples had available time prior to their departure and upon their return and were, therefore, available for participation without unduly adding to their schedules. Language majors must participate in an integrative experience during their last semester at the Academy, which is an interdisciplinary project. Some of these cadets were also available for participation in the study, because this class does not meet regularly. Selected non-language majors
who did not participate in a SAP took the IDI and completed the SBA in preparation for shorter-term immersion experiences.

Third, all three samples had some proficiency in a foreign language, and a disproportionate percentage (65%) of the first one consisted of foreign language majors when considered as a percentage of the entire U.S. Corps of Cadets (8%). Foreign language majors obviously have more proficiency in a foreign language, unless the cadets have extensive previous experience in one. As the literature review has noted and the theoretical framework posits, the relationship between proficiency in a foreign language and 3C may be significant and is worth considering in this study via both quantitative and qualitative comparisons.

All members of the first sample volunteered to participate in the SAP and the rest of them volunteered for the study, making them in effect self-selected two or three times over: once to attend USMA, once to participate in the SAP, and once to participate in the study. USMA cadets tend to pursue the “right” answer to any given problem and may treat the IDI, SAP, and focus groups as such (Forest, 2003). Thus, the sample consisted of a group of participants with high affective and motivational traits with regard to overseas travel and this study, possibly creating bias towards 3C, particularly in the affective domain.

Lastly, all USMA cadets live and work in a military environment, are commissioned as Second Lieutenants in the U.S. Army upon graduation, and must serve at least five years on active duty. This significantly raises their level of deference to others, especially those who are older or who hold a higher military rank. The immediacy of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan to their futures also makes them highly
focused on topics that are directly related to military service and less so to those that are not. These characteristics also affected data collection, especially that of a qualitative nature such as focus groups or interviews involving perceived authority figures.

The unique nature of the sample in this study was purposeful and was based on participation in the SAP and years of education at USMA. Although having all of the SAP participants and language majors in the two classes considered in this study would have been ideal, it was not possible due to the limited availability of cadets and voluntary nature of participation in the study. Similar studies using the IDI have encountered the same problem and have successfully used purposeful sampling in response (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Vande Berg, Balkcum, Sheid & Whalen, 2004). Research in the field of adolescent family members with international experience has demonstrated a link between the sponsoring organization; e.g., the military, diplomatic, business, or missionary communities; and how the subjects perceived that experience (Useem & Cottrell, 1996). This further militates for purposeful sampling and a mixed-method approach.

As indicated in the literature review, preliminary research has demonstrated the value of experiential learning in general, and in 3C in particular, for students who study abroad. Focusing this case study on the SAP participants and language majors while still considering non-language majors rather than using a random sample of USMA cadets, therefore, revealed more about the two assessment instruments at the heart of this study. Placing cadets in cohorts of their third and fourth years at USMA in the third sample also partially controlled for their general level of education at the Academy, which is important because one of the goals of its core curriculum is to develop 3C. Using these
samples had the further merit of being practical, given the time constraints facing the
general population of USMA cadets and their limited availability for the study.

Lastly, the study analyzed the results based on other demographic factors that
could have an impact on the 3C assessment instruments, such as gender, previous
overseas travel, and academic major. This revealed to what extent other factors could
affect the outcome of both the quantitative and qualitative instruments.

Instrumentation

This study used four instruments: the two 3C assessments employed by USMA’s
Center for Languages, Cultures, and Regional Studies (CLCRS), a personal data
questionnaire jointly developed by CLCRS and the Army Research Institute, and one
instrument that is unique to this study that formed the basis for an evaluation of the first
two. One instrument was quantitative and the other three were qualitative, due to the
exploratory nature of study previously described in the research design section of this
chapter.

The first assessment instrument for 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for
USMA cadets participating in a SAP was the IDI, a quantitative instrument being used as
part of an Army-wide study of 3C. The IDI is “a 50-item, theory-based instrument that
can be taken either in paper and pencil form or online” (Hammer, 2007). According to its
creator it is “a statistically reliable, cross-culturally valid measure of intercultural
competence.” The following is a detailed description of the IDI and its reliability and
validity from the proprietor:

Items on the IDI are actual statements selected from interviews of a
sample of 40 respondents representing cross-cultural and situation
diversity (i.e., not limited to university students) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) theory. All statements about cultural differences from the initial interviews were categorized using the DMIS theoretical framework by four raters with an inter-rater reliability of .85-95 (Spearman’s rho). Cross-cultural experts then reviewed the item pool, and items were deleted which were not similarly categorized by five of the seven experts. Additional pilot tests were then conducted with a culturally diverse sample to insure item clarity, and a preliminary 60-item instrument based on this initial research was extensively field-tested. The latest validation sample for a revised IDI consisted of 591 respondents from diverse backgrounds who responded to both original and revised items from the interview statements. Confirmatory Factor Analysis established that 50 items constituted the following dimensions or scales with their corresponding item reliabilities (coefficient alpha) that meet or exceed standard reliability criterion for individual and group psychometric diagnosis (Nunnally, 1978; DeVellis, 1991): DD (denial/defense) scale, 13 items, alpha = .85; R (reversal) scale, 9 items, alpha = .80; M (minimization scale), 9 items, alpha = .83; AA (acceptance/adaptation) scale, 14 items, alpha = .84; and EM (encapsulated marginality) scale, 5 items, alpha = .80. Validity of the IDI was established in several ways. Content validity was established by using actual statements drawn from interviews, along with reliable categorization of these statements by both raters and the “panel of experts.” Construct validity was established by
correlating the IDI with the Worldmindedness scale (Sampson & Smith, 1957; Wiseman, Hammer, and Nishida, 1989) and with the Intercultural Anxiety scale, a modified version of the Social Anxiety scale (Gao and Gudykunst, 1990). All construct validity tests supported the validity of each of the IDI scales. Finally, no significant differences were found on the IDI scales for age, education, gender, or social desirability. Overall, the development and testing of the IDI for reliability and validity reveals the instrument to be a robust measure of the cognitive states described by the DMIS, these identified worldviews are associated with stable orientations toward cultural differences, and the instrument is generalizable across cultures.

The IDI is, therefore, a reliable and valid instrument to measure 3C for a general audience and, as such, represents an effective indicator of 3C (Ringen, 2007). However, there is little information on the IDI’s use in the context of the military in general and none regarding its use at USMA. Therefore, the proprietor’s claims of reliability and validity were worth exploring, given this lack of previous research and the unique nature of the USMA population and semester abroad program.

The second assessment instrument this study examined for 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP was the SBA, a qualitative instrument developed by the author for USMA’s Center for Languages, Cultures, and Regional Studies with advice from the U.S. Army Research Institute, U.S. Army Culture Center, U.S. Air Force Culture and Language Center, and the U.S. Marine Corps Center for Advanced Culture Learning. The SBA was based on those currently in use by the
U.S. State Department’s Foreign Service Institute for its cross-cultural negotiations course (DLO, 2007), which consists of a written scenario that asks the participant to respond to an intercultural situation that he or she might encounter in a diplomatic setting. USMA is employing a similar SBA, a copy of which appears as Appendix A, but in a setting more oriented towards a military audience. There is no right or wrong answer to the scenario, but the examiner can gain insight into the participant’s 3C by looking for evidence that they are viewing the situation with some degree of empathy and pragmatism, and are considering the consequences of their response in a wider context than the immediate situation and in both the short- and long-term. It is also useful in conjunction with the IDI, because of their symbiotic relationship: The IDI provides a useful framework through which to view the SBA, while the latter sheds light on how the respondent manifests his or her level of intercultural development (Hammer, 2008).

The SBA does not have statistical reliability or validity in the same sense that the IDI does because it is a qualitative instrument, but the U.S. State Department has a long record of using it and the European Union uses a similar SBA for its Intercultural Competence Assessment Project (European Union Intercultural Competence Assessment Project [INCA], 2007). Qualitative instruments such as the SBA do have substantive significance (Patton, 2002) and consequential validity (Johnson, 1998) and are no less useful than quantitative instruments such as the IDI for assessment of phenomena such as 3C. Therefore, this study sought to determine the SBA’s reliability and validity using a deductive content analysis, coding the SBA responses using the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding standards for pre-commissioned leaders, which appear as Appendix B (CAL, 2007), and the IDI’s scales (Hammer, 2008) as a rubric, or analytical framework.
The former represent the desired outcome of U.S. Army leaders prior to being commissioned officers in the area of 3C, while the latter represent the dimensions of the quantitative instrument also being considered for use in tandem with the SBA at USMA. The choice of a rubric-based, deductive approach rather than a classical inductive form of qualitative analysis was purposeful and is defensible on the grounds that USMA is using the SBA and IDI as a means to determine the extent to which cadet 3C is affected by the SAP. Using the cultural understanding standards, or desired level of 3C, as a rubric, rather than inductively seeking for themes in the SBA responses, ensured that the assessment instrument remained focused on consistently measuring student outcome.

The third instrument this study employed was three multiple-category focus groups using questions designed to elicit the participants’ views of the validity, reliability, and feasibility of the two IDI and SBA instruments that attempted to measure 3C for the cadets in the sample. Prior to the actual data collection, this study piloted the focus group discussion questions with one panel of experts and one panel of cadets to ensure the validity and reliability of this qualitative instrument. The focus group questions appear at Appendix C.

The use of focus groups rather than interviews, surveys, or questionnaires was intentional and based on a careful analysis of the population, sample, and desired quality and quantity of data. The U.S. military has a long history of using focus groups, and their early use by the U.S. military at the end of World War II produced the seminal work on this instrument (Merton, Fisher, and Kendall, 1956). Thus, the institution is familiar with focus groups, has long found value in their use, and has ample personnel resources for their conduct and interpretation. In this instance, the focus groups were used as an
instrument to evaluate the two 3C assessment instruments, placing them in the category of Krueger & Casey’s (2000) program evaluation and policy-making tools. The intent of the focus groups in this study was to elicit the range of attitudes concerning the IDI and SBA in light of shared experiences, to uncover factors that influence these attitudes, to understand possible differences between groups of participants based on their composition, and to shed light on the quantitative data provided by the IDI (Krueger and Casey, 2000). This also aligns with Fern’s (2001) definition of an experiential focus group task.

This study employed three multiple-category focus groups of five students each to compare student attitudes towards the IDI and SBA in the cognitive and affective domains. The number of groups and participants aligns with Krueger and Casey’s (2000) general guidance for focus group composition in an academic setting. This study sought to provide feedback on the 3C assessment instruments from a variety of angles to determine if it was more or less relevant to SAP participants than otherwise. Thus, the multiple-category design, rather than a series of random single-category groups, was more appropriate for this study (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Specifically, this study used two focus groups from the senior class with experience in a SAP and one focus group from the junior class that had just returned from a SAP. All of them consisted of a mixture of language groupings to avoid creating focus groups composed entirely of close friends, who typically study the same languages, within any one group (Krueger and Casey, 2000). Both Fern (2001) and Krueger and Casey (2000) recommend that focus groups consist of homogenous categories, hence their grouping within their own class cohorts, which addressed the powerful dynamic of an internal “rank” structure by class at
USMA. Lastly, limiting participation to students who have spent a semester abroad addressed the important question of who can shed the most light on the topic (Patton, 2002), given that the focus of this study is on using the IDI and SAP in conjunction with the SAP.

The question of whether or not focus groups are "scientific," or have any validity or reliability, is a topic that has received much attention. Fern (2001) agrees that they are not "scientific" in the strict sense of the term, noting that they are not used for hypothesis generation in any event and highlighting their usefulness in mixed-method research. Inasmuch as they are systematic and verifiable, argue Krueger and Casey (2000), they at least have scientific value by providing insight and understanding (versus prediction). Although not generalizable across a wide population, they are transferable within a narrow audience such as that at USMA (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Wells (1979) addresses this trait of focus groups, plus the argument that they are not representative by limiting their applicability to a small population. Steiner (1972) notes the objection of some that a focus group limits data collection by reducing several potential inputs to one, but argues that this point is irrelevant unless one is attempting to use focus groups to obtain quantitative data, because group members are not bound by group responses and the outcome of focus group discussions is often more than the sum of their parts due to the synergy derived from discussion. Lastly, Fern (2001) notes that several empirical studies have shown that focus groups show significant similarities in outcome with interviews and surveys yet produce more data.

This study piloted the focus group discussion questions with one panel of experts and one panel of cadets to ensure the validity and reliability of this qualitative instrument.
The expert panel consisted of research psychologists in the Department of the Army's 3C study, psychology, geography, and foreign language instructors at USMA, and U.S. Army foreign area officers - specialists in various regions of the world - who are members of the USMA faculty and have lived in, and worked closely with, foreign cultures, often independent of large U.S. military organizations. The cadet panel consisted of seven USMA cadets who had participated in a SAP and taken the IDI. The limited scope of this research and its focus on a very homogenous population, combined with the pilot program, ensured the validity and reliability of the focus groups, at least within the parameters of USMA's semester-abroad program.

The last instrument employed by this study was a personal data questionnaire (PDQ), developed jointly by USMA and the Army Research Institute, which sought relevant biographical information about the participants. It specifically addressed any previous overseas experience that the cadets had in sufficient detail to determine its location, duration, purpose, and nature, as well as the age of the participant when the overseas experience occurred. Previous research has established a correlation between living abroad and intercultural sensitivity (Brislin, 1991; Kealey and Rubin, 1983; Klineberg-Hull, 1979; Landis and Bhagat, 1996), but not necessarily in the context of a SAP. Thus, the use of the PDQ to isolate this variable was significant. This study piloted the PDQ with the same panels that reviewed the focus group questions to ensure its reliability and validity. The PDQ appears at Appendix D.

Data Collection

This study collected the data in four phases: a pilot phase, a pre-deployment phase, a mid-term phase, and a post-deployment phase. All participants were voluntary
and received the Privacy Act statement that appears as Appendix E in accordance with DoD regulations. During the pilot phase, the aforementioned expert panels reviewed and commented on the focus group questions, SBA, and PDQ. The anthropologists and research psychologists did so electronically, because they are remote from West Point. A USMA faculty panel also met and discussed the instruments, and a focus group composed of USMA cadets conducted a mock focus group using the previously vetted questions and discussed them.

During the pre-deployment phase, the participants in the first sample, departing on their SAP, completed the PDQ and took the IDI as part of a Center for Languages, Cultures and Regional Studies project. This occurred approximately one week prior to their departure for the SAP. They took the IDI and completed the PDQ in a group setting, with thirty minutes allocated to each instrument. The participants did not have access to reference material and were not allowed to discuss either the IDI or PDQ while completing them.

During the mid-term phase the participants in the second sample, foreign language and foreign area studies majors plus non-language majors preparing for shorter term immersion programs, completed the PDQ and took the IDI as part of a U.S. Army Research Institute project. This occurred following Spring Break, approximately halfway through the semester. They took the IDI and completed the PDQ in a group setting, with thirty minutes allocated to each instrument. The participants did not have access to reference material and were not allowed to discuss either the IDI or PDQ while completing them. This group also responded to the SBA in writing with no time limit and submitted their responses electronically at their leisure.
During the post-deployment phase the participants returning from their SAP again took the IDI and responded to the same 3C SBA as the other sample in writing. This occurred approximately one week after their return from the SAP. Participants completed the SBA via email or hand-wrote it with no time limit. They took the IDI in a group setting, with thirty minutes allocated to it. The participants did not have access to reference material and were not allowed to discuss the IDI while completing it. Once the IDI was scored and the SBA reviewed, the cadets participating in the focus groups received feedback on the results. The participants from the third sample then met in three focus groups composed of five cadets in the same-year cohort, two groups of cadets in their fourth year and one in their third year at the Academy. The first focus group included five cadets in their fourth year who had participated in a SAP in Chile, China, France, Jordan, and Mexico. The second focus group included five cadets in their fourth year who had participated in a SAP in Egypt, France, Morocco, and Russia. The third focus group included five cadets in their third year who had returned from a SAP in China, Egypt, France, Morocco, and Russia. The focus groups were standardized, open-ended interviews, and the sequenced questions were asked verbatim. Each focus group lasted a maximum of one hour and was recorded from start to finish. The use of focus groups organized by graduation year maximized participation and frankness in an effort to counter the aforementioned deference cadets exhibit towards their elders and senior officers on an individual basis. Forming focus groups in mixed-language cohorts served two purposes: It kept their size, from five to ten, appropriate for focus groups, and placed the participants in a group with a variety of experiences to create a level of synergy that would otherwise not exist.
Each instrument provided data that specifically addressed one or more of the
guiding questions for this study. As a result, each guiding question had data collected for
it; some from more than one instrument. Table 1 is a matrix that lists the guiding
questions and data sources that addressed it.

Table 1

Guiding questions, data sources, and domains for 3C assessment instruments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Questions</th>
<th>Affective Domain</th>
<th>Cognitive Domain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IDI Validity</td>
<td>IDI, Pilot Study, Focus Group, PDQ</td>
<td>IDI, Pilot Study, Focus Group, PDQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SBA Validity</td>
<td>SBA, Pilot Study, Focus Group, PDQ</td>
<td>SBA, Pilot Study, Focus Group, PDQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. IDI Reliability</td>
<td>IDI, Pilot Study, Focus Group, PDQ</td>
<td>IDI, Pilot Study, Focus Group, PDQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. SBA Reliability</td>
<td>SBA, Pilot Study, Focus Group, PDQ</td>
<td>SBA, Pilot Study, Focus Group, PDQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. IDI Feasibility</td>
<td>IDI, Pilot Study, Focus Group</td>
<td>IDI, Pilot Study, Focus Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. SBA Feasibility</td>
<td>SBA, Pilot Study, Focus Group</td>
<td>SBA, Pilot Study, Focus Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis

This study analyzed the data in three stages. It first analyzed the data individually
by instrument. It conducted a two-tailed matched pair t-test of the first sample's pre- and
post-SAP IDI results to determine if any detected change was statistically significant. It
then conducted a multiple regression with selection for SAP participation, gender, self-
reported foreign language proficiency, living abroad, and overseas travel as independent
variables with the second, larger, sample to determine the statistical significance and
relative strength of the relationship, if any, between these variables and the IDI scores. In
so doing, the study addressed the following guiding questions posed at the outset:
1. How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

3. How reliable is the IDI for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

The study treated overseas travel and foreign language proficiency as continuous variables with the other independent variables as dichotomous. As the literature review noted, overseas experience has an impact on 3C, and those cadets with previous experience would be expected to demonstrate higher 3C abilities. However, the literature has been largely silent on the use of the IDI as an instrument to measure 3C in the context of the military and other overseas experience, and the larger ARI study is addressing this very topic in a comprehensive way. The role of the regression analysis in this study was to offer insights into the usefulness of the IDI for USMA's semester abroad program without making any broader claims about the instrument’s reliability and validity, due to the unique nature of the sample and population at West Point. Further research may, indeed, draw on this study, but in this case the quantitative analysis is intended to address the original research question and subsequent guiding questions in the context of USMA's SAP.

In the second phase, the study analyzed the IDI results in concert with the SBA’s for 3C in the affective and cognitive domains. It did this in a deductive way by comparing the results of the SBA independently as compared to the pre-commissioning standards set forth in the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency project (CAL, 2007), and then comparing the IDI and SBA results to each other within
the cultural understanding standards framework. This analysis sought to address the following guiding questions posed at the outset of the study:

1. How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

2. How valid is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

3. How reliable is the IDI for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

4. How reliable is the SBA for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

First, the study conducted a content analysis of the SBA’s, deductively coding them using the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding standards for pre-commissioned leaders, which appear at Appendix B (CAL, 2007), and the IDI’s scales (Hammer, 2008). The former represent the desired outcome of U.S. Army leaders prior to becoming commissioned officers in the area of 3C, while the latter represent the dimensions of the quantitative instrument also being considered for use in tandem with the SBA at USMA. The use of deductive content analysis rather than classical quantitative inductive analysis was intentional and sought to view the SBA and IDI through a consistent, standards-based lens or rubric as USMA and the Army will do. The content analysis used phrases and sentences, both of which express complete thoughts, as its sample and sought both manifest and latent content (Babbie, 1992). Using individual thoughts, rather than taking the SBA as a whole, enabled the study to consider the nuances of the SBA responses by allowing for a range of ordinal codes along the IDI scale and cultural understanding.
standards that more clearly accounted for the complexity of the phenomenon (Babbie, 1992).

After coding the SBA’s, the study placed the data into a cross-classification matrix (Patton, 2002) with the Army’s Cultural Understanding standards on one axis and the IDI scales on another. Arranging the data this way represented an deductive approach (Patton, 2002) to establishing the SBA’s substantive significance and consequential validity (Johnson, 1998), by working backwards from the standards and forwards from the IDI scale to arrive at a more complete picture of the SBA as an instrument to assess 3C.

Next, the study compared the IDI results with those of the SBA to explore the extent to which the qualitative results from the latter were consistent with the former’s quantitative approach. To do this, it compared the analysis of the cross-classification matrix with the participant’s IDI score within each cultural understanding standard, seeking a pattern in the relationship, if any, between the two. The purpose of this comparison was to determine to what degree both instruments shed light on the level of 3C of the participating cadets, as well as address the instruments’ validity and reliability.

In the third phase, the study examined the focus group sessions to determine the cadets’ views of both the IDI and SBA. USMA endeavors to use all assessment instruments as developmental tools rather than as data sources alone, and both instruments lend themselves to this end. The IDI is based upon the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, and its output is intended for use as a means to develop those that take it in the cognitive and affective domains (Hammer, 2008). SBA’s have been in use at USMA in several academic departments as a means to assess critical-
thinking skills. Thus cadet feedback focused not only on the instruments’ value as data, but also on their value as developmental tools in the cognitive and affective domains. Therefore, this analysis sought answers to all six guiding questions by addressing the validity, reliability, and feasibility of both instruments in the affective and cognitive domains. It sought to determine to what degree the assessment instruments addressed 3C (validity), to what degree they were appropriate for a military audience (reliability), and to what degree they were practical for application at USMA (feasible). In order to frame this information, it also sought feedback on the SAP experience with respect to 3C in the affective and cognitive domains.

The focus group data was analyzed inductively using classical qualitative techniques to find themes and patterns and relate them to the study’s guiding questions. After a first review of the transcripts, a series of categories, or major topical areas became evident in the student responses to the nine questions. Themes converged into each category via repetitive words and phrases, always from multiple students and from at least two of the three focus groups, usually all three of them. The study assigned each of these themes a code and noted every instance of the theme’s occurrence in the transcripts, using the nine questions themselves as the organizational framework. Thus, codes remained organized by question in an effort to keep the data focused on the research guiding questions.
Chapter 4: Findings

Overview

This study analyzed the data in three ways to answer the following guiding questions:

1. How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?
2. How valid is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?
3. How reliable is the IDI for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?
4. How reliable is the SBA for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?
5. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the IDI for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?
6. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the SBA for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?

First, it used the PDQ’s to provide descriptive data, which is of particular importance to help place the quantitative and qualitative data in context. Next, it used the IDI scores and PDQ results to conduct a quantitative analysis of inferential statistics to determine the significance of IDI results based on the relevant variables. It lastly conducted deductive qualitative analysis of the IDI and SBA results and inductive qualitative analysis of focus group transcripts to seek patterns and trends in student responses to and about 3C and its assessment using the two instruments used by the study.
Quantitative analysis included a two-tailed matched pair t-test of the first sample’s pre- and post-SAP IDI developmental and perception results to determine if any detected change was statistically significant, as well determination of the effect size of the SAP on both IDI scores. It also conducted two multiple regressions to estimate the relative impact of five variables on IDI developmental and perception scores: selection for participation in a SAP, gender, self-reported foreign language proficiency, whether or not one has lived abroad, and the amount of overseas travel one has experienced.

One qualitative portion consisted of a deductive content analysis of the thirty-three SBA’s available from USMA, coding them using the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding standards for pre-commissioned leaders (CAL, 2007), and the IDI’s scales (Hammer, 2008). This form of qualitative analysis did not use the classical inductive techniques, because the SBA is an assessment that determines the level of a student’s 3C against standards established by the U.S. Army. Thus, those standards were the rubric used by the study to code the content analysis. Similarly, the IDI is the quantitative instrument chosen by USMA for use in assessing 3C, and the study used its framework as the other rubric to analyze the SBAs as a way to cross-check both instruments’ validity and reliability when used in tandem. Next, the study compared the IDI results with those of the SBA to explore the extent to which the qualitative results from the latter were consistent with the former’s quantitative approach, both in a general sense and as a function of each cultural understanding standard. Although expressed in percentages, this data did not lend itself to true quantitative analysis and the study made no attempt to judge its statistical significance, but it was useful in revealing trends and patterns.
The second qualitative portion consisted of an inductive content analysis of three focus groups which convened to discuss the IDI and SBA in the context of USMA's SAP. Each focus group consisted of five participants from the same graduation cohort who participated in semester-abroad experiences in different locations. This study used the focus group questions themselves as an analytical framework for the content analysis (Patton, 2002). After an initial review of the focus group transcripts, the analysis included the following steps: a second reading noting convergence of ideas or attitudes into categories, a third reading noting regularities or repetitive words and phrases within each major category, and then the assignment of codes to words and phrases with the attributes of internal homogeneity, or consistency within codes, and external heterogeneity, or differentiation between codes (Strydom, 2008). Repeated reviews eliminated some of the codes originally assigned and consolidation of others that lacked external heterogeneity. The unit of analysis used in this process was the individual student. The transcripts of the focus groups appear at Appendix G, and the coded focus group transcripts appear at Appendix H.

*Descriptive Data*

Much of the information in this section also appears in the Population and Sample section of Chapter 3, but it bears repeating due to the unique nature of USMA's student body. All USMA cadets are unmarried and between 18-31 years of age. Both the sample and population demonstrated unique features that impacted this study. First, USMA cadets are all volunteers and come from a demographically selective field, with higher than average scholastic aptitude test scores and class rankings. For example, 70% of the entire class of 2009, from which both the first sample and population are drawn,
graduated in the top 20% of their respective high school classes (USMA Library, 2007). Further, 75% of the class scored over 1,000 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and over 50% of them scored over 1,100 (USMA Library, 2007). For the class of 2005, the average SAT score was 1,248 and 80% of them were varsity athletes. Academic and professional success continues after graduation: West Point has produced fifty-five Rhodes Scholars and numerous well-known military, political, and business leaders (Forest, 2003). Their level of self-confidence may have colored their responses to both quantitative and qualitative instruments based on self-reporting, and the data analysis took this into account.

All cadets have some proficiency in a foreign language and a disproportionate percentage (65%) of those that completed a SAP consisted of foreign language majors, when considered as a percentage of the entire U.S. Corps of Cadets (8%). Language majors obviously have more proficiency in a foreign language, unless the cadets have extensive previous experience in one. As the literature review has noted and the theoretical framework posits, the relationship between proficiency in a foreign language and 3C may be significant and is worth considering in this study via both quantitative and qualitative comparisons.

All members of the first sample volunteered to participate in the SAP and the rest of them volunteered for the study, making them, in effect, self-selected two or three times over: once to attend USMA, once to participate in the SAP, and once to participate in the study. USMA cadets tend to pursue the "right" answer to any given problem and may treat the IDI, SAP, and focus groups as such (Forest, 2003). Thus, the sample consisted of a group of participants with high affective and motivational traits with regard to
overseas travel and this study, possibly creating bias towards 3C, particularly in the affective domain. Those participating in a SAP did so in one of the following countries: Austria, Brazil, Chile, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, Russia, or Spain.

All USMA cadets live and work in a military environment, are commissioned as Second Lieutenants in the U.S. Army upon graduation, and must serve at least five years on active duty. This significantly raises their level of deference to others, especially those who are older or who hold a higher military rank. The immediacy of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan to their futures also makes them highly focused on topics that are directly related to military service and less so to those that are not. These characteristics also affected data collection, especially of a qualitative nature such as focus groups or interviews involving perceived authority figures.

Among the 203 total study participants, 133 cadets completed both the PDQ and IDI, thirty-three submitted SBA’s, and fifteen agreed to participate in focus groups. The following descriptive statistics apply to those completing both the PDQ and IDI, although not all of them answered every question in the former. Of the 132 cadets who answered the PDQ’s gender question, thirty-three (25%) were female and ninety-nine (75%) were male. Of the 128 cadets who answered the PDQ’s question about foreign language proficiency, three (2.3%) indicated a novice level, thirty-one indicated an elementary level (24.2%), fifty-five indicated a working level (43%), twenty-five indicated a professional level (19.6%), and fourteen (10.9%) indicated that they were native speakers of a foreign language. Of the 131 cadets who answered the PDQ’s question having lived abroad previously, fifty-five (42%) responded affirmatively and seventy-six (58%)
negatively. Of the 130 cadets who answered the PDQ's question about the amount of
cruise abroad, eleven (8.5%) indicated no previous cruise abroad, fifty-two (25.6%) indicated
less than one month total cruise abroad, forty-two (20.7%) indicated between
one and three months total cruise abroad, and twenty-five (12.3%) indicated more than
three months' total cruise abroad.

Inferential Statistics

Pre-Post SAP IDI Results. This study conducted a two-tailed matched pair t-test
of the first sample's pre- and post-SAP IDI results obtained from the CLCRS records to
determine if any detected change was statistically significant. It first established a null
hypothesis: The population mean of all difference scores is equal to zero. Rejecting this
hypothesis would result in strong evidence of a statistically significant difference in pre-
and post-ID1 scores for participants in this study. Failure to reject the null hypothesis
would mean that there was insufficient evidence to suggest that the difference in pre- and
post-ID1 test scores was statistically significant. The alternative hypothesis was the
population mean of all difference scores did not equal zero.

Due to the nature of the project and the IDI, this study developed a decision rule
for rejecting the null hypothesis based on social science research standards. It would
reject the null hypothesis if a two-tailed matched pair t-test with an established level of
significance (α) of 0.05, a critical t value of +/- 2.110, and a population of 18 yielding 17
degrees of freedom produced the one or both of the following results:

1. $p \leq \alpha$; the calculated significance ($p$) was less than or equal to an
   established level of significance ($\alpha$) of 0.05.
2. the absolute value of the calculated $t$ was greater than or equal to the
   absolute value of the critical $t$ (2.110).
Therefore, if the t-test described above met either criterion, this study would reject the null hypothesis and would have strong evidence to suggest that the difference in pre- and post-IDI scores was statistically significant.

This study tested eighteen USMA cadets prior to and after their participation in a SAP and used SPSS to calculate the following values: the pre-mean IDI developmental score was 93.162, the post-mean IDI Developmental score was 93.648, the calculated t-value was -0.219, and the significance was 0.829. Using the decision rule described above, this produced the following results for the two-tailed matched pair t-test with an established level of significance (α) of 0.05, a critical t value of +/- 2.110, and a population of 18 yielding 17 degrees of freedom:

1. \( p(0.829) > \alpha(0.050) \); the calculated significance (p) is greater than the established level of significance (α) of 0.050.
2. the absolute value of the calculated t (0.219) was less than the absolute value of the critical t (2.101).

These results produced a weak decision that failed to reject the null hypothesis because they did not meet either criterion for rejecting it.

In addition to the statistical significance, the study calculated the effect size of the SAP on the IDI developmental score in the event the change was significant enough to warrant closer investigation no matter what the results of the t-test. Given a pre-SAP mean developmental IDI score of 93.648 with a standard deviation of 11.808 and a post-SAP mean developmental IDI score of 93.162 and a standard deviation of 13.780, the effect size of the SAP on IDI developmental scores is 0.0189 with a Cohen's d value of 0.0378. This did not constitute a significant effect size.
This study also analyzed the IDI perception scores to determine the statistical significance of any change in cadets’ self-perceptions regarding 3C after completion of a SAP. It used SPSS to calculate the following values: the pre-mean IDI Perception score was 122.331, the post-mean IDI Perception score was 122.577, the calculated t-value was -0.313, and the significance was 0.758. Using the decision rule described above, this produced the following results for the two-tailed matched pair t-test with an established level of significance (α) of 0.05, a critical t value of +/- 2.110, and a population of 18 yielding 17 degrees of freedom:

1. \( p (0.758) > \alpha (0.050) \); the calculated significance (p) is greater than the established level of significance (α) of 0.050.
2. the absolute value of the calculated t (0.313) was less than the absolute value of the critical t (2.110).

These results also produced a weak decision that failed to reject the null hypothesis because they did not meet either criterion for rejecting it.

In addition to the statistical significance, the study calculated the effect size of the SAP on the IDI perception score in the event the change was significant enough to warrant closer investigation no matter what the results of the t-test. Given a pre-SAP mean perception IDI score of 122.331 with a standard deviation of 4.418 and a post-SAP mean perception IDI score of 122.577 and a standard deviation of 5.451, the effect size of the SAP on IDI perception scores is 0.0248 with a Cohen’s d value of 0.0496. This did not constitute a significant effect size.

The test described above was intended to address the following guiding questions:

1. How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?
3. How reliable is the IDI for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

The results indicate that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the difference in the average developmental or perception IDI test scores for cadets at USMA before and after participation in a SAP is statistically significant. Further, the weak effect size for both the developmental and perception IDI scores, which were less than 0.3, do not meet the minimum standard for an intervention effect (Hinkle, Wiersms, and Jurs, 2003).

The weak nature of these results should not lead to any assertive decisions about the semester-abroad program, however. Rejecting the null hypothesis indicates only that one cannot rule out the possible role of chance in the different mean test scores. Thus CLCRS would recommend continuation of the expanded SAP program for now, particularly since other research demonstrates a significant improvement in language ability as a result of a semester abroad. Some ideas for further research include employing other assessment instruments for cross-cultural competence in concert with the IDI and giving the IDI test to a larger number of cadets participating in the semester abroad program.

*Hierarchical Multiple Regression.*

This study conducted two multiple regressions to estimate the relative impact of five variables on IDI developmental and perception scores: selection for participation in a SAP, gender, foreign language proficiency, whether or not one has lived abroad, and the amount of overseas travel one has experienced. The IDI scores and SAP participation data came from the CLCRS archives and the remaining four variables were self-reported on the PDQ used in this study, which appears at Appendix C. Having determined that
actual participation in a SAP did not have a statistically significant impact on either developmental or perception IDI scores using the previous test, this study used pre-test IDI scores for all members of the sample. It retained selection for participation in a SAP as a variable because the program is voluntary and includes a rigorous selection process, which may indicate a high level of motivation in the affective domain that may contribute to elevated IDI scores.

The first multiple regression used IDI developmental scores as the dependent variable. The model included five independent variables: selection for a SAP, gender, foreign language proficiency, whether or not one has lived abroad, and the amount of travel abroad one has had. The IDI scores and SAP participation data came from the CLCRS archives and the remaining four variables were self-reported on the PDQ used in this study, which appears at Appendix C. This regression model accounts for 7.6% (adjusted $r^2=0.076$) of the variance in IDI developmental scores and was statistically significant with $f = 3.062$, $df = 5, 120$, and $p = 0.012$. In the regression model, selection for a SAP was not significant with $B = 0.010$, $t = 0.106$, and $p = 0.906$. Gender was not significant with $B = -0.019$, $t = -0.218$, and $p = 0.828$. Foreign language proficiency was significant with $B = 0.218$, $t = 2.973$, and $p = 0.04$. The positive direction suggests that cadets with higher self-reported proficiency in a foreign language are likely to have higher IDI developmental scores. In the regression model, whether or not one has lived abroad was not significant with $B = -0.081$, $t = -0.816$, and $p = 0.416$. The amount of overseas travel one has experienced was not significant with $B = 0.071$, $t = 0.791$, and $p = 0.430$. 
The second multiple regression used IDI perception scores as the dependent variable. The model included the same five independent variables: selection for a SAP, gender, foreign language proficiency, whether or not one has lived abroad, and the amount of travel abroad one has had. The IDI scores and SAP participation data came from the CLCRS archives and the remaining four variables were self-reported on the PDQ used in this study, which appears at Appendix C. The regression model accounts for 15.8% (adjusted $r^2=0.158$) of the variance in IDI perception scores and was statistically significant with $f = 5.868$, df = 5, 120, and $p = 0.000$. In the regression model, selection for a SAP was not significant with $B = 0.045$, $t = 0.476$, and $p = 0.635$. Gender was not significant with $B = -0.034$, $t = -0.397$, and $p = 0.692$. Foreign language proficiency was significant with $B = 0.327$, $t = 3.631$, and $p = 0.000$. The positive direction suggests that cadets with higher self-reported proficiency in a foreign language are likely to have higher IDI perception scores. In the regression model, whether or not one has lived abroad was not significant with $B = -0.081$, $t = -0.816$, and $p = 0.416$. The amount of overseas travel one has experienced was not significant with $B = 0.134$, $t = 1.561$, and $p = 0.121$.

The multiple regression was intended to address the following guiding questions:

1. How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

3. How reliable is the IDI for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

In both models only self-reported foreign language proficiency appeared to have a statistically significant influence on IDI developmental and perception scores. Thus,
there is insufficient evidence to suggest that selection for participation in a SAP, gender, living abroad, or amount of overseas travel are statistically significant. The weak nature of these results should not lead to any assertive decisions about the semester abroad program or other variables, however. One should only interpret it as an inability to rule out the possible role of chance in the variables that are not statistically significant. Thus, CLCRS would recommend continuation of the expanded SAP program for now, particularly since other research demonstrates a significant improvement in language ability as a result of a semester abroad, and both regression models show some correlation between foreign language proficiency and IDI developmental and perception scores.

Qualitative Patterns

Analysis of SBA and IDI Results

First, the study conducted a content analysis of the thirty-two SBA’s available from USMA, coding them using the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding standards for pre-commissioned leaders (CAL, 2007), and the IDI’s scales (Hammer, 2008) as rubrics. The former represent the desired outcome of U.S. Army leaders prior to becoming commissioned officers in the area of 3C and are one way USMA might analyze the SBA, while the latter represent the dimensions of the quantitative instrument also being considered for use in tandem with the SBA at USMA. Thus, the study used a deductive approach to analyze the SBA responses in an effort to view them through a standards-based lens consistent with USMA’s goals and the other 3C assessment instrument it intends to employ. The SBA responses appear as Appendix F, and they include the original spelling and syntax. The content analysis used phrases and sentences, both of
which express complete thoughts, as its sample and sought both manifest and latent content (Babbie, 1992).

First, the study conducted an analysis of thirty-two SBA’s alone to address the following guiding questions:

2. How valid is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

4. How reliable is the SBA for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

The study distilled the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding standards for pre-commissioned leaders (CAL, 2007), which appear at Appendix B, into nine codes to prevent double-reporting and ensure external heterogeneity while preserving internal homogeneity. This uses a deductive, rather than inductive, approach, due to the SBA’s role as an assessment instrument for 3C rather than an interview or survey instrument. Inasmuch as USMA is considering the SBA as a means to assess 3C in its students in an academic setting, it must be coded using meaningful and consistent standards, rather than inductively seeking evidence of 3C as one might in an interview setting. These standards represent the U.S. Army’s desired outcomes for cadets such as those at USMA prior to being commissioned officers. The codes employed were: Recognize Cultural Differences (CD), Appreciate Diverse Cultural Norms (CN), Anticipate Intercultural Challenges (IC), Increase Cultural Knowledge (CK), Relate 3C to Mission (3CM), Understand Definition of Culture (C), Communicate across Cultures (CC), Employ Technology for 3C (TC), Understand Role of Culture in Behavior (CB), Recognize Negative Role of Bias in 3C (BC). Using this schema, some phrases or sentences from the SBA’s could apply to more
than one code, and student responses may include more than one instance of any particular code.

The student SBA responses resulted in thirty-eight instances of recognizing cultural differences, coded CD. Three examples of statements coded CD that appear to meet the aforementioned cultural understanding standard from student SBA’s follow; they are verbatim and include the original spelling and syntax. Student responses also included examples that appeared to not meet the cultural understanding standard. Student #91400 wrote, “However, I still recognize that they have their traditions, and that I am not the judge of whether they are right or wrong.” Student #96343 wrote, “I would make it clear that I did not agree with this idea, however it is their culture so I would not interfere.” Student #84406 wrote, “However, since the United States is not trying to change the cultural norms and morals of this nation, you should send her along after explaining to her that it is of utmost importance that she get on the plane now.” Each of these three statements overtly demonstrates that the student recognized cultural differences and was coded appropriately.

The student SBA responses resulted in thirty-six instances of appreciating diverse cultural norms, coded CN. Three examples of statements coded CN that appear to meet the aforementioned cultural understanding standard from student SBA’s follow; they are verbatim and include the original spelling and syntax. Student responses also included examples that appeared to not meet the cultural understanding standard. Student #99536 wrote, “I would keep my reasoning from touching the cultural differences or my personal objection.” Student #92427 rhetorically asked, “Who would I be to force my culture on another’s; especially one that has such deep roots?” Student #95991 wrote, “Your
cultural norms differ from mine. However, if you do something I perceive as wrong, as long as it is not a gross moral violation (i.e., genocide), I respect your right to do it.” The first two statements represent latent content coded as CN; while the last one represents manifest content specifically addressing cultural norms.

Only two students appeared to recognize the need to anticipate intercultural challenges, although the SBA’s structure may not have lent itself to addressing this standard. The statements used by these students that were coded IC follow; they are verbatim and include the original spelling and syntax. Student #84406 wrote, “We need to address what the approved solution for this kind of situation will be in the future.” Student #95543 wrote, “It should be recommended to headquarters that people on the ground get better cultural awareness training.” Both of these statements implicitly anticipate intercultural challenges by recommending present action to address future situations.

The student SBA responses resulted in nine instances of increasing cultural knowledge, coded CK. Three examples of statements coded CK that appear to meet the aforementioned cultural understanding standard from student SBA’s follow; they are verbatim and include the original spelling and syntax. Student responses also included examples that appeared to not meet the cultural understanding standard. Student #90722 wrote, “Ask the woman what she is doing there, get her side of the story.” Student #90792 wrote, “First I would talk to the girl alone to figure out if the problem is the arranged marriage or the fear of flight.” Student #88871 wrote, “I would . . . engage him in a discussion regarding this issue if I felt the timing and our professional relationship made such a conversation appropriate.” All three of these statements demonstrate an
indirect, or latent, attempt to increase cultural knowledge by engaging one of the parties from the other culture involved.

The student SBA responses resulted in twenty-six instances of relating cross-cultural competence to mission accomplishment, coded 3CM. Three examples of statements coded 3CM that appear to meet the aforementioned cultural understanding standard from student SBA’s follow; they are verbatim and include the original spelling and syntax. Student responses also included examples that appeared to not meet the cultural understanding standard. Student #81601 wrote, “I would do this because accomplishing the mission is paramount, if I can prevent something that I feel contradicts our way of life simultaneously I will attempt to do that.” Student #94504 wrote, “I would use an administrative excuse (regulations) to decline her passage. If there were no regulations and the story of the host nation was true (no other motives I would take her).” Student #95991 wrote, “If I refuse to fly her, I damage relations with a very important ally in the GWOT and add to American stereotypes that we are cultural hegemons.” All three of these statements implicitly recognize the relationship between 3C and mission accomplishment.

The student SBA responses resulted in thirty-six instances of understanding the definition of culture, coded C. Three examples of statements coded C that appear to meet the aforementioned cultural understanding standard from student SBA’s follow; they are verbatim and include the original spelling and syntax. Student responses also included examples that appeared to not meet the cultural understanding standard. Student #90117 wrote, “This is a cultural thing & I would be overstepping my boundaries by doing something.” Student #88871 wrote, “No matter what my personal opinion in the
situation is, this is a cultural issue and it is not appropriate for me to intervene unless there is evidence of physical abuse or other illegal or criminal behavior.” Student #98414 wrote, “I think she should go because that is how the country works; she will be in danger if she doesn’t go...” All three of these statements are examples of latent content, and indicate some level of understanding of the definition of culture currently in use by the U.S. Army, “…the set of distinctive features of a society or group, including, but not limited to values, beliefs, and norms, that ties together members of that society or group and drives action and behavior” (TCC, 2007).

The student SBA responses resulted in only three instances of an effort at communicating across cultures, coded CC. These statements coded CC that appear to meet the aforementioned cultural understanding standard from student SBA’s follow; they are verbatim and include the original spelling and syntax. Student responses also included examples that appeared to not meet the cultural understanding standard. Student #95543 wrote, “It would be a good source of information and history of the tradition of arranged marriages with the host nation counterpart. That way a deeper understanding of cultural differences can be reached.” The same student also wrote, “It should be recommended to another branch of the military to initiate a cultural change that comes from the people, and not being forced from an outside source.” Student #90722 wrote, “Not comfortable with taking woman far away without express consent of her father/brothers.” All three of these statements indicate some effort on the part of the student to communicate across cultures, either directly or via some systemic means such as “another branch of the military.”
Interestingly, none of the student responses made any implicit or overt mention of a technological solution to this problem. Given USMA’s heavy emphasis on information technology and the important role it plays in the lives of students, one would expect some attempt at consulting a regional knowledge database to confirm or deny the host nation official’s story. However, the way the SBA was written may have discouraged such a course of action by emphasizing the limited time available to make a decision.

The student SBA responses resulted in thirty-three instances of understanding the role of culture in behavior, coded CB. Three examples of statements coded CB that appear to meet the aforementioned cultural understanding standard from student SBA’s follow; they are verbatim and include the original spelling and syntax. Student responses also included examples that appeared to not meet the cultural understanding standard. Student #96396 wrote, “Our orders dictate that we complete our mission, and I single handedly would not be able to change the marital customs of another nation.” Student #96057 wrote, “As a visitor in a foreign country, I would do my best to abide and respect the laws and customs of my host, especially on a military mission.” Student #85330 wrote, “Arranged marriages are still used in some parts of the world and not taking part in them would be dangerous.” All three of these statements show that the students recognize that culture has behavioral implications, in this case in the form of arranged marriages.

The student SBA responses resulted in nine instances of recognizing the negative role of bias in cross cultural competence, coded BC. Three examples of statements coded BC that appear to meet the aforementioned cultural understanding standard from student SBA’s follow; they are verbatim and include the original spelling and syntax. Student
responses also included examples that appeared to not meet the cultural understanding standard. Student #94698 wrote, “I would give the reasons listed above and stress the importance of keeping the confidence and trust of the host nation military by trusting them.” Student #85677 wrote, “It would be irresponsible of me to impose my culture’s values on this situation, especially when acting in an official capacity.” Student #85178 wrote, “As the guest in a host nation, working closely with host nation military counterparts on an important mission that requires cooperation between both militaries, I would not wager the success of my mission against the slim chance that the host nation men would understand my point of view and allow the woman to remain at the airport.” All of the statements above demonstrate an effort to keep negative personal feelings about arranged marriage from interfering with mission accomplishment by not expressing them to the host nation.

The study also coded the student SBA responses according to the IDI scales, which are based on the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Hammer, 2008) and represent one of the means by which USMA may attempt to assess cadet 3C. As in the case with the cultural understanding standards, this uses a deductive rather than inductive approach due to the SBA’s role as an assessment instrument for 3C rather than an interview or survey instrument. Inasmuch as USMA is considering the SBA as a means to assess 3C in conjunction with the IDI in its students in an academic setting, it must also be coded in a way that relates the two instruments rather than inductively seeking evidence of 3C as one might in an interview setting. The scales appear in ascending order of intercultural sensitivity: Denial/Defense/Reversal (DDR), Minimization (M), Acceptance/Adaptation (AA), and Integration (I).
The student SBA responses included seventy instances of denial and defense (DDR). This included nine instances of the former, which “assumes there are no real differences among people from different cultures,” and sixty-one instances of the latter, “which refers to a more explicit recognition of [cultural] differences coupled with more overt attempts at erecting defenses against them” (Hammer, 2008). None of them demonstrated the related phenomenon of reversal, or “the denigration of one’s own culture and an attendant assumption of superiority of a different culture” (Hammer, 2008). Three examples of student SBA responses coded DDR follow; the original spelling and syntax are intact. Student #81705 offered an example of denial by writing, “I would tell them that it wasn’t part of the mission and that we didn’t have time to deal with it.” Student #88318 offers an example of defense with the following statement: “I have a moral and legal obligation to ensure her safety and not just obey cultural rules and traditions whether they are of my culture or of someone else’s.” Student #87210 provides another example of defense, stating, “Although I do not agree with the host nation’s customs/traditions, I did not feel it was in my power to step in and stop the arranged marriage.” No matter what decision the student made on the SBA, the explanations of their actions revealed the degree to which they considered intercultural differences at all (denial), or viewed the differences in a pejorative way (defense).

The student SBA responses included forty-nine instances of minimization (M), which “acts as a kind of transition between the polarization of difference in Defense and the nonevaluative recognition of difference in Acceptance” (Hammer, 2008). Three examples of student SBA responses coded M follow; the original spelling and syntax are intact. Student #98414 wrote, “I would tell them that I think it is the wisest decision for
all parties & keeps more people out of danger than puts them in it.” Student #96115 wrote, “I did what was necessary to complete the mission.” Student #82252 wrote, “If he could not diffuse the situation I would tell him that we can’t transfer the woman (because she is afraid of flying) and she could represent a risk to the mission at this time and this would be an abuse of government funds.” In each of the three examples above the students demonstrate an attempt to rationalize their actions using universal values rather than acknowledging the potential impact of culture in either a defensive or accepting way.

The student SBA responses included eighty instances of acceptance and adaptation. Acceptance “involves an acknowledgment that identifying significant cultural differences is crucial to understanding human interaction” (Hammer, 2008). Adaptation, a related stage that the IDI treats as equivalent for the purposes of its intercultural sensitivity scale, “involves a more proactive effort on the part of an individual to use cultural differences and intercultural skills in ways which maximize his/her understanding and relationships with people from other cultures” (Hammer, 2008). The study made no attempt to distinguish between the two because, unlike the difference between denial and defense, they are more a matter of degree rather than qualitatively different. Three examples of student SBA responses coded AA follow; the original spelling and syntax are intact. Student #87210 wrote, “Since the host nation has such a strong concept of family, I don’t think it would be right to try to stop the arranged marriage. This is part of their culture/customs.” Student #85928 wrote, “This is their culture; their way of life, although I do not approve I can not jump in and stop something that’s been going on for centuries.” Student #83309 wrote, “I would tell them that I
supported the host nation culture rather than imposing my own cultural ideals.” Each of these statements demonstrates recognition on the part of the student that cultural differences matter and should be considered when making decisions.

None of the student SBA responses indicated integration, or “the effort to integrate disparate aspects of one’s cultural identity into a new whole” (Hammer, 2008). This is not surprising, given that the SBA did not represent a true intercultural situation, but only a representation thereof.

After coding the SBA’s, the study placed the data into a cross-classification matrix (Patton, 2002) with the Army’s Cultural Understanding standards on one axis and the IDI scales on another, the results of which appear in Table 2. It then compared the number of times the student response addressed each standard by IDI scale to seek any existing trends.
Table 2

Cross-classification matrix of cultural understanding and IDI scale

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<tr>
<td><strong>Recognize Cultural Differences - CD</strong></td>
<td>99536, 95991, 96115, 95543, 96057, 81601, 88318, 87210, 85178, 84776, 83309, 88871, 84406</td>
<td>96343, 94698, 90792, 96396, 96057, 85330, 95316</td>
<td>90722, 94504, 90117, 94698, 90792, 91400, 98414, 92427, 95991, 9543, 87210, 85178, 84776, 83928, 83309, 88871, 84406, 84853</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appreciate Diverse Cultural Norms – CN</strong></td>
<td>99536, 95991, 96115, 95543, 96057, 81601, 88318, 87210, 85178, 84776, 83309, 88871, 84406</td>
<td>96343, 94698, 90792, 96396, 96057, 85330, 95316</td>
<td>90722, 90117, 94698, 90792, 91400, 98414, 92427, 95991, 9543, 87210, 85178, 84776, 83928, 83309, 88871, 84406, 84853</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anticipate Intercultural Challenges - IC</strong></td>
<td>95543, 88318, 88871, 84406</td>
<td>90722, 90792, 85318</td>
<td>90792, 95543</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increase Cultural Knowledge - CK</strong></td>
<td>95543, 88318, 88871, 84406</td>
<td>90722, 96343, 94504, 95608, 90792, 90792, 96396, 92427, 95991, 96115, 96057, 81601, 85178, 84776, 82608, 88871, 84406, 95316</td>
<td>94698, 91400, 94307, 89414, 92427, 95991, 9543, 87210</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relate 3C to Mission – 3CM</strong></td>
<td>95543, 88318, 88871, 84406</td>
<td>96343, 94698, 96396, 96057, 83309, 95316</td>
<td>90722, 95543</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understand Definition of Culture – C</strong></td>
<td>99536, 95991, 96115, 95543, 96057, 81601, 88318, 87210, 85178, 84776, 83309, 88871, 84406</td>
<td>96343, 94698, 90792, 96396, 96057, 85330, 95316</td>
<td>94504, 90117, 94698, 90792, 91400, 98414, 92427, 95991, 9543, 87210, 85178, 84776, 85928, 83309, 88871, 84406, 84853</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicate across Cultures – CC</strong></td>
<td>95543</td>
<td>95543</td>
<td>90722, 95543</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employ Technology for 3C – TC</strong></td>
<td>90722, 96343, 94698, 90792, 91400, 99536, 95543, 95543, 96057, 88318, 87210, 85178, 84776, 83309, 88871, 84406</td>
<td>90792, 96396, 95991, 96057, 85330</td>
<td>90117, 90792, 91400, 98414, 87210, 85178, 84776, 85928, 83309, 88871, 84406, 84853</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understand Role of Culture in Behavior - CB</strong></td>
<td>94307, 99536, 81705, 82252, 81601, 85677, 84776, 82608</td>
<td>96115, 85178, 88871</td>
<td>90117, 94698, 98414, 95991, 87210, 85677</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recognize Negative Role of Bias in 3C – BC</strong></td>
<td>94307, 99536, 81705, 82252, 81601, 85677, 84776, 82608</td>
<td>96115, 85178, 88871</td>
<td>90117, 94698, 98414, 95991, 87210, 85677</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the area of recognizing cultural differences, coded CD, the SBA responses included thirteen at the Defense/Reversal (D/R) level (34%), seven at the Minimization (M) level (19%), and eighteen at the Acceptance/Adaptation (AA) level (47%). In the area of appreciating diverse cultural norms, coded CN, the SBA responses included thirteen at the D/R level (36%), seven at the M level (20%), and sixteen at the AA level (44%). In the area of anticipating intercultural challenges, coded IC, the SBA’s included two responses at the AA level (100%). In the area of increasing cultural knowledge, coded CK, the SBA’s included four responses at the D/R level (45%), three at the M level (33%), and two at the AA level (22%). In the area of related 3C to the mission, coded 3CM, one SBA response was at the D/R level (4%), eighteen were at the M level (69%), and seven were at the AA level (27%). In the area of understanding the definition of culture, coded C, the SBA’s included thirteen at the D/R level (36%), six at the M level (17%), and seventeen at the AA level (47%). In the area of communicating across cultures, coded CC, the SBA’s included one response at the D/R level (33%) and two at the AA level (67%). In the area of understanding the role of culture in behavior, coded CB, the SBA’s included sixteen responses at the D/R level (49%), five responses at the M level (15%), and twelve responses at the AA level (36%). In the area of recognizing the negative role of bias in 3C, the SBA’s included no responses at the D/R level, three responses at the M level (33%), and six responses at the AA level (67%). Eight SBA responses displayed denial, which indicates a rejection of the Cultural Understanding standards.

Although the sample sizes are too small and the process of coding too subjective to use quantitative analysis for this information, one can detect some general trends and
patterns in the data that are revealing. Some of the cultural understanding standards, IC, CK, CC, BC, and D, were not addressed often enough to detect a pattern. The cultural understanding standards addressed most often in student responses to the SBA were CD (38), CN (36), 3CM (26), C (36), and CB (33). In the case of three of these, CD, CN, and C, student responses were concentrated at the AA level, followed by the D/R level, then the M level. Closely related to this was the CB standard, in which student responses were concentrated at the D/R level, followed by the AA level and then the M level.

Interpretation of this pattern could include a combination of various factors. First, the dispersion of results for these standards, concentrated at the AA and D/R ends of the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity spectrum, may represent a certain level of cognitive dissonance in the respondents as they wrestle with the concept of culture in a military setting. This may indicate that they are undergoing a process of equilibration (Piaget, 1964), as this idea jostles with others to find a place in the student’s schema. Another factor could be students attempting to give the “right” answer (AA responses) while simultaneously belying their actual tendencies (D/R). Although the study made every effort to encourage students to answer the questions with candor, USMA cadets are eager to please and deferential, and the respondents knew the purpose of the SBA was to assess 3C. Lastly, these particular cultural understanding standards may be so closely related that they lacked external heterogeneity (Strydom, 2008), and student responses consistently resulted in the same coding pattern.

Student SBA responses in the cultural understanding standard 3CM exhibited the opposite pattern: most responses were at the M level with AA and D/R trailing respectively. The nature of the standard itself, which puts mission accomplishment at the
fore, may account for this pattern. Mission accomplishment evokes a near-Pavlovian response at West Point, trumping other considerations. Thus, it is not surprising that any standard dealing with mission accomplishment would demonstrate a high level of minimization, as the mission itself becomes the figurative acid which dissolves other factors.

Next, the study compared the IDI results with those of the SBA to explore the extent to which the qualitative results from the latter were consistent with the former's quantitative approach. To do this, it compared the analysis of the cross-classification matrix in Table 2 with the participant's IDI score, seeking a pattern in the relationship, if any, between the two. The purpose of this comparison was to determine to what degree both instruments shed light on the level of 3C of the participating cadets, as well as address the instruments' validity and reliability. It thus addressed the following guiding questions:

1. How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

2. How valid is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

3. How reliable is the IDI for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

4. How reliable is the SBA for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

To organize this data for analysis, the study created a matrix with student numbers along one axis and the IDI scales, based on the Developmental Scale of Intercultural
Sensitivity (Hammer, 2008) along the other axis. The scales appear in ascending order of intercultural sensitivity: Denial/Defense/Reversal (D/D/R), Minimization (M), Acceptance/Adaptation (AA), and Integration (I). The student’s ID1 score was placed in the appropriate point on the scale along with his or her SBA codes from Table 2, using the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding standards for pre-commissioned leaders (CAL, 2007) codes from Table 2. The codes employed were: Recognize Cultural Differences (CD), Appreciate Diverse Cultural Norms (CN), Anticipate Intercultural Challenges (IC), Increase Cultural Knowledge (CK), Relate 3C to Mission (3CM), Understand Definition of Culture (C), Communicate across Cultures (CC), Employ Technology for 3C (TC), Understand Role of Culture in Behavior (CB), Recognize Negative Role of Bias in 3C (BC). The data appears in this form in Table 3 below:
Table 3
Comparison of Student IDI Scores and SBA Codes by Student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Denial/Defense/Reversal - D/DR</th>
<th>Minimization - M</th>
<th>Acceptance/Adaptation - AA</th>
<th>Integration - I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>81601</td>
<td>CD, CN, C, D</td>
<td>IDI-DS, 3CM</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81705</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>IDI-DS</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82252</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>IDI-DS</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82608</td>
<td>IDI-DS, D</td>
<td>IDI-PS, 3CM</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83309</td>
<td>IDI-DS, CD, CN, C, CB</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>CD, CN, C, CB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84406</td>
<td>CD, CN, CK, C, CB</td>
<td>IDI-DS, 3CM</td>
<td>IDI-PS, CD, CN, IC, C, CB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84776</td>
<td>CD, CN, C, CB, D</td>
<td>IDI-DS, 3CM</td>
<td>IDI-PS, CD, CN, C, CB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84853</td>
<td>IDI-DS</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>CD, CN, C, CB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85178</td>
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<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>IDI-PS, CD, CN, C, CB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>IDI-PS, CD, CN, C, CB</td>
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<tr>
<td>85677</td>
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<td>IDI-DS</td>
<td>IDI-PS, BC</td>
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<tr>
<td>85928</td>
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<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>CD, CN, C, CB</td>
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<tr>
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<td>IDI-DS</td>
<td>IDI-PS, CD, 3CM, C, CB, BC</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>88318</td>
<td>CD, CN, CK, C, CB</td>
<td>IDI-DS, CK</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
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<tr>
<td>88871</td>
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<td>3CM, BC</td>
<td>IDI-PS, IDI-DS, CD, CN, C, CB</td>
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<td>IDI-PS</td>
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<td>90722</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>CD, CN, CC</td>
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<tr>
<td>90792</td>
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<td>IDI-PS</td>
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<tr>
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<td>CB</td>
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<td>IDI-PS</td>
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<td>3CM</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
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<td>94504</td>
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<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>IDI-PS, CD, C</td>
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<tr>
<td>94698</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>IDI-DS</td>
<td>IDI-PS, CD, CN, 3CM, C, CB</td>
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<tr>
<td>95316</td>
<td>IDI-DS, CD, CN, 3CM, C</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>IDI-DS</td>
<td>IDI-PS, CD, CN, IC, C, CC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3CM, CB</td>
<td>IDI-PS, CD, CN, 3CM, C, CB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96057</td>
<td>CD, CN, C, CB</td>
<td>CD, CN, 3CM, C, CB</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96115</td>
<td>CD, CN, C</td>
<td>IDI-DS, 3CM, BC</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96343</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96396</td>
<td>IDI-DS, CD, CN, 3CM, C, CB</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98414</td>
<td>IDI-DS</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99536</td>
<td>CD, CN, C, CB, D</td>
<td>IDI-DS</td>
<td>IDI-PS</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Using the data in Table 3, the study explored the relationship between the IDI developmental and perception scores for the twenty-nine students who completed both instruments and the SBA results by comparing the IDI scores with the coded SBA responses that corresponded to the IDI scales. It did this by noting the quantity of individual coded statements on the IDI’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity scale for each student as well as the student’s overall SBA response to determine how they compared with the IDI developmental and perception scores. This analysis revealed that IDI developmental scores (IDI-DS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for fourteen of the twenty-nine students (48%), equivalent for six of them (21%), and higher for nine of them (31%). It also revealed that IDI perception scores (IDI-PS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for three of the twenty-nine students (10%), equivalent for ten of them (35%), and higher for sixteen of them (55%). Table 4 shows this information by individual student.

Table 4
Aggregate Comparison of Student IDI Scores and SBA Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDI-DS &lt; SBA (48%)</th>
<th>IDI-DS = SBA (21%)</th>
<th>IDI-DS &gt; SBA (31%)</th>
<th>IDI-PS &lt; SBA (10%)</th>
<th>IDI-PS = SBA (35%)</th>
<th>IDI-PS &gt; SBA (55%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>83309, 84853, 85178, 85330, 85928, 87210, 90117, 90722, 90792, 91400, 94504, 94698, 95991, 98414</td>
<td>84406, 84776, 85677, 95316, 96343, 96396</td>
<td>81601, 81705, 82608, 88318, 88871, 95543, 96115, 99536</td>
<td>82608, 90117, 90792</td>
<td>83309, 84853, 85330, 85928, 90722, 91400, 94504, 94698, 95991, 98414</td>
<td>81601, 81705, 82252, 84406, 84776, 85178, 85677, 87210, 88318, 88871, 95316, 95543, 96115, 96343, 96396, 99536</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As was the case with the SBA analysis using the IDI scales, this data does not lend itself to true quantitative analysis, but it does show some trends. One general pattern revealed by this view of the data is that the students’ IDI developmental scores tended to
be lower than their responses to the SBA indicated. On the other hand, the opposite was true for the IDI perception scores, which tended to be higher than the SBA responses indicated. Reasons for the pattern could include several factors, three of which follow. First, the students could have a higher level of 3C than the IDI developmental scores indicate, calling the test’s validity into question. Second, the SBA allows students the opportunity to rationalize their decisions and demonstrate higher levels of 3C via explanations of their decisions, while the IDI does not allow for this. Lastly, students may have been attempting to give the “right” answer to demonstrate 3C. Although the study made every effort to encourage students to answer the questions with candor, USMA cadets are eager to please and deferential, and the respondents knew the purpose of the SBA was to assess 3C.

To gain finer resolution on the relationship between the IDI developmental and perception scores and the SBA results, the study also compared these scores with the number of coded SBA responses that corresponded to the IDI scales by individual cultural understanding standard using the data in Tables 2 and 3. The first step in this analysis was the preparation of a matrix placing the coded SBA responses and IDI scores on the latter’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity by each of the U.S. Army cultural understanding standards. The results appear in Table 5 below, and are intended to show the combined data for analysis.
**Table 5**

Comparison of IDI Scores and SBA Codes by Cultural Understanding Standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recognize Cultural Differences - CD</strong></td>
<td>81601, 83309, 84406, 84776, 85178, 87210, 88318, 88871, 95543, 95991, 96115, 99536</td>
<td>85330, 90792, 94698, 95316, 96343, 96396</td>
<td>83309, 84406, 84776, 84853, 85178, 85928, 87210, 88871, 90117, 90722, 90792, 91400, 94504, 94698, 95543, 95991, 98414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appreciate Diverse Cultural Norms - CN</strong></td>
<td>81601, 83309, 84406, 84776, 85178, 87210, 88318, 88871, 95543, 95991, 96115, 99536</td>
<td>85330, 90792, 94698, 95316, 96343, 96396</td>
<td>83309, 84406, 84776, 84853, 85178, 85928, 88871, 90117, 90722, 90792, 91400, 94698, 95543, 95991, 98414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anticipate Intercultural Challenges - IC</strong></td>
<td>84406, 88318, 88871, 95543</td>
<td>88318, 90722, 90792</td>
<td>84406, 95543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increase Cultural Knowledge - CK</strong></td>
<td>81601, 82608, 84406, 84776, 85178, 88871, 90722, 90792, 94504, 95316, 95991, 96115, 96343, 96396</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relate 3C to Mission - 3CM</strong></td>
<td>81601, 83309, 84406, 84776, 85178, 87210, 88318, 88871, 95543, 95991, 96115, 99536</td>
<td>85330, 94698, 95316, 96343, 96396</td>
<td>83309, 84406, 84776, 84853, 85178, 85928, 87210, 88871, 90117, 90722, 91400, 94698, 95543, 95991, 98414</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Understand Definition of Culture - C</strong></td>
<td>83309, 84406, 84776, 85178, 87210, 88318, 88871, 90722, 90792, 91400, 94698, 95543, 96343, 99536</td>
<td>85330, 90792, 95991, 96396</td>
<td>83309, 84406, 84776, 84853, 85178, 85928, 87210, 88871, 90117, 90722, 91400, 98414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicate across Cultures – CC</strong></td>
<td>95543</td>
<td></td>
<td>90722, 95543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understand Role of Culture in Behavior – CB</strong></td>
<td>82608, 83309, 85330, 85928, 90117, 90792, 95991</td>
<td>81601, 81705, 82252, 84406, 84776, 84853, 85178, 85677, 87210, 88318, 90722, 91400, 94504, 94698, 95316, 95543, 96115, 96343, 96396, 98414, 99536</td>
<td>88871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recognize Negative Role of Bias in 3C – BC</strong></td>
<td>82608, 83309, 85330, 85928, 90117, 90792, 95991</td>
<td>82608, 83309, 85330, 90117, 90792</td>
<td>81601, 81705, 82252, 84406, 84776, 84853, 85178, 85677, 85928, 87210, 88318, 88871, 90722, 91400, 94504, 94698, 95316, 95543, 95991, 96115, 96343, 96396, 98414, 99536</td>
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<td><strong>IDI Development Score</strong></td>
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<td><strong>IDI Perception Score</strong></td>
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<td>82608, 83309, 85330, 90117, 90792</td>
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<td>81601, 81705, 82252, 82608, 84776, 85677, 99536</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Using the data in Table 5, the study next determined the relationship between the IDI developmental and perception scores and the SBA for each of the U.S. Army cultural understanding standards by comparing these scores with the coded SBA responses that corresponded to the IDI scales. It did this by noting the quantity of individual coded statements on the IDI's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity scale for each student, as well as that student's overall SBA response to determine how the SBA results compared with the IDI developmental and perception scores for each of the individual cultural understanding standards. This information appears in Table 6.
Table 6
Aggregate Comparison of IDI Scores and SBA Codes by Cultural Understanding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>IDI-DS &lt; SBA</th>
<th>IDI-DS = SBA</th>
<th>IDI-DS &gt; SBA</th>
<th>IDI-PS &lt; SBA</th>
<th>IDI-PS = SBA</th>
<th>IDI-PS &gt; SBA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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For the standard “Recognize Cultural Differences” (CD), this analysis revealed that IDI developmental scores (IDI-DS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results.
for twelve of the twenty-five students (48%), equivalent for eight of them (32%), and higher for five of them (20%). It also revealed that IDI perception scores (IDI-PS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for two of the twenty-five students (8%), equivalent for eight of them (32%), and higher for fifteen of them (60%). This trend aligns with the pattern revealed in the comparison of overall IDI and SBA results discussed earlier in the study and encapsulated by Table 4.

For the standard “Appreciate Different Cultural Norms” (CN), this analysis revealed that IDI developmental scores (IDI-DS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for eleven of the twenty-four students (46%), equivalent for seven of them (29%), and higher for six of them (25%). It also revealed that IDI perception scores (IDI-PS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for two of the twenty-four students (8%), equivalent for seven of them (32%), and higher for fifteen of them (60%). This trend aligns with the pattern revealed in the comparison of overall IDI and SBA results discussed earlier in the study and encapsulated by Table 4.

For the standard “Anticipate Intercultural Challenges” (IC), this analysis revealed that both IDI developmental scores (IDI-DS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results (100%). It also revealed that both IDI perception scores (IDI-PS) tended to be equivalent to the coded SBA results (100%). This standard lacked adequate responses to determine a pattern or trend.

For the standard “Increase Cultural Knowledge” (CK), this analysis revealed that IDI developmental scores (IDI-DS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for one of the six students (17%), equivalent for one of them (17%), and higher for four of them (66%). It also revealed that IDI perception scores (IDI-PS) tended to be equivalent
for one of the six students (17%), and higher for five of them (83%). This standard also lacked enough responses to constitute a meaningful pattern.

For the standard “Relate 3C to the Mission” (3CM), this analysis revealed that IDI developmental scores (IDI-DS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for seven of the eighteen students (39%), equivalent for ten of them (55%), and higher for one of them (6%). It also revealed that IDI perception scores (IDI-PS) tended to be equivalent for eight of the six responses (33%), and higher for twelve of them (67%). This trend nearly aligns with the pattern revealed in the comparison of overall IDI and SBA results discussed earlier in the study and encapsulated by Table 4. In the comparison of the IDI-DS score with the SBA responses, the most frequent result was equivalency at the minimization level. This does not align exactly with the general trend of lower IDI-DS scores, but it does align with the emphasis that USMA places on mission accomplishment discussed in the initial analysis of SBA patterns.

For the standard “Understand the Definition of Culture” (C), this analysis revealed that IDI developmental scores (IDI-DS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for eleven of the twenty-four students (46%), equivalent for eight of them (33%), and higher for five of them (21%). It also revealed that IDI perception scores (IDI-PS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for two of the twenty-four students (8%), equivalent for seven of them (29%), and higher for fifteen of them (63%). This trend aligns with the pattern revealed in the comparison of overall IDI and SBA results discussed earlier in the study and encapsulated by Table 4.

For the standard “Communicate Across Cultures” (CC), this analysis revealed that one IDI developmental score (IDI-DS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results
(50%) and one equivalent to it (50%). It also revealed that one IDI perception score (IDI-PS) tended to be equivalent to the coded SBA results (50%) and one higher than it (50%). This standard did not generate enough responses to establish a pattern.

For the standard “Understand the Role of Culture in Behavior” (CB), this analysis revealed that IDI developmental scores (IDI-DS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for eight of the twenty-one students (38%), equivalent for six of them (29%), and higher for seven of them (33%). It also revealed that IDI perception scores (IDI-PS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for one of the twenty-one students (5%), equivalent for six of them (28%), and higher for fourteen of them (67%). This trend aligns with the pattern revealed in the comparison of overall IDI and SBA results discussed earlier in the study and encapsulated by Table 4.

For the standard “Recognize the Negative Role of Bias in 3C” (BC), this analysis revealed that IDI developmental scores (IDI-DS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for six of the nine students (67%), equivalent for two of them (22%), and higher for one of them (11%). It also revealed that IDI perception scores (IDI-PS) tended to be lower than the coded SBA results for one of the nine students (11%), equivalent for five of them (56%), and higher for three of them (33%). This standard did not evoke enough responses to generate a trend.

For responses indicating “Denial” (D), which is evidence of not addressing culture at all, this analysis revealed that IDI developmental scores (IDI-DS) tended to be equivalent to the coded SBA results for the seven relevant responses (14%), and higher for six of them (86%). It also revealed that all seven of the IDI perception scores (IDI-PS) tended to be higher than the coded SBA results (100%). Not enough responses
indicated a level of denial to establish a pattern. The fact that the stated reason for the SBA was to place the respondents in an intercultural situation may explain the low number of denial responses, because the problem posed dealt overtly and inherently with culture.

As was the case with other analyses involving the SBA, this data does not lend itself to true quantitative analysis, but it does show some trends. The pattern revealed by the comparison of those individual cultural understanding standards that garnered enough responses to be meaningful mirrors the general one: The students' IDI developmental scores tended to be lower than their responses to the SBA indicated while the IDI perception scores tended to be higher than the SBA responses indicated. Reasons for the consistent pattern may mirror those of the previously discussed general results, and consistency in the general and specific results may help validate both instruments' utility in assessing student 3C with respect to the standards used by the U.S. Army.

The one frequently evoked cultural understanding standard that did not exactly mirror the general trend was that of 3CM, for which the highest concentration was at the minimization level when compared to IDI-DS scores. The nature of the standard itself, which puts mission accomplishment at the fore, may account for this pattern. Mission accomplishment occupies a paramount position at West Point, and cadets are trained early and continuously that other considerations are subordinate to it. Thus, it is not surprising that any standard dealing with mission accomplishment would demonstrate a high level of minimization.
Focus Group Results

This study employed three multiple-category focus groups of five cadets each to compare student attitudes towards the IDI and SBA in the cognitive and affective domains. It used the focus groups as one means to obtain student feedback on the 3C assessment instruments from a variety of angles to determine their validity, reliability, and feasibility for use at USMA. Specifically, this study used two focus groups from the senior class with experience abroad and one focus group from the junior class that had just returned from a SAP. All focus groups consisted of a mixture of immersion locations to avoid creating groups composed entirely of close friends, who typically study the same languages, within any one group. However, it did group the participants within graduation year cohorts to maintain some homogeneity and address the powerful dynamic of an internal “rank” structure by class at USMA.

The focus groups were scheduled to last one hour, but tended to run about fifteen minutes longer than the allotted time. As a result of two pilot focus groups, which consistently ran well over an hour, the number of questions addressed by the groups was reduced from fifteen to nine. The nine remaining focus group questions, which were sequenced and included one opening question, one introductory question, two transitional questions, three key questions, and two ending questions, appear as Appendix C. The focus group moderator used the sequenced questions in verbatim form as an interview guide in a standardized, open-ended format. The focus groups occurred in a conference room in USMA’s Learning Resource Center and the participants were offered light refreshments. The study sought to provide a thick description (Patton, 2002) of student attitudes towards the 3C assessment instruments via a content analysis of the focus group
transcripts, which appear as Appendix G, to seek trends and patterns and provide answers to the following guiding questions:

1. How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

2. How valid is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

3. How reliable is the IDI for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

4. How reliable is the SBA for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

5. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the IDI for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?

6. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the SBA for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?

This study used the focus group questions themselves as an analytical framework for the content analysis (Patton, 2002). After an initial review of the focus group transcripts, the analysis included the following steps: a second reading noting convergence of ideas or attitudes, a third reading noting regularities or repetitive words and phrases within each major idea or attitude, and then the assignment of codes to words and phrases with the attributes of internal homogeneity, or consistency within codes, and external heterogeneity, or differentiation between codes (Strydom, 2008). Repeated reviews eliminated some of the codes originally assigned and consolidation of others that
lacked external heterogeneity. The unit of analysis used in this process was the
individual student. The coded focus group transcripts appear at Appendix H.

In general, responses to questions that related directly to the cadets’ experience
generated the longest and most detailed answers, while those of a more abstract nature
were brief and, for some students, generated no reply at all. Thus, questions two and
three, which asked the cadets to recall their experience, generated more categories and
more subsets than question four, which asked how the Army could identify the skills they
used in the two previous questions. For those questions which generated great
discussion, this study only assigned codes that were present in all three focus groups,
while it dropped this requirement for the questions with sparse answers and looked for
multiple students in at least two of the three focus groups for coding purposes.

The focus groups opened with a question regarding the cadets’ previous
experience abroad: “What is your previous experience abroad?” The study did not code
responses to the question, as it was administrative in nature and the replies did not
generate any discernable pattern or theme. It did reveal that the cadets participated in a
semester-abroad program in a variety of locations: two in the People’s Republic of China,
one in Chile, three in Egypt, three in France, one in Jordan, one in Mexico, two in
Morocco, and two in Russia. Thus, in spite of the voluntary nature of focus group
participation, the study was able to get students who spent time abroad in a variety of
locations and cultures.

The second question sought information about the cultural context and challenges
facing the students: “What was your most challenging intercultural encounter while
abroad?” Responses to this question converged around four categories: setting,
metaphysics, cultural difference, and adaptation. Each category, in turn, included a set of repetitive words, phrases, or ideas expressed by multiple students that were coded and tracked. Examples of these appear below.

In the category of setting, a frequently evoked item was food, which appeared in six student replies on fourteen occasions. An example from focus group one reads, “We had a family dinner with a traditional Jordanian dish called Mansar where everybody stands around the table and you first wash your hands and then eat the rice and beef with your hands and you’re really close together, you know.” Another from focus group two reads, “I thought it was going to be really cool, but when we got there his mother had cooked all this chicken for us and there was tons and tons of food.” Focus group three also included an example: “Being in a French military setting was a little different, too, because they are like us but have these differences like how important meals are.” The repeated evocation of food is an indicator of its importance as a manifestation of culture.

Another repeated item in the setting category for question two was family, mentioned by eight students on sixteen occasions. An example from focus group one reads, “It was just a small restaurant made out of, like, cardboard and plywood boards and the food smelled good so we stopped in and then the whole family came out to help cook the meal.” One from focus group two states, “I made a really good Egyptian friend and he had, like, nine brothers and sisters and they were all living in a little, like, apartment I guess.” Lastly, focus group three contains the following reference to family: “I was invited, um, to this Sheik’s house who was a friend of the family of one of the guys I was in school with, and it was pretty intense.” The repeated references to family,
both in the context of direct interaction and in passing, serve as another indicator of cultural context for the semester-abroad participants.

A third repeated idea in the setting category was time, which was brought up by seven students on ten occasions. An example from focus group one states, “There were, like, kids running around, and they started talking to us and they wanted to play games with us and, like, three hours later we were still there and we were there playing soccer in the dirt by the side of the highway.” Focus group two included the following statement regarding time: “It was, you know, really uncomfortable for me to be over there, in addition to the fact that the brother, he told us that we would be; that we were just going to stay there for a little while.” In focus group three, time appears in this passage: “I couldn’t get over how long they could talk about it, it’s like ‘don’t they have anything else to discuss but who is going to heaven and who isn’t?’” Time, then, occupies an important place in the cultural setting in which cadets lived during their semester abroad.

The last item in the setting category for question two was appearance, which was mentioned by four students on seven occasions. In focus group one, a student stated, “And it was just, like, this shock that there were people of a different color out there or who spoke a completely different language.” An example from focus group two states, “His brother was this pretty devout guy, like he wore a beard that was pretty long and he didn’t shave it like most of the other guys we interacted with.” Focus group three included the following: “It’s, like, everyone is trying to dress American and they do rap and stuff like that.” Appearance, in the guises of skin color, grooming, and dress was another part of the cultural setting noted by the students.
In the category of metaphysics only one recurring theme occurred in the focus groups: religion. Religion was cited by five students on thirteen occasions in question two. An example from focus group one is oblique: "...the head is really sacred and they pulled out the eyes and put it in your hands and you were supposed to eat it, so that was really one of those unique experiences where you really feel part of the culture." One from focus group two is more direct: "He was trying to tell us, like, 'you guys can't go to heaven because you're not Muslim' and so I was trying to, the big thing I was trying to explain was, you know, you believe that because it is in the Qu'ran and, like the reason you have to believe that Islam is better." A student in focus group three remarked on religion: "I wasn't used to talking about religious things, but I knew it was important to them so I hung with it." Religion, in its various forms, is an example of a metaphysical manifestation of culture recognized by the students on repeated occasions.

The next category that stemmed from the response to question two was that of cultural differences, and the first repeating idea was the concept of manners, or polite behavior. Six focus group participants brought up the issue on nine occasions, to include the following from focus group one: "The busses were, um, just a different thing than I was used to because if you were polite or tried to stay in a line you would never get anywhere." Focus group two included the following example: "Once I went to this mosque with my friends and I thought it was going to be all serious but they were, like joking around and laughing there." And focus group three produced this statement: "There is no such thing as personal space and there is a lot of pushing and shoving to get a seat and lines are a joke there and people spit on the ground and, you know, it's all so
different than here.” Cultural differences, then, were manifest to semester abroad participants in part by differences in concepts of manners and polite behavior.

Another item evoked in question two by students that fit into the category of cultural differences was the concept of personal space, which was cited eleven times by five focus group participants. In group one, a student remarked, “We were all standing in a line with signs that said ‘hug me,’ and they were, like, really hesitant to hug me and show warmth and they were hesitant to even come up to you and, like, say hi or to touch you or shake your hand.” Focus group two contained the following example of intimacy while dining: “So we sat at a table, me and my friend Akhmed, and, like, his father and two of his brothers, um, and felt like I should be eating a lot and that they were really trying to impress me.” Lastly, focus group three included the statement, “If you were not Chinese they would touch your hair and it could make you really uncomfortable at first.” Differing ideas of personal space and intimacy were another way cadets noted cultural differences during their semester-abroad experiences.

Language was the last manifestation of cultural differences noted by a critical mass of focus group participants in the second question, noted by six students on ten occasions. An example from focus group one is, “I mean, I thought I was doing pretty good just greeting them in French and all, but he was really pissed off about it.” In focus group two the following appeared: “Like, trying to defend myself in Arabic, that was hard.” A participant in focus group three stated, “We spent hours talking to each other in, like, broken Arabic and English.” The repeated evocation of language as an example of cultural difference indicates that it made an impression upon this group of immersion experience participants.
The last category that converged from question two was the cadets' reaction to encountering a foreign culture, and the first manifestation of that reaction was being surprised, shocked, or impressed by the difference. Twelve of the fifteen focus group participants remarked on their reaction on twenty occasions, including this one from focus group one: “We made a lot of really good friends while abroad and, especially in Jordan, um, some great friends and they always invite you over to their houses for dinner, which is really different than in the U.S.” In focus group two, a student stated, “I couldn’t understand why our culture was that way and French culture wasn’t.” An example from focus group three follows: “In Russia I was amazed at the history and how much the U.S. has affected their culture.” These examples show one form of cadet reaction to the intercultural encounter.

A second reaction evident from the focus group transcripts for question two was discomfort, mentioned by six students on eight occasions. Focus group one produced the following example of discomfort on the part of the host culture being overcome by peer pressure: “Um, but that was, like, once when we got started if one person would come up and say hi and come and hug somebody or [laughs] be forced to come hug somebody then everybody would want to hug and have pictures taken and all this stuff.” A response from focus group two was more direct: “You know these two things together just made me really uncomfortable and when we got back here to our room, to our apartment, that night I just pretty much vented.” An example from focus group three follows: “I had never been around any fundamentalist types so it was pretty weird for me and all.” Repeated evocations of discomfort by the focus group participants are manifestations of one reaction to the intercultural encounter.
The last reaction which produced a discernable pattern in responses to question two was a sense of adaptation, which was mentioned by nine focus group participants on thirteen occasions. Focus group one furnished the following example: “One of my friends had me over to his house for it with his whole family and we all stood around the table and I was trying to talk in Arabic and everybody is sitting there eating and it was one of those experiences where you just really feel part of the culture.” A student in focus group two stated, “I thought that was an interesting cultural breakthrough.” In focus three, a participant indicated, “It’s amazing how much you can communicate if you try and we got on some pretty deep subjects.” These examples of adaptation represent another form of reaction to an intercultural setting and are one of the goals of the immersion program itself.

The third focus group question sought information about the skills the cadets used, or might have used, to negotiate the intercultural encounter evoked above: “Think back to that encounter: If it was a successful encounter, what kind of skills did you use to negotiate it? If it was not successful, what skills were you lacking or do you wish you had?” Responses to this question converged around three categories: attitudes, skills, and means of initiating an intercultural encounter. Each category, in turn, included a set of repetitive words, phrases, or ideas expressed by multiple students that were coded and tracked. Examples of these appear below.

The first coded indicator for attitudes was that of open-mindedness, which was mentioned by nine students on twenty occasions. In focus group one a student implied open-mindedness, stating, “You also can’t judge someone else’s culture so just accept it.” An example from focus group two was more direct: “You can’t just think they are, like,
terrible, I mean you have to know where they are coming from and also just keep an open mind and realize there’s a reason for everything.” In a statement similar to that in the first group, a student in focus group three stated, “It’s, like, you have to keep your own culture but learn to appreciate theirs.” These examples show one attitude, open-mindedness, the immersion participants thought was important during their intercultural encounter.

A second attitude mentioned by cadets in all three focus groups in response to question three was flexibility, which four students each mentioned on one occasion. In focus group one a student states, “I guess we do the same thing and by having the patience to realize that, hey, we really do come from two different worlds and you have to adapt to the situation.” Focus group two produced the following example: “I think one thing that helps is sort just playing dumb, like being able to just go with the flow and don’t, you know, kind of like you said, don’t take people’s point of view as everything.” Focus group three’s contribution is similar: “What works in China works in China and if we tried to do things there the American way it might not work at all. You just have to go with it, I guess.” Although this trait was only evoked four times, the fact that it appeared independently in all three focus groups is important to note and it is worthy of inclusion in the attribute category.

The second category that converged from the responses to question three was skills, and its first manifestation was logic, or reasoning, to place culture in context to enable adaptation to it. Five focus group participants from all three focus groups made a total of nine references to reasoning, either directly or obliquely. This entry from focus group one is an example of the latter: “I think patience was a really big thing, um, for us
in China just because, um, like it just kind of goes back to the whole thing, like they are not used to dealing with foreigners and they assume, like, because everything they have done is the way they've done it they all assume that they are the ones that are right and I guess we do the same thing and by having the patience to realize that, hey, we really do come from two different worlds and you have to adapt to the situation.” A more direct reference comes from focus group two: “I realize that there are certain things with the culture that are common and then are certain things where people are going to vary on their opinions just based on individuals.” An example from focus group three follows: “What works in China works in China and if we tried to do things there the American way it might not work at all.” These attempts to put the foreign culture in a context and compartmentalize the information represent the use of cognitive skills to deal with an intercultural encounter.

A second skill mentioned by students with some frequency in question three was proficiency in a foreign language, which was mentioned by seven students on ten occasions. The first example, from focus group one, is by implication: “Like, you need to be open-minded and able to, you know, express yourself without offending anyone.” This task would be impossible without some level of proficiency in a foreign language, something which the semester-abroad participants take for granted. The example from focus group two is more direct: “I mean, a lot of the students from regular universities didn’t have the same experiences as we did and they weren’t there for the same reasons, and so their Arabic wasn’t as good and they weren’t as serious about learning things.” Focus group three furnished the following example, which overtly ties foreign language proficiency to intercultural adaptation: “I don’t see how you can adapt if you don’t speak
some of the language because it’s such a big part of the culture and who they are.” Thus, proficiency in foreign language is a skill deemed important enough for repeated mention in the context of dealing with intercultural encounters.

A third skill evoked by question three that the focus groups revealed was employment of a sense of humor, which was mentioned by four students on seven occasions. An example from focus group one follows: “I think like he was saying earlier, with the meal of rice and meat: just being open to try new things and having a good sense of humor, like being able to joke around about stuff, really helps with just making friends.” Focus group two included the statement, “I would say a sense of humor was huge in everything.” A student in focus group three laughingly exclaimed, “Sometimes all you can do is laugh at a situation!” Using a sense of humor, then, is one skill the immersion participants on the focus groups employed to deal with their interaction in a foreign culture.

The last skill that focus group participants mentioned enough to detect a pattern was that of observation, which four students mentioned on six occasions. Focus group one provided an oblique example: “Being outgoing and curious, too, because you won’t get anything out of it if you are always hiding in your room.” The only way to satisfy curiosity is by observation and enquiry, implying the former in this case. Focus group two was more direct: “I think like it was said earlier, paying attention to small details about people and knowing that if they do certain things there’s a reason behind it.” Similarly, a cadet in focus group three stated, “That means, like, watching and observing and talking to them so you can see their point of view.” The ability and desire to observe,
therefore, is one of the skills that immersion participants emphasized in the focus groups for question three.

The last category that converged from focus group question three was that of the means by which one can have an intercultural encounter, and the necessity of forcing oneself to get out into the culture was mentioned by seven cadets on eleven occasions. An example from focus group one stated, “And it’s like, by putting yourself out there you’ll get a lot more out of it rather than just kind of shrinking back and saying, ‘Oh, I’m just an observer.’” One of the focus group two participants expressed it this way: “I think you also need to make sure you get out of the dorm and away from other American students.” Focus group three furnished this statement: “If you aren’t out there mixing it up some you’ll never, like, figure out where other cultures are coming from.” Thus, gaining exposure to foreign cultures by forcing oneself to make contact with them was a pattern that emerged from the focus group’s response to question three.

Another means of getting exposure to a foreign culture identified repeatedly by the focus groups in question three was the establishment of relationships. Five students remarked on relationships or friends in six instances. An example from focus group one of a general remark about friendship follows: “I think like he was saying earlier, with the meal of rice and meat: just being open to try new things and having a good sense of humor, like being able to joke around about stuff, really helps with just making friends.” More closely tied to the idea of relationships and intercultural adaptation was this statement from focus group two: “I remember there were several times when I was traveling by myself and, I don’t know, I’d meet some random person like some shepherd or something. The conversations could end up going for a couple of hours starting with
'hi, how are you,' then 'why are you some random American guy walking in the mountains?' Once you got past that it was always the war, and Bush, and, um, stuff like that and religion, which came up constantly.” Lastly, the example from focus group three overtly makes the connection, “It’s not so much a bunch of do’s and don’ts but you have to make a personal connection with people.” Exposure to a foreign culture via the establishment of relationships, then, was an important consideration for the immersion program participants in the focus groups.

The fourth question sought ideas on assessing intercultural competence in a general way: “What are some ways the Army could identify and measure these skills?” Student responses to this question were shorter, and fewer students responded to it, possibly because it is abstract and didn’t relate directly to their own experiences as the previous questions did. Responses to this question converged around two categories: experiential and institutional means. Each category, in turn, included a set of repetitive words, phrases, or ideas expressed by multiple students that were coded and tracked. Examples of these appear below.

In the category of experiential testing, multiple responses to question four indicated the importance of direct observation of an intercultural encounter as a means to identify and measure skills in this area. Five students pointed this out a total of twelve times in the focus groups. In focus group one a student stated, “I don’t know, it’s a hard thing short of actually observing them in another culture and seeing how people deal with it.” A participant in focus group two suggested, “I think maybe you judge based on, maybe, how prior AIAD’s [advanced individual academic development] went.” Focus group three furnished the following assertion: “I think you have to get the soldiers out of
their comfort zone and observe how they do. The way to do that is to get them to interact with some other culture and watch them.” Thus, direct observation or evaluation of an actual intercultural encounter represents one means for identifying and measuring intercultural competence, according to these students.

The second category for question four was institutional means of identifying the relevant skills for cultural adaptation. The only one to appear in multiple focus groups was an interview process or scenario that attempted to elicit the respondent’s level of intercultural competence, which was cited seven times for five students in all three focus groups. Focus group one supplied the following: “You know, kind of like a knowledge test and if you want to measure it. So, if you are going to this country here’s a list of customs, like, ‘what would you do?’ blah, blah, blah, blah.” This idea is similar to the scenario-based assessment at the heart of this study. A student in focus group two remarked, “So, there should be a cutoff for GPA [grade point average] but the interview should have a lot of weight for semester abroad because the personality of the person is probably more important than, you know, the grades. An example from focus group three was, “Role players are a good idea, I guess, um, especially if they are really from another culture and are told to act naturally like they would at home.” Also considered, but only by individual focus groups, were cultural knowledge tests and student grade point average, which was controversial.

The fifth question directly addressed the assessment instruments at the heart of this study: How well do you think the IDI and SBA captured your willingness and ability to adapt to an intercultural situation? This question, like the previous one, generated shorter and fewer replies than numbers two and three. Responses to this question
converged around four categories: IDI validity, IDI reliability, SBA validity, and the utility of both instruments. Each category, in turn, included a set of repetitive words, phrases, or ideas expressed by multiple students that were coded and tracked. Examples of these appear below.

In the category of IDI validity, a pattern of remarks emerged indicating that the instrument was too abstract to accurately measure the phenomenon of intercultural competence, according to the focus group participants. Four students made eight remarks in two of the three focus groups concerning this phenomenon. A student in focus group two asked, “I remember taking the test and looking at some of the questions, like, what are they trying to say?” One in focus group three commented, “The one test with the bubbles was really hard to understand because it was just your opinion not based on anything real. I don’t, um, see how they can rate using something like that.” These statements and others like them demonstrate a pattern that the focus group participants tended to view the test as too abstract to be valid.

Also converging on the category of IDI validity were comments regarding the consistent difference between IDI perceived and actual scores, which tended to support the validity of the instrument in the eyes of the focus group participants. One student in each focus group remarked on the phenomenon without prompting. A focus group one participant noted, “It shows you how you perceive yourself and how you actually are.” In focus group two, a student stated, “When you look at the difference between the perception and result scores, uh, I bet a lot of people have that similar pattern: thinking that we’re open but maybe we might not really be.” An example from focus group three follows: “I thought the difference between the perceived and real score was interesting,
but I the, um, the questions didn’t really fit the subject.” Although the number of times students expressed this sentiment was relatively low, the fact that they did so in all three groups and made direct assertions about the perception/reality gap shows that it made an impression.

The last factor to include in the IDI validity category is the extent to which it offered useful insight to the students. In this it generally received high marks, with nine students making fifteen comments on it. A focus group one participant stated, “I like the self-knowledge you get from the test.” One from focus group two was a bit more circumspect: “I think it’s interesting to know where you are on the scale, but one of the things I think is more interesting is that they told you you were, like, going on this semester abroad and then you made it what you made it.” Focus group three furnished this comment: “Even though it’s just a number if you, you know, explain what they mean it would be a good way to see yourself in that area.” The immersion program participants in the focus groups, therefore, appeared to agree that the IDI offered valuable insights into their intercultural competence and thereby offers some support to its validity.

Student responses to question five also generated patterns of comments in the category of the IDI’s reliability, or ability to consistently measure intercultural competence. Comments on this phenomenon tended to be less charitable than on the IDI’s validity and centered on the variability of conditions surrounding the test: student mood, knowledge of the test’s importance, length of time elapsed between the end of the immersion program and the test, etc. Five students in focus groups two and three remarked on this phenomenon a total of eleven times. A student in the former group noted, “I know a lot of times my perception of where I am on a scale has changed and
fluctuated since I got back because I know when we hit the ground coming in to the States we were, like, ‘Oh, thank God we’re on American soil.’” The latter group furnished the following: “I mean, there are too many things that it, uh, didn’t take in to account like personality traits or just what’s going on that day.” Although this sentiment was not present in focus group one, the number and assertiveness of the statements in the other make it a relevant data point describing the dim view of some regarding the reliability of the IDI.

The next category for question five addresses the validity of the SBA, starting with student comments that it is too abstract. Five students from all three focus groups made a total of eight remarks to this effect, starting with this one from focus group one: “The scenario thing was too hypothetical for me to give a good answer.” A focus group two participant was somewhat more positive but noted room for improvement: “I think how you, like, answered the scenario one gave a pretty good idea about someone’s approach but I think you could ask a few, even better questions about it.” Lastly, an example from focus group three indicates, “Same with the scenario: there were too many missing pieces to really answer the question.” A pattern of questioning the SBA’s validity due to concerns over its lack of detail and context, therefore, emerged from the focus groups.

However, in the same category cadets also expressed positive views of the insight the SBA offered, enhancing its perceived validity. Five students from all three focus groups made a total of seven remarks on the insight offered by the SBA. Typical of these was the following example from focus group one: “I think it’s useful, sir, but I think it’s how much the individual puts weight on it.” A student in focus group two remarked, “I
think how you, like, answered the scenario one gave a pretty good idea about someone’s approach but I think you could ask a few, even better questions about it.” This is an example of how the same sentence can carry two different, if not dichotomous, meanings. Focus group three’s example was less equivocal, asserting, “I think the scenario is better than the IDI because it shows you more about what you might do in a real situation, but the IDI was pretty good, too.” Student attitudes toward the SBA’s validity were mixed, then, with responses in this category alternately complaining that it was too abstract and praising the insights it offered to those who took it seriously.

Student responses to question five did not generate patterns of comments in the category of the SBA’s reliability, or ability to consistently measure intercultural competence, except for a few remarks in focus group one. Students remarked on the effect that the context and timing of the test had on how one might complete the task, casting some doubt in their minds on the reliability of the instrument. However, this study did not code these because they appeared in only one of the focus groups, and then only in passing.

The last category in question five that converged was the area of the general utility of either or both instruments, which generated eleven responses from nine students in all three focus groups. A student in focus group one agreed with a classmate on this point, stating: “Yeah, I would say that’s pretty accurate.” A participant in focus group two commented on their use as a pre/post assessment: “Then it would be, like, it is with the language test and it would definitely be beneficial.” A student in focus group three remarked, “The scenario was good for a military audience, especially if you could, like, see other cadets’ answers the way we can in the company leadership website.
The sixth question addressed the suitability of the assessment instruments for a military audience: Question 6: How relevant do you think the IDI and SBA were to a military audience such as that at West Point? This question, like the previous two, generated shorter and fewer replies than numbers two and three with the exception of focus group two, which had a lively discussion on it. Responses to this question converged around one category: level of applicability of the instruments. This category included a set of repetitive words, phrases, or ideas expressed by multiple students that were coded and tracked. Examples of these appear below.

The first level of applicability for the IDI and SBA that converged into this category for question six was the individual. Six students in focus groups two and three mentioned the individual officer or soldier a total of twelve times. An example from focus group two follows: “This is good knowledge about yourself, like, what I’m learning about in MS [military science] right now, this could be a way to see where you’re at, you know, in your cultural awareness.” A participant in focus group three stated, “The, um, IDI helped you know yourself while the scenario tested your decision-making.” A critical mass of immersion program participants, therefore, felt that the 3C assessment instruments were relevant to individual soldiers.

The second level of applicability for the IDI and SBA that appeared as a theme or pattern was that of the military unit. Six students in focus groups two and three mentioned the utility of the 3C assessment instruments at the level of the military unit a total of fourteen times. A participant in focus group two stated, “If you as a platoon leader, it depends on your branch, could give everyone in your unit this test it could help you decide which squad leader you are going to use to go out and talk to people and
which one I’ll leave back in the rear area to do the defense thing.” Focus group three furnished this negative example: “I think both are irrelevant because the military has to be culturally sensitive with the wars we are fighting right now.” This remark produced the following riposte, still addressing the unit level: “Yeah, but I think the scenario is a good tool for a commander to see how his soldiers will react to a strange situation.” The general consensus, with the exception of the one student in focus group three, was that the IDI and SBA were useful for military units.

The last level of applicability that appeared as a repetitive pattern was the general applicability of the SBA and IDI to any audience, military or not. Five students in all three focus groups addressed this level on a total of ten occasions, and focus group one remained at this level for its entire, brief, discussion. Typical of the comments from this group was this one: “I think it’s relevant to any person. I mean for us, we couldn’t even say we were from West Point when we were over there, but we still, of course, had all the rules and stuff, but it’s still like we have to act like we’re just normal people.” A participant in focus group two commented on the idea of using the instruments as a discussion starter for 3C, “Some people don’t like to see numbers and all, and they might just sit there and not say a word, so I don’t know if that would be good.” Focus group three furnished the following example: “I don’t think the audience matters too much because we all have to face different cultures no matter where we work.” Focus group participants tended to see the utility of the IDI and SBA for the general, versus military, population in their replies to question six.

The seventh question addressed the feasibility of the assessment instruments for use at USMA, where time is a critical resource, given the hectic lives its students lead. It
asked, "Did the IDI and SBA place an unreasonable demand on your time?" Students answered this question in a perfunctory way, since it was a yes or no one, and the unanimous negative response in all three focus groups was via body language: a shaking of the head. This represented the only theme to emerge from this question, although the question did generate some remarks. One student from focus group one simply replied, "No, it was easy." A participant in focus group two joked about getting out of unpleasant parade duties to take the test, "We got out of graduation week parades for it [laughs]." In focus group three, the replies such as this one were less generous but still indicated that the test was not too long: "It didn't take too long but the questions were similar and repetitive." Therefore, students did not find that the SBA and IDI were too much of a burden.

The eighth question was a more general one to solicit advice from the participants with respect to the IDI and SBA: "Given the importance that the Army is placing on intercultural competence and the fact that it is a stated goal in Educating Future Army Officers for a Changing World, what advice would you give the Dean about the IDI and SBA?" Responses to this question converged around two categories: employment of the assessment instruments as a developmental tool in a general way and employing them to enhance USMA's immersion experiences and academic program. These categories included a set of repetitive words, phrases, or ideas expressed by multiple students that were coded and tracked. Examples of these appear below.

The most frequently repeated words and phrases for this question converged on the use of the IDI and SBA as developmental tools for the individual student. Twelve students in all three focus groups mentioned this topic on twenty occasions.
group one this discussion started with a discussion of the relative merits of the IDI and SBA as developmental tools. A participant in focus group one emphasized the importance of providing interpretive feedback on the IDI for it to be of value, stating, “I think that is why you would have to provide individual feedback so that it’s in your head to take it seriously. I think that at some point in your cultural experience you will think back and remember that you did this and you would notice, like, ‘I guess I really am in denial’ and that sort of thing. Um, but I think it would be useful at some point.” A student in focus group two noted the same thing responding to another student’s emphasis on interpretation of the IDI’s results: “So you are constantly evolving and you can see how you are moving on the scale and being, like, more tolerant.” In focus group three, one of the participants remarked, “If they give us feedback on the IDI it’s good. We would need more than the score, though, because it is hard to interpret and just knowing you’re in, like, denial, is meaningless unless someone shows you what that means and how you can move on.” Immersion program participants, therefore, tended to agree that the SBA and IDI were useful as tools for individual development.

In the second category for question eight, one trend that this study coded was the utility of the 3C assessment instruments for enhancing USMA’s immersion and academic programs. Five students in all three focus groups brought up this topic on seven occasions. A participant in focus group one remarked, “I’d keep the test and use it with the DLPT (Defense Language Proficiency Test). I know, um, our language improves the more we are on the ground so there’s no reason our cultural scores shouldn’t be better too.” Focus group two provided this example, which simultaneously addresses the developmental aspect of the instruments and their association with immersion programs:
"I think it depends on how you use it. If you explain it early on and then discuss the results and you see, ‘Hey, I’m really bad according to this test in this one category,’ you can see just how you could be aware of that and then afterwards see if you were able to focus in on the particular area and move on the scale and, you know, affect that.” A respondent from focus group three offered a more direct answer: “I thought combining it with the immersion experience was good.” One pattern that emerged from question eight, then, was the efficacy of the IDI and SBA as a means to enhance USMA’s academic and immersion programs.

The last trend noted in the category of employing the 3C assessment instruments in conjunction with USMA’s immersion and academic programs was a warning to avoid using the results as mere quantitative data for grade point averages or internal data points. Six students from all three focus groups remarked on this topic a total of eight times. A student in focus group one commented on the quantitative nature of the IDI, “I think with the IDI it’s a little bit harder to gauge if it is accurate, if it really is, because we get a lot of standardized tests and a lot of people are, like, ‘it’s filling in bubbles.’ It’s like ‘check the box and kinda get it done.’” The student went on to explain how this is a result of “data hoarding” by USMA: “But, I mean, that’s the kind of responses – that’s how I feel sometimes because you get all kinds of assessments and tests but you never get results and it’s like ‘OK, so why do I take this seriously the next time I do it again?’” A participant in focus group two addressed the issue of using the results as part of a student’s grade point average, “With this test, sir, I don’t think you can put a grade on it: it shouldn’t become part of our GPA [grade point average].” Focus group three furnished the following reply: “I’d keep using the IDI, just make sure you, um, give feedback on it
and don't just keep the numbers somewhere.” Focus group participants, therefore, tended
to have a jaundiced view of the SBA and IDI’s use as statistical data or part of the
student’s grade point average.

The ninth, and last, question was even more general than its predecessor and was
designed to elicit any lingering thoughts the students had on the 3C assessment
instruments: “Our goal is to evaluate these two assessment tools for potential use here at
West Point. Is there anything we overlooked that you would like to add?” Unfortunately
focus group two ran out of time, so replies are limited to focus groups one and three. For
coding purposes, repeated words and phrases had to occur in both focus groups for
consideration by this study. Although this weakens the overall explanatory power of the
study for question nine, two mitigating factors exist. One is that some of data in previous
questions comes from two of the three focus groups in any event. The other is that this is
the last question, which only addresses the guiding questions in an oblique way.
Responses to this question converged around two categories: advice for USMA to
consider with the cadet experience in general, and advice concerning the content of
USMA’s academic program. These categories included a set of repetitive words,
phrases, or ideas expressed by multiple students that were coded and tracked. Examples
of these appear below.

The first category that converged for this question included advice by students on
the general cadet experience, and the only pattern that emerged from both focus groups in
this category was the importance of the immersion experience to their development. Four
students in two focus groups referred to this phenomenon a total of eleven times. A
participant in focus group one made a suggestion specifically addressed to the immersion
experience itself, stating, “I’d say staying with a host family instead of in an apartment or
dorm is really important. You just can’t learn as much language or culture if you are
always hanging around other Americans.” A student in focus group three spoke of the
immersion program more generally: “I think, like, the immersion experience has had a
bigger impact on me than anything here, including academics. The culture part was
especially important, more than the language. It helped me to figure out how to read in to
a situation and take someone else’s, um, point of view.” These statements and others like
them from focus groups one and three demonstrate the perceived impact of the
immersion experience on the cadets themselves.

The second category that emerged from both of the focus groups for question nine
was the relationship of foreign language to 3C, on which three students remarked a total
of six times. A participant in focus group one commented on attempts to separate the
two, stating, “But, I think that, just from my experiences, that language seems to be such
a part of the culture, uh, that I don’t know if you can, I guess you can measure the culture
part separately but to develop their ability to work with other cultures I think that the
ability; that having to learn the language is integral to that.” A student in focus group
three took a similar approach to the issue: “I don’t know, I think the language is what
helps you communicate and that is what makes the cultural part work. If I can’t
communicate I can’t get immersed, you know.” The tendency among the respondents
who commented on the relationship between these two focus groups, therefore, agreed
that they were inextricably linked.

The nine focus group questions were designed and sequenced to specifically
address the research guiding questions considered by this study:
1. How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

2. How valid is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

3. How reliable is the IDI for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

4. How reliable is the SBA for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

5. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the IDI for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?

6. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the SBA for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?

The convergence of categories and subsequent coding of key words and phrases that repeated in student discussions in the focus groups described above revealed some trends that will assist in answering these questions. The nine focus group questions included one opening question, one introductory question, two transitional questions, three key questions, and two ending questions (see Appendix C).

The opening question was administrative in nature and revealed that the cadets had been in immersion experiences in the People’s Republic of China, Chile, Egypt, France, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, and Russia. The introductory question, which asked about a memorable intercultural encounter, prompted lengthy student responses that converged into four categories: intercultural setting, metaphysics, cultural differences, and reactions to the intercultural encounter. In the first category, intercultural setting,
students evoked food, family, time, and appearance. In the second one, metaphysics, students focused on religion. In the third category, cultural differences, they noted manners, personal space, and language. Lastly, in the category of reactions to the intercultural encounter they expressed a mixture of discomfort and adaptation. This question evoked some responses related to the parameters of 3C and the affective domain.

Question three, the first transitional question, asked about the skills cadets used to cope with the encounter from the previous question. Responses to this converged around three categories: attitudes, skills, and the means by which one can gain exposure to a foreign culture. In the first category, attitudes, the themes of open-mindedness and flexibility recurred. In the second one, skills, students evoked the ability to reason, proficiency in a foreign language, employment of humor, and being observant. In the last category, gaining exposure to a foreign culture, students remarked on the importance of relationships and requirement to actively seek opportunities for intercultural encounters. This question furnished qualitative data relevant to the parameters of 3C in both the cognitive and affective domains, and the role of experiential education for teaching 3C.

Question four was the second transitional question, and it asked the students for ways the Army could identify and measure the skills evoked in question three. It produced two categories: experiential and institutional means. In the first category, student responses repeatedly turned to direct observation of an actual intercultural encounter and assessment of previous immersion experiences. In the second one, the recurring themes were the inefficacy of academic performance in measuring 3C, the possibility of employing some kind of test, and the utility of interviews and scenario-
based assessments. This question produced responses relevant to teaching and assessing 3C, as well as some support to the validity of SBA’s in general.

Question five was the first key question, and it specifically asked about the validity of the IDI and SBA. Responses to this question converged around four categories: the validity of the IDI, the reliability of the IDI, the validity of the SBA, and the utility of both 3C assessment instruments. Three themes emerged in the first category: Students tended to view the IDI as too abstract to have explanatory power, but they also indicated that it was effective at identifying the difference between perceived and actual 3C and noted that it offered good insight into the phenomenon. Commenting on the second category, the reliability of the IDI, students tended to emphasize the effect that the timing and context of the test could have on its results. As for the category of the validity of the SBA, students appeared to also view it as too abstract yet they appreciated the insight it offered them into their level of 3C. Lastly, a pattern of general acceptance of the general utility of both instruments for assessing 3C emerged in the fourth category. Responses to this question generally affirmed the validity of the SBA and IDI, with some caveats, but raised some questions about the latter’s reliability. It also addressed pedagogical approaches to and assessment of 3C in general.

Question six, the second key question, asked about the relevance of the IDI and SBA for a military audience. Student responses converged around the category of the various levels at which the 3C assessment instruments were applicable. One theme that emerged was at the individual level and another was at the military unit level. A third theme held that the IDI and SBA applied equally well to a general audience as it did to a
military one. Responses to this question tended to support the reliability of both instruments and provided data relevant to 3C in a military setting.

The third key question, number seven, asked about the feasibility of the two instruments for use at USMA. Cadets unanimously responded that it was not too long or difficult, particularly given the compensatory time they were given to complete it. Responses to this question directly addressed the issue of feasibility in a positive way.

Question eight, the first ending question, was a more general question soliciting advice from the students on the use of the SBA and IDI at USMA. Student responses to this question converged on two categories: the utility of the instruments as a development tool, and their use as part of USMA’s academic program. One theme emerged in the first category: the 3C assessment instruments were an effective tool for self-development. The two that emerged from the second category were that the IDI and SBA would be effective tools to use in concert with USMA’s immersion programs, and that the Academy should avoid limiting their use as data points or for inclusion in student grade point averages. Responses to this question generally supported the validity of the instruments and provided data relevant to pedagogical approaches to and assessment of 3C.

The last question, which was addressed only by two of the focus groups, asked for more general input on the IDI and SBA. Student responses converged around two categories: comments dealing with the overall cadet experience, and those focused on the academic program in particular. In the first category, the consistent theme was that the immersion program had a major impact on the cadets. In the second, the inextricable link between language and culture was a repeated theme. Responses to this question
addressed the parameters of 3C and the value of experiential learning as a means to teach 3C.

Summary of Findings

The study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to seek answers to the following guiding questions:

1. How valid is the ID1 in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?
2. How valid is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?
3. How reliable is the ID1 for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?
4. How reliable is the SBA for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?
5. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the ID1 for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?
6. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the SBA for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?

The quantitative results were generally inconclusive, but the qualitative ones revealed some useful patterns and trends.

The results of the pre- and post- test score analysis indicate that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the difference in the average developmental or perception IDI test scores for cadets at USMA before and after participation in a SAP is statistically significant. Further, the weak effect size for both the developmental and
perception IDI scores, which were less than 0.3, do not meet the minimum standard for an intervention effect.

In the two hierarchical regressions, only self-reported foreign language proficiency appeared to have a statistically significant influence on IDI developmental and perception scores. Thus, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that selection for participation in a SAP, gender, living abroad, or amount of overseas travel are statistically significant.

The weak nature of the quantitative results should not lead to any assertive decisions about the semester abroad program, because they indicate only that one cannot rule out the possible role of chance in the different test scores. Thus CLCRS would recommend continuation of the expanded SAP program for now, particularly since other research demonstrates a significant improvement in language ability as a result of a semester abroad.

Coding and deductive analysis of the SBAs consistently revealed several trends. In the case of three of the five most frequently coded U.S. Army cultural understanding standards, recognize cultural differences (CD), appreciate diverse cultural norms (CN), and understand the definition of culture (C), student responses were concentrated at the IDI acceptance and adaptation (AA) level, followed by the defense and reversal (D/R) level, then the minimization (M) level. Closely related to this was the understand the role of culture in behavior (CB) standard, in which student responses were concentrated at the D/R level, followed by the AA level and then the M level. In one standard, related 3C to the mission (3CM), student SBA responses in the cultural understanding standard 3CM
exhibited the opposite pattern: Most responses were at the M level with AA and D/R trailing respectively.

Qualitative analysis comparing the SBA results with the IDI developmental and perception scores also revealed some trends. The pattern revealed by the comparison of the IDI scores with both the general SBA responses and those by individual cultural understanding standards that garnered enough responses to be meaningful showed that the students’ IDI developmental scores tended to be lower than their responses to the SBA indicated while the IDI perception scores tended to be higher than the SBA responses indicated. The one frequently evoked cultural understanding standard that did not mirror the general trend was that of 3CM, for which the highest concentration was at the minimization level when compared to IDI-DS scores.

Qualitative analysis of the three focus group transcripts used in this study revealed a series of themes that emerged from the convergence of repeated words and phrases around several categories. In the introductory focus group question, there were three categories. For the first category, intercultural setting, students evoked food, family, time, and appearance. In the second one, metaphysics, students focused on religion. In the third category, cultural differences, they noted manners, personal space, and language. Lastly, in the category of reactions to the intercultural encounter they expressed a mixture of discomfort and adaptation.

The two transitional questions also produced several categories drawn from themes present in the responses. One set of categories involved the attitudes, skills, and the means by which one can gain exposure to a foreign culture. In the first category, attitudes, the themes of open-mindedness and flexibility recurred. In the second one,
skills, students evoked the ability to reason, proficiency in a foreign language, employment of humor, and being observant. In the third category, gaining exposure to a foreign culture, students remarked on the importance of relationships and requirement to actively seek opportunities for intercultural encounters.

A second set of categories from the transitional questions dealt with experiential and institutional means to identify and measure 3C in the Army. In the first category, student responses repeatedly turned to direct observation of an actual intercultural encounter and assessment of previous immersion experiences. In the second one, the recurring themes were the inefficacy of academic performance in measuring 3C, the possibility of employing some kind of test, and the utility of interviews and scenario based assessments.

The three key questions directly addressed the SBA and IDI’s reliability, validity, and feasibility. Responses to one of these questions converged around four categories: the validity of the IDI, the reliability of the IDI, the validity of the SBA, and the utility of both 3C assessment instruments. Three themes emerged in the first category: students tended to view the IDI as too abstract to have explanatory power, but they also indicated that it was effective in identifying the difference between perceived and actual 3C and noted that it offered good insight into the phenomenon. Commenting on the second category, the reliability of the IDI, students tended to emphasize the effect that the timing and context of the test could have on its results. As for the category of the validity of the SBA, students appeared to also view it as too abstract, yet they appreciated the insight it offered them into their level of 3C. Lastly, a pattern of general acceptance of the general utility of both instruments for assessing 3C emerged in the fourth category.
Responses to the two other key questions converged around the categories of the various levels at which the 3C assessment instruments were applicable and the amount of time required to complete the test. One theme that emerged for the former category was at the individual level and another was at the military unit level. A third theme for this category held that the IDI and SBA applied equally as well to a general audience as it did to a military one. Addressing the second category, cadets unanimously responded that the 3C assessment instruments were not too long or difficult.

Responses to the ending questions also produced several themes that converged around a series of categories. Two categories remarked on the utility of the instruments as a development tool and their use as part of USMA’s academic program. One theme emerged in the first category: the 3C assessment instruments were an effective tool for self-development. The two that emerged from the second category were that the IDI and SBA would be effective tools to use in concert with USMA’s immersion programs, and that the Academy should avoid limiting their use as data points or for inclusion in student grade point averages.

The last question, which was addressed only by two of the focus groups, asked for more general input on the IDI and SBA. Student responses converged around two categories: comments dealing with the overall cadet experience, and those focused on the academic program in particular. In the first category, the consistent theme was that the immersion program had a major impact on the cadets. In the second, the inextricable link between language and culture was a repeated theme.

This study, therefore, used a combination of quantitative and qualitative means to address its guiding questions. Quantitative analysis of IDI results was largely
inconclusive, although qualitative analysis of both the IDI and SBA and the focus group transcripts revealed some useful patterns and trends. Analysis of the former was conducted deductively using a rubric which offers an outcome-based lens through which USMA could view the SBA and relate it to the IDI rather than using classical qualitative means. This was intentional and is defensible, given the nature of the instruments and their role as means of assessing 3C in cadets who participate in a semester-abroad program. This study analyzed the focus group transcripts in an inductive manner, on the other hand, because they represent a more traditional form of qualitative data. The explanatory power of combining quantitative, deductive, and inductive approaches adds to the strength of the study.
Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

Overview. This study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative means to address the following guiding questions:

1. How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

2. How valid is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

3. How reliable is the IDI for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

4. How reliable is the SBA for a military population in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?

5. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the IDI for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?

6. How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the SBA for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?

It also provided insight into the five areas considered in Chapter 2: the parameters of 3C in general, 3C in the military context, higher education and globalization, pedagogical approaches to 3C, and assessment of 3C.

Quantitative analysis of IDI results was largely inconclusive, although quantitative analysis of both the IDI and SBA and the focus group transcripts revealed some useful patterns and themes. This study used a deductive approach to analyze the former using two rubrics, the U.S. Army’s cultural understanding standards, which offers
an outcome-based lens through which USMA could view the SBA and the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, on which the IDI is based. This was intentional and is defensible, given the nature of the instruments and their role as combined means of assessing 3C in cadets who participate in a semester-abroad program. Using inductive analysis would not compare the students to a standard, which is the point of USMA’s attempt to judge the efficacy of its semester-abroad program for developing 3C, nor would it intentionally relate the SBA results to the IDI. However, this study did analyze the focus group transcripts in an inductive manner, because they represent a more traditional form of qualitative data. The explanatory power of combining quantitative, deductive, and inductive approaches added to the strength of the study.

Summary of Conclusions. This study revealed a mixed response to the guiding questions, but one that tended to be affirmative regarding the validity, reliability, and feasibility of the 3C instruments. The lack of strong quantitative results does not rule out either the positive effect of immersion experiences on the IDI or its validity: It means only that one cannot rule out the role of chance in increased post-immersion IDI development and perception IDI scores.

Deductive analysis of the SBA alone and in concert with IDI scores generally supports the validity and reliability of both instruments, as the samples produced recognizable trends, such as a consistent difference in perceived and developmental IDI and SBA results, detectable patterns of student answers on SBA when compared to the cultural understand standards, and a consistent trend in the relationship of coded SBA responses compared to IDI scores.
Qualitative analysis of focus group transcripts simultaneously add support to the 3C instruments' reliability and validity and cast some doubt on it. Respondents generally felt that both offered valuable insight on 3C and, therefore, had consequential validity, but that they were too abstract to be meaningful. Further, there were concerns about the deleterious effect of the context in which the IDI was given on its reliability. The focus groups were unanimous in that the IDI and SBA were feasible for use at USMA.

In terms of the literature, the study adds some valuable insight into the five areas considered in Chapter 2: the parameters of 3C in general, 3C in the military context, higher education and globalization, pedagogical approaches to 3C, and assessment of 3C. The one quantitative result that was not weak was the hierarchical regression, which demonstrated that self-reported foreign language proficiency appeared to have a statistically significant influence on IDI developmental and perception scores. This, combined with focus group results that evoked the relationship between the two, adds some support, however tentative, to those who view 3C and language proficiency as inextricably linked. Other remarks in the focus groups identified some of the components of culture, reactions to intercultural encounters, and the role that affect plays in 3C.

Analysis of the SBA's, both alone and in concert with the IDI, plus themes emanating from the focus groups also add to the body of literature surrounding the importance of 3C in a military setting. The repeated focus on mission accomplishment and the employment of 3C therein in both the SBA responses and focus groups fits in this category.

Focus group responses pointed to the significant impact of the SBA experience on USMA cadets, who share many demographic characteristics with their civilian
counterparts in spite of the admittedly unique environment in which they are learning. Responses to questions two, eight, and nine in particular demonstrated the contribution the immersion experiences made to developing students as global citizens with a greater appreciation of, and tolerance for, both their own culture and that of the host nation in which they studied.

In terms of pedagogical approaches to 3C, the quantitative results plus focus group trends point to a combined approach to 3C that includes foreign language instruction, while the focus group themes alone outline some skills for developing 3C and point to developmental uses of immersion programs, the IDI, and the SBA. The focus group responses also evoked both the affective and cognitive domains. This adds to the field of experiential education and authentic assessment, particularly for higher education.

Assessment of 3C using the SBA and IDI together appears to be a generally reliable and valid approach, based on analysis of the SBA, IDI, and focus group transcripts. The weak nature of the quantitative analysis does not lead to any definitive conclusions one way or the other, while the negative comments regarding the instruments in the focus groups were more than compensated for affirmative ones plus the valuable trends noted in the deductive SBA and IDI analysis. In a more general sense, focus group responses included alternative methods for assessment of 3C, such as direct observation of intercultural encounters and role player.

Summary of Recommendations. Given the generally positive results of this study, USMA should continue to use both the IDI and SBA to assess 3C for cadets participating in a semester abroad program. It should also seek to maximize the number of students it
sends abroad. The weak quantitative results for the IDI do not challenge its validity or reliability, and the trends, themes, and patterns from the deductive analysis of the SBA and IDI plus the qualitative analysis of the focus groups generally support the validity, reliability, and feasibility of both of them.

In terms of practice, the focus groups highlighted the importance of explaining the instruments and giving students feedback on the results of both so they can gain insight into their level of 3C, as well as the requirement to ensure that cadets sent abroad are immersed in the foreign culture rather than grouped with other Americans and have some level of foreign language proficiency. Ensuring consistency in the timing and circumstances of the IDI would help address concerns about its reliability. The focus group analysis also pointed to the value of using the 3C instruments in conjunction with immersion programs and underscored the negative impact of using IDI and SBA results as graded events.

Areas for further research include the interrelationship of foreign language proficiency, 3C, and regional knowledge; the interplay of affect and cognitive skills in these three areas, the effect of the duration, location, and academic setting of immersion programs on 3C, and further research on the reliability and validity of the IDI and various forms of SBA. It may be useful for further research to use more anonymous means of obtaining qualitative data, such as surveys, to counteract the powerful effect of rank and position at USMA.

Conclusions

Answers to the guiding questions. This study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative means to address its guiding questions. It revealed a mixed response to
the guiding questions, though one that was generally positive, based on a combination of quantitative, and deductive and inductive qualitative analysis of the data.

The answer to the first guiding question, “How valid is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?” was generally affirmative with some caveats. The quantitative analysis was inconclusive, which does not call the IDI’s validity into question but only means that one cannot rule out the role chance plays in its results. Deductive analysis of the IDI results as compared to the SBA’s using the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding standards identified patterns consistent with 3C that offered valuable insight into cadet adaptation during semester-abroad experiences. This included a consistent relationship between cadet scores on the IDI perception and developmental scales and SBA responses. Inductive qualitative analysis of focus group transcripts revealed several themes supporting the IDI’s consequential validity, including its effectiveness at identifying the difference between perceived and actual 3C, its valuable insight into the phenomenon, and the general utility of the instrument in assessing 3C. Data questioning the validity of the IDI included focus group concerns that the instrument was too abstract to accurately reflect one’s level of 3C.

The answer to the second guiding question, “How valid is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?” was also generally affirmative with the same caveats. Deductive analysis of the SBA, both alone and as compared to the IDI results using the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding standards identified patterns consistent with 3C that offered valuable insight into cadet adaptation during semester-abroad experiences. These included cadet SBA responses.
that followed a pattern for each cultural understanding standard when compared to the IDI developmental and perception scales, and a consistent relationship between cadet scores on those two scales and overall SBA responses. Inductive qualitative analysis of focus group transcripts revealed several themes supporting the SBA’s consequential validity, to include its valuable insight into 3C, the general utility of the instrument in assessing it, and an emergent theme of SBA’s and interview as useful ways to identify and measure skills related to 3C. Data questioning the validity of the SBA included focus group concerns that the instrument was too abstract to accurately reflect one’s level of 3C.

The answer to the third guiding question, “How reliable is the IDI in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?” was generally affirmative, with some caveats. The quantitative analysis was inconclusive, which does not call the IDI’s reliability into question but means only that one cannot rule out the role chance plays in its results. Deductive analysis of the IDI results as compared to the SBA’s using the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding standards identified patterns that indicate consistency across the samples, in particular a consistent relationship between cadet scores on the IDI perception and developmental scales and overall SBA responses. However, inductive qualitative analysis of focus group transcripts questioned the reliability of the IDI by raising concerns over the effect that the context in which the test is given, both in terms of general timing and atmosphere and the amount of elapsed time since the immersion experience, might have on the results. Addressing these may be important if the IDI is to remain in use, particularly given the IDI proprietor’s
recommendation that the test not be given until six months after an immersion experience to allow for a re-adjustment period (Hammer, 2008).

The answer to the fourth guiding question, “How reliable is the SBA in assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains for USMA cadets participating in a SAP?” was generally affirmative without caveats. Deductive analysis of the SBA, both alone and as compared to the IDI results using the U.S. Army’s Cultural Understanding standards identified patterns that demonstrated a level of consistency in their responses. These included cadet SBA responses that followed a pattern for each cultural understanding standard when compared to the IDI developmental and perception scales, and a consistent relationship between cadet scores on those two scales and overall SBA responses. The focus groups did not comment on the reliability of the SBA with enough frequency to establish a meaningful data point.

The answer to the fifth guiding question, “How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the IDI for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?” and the sixth one, “How feasible for use by USMA cadets participating in a SAP is the SBA for assessing 3C in the affective and cognitive domains?” was affirmative with some caveats. Focus group responses were unanimous that the assessments did not take too long, although the relatively low number of SBAs received may indicate otherwise.

Therefore, this study revealed a generally affirmative, though mixed, response to the guiding questions, based on a combination of quantitative and deductive and inductive qualitative analysis of the data. The lack of strong quantitative results does not raise questions about the reliability or validity of the instruments; it means only that one
cannot rule out the role of chance in increased post-immersion IDI development and perception IDI scores. The presence of recognizable patterns of 3C in the analysis of the SBAs, both alone and in concert with the IDI results, adds support to their reliability and validity. The quantitative analysis of the three focus group transcripts also generally supports the reliability and validity of the instruments, even as it raises some questions about them. Lastly, the focus group data indicates that both the IDI and SBA are feasible for use at USMA.

Connection to the Literature. The results of this study also relate to other work in 3C, and thereby make a small contribution to the field by addressing some areas of tension. This study considered five aspects of 3C in Chapter 2: the parameters of 3C in general, the role of 3C in a military context, development of college students as “global citizens,” pedagogical approaches to 3C, and assessment of 3C. This study adds some further information to each of these and alternately adds to, and mitigates tensions in, each. However, one must consider the particularity of the context in which the study was conducted at USMA and exercise caution when attempting to generalize results.

In terms of the general subject of 3C, this study used the definition of 3C proposed by the U.S. Army Research Institute: “A set of cognitive, behavioral, and affective/motivational components that enable individuals to adapt effectively in intercultural environments” (Abbe et al., 2007). It relied on this definition because it is based on an ongoing, rigorous study of the phenomenon in the context of the U.S. Army and is the most likely one to become the accepted definition used by the Army and, therefore, by USMA. The qualitative data gathered and analyzed in this study, in particular the themes emanating from the focus groups, support this definition. One of
the themes that does so was that of adaptation to a foreign culture as one reaction to interaction with it in question two. Other themes in question three were the attitudes of open-mindedness and flexibility towards intercultural encounters, which allude to the affective domain cited in the definition. The last themes also came from question three and listed some skills, or cognitive and behavioral components, used to make the successful adaptation: reasoning, humor, observation, and language. Thus, the major components of the chosen definition of 3C, adaptation, affect, and cognitive and behavioral skills, are all present in the data.

One of the 3C skills cited in the focus groups brings up a point of tension in the literature, however: the extent to which 3C and language proficiency are interrelated. The only quantitative result with any statistical significance involved the positive influence of self-reported proficiency in a foreign language on IDI perception and development scores. These results align with the IDI proprietor’s identification of a weak curvilinear relationship between IDI scores and language proficiency, with the latter serving as a catalyst for students progressing through the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity stages and the former a requisite for meaningful language proficiency (Hammer, 2008). Further, qualitative analysis of the focus group transcripts reveal that students view skill in a foreign language as one means of adapting to an intercultural encounter (question three) and as a vital part of the academic program linking 3C and proficiency in a foreign language for immersion programs (question nine). This study, therefore, clearly falls on the side of an inextricable link between language proficiency and 3C as posited in its theoretical framework, although it fails to address the area of regional knowledge.
Addressing the subject of 3C in the military context, the data point to its importance for success in the contemporary operating environment, in which U.S. Forces are engaged in irregular wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere in the world such as the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, and the Philippines. In this type of war, 3C gains great importance because the key to victory is securing the support of the local populace by providing them meaningful security and convincing them to become invested in one’s side of the conflict (Cable, 1986; Krepinevich, 1990; Womack, 1995, 2007). This has brought 3C to the fore in military circles after a period of relative dormancy since the end of the Vietnam War, and cadet responses to the SBA and focus group comments point to this phenomenon. Analysis of SBA responses, both in isolation and in combination with the IDI, revealed that cadets were consistently aware of the relationship between mission accomplishment and 3C. In fact it was in this area that the IDI and SBA results most closely matched, with both placing participants at a minimization level. Further, focus group responses to question six consistently pointed to the applicability of 3C to the individual soldier and military units. Taken together, these indicate that, at the very least, cadets are sensitized to the growing importance of 3C on the contemporary battlefield, even though few of them have had the experience of combat.

On the topic of global citizenship and higher education, the study identifies immersion programs as one viable and effective means for broadening student’s horizons in the context of a liberal education such as that offered by USMA and advocated for by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2007). Analysis of SBA and IDI results using the U.S. Army’s cultural understanding standards, which could serve as a template for global citizenship in a more general sense, demonstrated that the SAP
challenged students in the cognitive and affective domains in the area of 3C. Further, analysis of the focus group responses, in particular questions eight and nine, demonstrated that students viewed the immersion programs as life changing events that significantly affected how they viewed the world and their place therein. To the extent to which one can extend the West Point experience to other post-secondary institutions that offer a liberal education, the data point to the value of study-abroad programs as one means of developing global citizens.

The study did not, however, address to a significant degree the question of internationalization of curricula or the extent to which a liberal education must specifically address multiculturalism. This topic deserves further research, as USMA and institutions of higher learning more generally are wrestling with the challenge of fitting in an ever-increasing body of knowledge into a finite program of instruction. It also did not address the issue of whether global citizenship is desirable per se, due to the uniquely military focus of the institution being considered.

In terms of pedagogical approaches to 3C, the study affirms the use of Bloom’s Taxonomy in the military training and education environment (CAL, 2007; CAOCL, 2007; TCC, 2007) and the value of experiential education as defined by Dewey (1938), Bruner (1961), and Gardner (1983). As discussed in the section on 3C in general, the focus group sessions repeatedly cited an attitude of open-mindedness and flexibility and skills such as reasoning, language, employment of humor, and observation. These neatly align with Bloom’s work on affect and cognition (Bloom, 1956; Krauthwohl, et al., 1973), as well as the work of Doll (1993), Wiggins (1993), and Gardner (1983), who
acknowledge the relationship between affect and knowledge and the importance of authentic context in developing both of them.

The focus group data also highlight the importance of experiential education in developing 3C. One of the major themes to come out of the sessions was the impact that USMA’s immersion program has had on the cadets. In addition, a related recurring theme was that of “getting out” in order to have meaningful intercultural encounters. These encounters echo Piaget’s (1937, 1964) ideas about schema and equilibration, and subsequent work by Weinreich (1989), who views threats to one’s cognitive-affective consistency via encounters with the unfamiliar as one means of readjusting all three of Bloom’s domains (Bloom, 1956; Krauthwohl, et al., 1973), and Geertz (1994), who argues for the deconstruction and subsequent integration of other cultural worldviews in yet another evocation of Piaget’s concept of equilibration. Lastly, focus group themes involving the importance of relationships aligns with the idea of “referent others” (Keats, Keats, Biddle, Bank, Hague, Wan-Rafaei, and Valantin, 1983) who, in the course of experiential learning such as a SAP provide the “scaffolding” (Bruner, 1985) or “framework” (Vygotsky, 1962) vital for effective interaction in an intercultural setting.

Other themes from the focus groups appear to support research indicating that developing 3C, as with learning a foreign language, is best done as a combination of theoretical (classroom) and authentic, experiential methods (Culhane, 2004; Lessard-Clouston, 1997; Li, in press; TCC, 2007). In addition, Selmeski (2007) recommends a combination of 3C experiences, training, and education as a way to develop it. Focus group feedback supported the use of the IDI and SBA, theoretical devices, in combination with the experiential immersion programs. Further, their emphasis on
foreign language proficiency and the quantitative data suggesting its influence on 3C
militate for a combined classroom – experiential approach to 3C.

The last area considered in Chapter 2 was assessment of 3C, and the data make
some contributions to the scant literature on the subject. Research in the area of 3C
assessment, while thin, underscores the value of qualitative instruments in concert with
quantitative ones (Kitsantas, 2004; Lessard-Clouston, 1997; Lievens, Harris, Van Keer,
and Bisqueret, 2003). The focus groups in this study evoked the general utility of both
3C assessment instruments, in particular as a way to frame and analyze immersion
experiences such as the semester-abroad program. They also indicated a preference for
direct observation of intercultural encounters and interviews or SBA’s as a means to
assess 3C, and shied away from using assessment data as part of a grade scheme. This
aligns with the views of Wiggins (1993), who argues for authentic assessment that
occurs, to the extent possible, in a realistic context.

Both the IDI and SBA appeared to demonstrate consequential, versus statistical
validity (Johnson, 1998), based on focus group themes which pointed to their use as a
development tool or way to gain meaningful insight into 3C. The trends noted in the
deductive analysis of both instruments point to their relative consistency and ability to
capture 3C across a variety of dimensions.

**Recommendations.**

This study posits some recommendations for policy, practice and future research
in the area of development and assessment of 3C. Although the study specifically
addressed USMA, it has more general implications for higher education as well. The
unique nature of the population and sample at USMA necessitates a certain level of
cautions in generalizing the results, but it in no way precludes doing so.

Policy. This study makes some policy recommendations for USMA based on
analysis of the data. The generally positive results of this study with regards to the IDI
and SBA’s validity, reliability, and feasibility indicate that USMA should continue to use
both instruments to assess 3C for cadets participating in a semester abroad program. The
repeated themes regarding the value of the immersion programs indicate that the
Academy should also seek to maximize the number of students it sends abroad. The
quantitative and qualitative data pointing to a link between foreign language proficiency
and 3C suggest that USMA should continue to make foreign language instruction
obligatory for its students.

On a broader level, the study also makes some policy recommendations for higher
education as well. The use of immersion programs as one viable and effective means for
broadening student’s horizons in the context of a liberal education such as that advocated
for by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2007) argues for their use
in postsecondary institutions. Analysis of the focus group responses and the cross-
referenced IDI and SBA results demonstrated that students viewed the immersion
programs as life-changing events that significantly affected how they viewed the world
and their place therein. Further, qualitative analysis of the focus group transcripts reveal
that students view skill in a foreign language as one means of adapting to an intercultural
encounter and as a vital part of the academic program linking 3C and proficiency in a
foreign language for immersion programs. This would militate for some level of foreign
language instruction in advance of participation in an immersion program.
*Practice.* This study also makes some recommendation for the execution, or practice, of the policies evoked above, both at West Point and more generally in institutions of higher learning. According to the data, assessment of the immersion experience and cadet 3C should consist of both the IDI and SBA, and neither should be used as a part of a student’s grade. The study highlighted the importance of explaining the IDI and SBA and giving students meaningful feedback on the results of both so they can gain insight into their level of 3C. This will also aid them in placing their immersion experience in context. The timing and circumstances under which the IDI, at a minimum, is administered should be standardized to the extent possible to address questions about its reliability. USMA should continue to grant cadets compensatory time to complete the assessments, and should consider having cadets complete the SBA as a group rather than on their own time to maximize participation.

The study argues that the semester-abroad program itself should ensure that cadets sent abroad are immersed in the foreign culture rather than grouped with other Americans. This can be done by arranging home stays or placing students in host nation student dorms rather than international ones. Lastly, the study highlighted the importance of sending students abroad with some level of foreign language proficiency. Use of surveys rather than focus groups for further research at USMA may also produce different results, due to their anonymous nature and the deferential attitude cadets can exhibit in group situations.

Similarly, use of the IDI and a civilian version of the SBA that does not employ a military situation at civilian post-secondary institutions should be done in a way that emphasizes their consequential validity and provides the student with a developmental
experience rather than a mere grade or competence level. This will require giving both students and faculty the requisite time to complete, analyze, and debrief the assessment instruments. Further, the immersion experience itself should not occur in a vacuum and should include theoretical instruction to place the experience in context. Foreign language instruction is a necessary but insufficient condition to meet this requirement, and it should be combined with some other instruction focused on the phenomenon of culture itself. Lastly, the immersion experience itself must ensure that the students are separated from other American students to the extent possible to gain maximum exposure to the foreign culture.

*Future research.* This study reveals several areas for further research in the field of 3C. Some of these were exposed in the course of study and reveal areas where one could improve on it, while others brought areas for future research of a more general nature to light. In the former area, a larger sample would allow for more refined analysis of both the qualitative and quantitative results, which could include the effect of such variables as the specific context of the immersion experience (location, duration, cultural distance, home stay versus dormitory, academic versus cultural, etc). Further, the proprietor of the IDI suggests a six-month readjustment period between the completion of the immersion experience and the student’s return. While this is not possible in the case of seniors, it may produce more consistent or meaningful results.

In a broader context, one area for future research includes the interrelationship of foreign language proficiency, 3C, and regional knowledge. Although the study established a tentative connection between the former two, it did not address regional knowledge and its scale was too small to make any broad generalizations about the
relationship. This is as relevant to civilian institutions as it is for USMA, and would provide useful policy guidance regarding the optimal amount of foreign language instruction, if any, necessary to maximize the benefit of the immersion experience.

The interplay of affect and cognitive skills in these three areas is another area of further general research, as the literature connects the two but does not explain how they are related. This study posited that affect was the driving force that enabled students to engage their cognitive skills to successfully negotiate an intercultural encounter. The study did demonstrate that both were important, but the nature of the relationship between the two remains unclear.

The effect of the duration, location, and academic setting on the effectiveness of immersion programs is yet another area of further research. This study reveals that immersion programs do have a positive effect on student 3C, but only in the context of four-month semester abroad programs. Further research on the impact of the context of the immersion programs would inform the design and delivery of these experiences.

The relationship of immersion programs to a liberal education and the issue of internationalization of curricula are also areas ripe for more study. The study militates for a combination of liberal education with immersion experiences for development of global citizens. However, it did not explore the relationship between USMA’s general curriculum and how well it prepares students for the immersion experiences, or how the latter inform the former. Further research in this area would help clarify the relationship and result in more effective instruction in both domains.

Lastly, further research on the reliability and validity of the IDI and various forms of SBA is warranted, as this study neither firmly established nor refuted these two aspects
of the 3C instruments. Although the study generally supported their reliability and validity, it was not conclusive and further research would assist in making the decision of whether or not to use the instruments.
Appendix A
Scenario Based Assessment

In the context of the Global War on Terror (GWOT), you have been assigned as a logistics advisor to a U.S. Government (USG) – funded anti-terrorist unit in a small, remote country in the developing world. The host nation has been very helpful in the GWOT, capturing and killing several terrorists who were targeting U.S. and Western interests. This support has come at some cost to the host nation military, a point which they are quick to make.

You have worked in this country for over a year and have noticed that your host nation counterparts’ concept of family is both expansive and patriarchal. As a result, even remote relatives are considered an integral part of a family and men have the final say in familial matters deemed important.

You are on an inspection tour of logistics stockpiles in remote locations with your counterpart, a host nation army captain, using an aircraft leased with USG funds. The aircraft is necessary because viable ground lines of communication are nonexistent and the country is landlocked. After successfully completing one inventory you arrive at the airfield to fly to your next location and notice your host nation counterpart, several other host nation soldiers, and a lone woman standing quietly to the side of the tarmac.

The pilot informs you that the host nation personnel want her to fly to the next destination, where she will meet her new husband. There is room on the aircraft and the pilot has no objections at this point. However, once the passengers begin to load the aircraft you notice that the woman does not want to enter it and your host nation counterparts, all male, are shoving her into the aircraft anyway. You ask your counterpart why the woman is upset and he replies, “The marriage was arranged: it’s our
She will shame her family if she does not go and things could go badly for her. She’s just afraid of flying, that’s all.” When asked about overland travel, the captain replies that it is possible but would take two weeks and be a miserable journey for a woman traveling alone. You must take off soon in order to make it to your next destination by nightfall, requiring a quick decision, and telecommunications are such that contacting higher authorities in time is not an option.

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
Appendix B
U.S. Army Cultural Understanding Standards

Standards Leader Category: Officer
Developmental Stage: 1 Pre-commissioning (Accession - IMT)

Subject Area: Cultural Understanding

Aptitudes
In the area of cultural understanding, a leader in this category and stage should:

- Identify cultural differences and considerations. (knowledge/receiving)
- Appreciate diverse beliefs, appearances, and lifestyles. (knowledge/receiving)
- Anticipate challenges in various cultures. (comprehension/responding)

Skills, Knowledge, and Behaviors
In the area of cultural understanding, a leader in this category and stage should:

- Use available learning tools to increase cultural knowledge prior to deployment. (knowledge)
- Describe cultural differences. (knowledge)
- Describe the relevance of cultural understanding to the US Army mission. (knowledge)
- Understand the definition of “culture.” (comprehension)
- Communicate with individuals from other cultural groups. (application)
- Leverage technology to communicate with and access resources about other cultures. (application)

Predispositions
In the area of cultural understanding, a leader in this category and stage should:

- Appreciate various cultural and societal norms. (knowledge/receiving)
- Be willing to learn about other cultures. (knowledge/receiving)
- Understand that culture affects one’s own behavior and that of others. (comprehension/responding)
- Recognize stereotyping and bias as barriers to cultural understanding. (comprehension/responding)
Appendix C
Focus Group Questions

**Opening Question**
1. What is your previous experience abroad?

**Introductory Question**
2. What was your most challenging intercultural encounter while abroad?

**Transition Questions**
3. Think back to that encounter: If it was a successful encounter, what kind of skills did you use to negotiate it? If it was not successful, what skills were you lacking or do you wish you had?

4. What are some ways the Army could identify and measure these skills?

**Key Questions**

5. How well do you think the IDI and SBA captured your willingness and ability to adapt to an intercultural situation?

6. How relevant do you think the IDI and SBA were to a military audience such as that at West Point?

7. Did the IDI and SBA place an unreasonable demand on your time?

**Ending Questions**

8. Given the importance that the Army is placing on intercultural competence and the fact that it is a stated goal in *Educating Future Army Officers for a Changing World*, what advice would you give the Dean about the IDI and SBA?

9. Our goal is to evaluate these two assessment tools for potential use here at West Point. Is there anything we overlooked that you would like to add?
Appendix D
Personal Data Questionnaire

YOUR BACKGROUND

The information requested in this section is essential for analyzing the data. Please answer these questions. All of your responses will remain confidential.

1. What is your rank?
   - O N/A; Civilian
   - O Cadet
   - Officers
     - O 2LT
     - O 1LT
     - O CPT
     - O MAJ
     - O LTC
     - O COL+
   - Enlisted
     - O WO1
     - O CW2
     - O CW3
     - O CW4
     - O CW5
2. How many years of Active Federal Military Service (AFMS) and/or Reserve service have you completed? COUNT TIME IN CURRENT TOUR AND TIME IN PREVIOUS TOURS OR SERVICES.
   - TOTAL YEARS
     - ACTIVE SERVICE
     - RESERVE SERVICE
3. Are you male or female?
   - O Male
   - O Female
4. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin or ancestry (of any race)? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.
   - O No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish ancestry
   - O Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
   - O Yes, Puerto Rican
   - O Yes, Cuban
   - O Yes, other Hispanic/Spanish
5. What is your race? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.
   - O American Indian or Alaska Native (e.g., Eskimo, Aleut)
   - O Asian (e.g., Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korea, Vietnamese)
   - O Black or African American
   - O Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Guamanian, Chamorro)
   - O White
6. What was your age on your last birthday?
   O Under 20  O 35-39 years old
   O 20-24 years old  O 40-44 years old
   O 25-29 years old  O 45-49 years old
   O 30-34 years old  O 50 or over

7. What is the highest level of education you have completed? MARK ONE.
   O Some high school or less, but no diploma, certificate, or GED
   O High school diploma or GED
   O From 1 to 2 years of college, but no degree
   O Associate degree
   O From 3 to 4 years of college, but no degree
   O Bachelor's degree
   O A year or more of graduate credit, but no graduate degree
   O Master's degree
   O Doctorate degree
   O Professional degree, such as MD, DDS, or JD

DEPLOYMENTS

8. Since 11 September 2001, were you deployed to any of the following? (Do not include accompanied PCS moves.)
   MARK ALL THAT APPLY.
   O Yes, to Afghanistan
   O Yes, to Kuwait
   O Yes, to Iraq
   O Yes, to elsewhere in Asia
   O Yes, to Europe
   O Yes, to Korea
   O Yes, to another OCONUS site
   O Yes, to a CONUS site
   O No, I was not deployed since 11 Sep 2001.

GO TO QUESTION 13.

9. Since 11 September 2001, how many times have you been deployed?
   NO. OF TIMES   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

10. Since 11 September 2001, how many total months have you been deployed?
    O Less than 1 month
    NO. OF MONTHS   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

11. For which operation were you most recently deployed? MARK ONE.
    O Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)
    O Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)
    O Other operation (Please specify:   )
12. When (what year and month) did you return from your most recent deployment?

YEAR 2000? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
MONTH 0 1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

☐ Other operation (Please specify):

☐ LANGUAGE AND INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCE

13. Do you know any languages other than English?

☐ Yes

☐ No

14. If you answered 'yes' to #13, please indicate which language(s) and level of proficiency using the scale below.

Second Language: ______________________

Please indicate level of proficiency:

☐ 1: Novice
   (know a few words and/or phrases)

☐ 2: Elementary
   (can ask some questions and make statements; understand gist of others' speech)

☐ 3: Working
   (can hold conversations on particular topics)

☐ 4: Professional
   (can hold conversations on a variety of social and professional topics)

☐ 5: Native speaker
   (can speak and understand the language as a native)

Third Language: ______________________

Level of proficiency:

☐ 1: Novice
   (know a few words and/or phrases)

☐ 2: Elementary
   (can ask some questions and make statements; understand gist of others' speech)

☐ 3: Working
   (can hold conversations on particular topics)

☐ 4: Professional
   (can hold conversations on a variety of social and professional topics)

☐ 5: Native speaker
   (can speak and understand the language as a native)
15. Have you ever lived outside the U.S. for reasons other than military service?
   O Yes
   O No – Skip to QUESTION #18

16. How long did you live outside the U.S. for reasons other than military service?
   YEARS  □  0 1 2 □ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   MONTHS □  0 1 □ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

17. At what age(s) did you most recently live outside the U.S. for reasons other than military service?
   AGE  □  0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 □ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   To
   AGE  □  0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 □ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

18. Have you previously traveled outside the U.S., for reasons other than deployment or living abroad?
   O No
   O Yes, for less than 1 month total
   O Yes, between 1 to 3 months total
   O Yes, for more than 3 months total

19. At what age(s) did you travel outside the U.S.? Mark all that apply.
   O N/A, no travel outside U.S.
   O Childhood (ages 0-11)
   O Adolescence (ages 12-17)
   O Ages 18-25
   O Age 26+

20. During deployment, how much interaction did you have with individuals from other cultures?
   O N/A, no deployment experience
   O Little or no interaction
   O Infrequent interaction
   O Occasional interaction
   O Regular interaction
   O A great deal; routine and daily interaction
21. **In times other than deployment**, how much interaction have you had with individuals from other cultures?

- Little or no interaction
- Infrequent interaction
- Occasional interaction
- Regular interaction
- A great deal; routine and daily interaction

22. **In general, how effective are you in communicating with individuals from other cultures?**

- Not at all effective
- Somewhat effective
- Effective
- Very effective

23. **In general, how effective are you at influencing individuals from other cultures?**

- Not at all effective
- Somewhat effective
- Effective
- Very effective

24. **In general, how prepared do you feel to interact with individuals from other cultures in the future?**

- Not at all prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Prepared
- Very prepared
Appendix E
Privacy Act Statement

Privacy Act Statement

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579), this notice informs you of the purpose of the study and how the findings will be used.

The U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) and the Center for Languages, Cultures, and Regional Studies (CLCRS) may collect the information requested in this survey under the authority of 10 U.S. Code 2358, “Research and Development Projects.”

The purpose of this research is to obtain information that will help ARI to determine how best to define and measure cross-cultural competence. The information that you provide today will be to help determine what traits, knowledge, and skills contribute to effective performance in cross-cultural settings and how best to measure those characteristics. The data collected during this study will be used for research purposes only and will not be used to evaluate your performance.

Providing information in this study is voluntary. Failure to respond to any particular questions will not result in any penalty. Any identifying information collected will be used only by persons engaged in, and for the purposes of, the research. All of your responses will be kept confidential.

If you have read the Privacy Act Statement above and agree to participate in this study, please indicate your consent by signing below.

_________________________  ____________________
Printed Name               Date

_________________________
Signature
Appendix F
Scenario Based Assessment Responses

Student ID# 81601

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would tell the captain that if we do not leave immediately there is no way we would be able to make it safely. If the woman continued to resist, I would tell the pilot that we are leaving now. I would do this because accomplishing the mission is paramount, if I can prevent something that I feel contradicts our way of life simultaneously I will attempt to do that.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
“We did not have time to argue about this. We have to go.”

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
The woman did not want to go, we did not have time, and her fearfulness could have caused her to do something stupid (such as leave her seat during flight).

Student ID# 81705

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would refuse to take the woman on board. It is not part of the mission and because I am morally opposed to arranged marriage.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would probably only tell them that it wasn’t part of the mission and that we didn’t have time to deal with it.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I would tell them exactly what I thought, basically the two reasons in number one.

Student ID# 82252

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would see if I could have my host nation counterpart work with the other males to delay the transfer of the woman until everyone had more information or until cooler heads prevailed. If he could not diffuse the situation I would tell him that we can’t transfer the woman (because she is afraid of flying) and she could represent a risk to the mission at this time and this would be an abuse of government funds.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
Basically, if she is an unwilling participant then she represents a threat to the mission. Furthermore, we shouldn’t be using government resources for private matters. If they want to transport the woman then they should do it on private funds.
3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
Same as number 2 above.

Student ID# 82608

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
Lying and social tact are not the same thing, thus, I would simply tell the pilot that I have specific instructions that my flight is for official use only and that I am not authorized to take this woman with me. She will have to wait for the next flight or the long overland travel.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I don’t believe I would have to, I have neither supported their effort nor have I infringed upon it.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
Command decision. I prevented a situation in which I have to make a cultural impact.

Student ID# 83309

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would fly the women with us. Even though I disagree with arranged marriages, it is not my place to tell them their culture is wrong.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would tell him that it’s his culture and, therefore, his decision.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I would tell them that I supported the host nation culture rather than imposing my own cultural ideals.

Student ID# 84406

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
Ask the woman. If she is, in fact, only afraid of flying, then send the woman overland with an escort each from your unit and the host nation’s unit. This way, she will not have to make the journey alone, and the escorts can prevent any “mishandling” of the woman by acting as guards against anyone who might take advantage of her—or even prevent rumors from starting, which might occur as a result of sending her with only one escort. This way she does not have to fly and potentially create problems in the air because of this fear. This also would prevent you or the host nation from suffering from the loss of too many soldiers for this detail.

If, however, she does not want to get married, you have bigger problems. However, since the United States is not trying to change the cultural norms and morals of this nation, you
should send her along after explaining to her that it is of utmost importance that she get on the plane now.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart? Explain to him that if the woman could potentially create a hazard to anyone on the plane by being afraid of flying, or if it would cause her undue unrest, it is better simply just to send her over land. It might take longer, but by sending escorts, you can ensure that she will make it safely to her family. You can also inform the family why she will not be with you once you land. You can also assure them (your counterpart and her new family) that there will be no impropriety: she will be escorted by one soldier from each army who can act as a witness for the other in case anything gets brought up. We need to address what, if anything, we should do in the future to solve this problem better in case there was a better answer.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters? Since it is not our policy to change this country's social norms and morals, and there was no time to sit and analyze the situation for hours, I had to make the best decision I could with the given information. This woman was supposed to go to this village to meet her husband. She was very afraid of flying. Both our unit and the host nation's unit could afford to send one soldier with this woman, which is not dangerous because there is no indication of, or reason to suspect, dangerous activity for the soldiers en route. The US Army is not in the business of unnecessarily traumatizing civilians, but we also cannot force them to accept our own cultural identity. This was the simplest answer to a complex problem. We need to address what the approved solution for this kind of situation will be in the future.

Student ID# 84776

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why? Unless standing regulations specifically forbids the transport of civilians on aircraft leased with USG funds, I would allow the woman to be transported as requested by the host nation.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart? I would tell my foreign counterpart that I am thankful for their host courtesy and military cooperation and that I would gladly allow the transport of the woman as long as she is properly seated and does not pose a threat to the plane or other passengers.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters? Though I am logical advisor to a developing military system, I consider myself a guest in their country and would respect their customs and culture. Though I may potentially be against the forced matchmaking of marriage pairs, I feel that any attempt to overrule local/national customs would alienate our dear ally and perhaps limit further cooperation.
Student ID# 84853

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
Knowing the traditions of the host nation, I would support the men in the choice to fly. However, I would speak with the woman and ask her if she would rather travel by land. If she did, then I would talk with the captain and see if we can come to an agreement. It is their traditions however, so I would ultimately support them. There is no way to be sure of all the situation’s circumstances.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
It is their nation and I am a guest. While I look out for the best interests of all individuals, I must be respectful to time constraints and traditions.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
The same way I do to the host nation. I am not in a position to decide for another person, in what seems to be a personal matter, what is best for everyone. I must trust and respect the decisions of my counterpart and his/her host nation.

Student ID# 85178

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
Although I personally struggle with the notion of an arranged marriage as it is not an accepted part of American culture, I would feel compelled to express my viewpoint against forcing the woman on the plane however, I would hold my feelings inside. As the guest in a host-nation, working closely with host-nation military counterparts on an important mission that requires cooperation between both militaries, I would not wager the success of my mission against the slim chance that the host-nation men would understand my point of view and allow the woman to remain at the airport.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would not have anything to explain as I would not choose to express my views against an arranged marriage.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
Once again, in choosing to remain quiet in order to respect the traditions of my host country and in an effort to see my mission completed through cooperation, I would not have an explanation for my headquarters.

Student ID# 85330

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would have her choose between air travel and overland travel. Arranged marriages are still used in some parts of the world and not taking part in them would be dangerous. If the woman said she wanted to go overland, I would not allow my counterpart to make her take a flight.
2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would explain that if the woman chooses to go overland, she has that right. This may not go over well considering many countries do not afford women the same rights. I don't see what difference it makes as long as she gets to her destination.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I would explain it the same way.

Student ID# 85677

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would not involve myself in any way with this event. The woman is not my responsibility and moving her to meet her husband is not one of my duties. It would be irresponsible of me to impose my culture's values on this situation, especially when acting in an official capacity.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would let him know that it is not my responsibility to tell his subordinates what to do in a situation like this. I may express my own opinion concerning the situation but would make it clear that it is based on my own values and not an attempt to impose them on his country.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I would report the incident and explain that it was not my place to attempt to affect the situation directly.

Student ID# 85928

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
There is not much you can do, if you make a stand and say something it will only hurt the women in the long run. If she does not go to her husband, she will shame her family, and probably be shunned from her family. This is their culture; their way of life, although I do not approve I cannot jump in and stop something that's been going on for centuries.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would not have to explain anything, because there is not much I would be able to do or say.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I would tell headquarters that in my opinion no good could come out of me doing or saying anything. In the long run the women would either be brought to her husband eventually or she would be shunned from her family. This is their culture it would only do harm between us and the host country for me to do anything.
1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
Since the host nation has such a strong concept of family, I don’t think it would be right to try to stop the arranged marriage. This is part of their culture/customs. Although, I might not personally agree with the tradition, the host nation accepts it. To try to push my thoughts or beliefs would be wrong—who is to say that my culture/customs are better? However, if the woman is truly afraid of flying, then I would not make her fly. The host captain says that travel by land is possible, though not easy. However, if the woman would feel more comfortable not flying, then I would send her by overland travel. She does not seem to be on a time schedule, so the extra two weeks are not important. However, since the travel would be miserable alone, I would send at least one other person with her from the host nation—to provide as an escort. I have to stay on schedule and would not be able to accompany her, but other host nation soldiers could. We could make arrangements to link up afterwards. This would ease some of the unnecessary fears of the woman.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
It is not vital that the woman arrive immediately to her new family. She does not need to go through the additional fear of flying when overland travel is possible.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
Although I do not agree with the host nation’s customs/traditions, I did not feel that it was in my power to step in and stop the arranged marriage. Interdicting into the marriage would be overstepping our boundaries—we are there to provide security, not to change their customs/culture to match that of ours. I thought I could provide the woman with an escort to accompany her to her new family so that the trip was not as miserable. Forcing her to fly would be wrong—she was not on a timeline. I also could afford to detach one or two host nation soldiers for the time being. We would have made plans for a later link up.

Student ID# 88318

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would ask her for her side of the story. Since I’m a woman, it would be acceptable to approach her. If her story matched up with theirs, I would just bring her on the plane to make the journey easier on her. If her story didn’t match up to theirs, I would have no choice but to leave her behind and find a way to look into the situation.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I have a moral and legal obligation to ensure her safety and not just obey cultural rules and traditions whether they are of my culture or of someone else’s. I must follow the spirit of the law rather than just the letter, and I have to go with my gut.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I would explain it to HQ the same way I explain it to my counterpart. I might also bring up how she and the men were physically struggling, which seems inappropriate for that culture.

Student ID# 88871

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
No matter what my personal opinion in the situation is, this is a cultural issue and it is not appropriate for me to intervene unless there is evidence of physical abuse or other illegal or criminal behavior. Based on the scenario, this does not seem to be the case; therefore, I would do nothing.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would explain to him that although my personal belief is that she should not be made to go if she does not want to, I respect their culture and their processes for handling such situations. My personal beliefs and professional beliefs do not need to be the same, and I would not volunteer my opinion unless asked. I would wait until later, when we are more removed from the situation, to engage him in a discussion regarding this issue if I felt it the timing and our professional relationship made such a conversation appropriate.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I have no other knowledge of the situation than what I saw and what my counterpart explained to me. I cannot judge their cultural norms based on ours, and I saw no abusive or illegal behavior. While I would be interested to find out if such a situation is truly “normal” and try to engage my counterparts in discussions about the importance of a woman’s choice in important matters, the issue was out of my hands and I felt it would be inappropriate and potentially damaging to international relations to intervene.

Student ID# 90117

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
Nothing. . . make her get on the helicopter. This is a cultural thing & I’d be overstepping my boundaries by doing something.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I’d say its not my area. Whether she was afraid of flying or not & my view on arranged marriages are completely irrelevant. If they were told to take the girl then I’m not going to stand in their way.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
Same as #2.
Student ID# 90722

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
1) Have the woman searched (by another woman) to make sure she is not carrying anything dangerous on her person.
2) Ask the woman what she is doing there, get her side of the story.
3) Tell themen that “I am not allowed to use government aircraft to taxi civilians.”

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
1) Not allowed to use govt. plane for civilian transport.
2) Not comfortable with taking woman far away without express consent of her father/brothers.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
1) Not allowed to use govt. plane for civilian transport.
2) Seemed like kidnapping.

Student ID# 90792

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
First, I would talk to the girl alone to figure out if the problem is the arranged marriage or the fear of flight. If the problem is the fear of flying, then I would get her into the airplane by helping her get over her fears. If not, then I would ask my counterpart exactly what he meant by things could go badly for her. If it is death, rape, or something similar I would allow them to force the girl to go. If not, I would send her overland to give her time to decide if she wants to accept the consequences.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I disagree with arranged marriages, but I am a foreign operative in their country, and thus have to right to impose my culture on them.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
Depends on which path I had to take. If I took the girl, I would say the consequences were too dire to refuse accepting her (or she was afraid of flying, it was senseless to send her by vehicle) and it did not diminish my ability to accomplish the mission. If I sent her by land, there probably would be no reason to explain, save the foreign military has sacrificed a lot, the last thing we should demand them to sacrifice is their culture.

Student ID# 91400

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would work with the pilot to make an excuse saying that we can’t take her because we don’t have enough space in the aircraft, or some other aircraft related issue. This would allow me to avoid endorsing their actions, but at the same time, not denounce their traditions. What they do is up to them, but I have a moral obligation to myself, and the
values of the Army, so I would not participate in any actions that would aid those men in any way. However, I still recognize that they have their traditions, and that I am not the judge of whether they are right or wrong, so I would not just flat out refuse them.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart? I would explain that it is an aircraft or admin issue that prevents me from helping.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters? I would explain that it was the best way to resolve the situation while still preserving the relationship with the host nation, not being the judge of their traditions, and that it was my only option in maintaining the values of the Army and the US at the same time.

Student ID# 92427

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why? If she was the only civilian boarding I would not allow her on because a USG - funded plane should not be used as a commercial jet. However, if this sort of thing, such as civilians boarding aircraft, I would kindly ask the woman to board and tell her things will be worked out at a later time. Who would I be to force my culture on another’s, especially one that has such deep roots. You would only create more enemies by disallowing her to board. Plus, isn’t that call the pilot’s?

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart? I would explain to him that the reason I made this decision was because time was such a critical factor and that the issue would be discussed upon landing and further dealt with upon landing.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters? I would explain to them that any other action would have resulted in a big agreement and delayed the mission. Also, all the men from the host nation would have only considered the opposite action to be an example of the U.S. imposing its will over people. Plus the woman didn’t seem to have other options. If she this flight she would only be slightly delaying the inevitable.

Student ID# 94307

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why? In this situation, I would say that it was not in my orders to allow any civilians onto the aircraft. This way, I would be able to avoid getting in this sticky conflict without my own personal feelings being behind my decision.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart? I would explain that US Army personnel are not allowed to have civilians come onto government owned aircraft without specified orders. In this case, my hands would be tied and I could not accommodate his request. I would apologize though and tell him that I would hope he would understand.
3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I would tell my headquarters that I did not think it was proper to allow civilians to be using a government owned aircraft for a wedding transportation. Regardless of my own feelings on arranged marriage, it was not proper for me to provide civilian transport.

Student ID# 94504

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
If possible I would use an administrative excuse (regulations) to decline her passage. If there were no regulation and the story of the host nation was true (no other motives I would take her).

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would explain that I had a mission and have to follow the rules.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I would explain that I followed the rules + what cultural impacts this might have.

Student ID# 94698

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would be inclined to question it, but ultimately I would likely let them bring her on the plane. In their culture, it seems to be the decision with the least possible negative strategic impact in the region, with the host military making the decision.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would give the reasons listed above.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I would give the reasons listed above and stress the importance of keeping the confidence and trust of the host military by trusting them.

Student ID# 95316

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would attempt to fill up the airplane and explain that there is no room. Boxes of MREs, anything I could get my hands on as “filler” and give it away at the next stop or bring it back with me. If time didn’t allow, I would tell them to hurry up and get on the plane and if the woman isn’t quiet and calm then she is not going. Basically, I would allow her on the plane but make it clear that they had to calm her down. It is better to upset one woman while adhering to their culture than to piss off and possibly strain the relationship with the people I am working with.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would tell him we have work to do and that outside distractions are not appreciated. However, if it goes smoothly it is fine and there are no problems.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
See questions 1 and 2.

Student ID# 95543

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
From my travels, I have generally found that it is best to main the status of “observer” when not acting in an official capacity, especially when alone. Even though the plane is American, it is temporary property of the host nation. To start a conflict between oneself and the host nation in an isolated part of the country is not the best idea, and one always has to be aware of jeopardizing ones personal safety. It is truly unfortunate that the girl is being forced into wedlock, but change isn’t going to start by challenging an established cultural norm. The change has to be from the people. In short, I would do nothing but counsel the girl and make bigger efforts later on to change the institution. Trying to do something could lead to more bad than good for the girl. Challenge the institution without jeopardizing safety.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
Because my decision would be to take the back seat I would not have much to explain to my counterpart. It would be a good source of information and history of the tradition to talk about the arranged marriages with the host nation counterpart. That way a deeper understanding of cultural differences can be reached. There would be a good foundation of knowledge to initiate change.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I would explain that I was ignorant to the nature, history, and details of the situation, along with the fact that the safety of the girl as well as myself would be jeopardized if there was greater intervention. It should be recommended to headquarters that people on the ground get better cultural awareness training, as well as recommend to another branch of the military to initiate a cultural change that comes from the people, and not being forced from an outside source.

Student ID# 95991

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would allow the men to push the woman into the plane and fly on to my destination. You have to think about the advantages and disadvantages of your actions. If I refuse to fly her, I damage relations with a very important ally in the GWOT and add to American stereotypes that we are cultural hegemons. If I refused to fly her, she would still be forced to marry against her will. The negatives of refusing to fly her mostly outweigh the benefits.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
Your cultural norms differ from mine. However, even if you do something I perceive as wrong, as long as it is not a gross moral violation (i.e., genocide), I respect your right to do it. Doing otherwise, intervening, would be imposing the tyranny of my own moral values on you, a crime in itself.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters? There was nothing to be gained from refusing to fly her. She would have been forced to marry against her will later. It is impossible to change an entire cultures’ norms, nor is it right. Refusing her flight would also have greatly damaged relations with a significant American ally. It was both logical and morally right, not intervene.

Student ID# 96057

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why? Given the scenario, I would do nothing. As a visitor in a foreign country, I would do my best to abide and respect the laws and customs of my host, especially on a military mission. While I personally may disagree with their actions based on my own views and culture, my interference would make things worse and would cost the U.S. government the support it had worked to obtain. I would go ahead with the flight as planned.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart? I would state that time is of the essence and would explain that the mission is of paramount military importance.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters? I would state the facts of the scenario, the prevalence and strong observance of the local culture and the pressing need to make a quick decision to ensure the completion of my objective.

Student ID# 96115

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why? I would stick to the cultural standard of the country in which I work. I am a visitor to that place and my job is to finish the mission.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart? I am a guest, and although I may disagree on a cultural level, I still must respect their traditions.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters? I did what was necessary to complete the mission.
1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
Well I could complain about it because I don't approve of arranged marriages, however
the situation is not necessarily in my control to do anything about. What I would really
hope though is that it is true that she has already accepted the arranged marriage and is
simply afraid of flying.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would make clear that I did not agree this idea, however it is their culture so I would not interfere.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
Even though I don't agree with this aspect of the host nation's culture, if I had done
something to jeopardize the arranged marriage not only would it cause strain in our two
countries relations, but the woman's life would be put in danger. All I have to do is think
that even though life with an unloving husband would be harsh, life in disgrace is even
worst. I have heard stories and recounts from women from Iran, Nigeria, and Libya of
when women have had acid pored of their faces or have been treated like whores because
they have been disgraced or are not married. So, by trying to prevent the woman from
going maybe I'd be creating trouble for her.

Student ID# 96396

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
Complete the mission and the flight. Our orders dictate that we complete our mission,
and I single handedly would not be able to change the marital customs of another nation.
One incident would cause more disrupt than good.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I believe they would be relieved since the decision I made was in their interests.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
I was not in a position to make an effective judgment call; the other choice would cause
more harm than good.

Student ID# 98414

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
I would have the host nation captain reassure the woman that flying is the safest mode of
travel in this instance. I think she should go because that is how the country works; she
will be in danger if she doesn't go; not taking her could ruin relations between the two
countries which could cause danger for more people, + there is no evidence that I know
of which leads me to believe she will in danger by going.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
I would tell him that I think it is the wisest decision for all parties and keeps more people out of danger than puts them in it.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
The same way. There is no evidence or reason for me to believe that the woman would be in danger by going. Arranged marriage is part of their culture & it’s not my job to try to change that. It is my job to ensure relations with this country go smoothly & that I keep people safe. All other options than flying her to her husband undermine my duties.

Student ID# 99536

1. What, if anything, would you do in this situation? Why?
Because of the time rush I would say no. It is an American plane and not official Army business. I would leave the woman to go back to her family or her new husband.

2. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your host nation counterpart?
It is not a military matter. I would keep my reasoning from touching the cultural difference or my personal objection.

3. If asked, how would you explain this decision to your headquarters?
Morally and professionally I decided it would be best to leave the woman there.
Focus Group One

Moderator: Welcome and thank you for your participation in our study. Please help yourself to the food and drinks and make yourselves at home. I am going to ask you a series of questions about your time abroad and the two cultural competence assessment instruments you completed: the standardized test, IDI, and the written scenario based assessment. Please be frank.

Question 1: What is your previous experience abroad?

Student 1: I did a month in Chile with the SOSH (Social Sciences) Department. We were working for Habitat for Humanity there but only four days a week. I spent the rest of the time going on trips around the country seeing different socio-economic levels. Each weekend we would move up a level. We started out at a really base level, with no hot showers and that, and stayed in a pretty nice hotel the last weekend.

Student 2: I did a semester abroad in China. I was, basically, up north in Jilin, near Korea. I guess other than that I traveled a lot internationally in Europe, Asia, and South America and I’m originally from Korea and grew up there for a while before moving to the United States.

Student 3: Um, this past semester I spent four months in Jordan and I did a lot of travel over there, in Jordan and the area and I met a lot of people. I went to Israel and I was actually born in Israel, and before this, before West Point I went to Qatar for Spring Break spent with their military academy and hosted their military cadets and also spent three weeks in Egypt traveling in the region.

Student 4: I spent a semester in France, most of it in Paris.

Student 5: I was in Mexico City for a semester abroad and did a month in Monterrey on an AIAD (Advanced Individual Academic Development). I was, um, with a family in Mexico City instead of a dorm.

Student 1: I didn’t understand the question; I also spent five months in Mexico on a semester abroad.

Question 2: What was your most challenging intercultural encounter while abroad?

Student 1: Me and some of the other international students, an Australian and a Bulgarian, and two Chileans we took a trip through southern Mexico and on the return leg of it back to the airport we stopped at a small restaurant on the side of the highway. It was just a small restaurant made out of, like, cardboard and plywood boards and the food smelled good so we stopped in and then the whole family came out to help cook the meal.
There were, like, kids running around, and they started talking to us and they wanted to play games with us and, like, three hours later we were still there and we were there playing soccer in the dirt by the side of the highway. Um, then when it was time for us to go so we could make it in time for our flight there were, I don’t know, one of the kids started crying because they didn’t want us to leave and they usually don’t play with other people besides their brothers and sisters and they were sad to see us go. That was a different experience for me.

Student 3: We made a lot of really good friends while abroad and, especially in Jordan, um, some great friends and they always invite you over to their houses for dinner, which is really different than in the U.S. We had a family dinner with a traditional Jordanian dish called Mansar where everybody stands around the table and you first wash your hands and then eat the rice and beef with your hands and you’re really close together, you know. One of my friends had me over to his house for it with his whole family and we all stood around the table and I was trying to talk in Arabic and everybody is sitting there eating and it was one of those experiences where you just really feel part of the culture. The same kind of thing happened to me in Qatar when I went in there. In Qatar it was a little bit different we sat around sharing from the same big bowl but there you do it on the ground, sitting on the ground cross-legged and it was the kind of thing. One of the cadets there, his family, like, sacrificed two sheep for us and like had this big presentation of food and everything and we all sat around and at the end, like, the head is really sacred and they pulled out the eyes and put it in your hands and you were supposed to eat it, so that was really one of those unique experiences where you really feel part of the culture.

Student 4: I guess one thing that really stuck with me was this guy getting really mad at me for not calling him “monsieur” when I said hello to him. I mean, I thought I was doing pretty good just greeting them in French and all, but he was really pissed off about it. That almost made me want to quit being polite but I realized he might have been having a bad day or something. Most of the people I met were great.

Student 2: Um, for us we were in China when it was leading up to the Olympics and it was kind of like this group, they started this movement, and it was called Olympic hugs and basically what they would do is they would take a bunch of foreigners and they would take them out to a small town and you would, like, hang out in front of a bank or something – we did it in front of a bank – and you all stand there and hug people and they played music and a crowd gathered because the Chinese there hadn’t seen foreigners before. And it was just, like, this shock that there were people of a different color out there or who spoke a completely different language. And even me, although I look Chinese – I’m Korean but I look Chinese – even then they looked at me the way I dressed and it was obvious I wasn’t who they were. We were all standing in a line with signs that said “hug me,” and they were, like, really hesitant to hug me and show warmth and they were hesitant to even come up to you and, like, say hi or to touch you or shake your hand; and I think that was when I finally noticed isolated China really was and how those people really have no idea what is going on in the world outside how it forces you to really understand why they are the way they are and why so many things happened that we just didn’t understand. Um, but that was, like, once when we got started if one person
would come up and say hi and come and hug somebody or [laughs] be forced to come hug somebody then everybody would want to hug and have pictures taken and all this stuff. It just kind of, it’s like you almost find that everyone’s human, almost. Whereas in the beginning they might have thought that we are all aliens, like, or a malicious kind of thing like we were a bunch of kids competing to try to get someone’s attention. That was probably the most memorable encounter.

Student 5: I guess it would either be family gatherings during my home stay or taking public transportation in Mexico City. Like, in my family it was just close relatives but in Mexico there could be thirty or forty people in the house all talking at once until late at night. I don’t see how anyone can anything done but it was fun. The busses were, um, just a different thing than I was used to because if you were polite or tried to stay in a line you would never get anywhere. So I learned to just butt in and join the crowd so I could get to class every day.

Question 3: Think back to that encounter: If it was a successful encounter, what kind of skills did you use to negotiate it? If it was not successful, what skills were you lacking or do you wish you had?

Student 3: Um, when you are in another culture, I was raised in a very culturally diverse family where, I mean, I was born in Israel and I come from a very diverse background there is always cultural acceptance and, like, being worldly, like understanding other cultures and having other friends and things like that, is not very closed-minded. So, that’s the key and you notice this too, like, when you go abroad and some of the guys that you go abroad with and you can tell that they were not in key with that and they would have more trouble fitting in and where it came from was getting in to a culture and trying to see from that, from the other culture’s point of view and not passing your judgment on how if you were in America you would saw the same thing on this person. Um, I can think of an example and it’s, um, weird for Americans to understand but in the Middle East a lot of times it’s very common to marry your second cousin and things like that. And so, when, you know, like some Americans would hear, “oh I have an engagement party” and “oh, good, who’s the girl” and “oh, it’s my uncle’s daughter” and they’re like, “it’s your cousin; you are marrying your cousin; ugh.” It’s like some people, a lot of people instead of understanding it’s alright in this culture they’re “we don’t accept that in the U.S.” but, you know, it’s things like that you have to just take a moment and realize it’s just different in that culture and you just want to try accept it more and understand rather than, like, passing judgment. So, that is really important to be able to fit in to another culture or at least understand it and appreciate it.

So, other ideas?

Student 1: I think like he was saying earlier, with the meal of rice and meat: just being open to try new things and having a good sense of humor, like being able to joke around about stuff, really helps with just making friends.
Student 5: Well, I guess you need to have a lot of traits at once. Like, you need to be open-minded and able to, you know, express yourself without offending anyone. Being outgoing and curious, too, because you won’t get anything out of it if you are always hiding in your room. You also can’t judge someone else’s culture so just accept it.

Student 2: I think patience was a really big thing, um, for us in China just because, um, like it just kind of goes back to the whole thing, like they are not used to dealing with foreigners and they assume, like, because everything they have done is the way they’ve done it they all assume that they are the ones that are right and I guess we do the same thing and by having the patience to realize that, hey, we really do come from two different worlds and you have to adapt to the situation. Um, I’d also say something, like, having the willingness to be wrong, I guess, and like, I know a lot of us are afraid to do things like when you guys went abroad and we didn’t want to do things that might offend somebody or “we’re too scared to, like, try something new.” And it’s like, by putting yourself out there you’ll get a lot more out of it rather than just kind of shrinking back and saying, “Oh, I’m just an observer.” Unless you decide to interact you’re not going to get anything out of it.

Question 4: What are some ways the Army could identify and measure these skills?

Student 1: I don’t know, it’s hard thing short of actually observing them in another culture and seeing how people deal with it. I mean, if there’s a way to make a test that just takes people from different cultures and puts them together and just seeing how they interact.

Student 3: I know that when I was in Jordan, the place that we stayed at was, uh, the same place that they send DLI (Defense Language Institute). Like, the Arabic students from DLI in their last month at DLI they sent them to, like, they send usually the top whatever percentage to Jordan to just get some cultural experience to use the language, and, um, so I mean, that’s one way to send people to actually do that. But that’s tough so one thing the Army could do is something that’s called cultural cards, you get, like, those Iraq cards that talk about the hand gestures and things like that, and, so, like, more of those things.

Student 1: You know, kind of like a knowledge test and if you want to measure it. So, if you are going to this country here’s a list of customs, like, “what would you do?” blah, blah, blah, blah.

Student 5: Yeah, some kind of pre-deployment training for that would be good. You could check out how much people know about the culture before they go there. It would, um, make everyone better prepared for it.

Student 2: Um, I always think that if you could put people in a situation where they didn’t agree with something, um, like not necessarily just a plan of action or a situation but more like values or beliefs and if they start clashing to, like, see how they handle it kind of. And then, like, if they are really stubborn and not really listening to the other person and how they felt about something, like, if you took any controversial topic like abortion
or the death penalty and watch them discuss it, it would almost, you could almost see that whole dynamic of if you are willing to even listen to the other person’s idea or you’re going to take it in or you’re willing to compromise any. Um, that’s like, how I sometimes felt in China; it was like two very stubborn people going at it [laughs] and they weren’t willing to take it and there were, like, other people who had worked with Western students before and they were a little more willing to see our perspective and our side of things. And that was, like, I could really see a difference in who was willing to take that approach and who wasn’t, even from our side, like from the cadets’.

Question 5: How well do you think the IDI and SBA captured your willingness and ability to adapt to an intercultural situation?

Student 1: I think its okay. It shows you how you perceive yourself and how you actually are. If you just get to see, are just made aware of the discrepancies, you might see flaws in your intercultural abilities and just be more aware of what you need to work on; if that is something you want to do.

Student 2: Yeah, I think that it shows if you are like, actually at one level, it’s like things I did in China that it makes me wonder was I really in defense or denial or whatever, or how often I was, like, offending the other person.

Student 5: I like the self-knowledge you get from the test. It helps you, like, think through where you are and where you should be.

Student 3: Yeah, I would say that’s pretty accurate. You know, if I knew I was pretty ethno-centric I think I’d try to, um change that. But as far as the scenario goes, uh, you are kind of hamstrung from the beginning because, because, in giving an answer to the scenario you’re not going to give all the um, how do I say, it’s just a basic description because there were no other variables like what culture it is. But as far as that goes, I think it was a little too long for, you know, for the scenario.

Student 4: The scenario thing was too hypothetical for me to give a good answer. I mean, there weren’t enough details to know the real situation. I think it might be good if you can talk it out with someone in an interview or something like that.

Student 3: I think that one thing you could do is, like, teach cadets when they are in an intercultural thing that they need to ask themselves, “Is it the right thing to do?” Because I know in our group we had a lot of hard-charging infantrymen, um, and they were really decisive and um, you know, maybe like letting the cadets know “hey, in this situation that might be the wrong approach and you might want to think about doing something differently.”

Student 2: I think it’s useful, sir, but I think it’s how much the individual puts weight on it. I know, like, the whole scenario, I had something like it, I guess you could liken it to the fact, uh, that in China you drink at every meal and that’s what you do. I mean, you drink all the time, and I don’t drink, period. So, when I’m there and people offer beer
and say, "here’s a beer" it’s for me to be like, "I don’t drink," it would be like they wouldn’t understand that. They would feel like you were just judging something that’s really part of their lives more so than “I just don’t drink because I choose not to.” And, although I didn’t see it, I just said, “I don’t drink, that’s just who I am,” and I didn’t drink throughout my entire five months because that is, like, my personal choice but it’s like at the end of it I wondered “should I have?” “Did that, like, ruin the relationship with someone that I could have had who wanted to go out drinking socially or something, not, you know. It makes me think about it, what people in that situation – it’s like the scenario based assessment: is it that kind of situation? I don’t know how you would enforce or teach that but, like, with mine I did in that situation what I would normally do. As weighted as that situation was; you had to negotiate with officials for national security purposes, it is still, like, similar.

Question 6: How relevant do you think the IDI and SBA were to a military audience such as that at West Point?

Student 2: I think it’s relevant to any person. I mean for us, we couldn’t even say we were from West Point when we were over there, but we still, of course, had all the rules and stuff, but it’s still like we have to act like we’re just normal people. It’s not, like, being an Army officer changes who you are necessarily; maybe to a certain extent.

Student 5: Um, I think it was good. It’s generic but that’s best even for the military because it’s not like we’re the only ones who need to have cultural awareness. It’s good to have something that’s not so military all the time like our professional military education tests.

Question 7: Did the IDI and SBA place an unreasonable demand on your time?

[All the students shake their heads.]

Student 4: No, it was easy.

Student 2: They excused us to take the DLPT (Defense Language Proficiency Test) anyway, so it wasn’t a big deal.

Question 8: Given the importance that the Army is placing on intercultural competence and the fact that it is a stated goal in *Educating Future Army Officers for a Changing World*, what advice would you give the Dean about the IDI and SBA?

Student 1: I would say, sir, that if you had to choose the scenario based assessment was more valuable, not because it gives a good view of what the level of cadet ethnocentricity is, but because, um, it’s get people thinking about things. I think the IDI is more of, like, an interesting, well, you don’t walk away from it – it doesn’t really affect the way you see things. The scenario is similar, there are people who are cynical about it, it is similar to the PME (professional military education) I think where it’s not all about taking an
index of where you are morally but it's to put you in a situation to, like, challenge yourself more. It's the same thing where that is probably more valuable.

Student 2: I think we got a lot out of our discussion when we did the scenario based one, like we did it with Arabic and Chinese together. We had a really interesting discussion and there were a lot of different opinions about that whole thing. I guess it makes you think that "if that person views it this way is she right or am I right or is there really a right or wrong answer?" and it kind of makes you think about that. I think with the IDI it's a little bit harder to gauge if it is accurate, if it really is, because we get a lot of standardized tests and a lot of people are, like, "it's filling in bubbles." It's like "check the box and kinda get it done." And the other part of that is you have to see the individual scores and have it explained. I think most people would take and get their scores and take it again, saying, like, "I didn't take it seriously the first time." But, I mean, that's the kind of responses - that's how I feel sometimes because you get all kinds of assessments and tests but you never get results and it's like "OK, so why do I take this seriously the next I do it again?" I think that why you would have to provide individual feedback so that it's in your head to take it seriously. I think that at some point in your cultural experience you will think back and remember that you did this and you would notice, like, "I guess I really am in denial" and that sort of thing. Um, but I think it would be useful at some point.

Student 5: I'd keep the test and use it with the DLPT (Defense Language Proficiency Test). I know, um, our language improves the more we are on the ground so there's no reason our cultural scores should be better too.

Question 9: Our goal is to evaluate these two assessment tools for potential use here at West Point. Is there anything we overlooked that you would like to add?

Student 1: I remember when we first took it, and they were saying that culture could be taught separate from language, and whether; how related were the two, um, and I guess this test makes an attempt at measuring culture separate from language. But, I think that, just from my experiences, that language seems to be such a part of the culture, uh, that I don't know if you can, I guess you can measure the culture part separately but to develop their ability to work with other cultures I think that the ability; that having to learn the language is integral to that.

Student 4: Yeah, and if, um, you want to do that you need be out in the culture. I'd say staying with a host family instead in an apartment or dorm is really important. You just can't learn as much language or culture if you are always hanging around other Americans. Make sure everybody knows the names of world leaders, too! It's, like, everybody expects us to be ignorant.

Student 3: This is the first time we've discussed it since we actually took it, you know, and many people don't choose to participate in a study and they'll never hear about this again. So, I mean I definitely agree that we need to find a way for everyone to get their feedback. I mean, it's just like the DLPT - I wouldn't have known what I got unless I
actively found out my score, so, I guess the Army has to work on getting better feedback if they want their test to be effective. Um, and then the test also... it's like one of those tests that sort of says, like, do you agree, strongly disagree, slightly disagree, whatever, neutral and when it, like, tweaks - it just tweaks these questions so slightly, you know, I don't know what he's asking so I'm just going to put "neutral."

Student 2: It's like what's the difference between "agree" and "slightly agree?" and I was sleepy.

Student 1: Yeah. I don't know how else to do that but it might not be effective because the questions just get annoying after a while. Finally, all right, whatever the first thing that pops into my head I'm just going to go with it.

Moderator: Thanks for taking the time out to discuss it with us. The information you gave was very valuable and will help West Point improve its immersion experiences. Good luck with the rest of your studies and your Army career, which will start sooner than you expect!

Focus Group Two

Moderator: Greetings all, and thank you for coming today. Help yourself to the food and drinks and please make yourselves comfortable. I am going to ask you a series of questions about your experience abroad and the two cultural competence assessment instruments you completed: the standardized test, IDI, and the written scenario based assessment.

Question 1: What is your previous experience abroad?

Student 1: I went to Russia.

Student 2: I went to Egypt.

Student 3: I went to Morocco for a semester abroad.

Student 4: I went to Egypt for a semester abroad and before that I went to Jordan on two AIAD's (advanced individual academic development).

Student 5: I went to France for a semester abroad and I went to France for an AIAD.

Question 2: What was your most challenging intercultural encounter while abroad?

Student 4: My most memorable one was on my second AIAD to Jordan. Um, me and a friend of mine was with me, we got invited to this, uh, house. It was, you know, one of the Arab students who was studying at the university where we were doing our English program, and uh, basically we went over there and he was being really nice and everything and we got into this conversation about heaven and hell: who goes to heaven...
and who goes to hell. His brother was this pretty devout guy, like he wore a beard that was pretty long and he didn’t shave it like most of the other guys we interacted with. He was trying to tell us, like, you guys can’t go to heaven because you’re not Muslim and so I was trying to, the big thing I was trying to explain was, you know, you believe that because it is in the Qu’ran and like the reason you have to believe that Islam is better. It was, you know, really uncomfortable for me to be over there, in addition to the fact that the brother, he told us that we would be; that we were just going to stay there for a little while. I was just trying to be really hospitable and so we had to stay as long as we had to stay. You know these two things together just made me really uncomfortable and when we got back here to our room, to our apartment, that night I just pretty much vented. I was really angry and, you know, and I know the situation is part of their culture and we talked about that for a few hours after that and for the rest of the trip.

Student 5: I know in France people have this reputation of, like, being cold and impersonal: ils sont froids (they are cold). And I, I didn’t really have any friends when I was there for my AIAD at first. I worked at a mental hospital and when I was first there, like no one talked to me. I kind of found; I was doing translations for doctors and I had my little office that I would just go to work and do my translations and then go back to my hotel. No one would talk to me and I was the only American there and nobody really knew I was there. Finally, I was there for two, two and a half weeks and one of the psychologists invited me to her house for dinner. And when she finally invited me to her house, she was, like, younger, like thirty, thirty-five and had a young daughter and, uh, over dinner we had a, we just discussed things for a long time. I ended up staying at her house for three or four hours and we got really, really close. I asked her how come, like, people were, people never talked to me at first. Like, in America, as soon as new person comes it’s like open arms, you know. I couldn’t understand why our culture was that way and French culture wasn’t. She asked me what Americans thought about French people and I told her Americans thought they were pretty cold and she said, “it’s not that we’re cold, it’s that we’re doubtful at first. I didn’t want to ask you to dinner just to have you say yes to say yes. I wanted to make sure we had something to talk about and we would have something in common.” That was kind of a big breakthrough for me in that I could see that these people weren’t horrible, that they were just cautious and they wanted to be sure that you had something in common so that you could have a relationship that would be long lasting and strong. I thought that was an interesting cultural breakthrough.

Student 2: Uh, other than climbing the pyramids it was pretty limited. I made a really good Egyptian friend and he had, like, nine brothers and sisters and they were all living in a little, like, apartment I guess. And I went to the apartment complex a couple of times and one time towards the end of our time in Egypt I told him that it was really good to have made such a good friend. He took it really well, but he was, like, really shocked and he had me over to his house to meet his family and all. I thought it was going to be really cool, but when we got there his mother had cooked all this chicken for us and there was tons and tons of food. So we sat at a table, me and my friend Akhmed, and, like, his father and two of his brothers, um, and felt like I should be eating a lot and that they were really trying to impress me. They didn’t know I was in the military and when his brother Ibrahim came home he said, “you guys know he’s the military, right?” My friend said
that, well, there’s no problem with that but his brother said, no, he wants to go to Iraq and kill people. Like, it was pretty intense, you know? And, um, I kind of like looked around at everyone like I misinterpreted it and I didn’t quite know what to say. They started laughing and they got a big kick out of it but it was pretty uncomfortable. I told them, like, I didn’t want to go and kill people: I wanted to be an engineer and help rebuild and stuff, you know. I think they kind of understood that answer and were comfortable and interested and stuff. Um, I think they realized that it’s not just about going and killing people and we’re branching out and trying to help people. Like, trying to defend myself in Arabic, that was hard.

Student 3: One of the, um, most shocking things for me as far as cultural experiences during my stay abroad, was when I went home for the weekend with this female friend of mine, lots of the exchange students were females, and her father and brother weren’t home. Her mother and two elder sisters were, so I didn’t know how that would turn out and I figured I would just stay in a hotel or something like that but it was totally the opposite. They took me in for the whole time, which really shocked me and it went against the whole stereotype of the Arabs and their cultural norms. It really wasn’t an issue at all even though we were in Morocco.

Student 1: Once I went to this mosque with my friends and I thought it was going to be all serious but they were, like joking around and laughing there. It kind of blew my mind because I always thought the mosques were supposed to be such serious places. Anyway, it showed me how different things can be than you expect.

Question 3: Think back to that encounter: If it was a successful encounter, what kind of skills did you use to negotiate it? If it was not successful, what skills were you lacking or do you wish you had?

Student 4: I remember in my situation, it was one where my Arabic instructor, he was on the trip with us. He told me, well you know how it is and people have to know where you’re coming from, if that’s the only exposure they have then they are going to accept some things as facts that you are not going to accept as facts and, at the end of the day, you are going to have your beliefs and they are going to have their beliefs and just because they say that they are right doesn’t mean that they are right and you are wrong or the other way around. So, it’s kind of like, I mean in a way it’s like we were traveling so fast that when we were in Jordan and then again when I went to Egypt it’s like we experienced so many different things I knew that it wasn’t, it wasn’t the norm for every single person. I realize that there are certain things with the culture that are common and then are certain things where people are going to vary on their opinions just based on individuals. And so when we were in Jordan we went to the house of this Jordanian officer who had been a cadet, he was on a FAEP here at the academy, and so he invited us over when we were down near Petra and it was the same hospitality and everything and we just didn’t get on that topic and we just talked about general things. I mean, I think I realized that there are some people no matter what culture that are just going to rub me wrong and it’s not always just the culture that, like sometimes it’s the culture that is
influencing it but it's not determining that. There's a lot of variance in how people are and how they act.

Student 2: I think one thing that helps is sort just playing dumb, like being able to just go with the flow and don't, you know, kind of like you said, don't take people's point of view as everything. It was like, we had this one kid in Egypt who took things personally, like if anyone said anything against Israel he would like, get mad and he went off on the entire culture based on this one experience. You know, he would just compile, and the fact that he wasn't getting out of the dorm and didn't really see anything. So I think if you, if you, can just make yourself feel comfortable in a conversation like when the Egyptians have something to say that you don't like you can say, well, "that's your opinion and you are very, like, entitled" even if you think it's kind of weird, you know. That's the way you have to deal with it if you want to get anything out of the experience.

Student 4: I agree with the playing dumb part, like once when we were in Egypt and one time that cadet had a bad experience because people are always trying to rip you off because you are an American and things like that. People are coming up with judgments and like we said earlier, um, if you're kind of playing dumb and making a joke out of things, like we would say, "oh, I must be crazy," and "I must be ignorant," and things like that really helped because it gave us things to laugh about and helped us use Arabic that we wouldn't have used otherwise. And, like, just making jokes and even if the Egyptians didn't understand them, like there was some reference to American pop culture in Arabic, like, it was kind of fun.

Student 5: I think, uh, you can't take things personally because when someone says something to you or even when they're not talking to at all like they were at the beginning for me. You can't just think they are, like, terrible, I mean you have to know where they are coming from and also just keep an open mind and realize there's a reason for everything. There's a reason why people are doing these things; they're not just doing them because they are horrible people but because that is all they know, or that's how they grew up.

Student 3: I would say a sense of humor was huge in everything. Even if it was, you know, something that made no sense the fact that you were trying showed. I remember there were several times when I was traveling by myself and, I don't know, I'd meet some random person like some shepherd or something. The conversations could end up going for a couple of hours starting with "hi, how are you" then "why are you some random American guy walking in the mountains?" Once you got past that it was always the war, and Bush, and, um, stuff like that and religion, which came up constantly. It was just very important for me to just, like, be able to laugh it off. If I didn't have the language skills, or they didn't either, to have an intelligent discussion about it we could still laugh it off. It was helpful to, like, compartmentalize stuff and not take it personally in Morocco.

Student 1: I think like it was said earlier, paying attention to small details about people and knowing that if they do certain things there's a reason behind it. One thing, too, is to
have a sense of adventure. Like, we would go out every night and plan our route to make sure we hit different places, even some shady ones or places where nobody speaks English. I think if you want to get the most out of it you have to, like, you have to be able to plan out your time and use it well.

Student 2: I think you also need to make sure you get out of the dorm and away from other American students. I mean, a lot of the students from regular universities didn’t have the same experiences as we did and they weren’t there for the same reasons, and so their Arabic wasn’t as good and they weren’t as serious about learning things. Do, once a week we would plan to go out and smoke shisha with one of our friends from the university who were Americans and we would end up speaking mostly English, but the next night or later on that day we would be, like, okay we’re going to go to this spot on the map and we’re going pick this landmark and we’re going to tell the cab driver to go and we’re gonna go out and see what’s there. That was pretty much what we did.

Question 4: What are some ways the Army could identify and measure these skills?

Student 5: Oh, sir, you have to be outgoing. You have to be willing to put yourself out there and be shot down. I mean, that person who is quiet is going to sit in the corner and they are going to spend all of their time on the internet.

Student 2: I think they tend to label you; I know in DFL they use grade point average (GPA) to choose but I think it’s, um, important to realize that academic performance might be counter to what you want. The people who perform well academically are people who tend to like a very structured learning environment, and that’s why they are, you know, doing very well at the academy. It’s like, I wake up at this time, I go to these classes, I do this at a certain time. The people who did well on semester abroad were the opposite: on my semester abroad I couldn’t even tell you, like, what I was going to do in the next fifteen minutes.

Student 5: I, I have to answer, disagree with that because . . .

Student 4: [laughs] You get good grades.

Student 5: Yeah, [laughs] but I was abroad with six other people and I would say that three of them were at the top of their class and three were at the bottom of their class. I would say that, um, the half that did well were not necessarily the half that were at the top or bottom: it was kind of a mixture. I don’t think you can look at it GPA and say automatically, “I don’t think that cadet will work.” Some of the cadets with the lowest GPA’s would only, like, go out with other Americans, so I don’t think you can only look at GPA. You have to look at a combination of the two. I mean, you have to get someone who cares enough about school, you know, about academics, that they will want to go out there and learn, but at the same time they can’t be so closed minded that they are always going to stay in their room and study. So I think it’s really important to have a combination of the two. So, there should be a cutoff for GPA but the interview should
have a lot of weight for semester abroad because the personality of the person is probably more important than, you know, the grades.

Student 4: I think maybe you judge based on, maybe, how prior AIAD’s went. I know, like, when I went on AIAD’s there were people who, you know, did what I did in Egypt, who would like, go out at night and say, “see you later,” and we would meet back up at the hotel later that night. But there were some people who went straight back to the hotel and would swim and, uh, went to bed and they wouldn’t speak Arabic when we went to sites the next day. Like, from what I saw, those who went on to do semester abroad behaved almost the same way as that, especially when there’s not an instructor there to hold your hand and make you get out there.

Student 3: Maybe one thing you could ask is, like, what kind of pass do you take; what do you do with your time off? If you have someone who goes home and does laundry and their homework every time they have a pass maybe that’s not the kind of person you want going on a semester abroad. I mean, maybe they are: maybe they’ll get immersed and love it but I would look at someone who just went to some random place in New York and, like, trashed my car and had a great time. That might be more of the kind person who would, you know, get something out of it.

Question 5: How well do you think the IDI and SBA captured your willingness and ability to adapt to an intercultural situation?

Student 5: I remember taking the test and looking at some of the questions, like, what are they trying to say? One of them was, “Is your culture more tolerant than others?” or something like that. I’m thinking, well, I was in France for a semester and France is, you know, much more tolerant, but maybe it’s just that one person was more tolerant than one in the United States. So, how do you answer that? “Yes, my culture is more tolerant” or not? Was I supposed to compare my culture to France or what?

Moderator: To you last cultural experience, wherever that was.

Student 5: Oh, I don’t think that was clearly explained and it might make a difference. That’s not how I answered the question at all.

Student 1: That’s how I answered it, so I was thinking of the religious differences and stuff that I saw when I was there. I think how you, like, answered the scenario one gave a pretty good idea about someone’s approach but I think you could ask a few, even better questions about it. You could, um, ask about different views of it, like “what do you think about doing this?” So then it turns into a discussion or dialogue instead of just choosing one or the other option, you know. You could learn a lot more about the student that way.

Student 2: I think it’s interesting to know where you are on the scale, but one of the things I think is more interesting is that they told you were, like, going on this semester abroad and then you made it what you made it. It wasn’t gauged; it wasn’t, you know,
graded. I don’t know if giving the test might kind of destroy that aspect of the program, but it might be interesting to see how I changed.

Student 3: I think it might be interesting to know, um, more about the test before you go, like, I had no clue about it when I took it and it might help me to know about how it works. Then when I come back it helps me look for some things that I did or should have done. Then it would be, like, it is with the language test and it would definitely be beneficial.

Student 4: When you look at the difference between the perception and result scores, uh, I bet a lot of people have that similar pattern: thinking that we’re open but maybe we might not really be. It’s natural to think that, hey, you know, we’re pretty tolerant but maybe in different areas we might be intolerant. It could go either way: you look at the test and say “well, it’s just garbage” or somebody might actually take that information and use it.

Student 2: I know a lot times my perception of where I am on a scale has changed and fluctuated since I got back because I know when we hit the ground coming in to the States were, like, “Oh, thank God we’re on American soil.” But, you know, a couple of hours before that we were sad to be leaving Egypt. A month after that I was buying my car and, like, I seriously though I was going to be able to go to the dealership and haggle with the guy and get the price down. And then I was going to New York City and I got really pissed because there was this line to get in the subway car and I thought, “I should just cut all these people and park myself right in the front of the line because this is so inefficient and all of these people are just waiting and taking their time. If they just had a guy behind the booth throwing tickets out at people I’d already be on the subway.” And then there are times I thought, “Man, I’m glad I’m not in traffic now and breathing carbonous fumes all day.”

Student 5: Yeah, it changes the longer you get back. When I first got back I was, like, France has this great culture and they are so open to other cultures but now that I’m back I really like America.

Student 3: It hit me, like, delayed.

Question 6: How relevant do you think the IDI and SBA were to a military audience such as that at West Point?

Student 2: I think it’s useful.

Student 4: Especially when you’re talking about, like in military science class, about different types of officership and different tiers of knowledge like political and, um, cultural. It can give you more information about yourself in that field, just the way taking MS (military science) class would give you more information about how you are in your, you know, technical field.
Student 1: This is good knowledge about yourself, like, what I’m learning about in MS right now, this could be a way to see where you’re at, you know, in your cultural awareness. I think all these things are good to know about, like if you are a platoon leader and you about to go to Iraq and you aren’t very culturally sensitive or you know how you perceive other cultures you could, like, focus on that before you go.

Student 5: If you as a platoon leader, it depends on your branch, could give everyone in your unit this test it could help you decide which squad leader you are going to use to go out and talk to people and which one I’ll leave back in the rear area to do the defense thing. Like that guy that is all pissed off about the Iraqis isn’t, um, the one you are going to send out there to a house but for searching someone’s family you would want the one who is more understanding and who will show them some respect.

Student 3: I think the test, this first one, might be a good way to quantify things but I think that talking to someone and knowing your people, if you actually know someone, you can pretty much tell who would be the better candidate, maybe even the better than using the test. I remember the questions were very trickily worded, they were...

Student 2: They were trying to see the perceived and real difference.

Student 5: Kind of like a combination of those two might open up things as a way to start the conversation. So you say, “You scored this on the test, what do you think about that?” I’m sure a lot of platoon leaders coming out of here, how do we know how we are going to talk to our soldiers about different cultures? How do we even know where to, uh, begin that conversation? This might be a good starting point to launch an even deeper conversation about where they are coming from.

Student 1: It’s a good, like, conversation starter that way.

Student 4: It kind of reminds me of PME (professional military education), you know, you kind of like discuss these situations that your soldiers face but in a cultural way.

Student 2: Some people don’t like to see numbers and all, and they might just sit there and not say a word, so I don’t know if that would be good.

Student 4: I don’t think you have to worry about the numbers, it’s the ideas, and you can, um, look at it more like what you would do than where you are.

Student 5: I think it’s more like a moral situation, cultural awareness.

Student 2: I think if you remember it’s an assessment, a tool, and not, I don’t think it can really mean, be a definitive answer on where you are, you know. It can kind of give you an idea, because it’s just like any test. A test doesn’t mean your performance is going to be good or the other way. I’ve had friends who got, like, crappy scores on the DLPT (Defense Language Proficiency Test) but, you know, when I was with them in the Middle East they were talking up a storm and they know how to handle themselves. Then there’s
the other way around: there are people who know how to read and listen in Arabic but
they can’t speak. It’s probably the same with culture, you know, they might give the
wrong answer on a test but then go out and read the situation and act appropriately.

Question 7: Did the IDI and SBA place an unreasonable demand on your time?

[All students shake their heads].

Student 4: We got out of graduation week parades for it [laughs].

Question 8: Given the importance that the Army is placing on intercultural competence
and the fact that it is a stated goal in educating future Army Officers for a Changing
World, what advice would you give the Dean about the IDI and SBA?

Student 5: With this test, sir, I don’t think you can put a grade on it: it shouldn’t become
part of our GPA. I think it could be used as a tool, but not as an assessment tool.

Student 4: It shouldn’t have anything to do with GPA or any of that.

Student 2: Like I said, this is something that can make me think about it but it is not a
definitive answer on where or what I am or anything like that.

Student 1: It gets you thinking about the different, um, stages, but I don’t know if it’s the
best way to get people thinking about that.

Student 3: Considering how much money they spent just to send us abroad and seeing
how much just the plane ticket was, maybe the test is, like, worth it.

Student 4: I think it depends on how you use it. If you explain it early on and then
discuss the results and you see, “Hey, I’m really bad according to this test in this one
category,” you can see just how you could be aware of that and then afterwards see if you
were able to focus in on the particular area and move on the scale and, you know, affect
that.

Student 2: So you are constantly evolving and you can see how you are moving on the
scale and being, like, more tolerant.

Student 1: I think it’s, uh, kind of hard to separate all of this from a specific country or
culture like the tests did. Like what you would do might be different depending on which
part of the country you are in and who is there and all.

Student 3: I don’t think the test is worth it as it is now but it could be developed more. I
think you get a, you know, better understanding of where people’s cultural awareness is
through a better test. If was better I would say, yeah, it’s worth the money but right now
I don’t think so.
Question 1: What is your previous experience abroad?

Student 1: I spent a semester in Morocco and did an AIAD (advanced individual academic development) in Egypt.

Student 2: I spent a semester at St. Cyr (the French military academy) and did an AIAD in Senegal with the French Marines.

Student 3: I was in China doing a semester abroad.

Student 4: Um, I was in Russia for a semester abroad. We stayed with a host family and went to a civilian university.

Student 5: I was in Egypt for a semester abroad and did an AIAD in Jordan.

Question 2: What was your most challenging intercultural encounter while abroad?

Student 1: I was invited, um, to this Sheik’s house who was a friend of the family of one of the guys I was in school with, and it was pretty intense. There was all of this food and we were there really late and the guy kept trying to convert me to Islam. It was, like, he kept telling me I would not get to heaven if I didn’t follow the Qu’ran and he was a Wahabbist so he was really strict about it all. I had never been around any fundamentalist types so it was pretty weird for me and all. I wasn’t used to talking about religious things, but I knew it was important to them so I hung with it. The only thing that kept him from getting mad was the fact that I was trying to talk Arabic, and I guess the only thing that kept me from getting mad was cultural understanding.

Student 5: I got to climb Mount Sinai and on the way up I met this Bedouin guy up there. We spent hours talking to each other in, like, broken Arabic and English. It’s amazing how much you can communicate if you try and we got on some pretty deep subjects.

Student 2: I was surprised at how few French could speak English, or at least wanted to. I always thought Europeans all spoke English, so it was good for me to have to work on the French. Being in a French military setting was a little different, too, because they are like us but have these differences like how important meals are. We just eat our chow to get ready for the next thing but to them it’s like an event every time they sit down to eat. I guess dealing with markets and locals in Senegal was really different, too.
Student 4: In Russia I was amazed at the history and how much the U.S. has affected their culture. It’s, like, everyone is trying to dress American and they do rap and stuff like that. We also saw this stabbing in a park and it really made me think about crime there. I guess it’s not much different over here but it still made me think.

Student 3: Um, in China I just remember riding the trains and how crowded they were and how they were even more crowded than the subway in New York. There is no such thing as personal space and there is a lot of pushing and shoving to get a seat. Not only that, but the staring and picture taking: it’s like I was some zoo animal sometimes. If you were not Chinese they would touch your hair and it could make you really uncomfortable at first. But then when I came back to the U.S. it was hard to deal with Americans, especially cadets.

Question 3: Think back to that encounter: If it was a successful encounter, what kind of skills did you use to negotiate it? If it was not successful, what skills were you lacking or do you wish you had?

Student 3: It’s, like, you have to keep your own culture but learn to appreciate theirs. You can’t just write them off as inferior or anything like that. That means you need to be patient with things you might think are outrageous like spitting or pushing. You also have to realize that your way of doing things may not always be the best one.

Student 1: I would say, “Know thyself.” You have to recognize the, um, differences between you and them and the reasons for them. It’s not so much a bunch of do’s and don’ts but you have to make a personal connection with people. That means, like, watching and observing and talking to them so you can see their point of view.

Student 2: I guess patience, especially with yourself. Courage, too, because you can’t get through these things without being able to confront them.

Student 5: You need to be diplomatic and use language and, like, social skills to bridge the gap between the cultures.

Student 4: I think the key is being persistent. You can’t get embarrassed all the time and you need to be able to stand your ground and be confrontational sometimes. If you’re not, like, assertive then you will get no respect.

Question 4: What are some ways the Army could identify and measure these skills?

Student 5: I think you have to get the soldiers out of their comfort zone and observe how they do. The way to do that is to get them to interact with some other culture and watch them.

Student 4: Yeah, the only, um, way to really know how someone will react in this kind of thing is to get them to do it. It’s helpful to have some facts about the culture but the only way to really know is to get in a situation where you have to use them in a real setting.
Question 5: How well do you think the IDI and SBA captured your willingness and ability to adapt to an intercultural situation?

Student 2: I think the tests grouped "cultures" too loosely. There should be different test for each, um, culture or place because there are too many differences.

Student 1: I thought the difference between the perceived and real score was interesting, but I the, um, questions didn't really fit the subject. I mean, there are too many things that it didn't take in to account like personality traits or just what's going on that day. I might score high one day because I'm in a good mood or had a good experience and then score low the next because I'm pissed off or something. Same with the scenario: there were too many missing pieces to really answer the question.

Student 5: I thought the IDI would be good as a teaching tool and for use in the whole Army. The scenario was good for a military audience, especially if you could other cadets' answers they way we can in the company leadership website. I think the scenario is better than the IDI because it shows you more.

Student 4: If you got a low score on the IDI it might show you how to get better, but otherwise I don't think it tells you much. The questions made you think, though. Um, the scenario was good at measuring your balance between your own culture and values and theirs. That is something that we will have to do.

Question 6: How relevant do you think the IDI and SBA were to a military audience such as that at West Point?

Student 3: I thought both were good for that. The, um, IDI helped you know yourself while the scenario tested your decision-making.

Student 1: I think both are irrelevant because the military has to be culturally sensitive with the wars we are fighting right now. Tests can't really show this, it has to be observed on the ground.

Student 4: Yeah, but I think the scenario is a good tool for a commander to see how his soldiers will react to a strange situation. It's not something you grade, really, it just shows how you, um, react. The IDI test might be good for special forces or FAO's (foreign area officers) because they need more skills like this. Maybe for the broader Army, too, though.

Question 7: Did the IDI and SBA place an unreasonable demand on your time?

[Students shake their heads].
Student 3: The scenario took ten minutes and we did the other test during Dean’s Hours. It was a pain but not unreasonable.

Student 5: It didn’t take too long but the questions were similar and repetitive.

Question 8: Given the importance that the Army is placing on intercultural competence and the fact that it is a stated goal in *Educating Future Army Officers for a Changing World*, what advice would you give the Dean about the IDI and SBA?

Student 2: I thought combining it with the immersion experience was good. Like, it showed you where you were on a scale and helped you think about how the experience showed that. I’d keep using the IDI, just make sure you, um, give feedback on it and don’t just keep the numbers somewhere.

Student 5: I’d suggest putting the scenario on line like the Platoon Leader’s challenge so we can see how others handled it.

Student 4: If they give us feedback on the IDI it’s good. We would need more than the score, though, because it is hard to interpret. The scenario is good, too, um, because it gives some generic feedback. It should be shorter, though.

Student 1: I thought the scenario was good because it forced you to answer the “why” question instead of just the usual “what.” West Point gets too worried about the right answer sometimes.

Question 9: Our goal is to evaluate these two assessment tools for potential use here at West Point. Is there anything we overlooked that you would like to add?

Student 1: I think, like, the immersion experience has had a bigger impact on me than anything here, including academics. The culture part was especially important, more than the language. It helped me to figure out how to read in to a situation and take someone else’s, um, point of view. This really relied on our powers of observation.

Student 3: I don’t know, I think the language is what helps you communicate and that is what makes the cultural part work. I do know we don’t use the foreign cadets we have here properly, they stay here and we just don’t use the, um, opportunity to interact with them.

Student 5: Is cultural competence something we can attain here? Social skills are real important but we don’t get to use them much. Um, West Point and the Army are always trying to box us in but to be good at something like this you need to open up. The ethical part is also hard to tie in but it’s part of the picture, too.

Student 2: Maybe a culture course would help fit the ethics in somehow. The experiences I had in France and Senegal were real eye openers and showed how I was pretty, um, ethnocentric. West Point should get everyone abroad before they graduate.
Appendix H
Coded Focus Group Transcripts

Focus Group One – coded transcript

Moderator: Welcome and thank you for your participation in our study. Please help yourself to the food and drinks and make yourselves at home. I am going to ask you a series of questions about your time abroad and the two cultural competence assessment instruments you completed: the standardized test, IDI, and the written scenario based assessment. Please be frank.

Question 1: What is your previous experience abroad?

Student 1: I did a month in Chile with the SOSH (Social Sciences) Department. We were working for Habitat for Humanity there but only four days a week. I spent the rest of the time going on trips around the country seeing different socio-economic levels. Each weekend we would move up a level. We started out at a really base level, with no hot showers and that, and stayed in a pretty nice hotel the last weekend.

Student 2: I did a semester abroad in China. I was, basically, up north in Jilin, near Korea. I guess other than that I traveled a lot internationally in Europe, Asia, and South America and I'm originally from Korea and grew up there for a while before moving to the United States.

Student 3: Um, this past semester I spent four months in Jordan and I did a lot of travel over there, in Jordan and the area and I met a lot of people. I went to Israel and I was actually born in Israel, and before this, before West Point I went to Qatar for Spring Break spent with their military academy and hosted their military cadets and also spent three weeks in Egypt traveling in the region.

Student 4: I spent a semester in France, most of it in Paris.

Student 5: I was in Mexico City for a semester abroad and did a month in Monterrey on an AIAD (Advanced Individual Academic Development). I was, um, with a family in Mexico City instead of a dorm.

Student 1: I didn't understand the question; I also spent five months in Mexico on a semester abroad.

Question 2: What was your most challenging intercultural encounter while abroad?

Question 2 categories and codes
Setting: food (2S1), family (2S2), time (2S3), appearance (2S4)
Metaphysics: religion (2M1)
Cultural differences: manners (2C1), personal space (2C2), language (2C3)
Reaction: difference noted (2R1), discomfort (2R2), adaptation (2R3)
Student 1: Me and some of the other international students, an Australian and a Bulgarian, and two Chileans we took a trip through southern Mexico and on the return leg of it back to the airport we stopped at a small restaurant on the side of the highway. It was just a small restaurant made out of, like, cardboard and plywood boards and the food smelled good (2SI) so we stopped in and then the whole family (2S2) came out to help cook the meal (2SI). There were, like, kids running around (2S2), and they started talking to us and they wanted to play games with us and, like, three hours later (2S3) we were still there and we were there playing soccer in the dirt by the side of the highway. Um, then when it was time for us to go so we could make it in time for our flight there were, I don’t know, one of the kids started crying because they didn’t want us to leave and they usually don’t play with other people besides their brothers and sisters (2S2) and they were sad to see us go. That was a different experience for me (2RI).

Student 3: We made a lot of really good friends while abroad and, especially in Jordan, um, some great friends and they always invite you over to their houses for dinner (2SI), which is really different than in the U.S (2RI). We had a family (2S2) dinner with a traditional Jordanian dish called Mansar (2SI) where everybody stands around the table and you first wash your hands and then eat the rice and beef with your hands (2CI) and you’re really close together (2C2), you know. One of my friends had me over to his house for it with his whole family (2S2) and we all stood around the table and I was trying to talk in Arabic (2C3) and everybody is sitting there eating (2SI) and it was one of those experiences where you just really feel part of the culture (2R3). The same kind of thing happened to me in Qatar when I went in there. In Qatar it was a little bit different we sat around sharing from the same big bowl (2SI) but there you do it on the ground, sitting on the ground cross-legged and it was that kind of thing (2CI). One of the cadets there, his family (2S2), like, sacrificed two sheep for us and like had this big presentation of food (2SI) and everything and we all sat around and at the end, like, the head is really sacred (2MI) and they pulled out the eyes and put it in your hands and you were supposed to eat it, so that was really one of those unique experiences (2RI) where you really feel part of the culture (2R3).

Student 4: I guess one thing that really stuck with me was this guy getting really mad at me for not calling him “monsieur” (2C3) when I said hello to him (2CI). I mean, I thought I was doing pretty good just greeting them in French (2C3) and all, but he was really pissed off about it (2RI). That almost made me want to quit being polite (2CI) but I realized he might have been having a bad day or something. Most of the people I met were great.

Student 2: Um, for us we were in China when it was leading up to the Olympics and it was kind of like this group, they started this movement, and it was called Olympic hugs and basically what they would do is they would take a bunch of foreigners and they would take them out to a small town and you would, like, hang out in front of a bank or something - we did it in front of a bank – and you all stand there and hug people (2C2) and they played music and a crowd gathered because the Chinese there hadn’t seen foreigners before. And it was just, like, this shock (2RI) that there were people of a
different color (2S4) out there or who spoke a completely different language (2C3). And even me, although I look Chinese – I’m Korean but I look Chinese – even then they looked at me the way I dressed (2S4) and it was obvious I wasn’t who they were. We were all standing in a line with signs that said “hug me,” and they were, like, really hesitant (2R2) to hug me and show warmth and they were hesitant to even come up to you and, like, say hi or to touch you or shake your hand (2C2); and I think that was when I finally noticed isolated China really was and how those people really have no idea what is going on in the world outside how it forces you to really understand why they are the way they are (2R3) and why so many things happened that we just didn’t understand (2RI). Um, but that was, like, once when we got started if one person would come up and say hi and come and hug somebody or [laughs] be forced to come hug somebody (2R2) then everybody would want to hug (2C2) and have pictures taken and all this stuff. It just kind of, it’s like you almost find that everyone’s human, almost. Whereas in the beginning they might have thought that we are all aliens, like, or a malicious kind of thing like we were a bunch of kids competing to try to get someone’s attention. That was probably the most memorable encounter.

Student 5: I guess it would either be family gatherings (2S2) during my home stay or taking public transportation in Mexico City. Like, in my family (2S2) it was just close relatives but in Mexico there could be thirty or forty people in the house all talking at once until late at night (2S3). I don’t see how anyone can get anything done (2R1) but it was fun. The busses were, um, just a different thing than I was used to (2RI) because if you were polite (2C1) or tried to stay in a line you would never get anywhere. So I learned to just butt in (2CI) and join the crowd (2C2) so I could get to class every day (2R3).

Question 3: Think back to that encounter: If it was a successful encounter, what kind of skills did you use to negotiate it? If it was not successful, what skills were you lacking or do you wish you had?

Question 3 categories and codes
Attitudes: open-mindedness (3A1), flexibility (3A3)
Skills: reasoning (3S1), language (3S2), humor (3S3), observation (3S4)
Exposure: getting out into the culture (3E1), relationships (3E2)

Student 3: Um, when you are in another culture, I was raised in a very culturally diverse family where, I mean, I was born in Israel and I come from a very diverse background (3EI) there is always cultural acceptance (3AI) and, like, being worldly, like understanding other cultures (3AI) and having other friends (3E2) and things like that, is not very closed-minded (3AI). So, that’s the key and you notice (3S4) this too, like, when you go abroad and some of the guys that you go abroad with and you can tell that they were not in key with that and they would have more trouble fitting in and where it came from was getting in to a culture and trying to see from that, from the other culture’s point of view and not passing your judgment (3AI) on how if you were in America you would see the same thing in this person. Um, I can think of an example and it’s, um, weird for Americans to understand but in the Middle East a lot of times it’s very common
to marry your second cousin and things like that. And so, when, you know, like some Americans would hear, “oh I have an engagement party” and “oh, good, who’s the girl” and “oh, it’s my uncle’s daughter” and they’re like, “it’s your cousin; you are marrying your cousin; ugh.” It’s like some people, a lot of people instead of understanding it’s alright in this culture (3A1) they’re “we don’t accept that in the U.S.” but, you know, it’s things like that you have to just take a moment and realize it’s just different in that culture and you just want to try accept it more and understand (3A1) rather than, like, passing judgment. So, that is really important to be able to fit in to another culture or at least understand it and appreciate it (3A1).

Moderator: So, other ideas?

Student 1: I think like he was saying earlier, with the meal of rice and meat: just being open to try new things (3A1) and having a good sense of humor, like being able to joke around about stuff (3S3), really helps with just making friends (3E2).

Student 5: Well, I guess you need to have a lot of traits at once. Like, you need to be open-minded (3A1) and able to, you know, express yourself (3S2) without offending anyone. Being outgoing and curious (3S4), too, because you won’t get anything out of it if you are always hiding in your room (3E1). You also can’t judge someone else’s culture so just accept it (3A1).

Student 2: I think patience was a really big thing, um, for us in China just because, um, like it just kind of goes back to the whole thing, like they are not used to dealing with foreigners and they assume, like, because everything they have done is the way they’ve done it they all assume that they are the ones that are right and I guess we do the same thing (3S1) and by having the patience to realize that, hey, we really do come from two different worlds and you have to adapt to the situation (3A1), (3A3). Um, I’d also say something, like, having the willingness to be wrong, I guess, and like, I know a lot of us are afraid to do things like when you guys went abroad and we didn’t want to do things that might offend somebody or “we’re too scared to, like, try something new (3A1).” And it’s like, by putting yourself out there (3E1) you’ll get a lot more out of it rather than just kind of shrinking back and saying, “Oh, I’m just an observer.” Unless you decide to interact you’re not going to get anything out of it (3E1).

Question 4: What are some ways the Army could identify and measure these skills?

Question 4 categories and codes
Experiential: observed immersion (4E1), past performance (4E2)
Institutional: academic performance (4I1), tests (4I2), interview/ SBA (4I3)

Student 1: I don’t know, it’s hard thing short of actually observing them in another culture and seeing how people deal with it (4E1). I mean, if there’s a way to make a test that just takes people from different cultures and puts them together and just seeing how they interact (4E1).
Student 3: I know that when I was in Jordan, the place that we stayed at was, uh, the same place that they send DLI (Defense Language Institute). Like, the Arabic students from DLI in their last month at DLI they sent them to, like, they send usually the top whatever percentage to Jordan to just get some cultural experience to use the language, and, um, so I mean, that’s one way to send people to actually do that (4E1). But that’s tough so one thing the Army could do is something that’s called cultural cards, you get, like, those Iraq cards that talk about the hand gestures and things like that, and, so, like, more of those things (4I2).

Student 1: You know, kind of like a knowledge test and if you want to measure it (4I2). So, if you are going to this country here’s a list of customs, like, “what would you do?” blah, blah, blah (4I3).

Student 5: Yeah, some kind of pre-deployment training for that would be good. You could check out how much people know about the culture before they go there (4I2). It would, um, make everyone better prepared for it.

Student 2: Um, I always think that if you could put people in a situation where they didn’t agree with something, um, like not necessarily just a plan of action or a situation but more like values or beliefs and if they start clashing to, like, see how they handle it kind of (4I3). And then, like, if they are really stubborn and not really listening to the other person and how they felt about something, like, if you took any controversial topic like abortion or the death penalty and watch them discuss it, it would almost, you could almost see that whole dynamic of if you are willing to even listen to the other person’s idea or you’re going to take it in or you’re willing to compromise any (4I3). Um, that’s like, how I sometimes felt in China; it was like two very stubborn people going at it [laughs] and they weren’t willing to take it and there were, like, other people who had worked with Western students before and they were a little more willing to see our perspective and our side of things. And that was, like, I could really see a difference in who was willing to take that approach and who wasn’t, even from our side, like from the cadets’.

Question 5: How well do you think the IDI and SBA captured your willingness and ability to adapt to an intercultural situation?

**Question 5 categories and codes**

IDI validity: too abstract (SIV1), perception/reality difference (SIV2), insight (SIV3)  
IDI reliability: effect of test context and timing (SIR1)  
SBA validity: too abstract (SSV1), insight (SSV2)  
Utility of instruments: general (SU2)

Student 1: I think its okay (SU2). It shows you how you perceive yourself and how you actually are (SIV2). If you just get to see, are just made aware of the discrepancies, you might see flaws in your intercultural abilities and just be more aware of what you need to work on (SIV3); if that is something you want to do.
Student 2: Yeah (5U2), I think that it shows if you are like, actually at one level, it's like things I did in China that it makes me wonder was I really in defense or denial or whatever, or how often I was, like, offending the other person (5IV3).

Student 5: I like the self-knowledge you get from the test (5IV3). It helps you, like, think through where you are and where you should be (5IV3).

Student 3: Yeah, I would say that’s pretty accurate (5IV3), (5U2). You know, if I knew I was pretty ethno-centric I think I’d try to, um change that (5IV3). But as far as the scenario goes, uh, you are kind of hamstrung from the beginning because, because, in giving an answer to the scenario you’re not going to give all the um, how do I say, it’s just a basic description because there were no other variables like what culture it is (5SVI). But as far as that goes, I think it was a little too long for, you know, for the scenario.

Student 4: The scenario thing was too hypothetical for me to give a good answer (5SVI). I mean, there weren’t enough details to know the real situation (5SVI). I think it might be good if you can talk it out with someone in an interview or something like that (5U2).

Student 3: I think that one thing you could do is, like, teach cadets when they are in an intercultural thing that they need to ask themselves, "Is it the right thing to do?" Because I know in our group we had a lot of hard-charging infantrymen, um, and they were really decisive and um, you know, maybe like letting the cadets know "hey, in this situation that might be the wrong approach and you might want to think about doing something differently."

Student 2: I think it's useful, sir, (5U2) but I think it's how much the individual puts weight on it (5SV2). I know, like, the whole scenario, I had something like it, I guess you could liken it to the fact, uh, that in China you drink at every meal and that's what you do. I mean, you drink all the time, and I don’t drink, period. So, when I'm there and people offer beer and say, “here’s a beer” it’s for me to be like, “I don’t drink,” it would be like they wouldn’t understand that. They would feel like you were just judging something that’s really part of their lives more so than “I just don’t drink because I choose not to.” And, although I didn’t see it, I just said, “I don’t drink, that’s just who I am,” and I didn’t drink throughout my entire five months because that is, like, my personal choice but it’s like at the end of it I wondered “should I have?” “Did that, like, ruin the relationship with someone that I could have had who wanted to go out drinking socially or something, not, you know. It makes me think about it, what people in that situation – it’s like the scenario based assessment: is it that kind of situation? I don’t know how you would enforce or teach that but, like, with mine I did in that situation what I would normally do. As weighted as that situation was; you had to negotiate with officials for national security purposes, it is still, like, similar (5SV2).

Question 6: How relevant do you think the IDI and SBA were to a military audience such as that at West Point?
Question 6 category and codes
Level of applicability: individual soldier (6I), unit (6U), polyvalent (6P)

Student 2: I think it’s relevant to any person (6P). I mean for us, we couldn’t even say we were from West Point when we were over there, but we still, of course, had all the rules and stuff, but it’s still like we have to act like we’re just normal people (6P). It’s not, like, being an Army officer changes who you are necessarily; maybe to a certain extent (6P).

Student 5: Um, I think it was good (6P). It’s generic but that’s best even for the military because it’s not like we’re the only ones who need to have cultural awareness (6P). It’s good to have something that’s not so military all the time like our professional military education tests (6P).

Question 7: Did the IDI and SBA place an unreasonable demand on your time?

Question 7 category and codes
Duration of test: not too long (7N), compensatory time (7C)

[All the students shake their heads.] (7N)

Student 4: No, it was easy.

Student 2: They excused us to take the DLPT (Defense Language Proficiency Test) anyway, so it wasn’t a big deal (7C).

Question 8: Given the importance that the Army is placing on intercultural competence and the fact that it is a stated goal in Educating Future Army Officers for a Changing World, what advice would you give the Dean about the IDI and SBA?

Question 8 categories and codes
Instrument employment: developmental tool (8E1)
Program enhancement: immersion (8P1), instruments more than a grade (8P2)

Student 1: I would say, sir, that if you had to choose the scenario based assessment was more valuable, not because it gives a good view of what the level of cadet ethnocentricity is, but because, um, it’s get people thinking about things (8E1). I think the IDI is more of, like, an interesting, well, you don’t walk away from it – it doesn’t really affect the way you see things. The scenario is similar, there are people who are cynical about it, it is similar to the PME (professional military education) I think where it’s not all about taking an index of where you are morally but it’s to put you in a situation to, like, challenge yourself more (8E1). It’s the same thing where that is probably more valuable.

Student 2: I think we got a lot out of our discussion when we did the scenario based one, like we did it with Arabic and Chinese together (8E1). We had a really interesting discussion and there were a lot of different opinions about that whole thing (8E1).
guess it makes you think that “if that person views it this way is she right or am I right or is there really a right or wrong answer?” and it kind of makes you think about that (8E1). I think with the IDI it’s a little bit harder to gauge if it is accurate, if it really is, because we get a lot of standardized tests and a lot of people are, like, “it’s filling in bubbles.” (8P2) It’s like “check the box and kinda get it done.” (8P2) And the other part of that is you have to see the individual scores and have it explained. I think most people would take and get their scores and take it again, saying, like, “I didn’t take it seriously the first time.” But, I mean, that’s the kind of responses – that’s how I feel sometimes because you get all kinds of assessments and tests but you never get results and it’s like “OK, so why do I take this seriously the next time I do it again?” (8P2) I think that is why you would have to provide individual feedback so that it’s in your head to take it seriously (8E1). I think that at some point in your cultural experience you will think back and remember that you did this and you would notice, like, “I guess I really am in denial” and that sort of thing (8E1), (8P1). Um, but I think it would be useful at some point (8E1).

Student 5: I’d keep the test and use it with the DLPT (Defense Language Proficiency Test) (8E1). I know, um, our language improves the more we are on the ground so there’s no reason our cultural scores should be better too (8E1), (8P1).

Question 9: Our goal is to evaluate these two assessment tools for potential use here at West Point. Is there anything we overlooked that you would like to add?

Question 9 categories and codes
Programmatic: immersion (9P1)
Academic: foreign language (9A2)

Student 1: I remember when we first took it, and they were saying that culture could be taught separate from language, and whether; how related were the two, um, and I guess this test makes an attempt at measuring culture separate from language (9A2). But, I think that, just from my experiences, that language seems to be such a part of the culture, uh, that I don’t know if you can (9A2), I guess you can measure the culture part separately but to develop their ability to work with other cultures I think that the ability; that having to learn the language is integral to that (9A2).

Student 4: Yeah (9A2), and if, um, you want to do that you need be out in the culture (9P1). I’d say staying with a host family instead in an apartment or dorm is really important (9P1). You just can’t learn as much language or culture if you are always hanging around other Americans (9P1). Make sure everybody knows the names of world leaders, too! It’s, like, everybody expects us to be ignorant.

Student 3: This is the first time we’ve discussed it since we actually took it, you know, and many people don’t choose to participate in a study and they’ll never hear about this again. So, I mean I definitely agree that we need to find a way for everyone to get their feedback. I mean, it’s just like the DLPT – I wouldn’t have known what I got unless I actively found out my score, so, I guess the Army has to work on getting better feedback if they want their test to be effective. Um, and then the test also...it’s like one of those
tests that sort of says, like, do you agree, strongly disagree, slightly disagree, whatever, neutral and when it, like, tweaks – it just tweaks these questions so slightly, you know, I don’t know what he’s asking so I’m just going to put “neutral.”

Student 2: It’s like what’s the difference between “agree” and “slightly agree?” and I was sleepy.

Student 1: Yeah. I don’t know how else to do that but it might not be effective because the questions just get annoying after a while. Finally, all right, whatever the first thing that pops into my head I’m just going to go with it.

Moderator: Thanks for taking the time out to discuss it with us. The information you gave was very valuable and will help West Point improve its immersion experiences. Good luck with the rest of your studies and your Army career, which will start sooner than you expect!

Focus Group Two – Coded Responses

Moderator: Greetings all, and thank you for coming today. Help yourself to the food and drinks and please make yourselves comfortable. I am going to ask you a series of questions about your experience abroad and the two cultural competence assessment instruments you completed: the standardized test, IDI, and the written scenario based assessment.

Question 1: What is your previous experience abroad?

Student 1: I went to Russia.

Student 2: I went to Egypt.

Student 3: I went to Morocco for a semester abroad.

Student 4: I went to Egypt for a semester abroad and before that I went to Jordan on two AIAD’s (advanced individual academic development).

Student 5: I went to France for a semester abroad and I went to France for an AIAD.

Question 2: What was your most challenging intercultural encounter while abroad?

Question 2 categories and codes
Setting: food (2S1), family (2S2), time (2S3), appearance (2S5)
Metaphysics: religion (2M1)
Cultural differences: manners (2C1), personal space (2C2), language (2C3)
Reaction: difference noted (2R1), discomfort (2R2), adaptation (2R3)
Student 4: My most memorable one was on my second AIAD to Jordan. Um, me and a friend of mine was with me, we got invited to this, uh, house. It was, you know, one of the Arab students who was studying at the university where we were doing our English program, and uh, basically we went over there and he was being really nice and everything and we got into this conversation about heaven and hell: who goes to heaven and who goes to hell (2MI). His brother (2S2) was this pretty devout guy (2MI), like he wore a beard that was pretty long and he didn’t shave it like most of the other guys we interacted with (2S4). He was trying to tell us, like, you guys can’t go to heaven because you’re not Muslim (2MI) and so I was trying to, the big thing I was trying to explain was, you know, you believe that because it is in the Qu’ran and like the reason you have to believe that Islam is better (2MI). It was, you know, really uncomfortable (2R2) for me to be over there, in addition to the fact that the brother (2S2), he told us that we would be; that we were just going to stay there for a little while (2S3). I was just trying to be really hospitable (2CI) and so we had to stay as long as we had to stay (2S3). You know these two things together just made me really uncomfortable (2R2) and when we got back here to our room, to our apartment, that night I just pretty much vented. I was really angry and, you know, and I know the situation is part of their culture (2R3) and we talked about that for a few hours (2S3) after that and for the rest of the trip.

Student 5: I know in France people have this reputation of, like, being cold and impersonal: ils sont froids (they are cold) (2C3). And I, I didn’t really have any friends when I was there for my AIAD at first. I worked at a mental hospital and when I was first there, like no one talked to me. I kind of found; I was doing translations (2C3) for doctors and I had my little office that I would just go to work and do my translations and then go back to my hotel. No one would talk to me and I was the only American there and nobody really knew I was there. Finally, I was there for two, two and a half weeks (2S3) and one of the psychologists invited me to her house for dinner (2S1). And when she finally invited me to her house, she was, like, younger, like thirty, thirty-five and had a young daughter (2S2) and, uh, over dinner we had a, we just discussed things for a long time (2S3). I ended up staying at her house for three or four hours (2S3) and we got really, really close. I asked her how come, like, people never talked to me at first. Like, in America, as soon as new person comes it’s like open arms, you know (2C2). I couldn’t understand why our culture was that way and French culture wasn’t (2R1). She asked me what Americans thought about French people and I told her Americans thought they were pretty cold and she said, “it’s not that we’re cold, it’s that we’re doubtful at first. I didn’t want to ask you to dinner (2S1) just to have you say yes to say yes. I wanted to make sure we had something to talk about and we would have something in common.” That was kind of a big breakthrough for me (2R3) in that I could see that these people weren’t horrible, that they were just cautious (2R1) and they wanted to be sure that you had something in common so that you could have a relationship that would be long lasting and strong. I thought that was an interesting cultural breakthrough (2R3).

Student 2: Uh, other than climbing the pyramids it was pretty limited. I made a really good Egyptian friend and he had, like, nine brothers and sisters (2S2) and they were all living in a little, like, apartment I guess. And I went to the apartment complex a couple
of times and one time towards the end of our time in Egypt I told him that it was really
good to have made such a good friend. He took it really well, but he was, like, really
shocked and he had me over to his house to meet his family (2S2) and all. I thought it
was going to be really cool, but when we got there his mother had cooked all this chicken
for us and there was tons and tons of food (2S1). So we sat at a table (2C2), me and my
friend Akhmed, and, like, his father and two of his brothers (2S2), um, and felt like I
should be eating a lot (2S1) and that they were really trying to impress me. They didn’t
know I was in the military and when his brother (2S2) Ibrahim came home he said, “you
guys know he’s the military, right?” My friend said that, well, there’s no problem with
that but his brother said, no, he wants to go to Iraq and kill people. Like, it was pretty
intense, you know (2R2)? And, um, I kind of like looked around at everyone like I
misinterpreted it and I didn’t quite know what to say. They started laughing and they got
a big kick out of it but it was pretty uncomfortable (2R2). I told them, like, I didn’t want
to go and kill people: I wanted to be an engineer and help rebuild and stuff, you know. I
think they kind of understood that answer and were comfortable and interested and stuff
(2R3). Um, I think they realized that it’s not just about going and killing people and
we’re branching out and trying to help people. Like, trying to defend myself in Arabic
(2C3), that was hard.

Student 3: One of the, um, most shocking things for me as far as cultural experiences
during my stay abroad, was when I went home for the weekend with this female friend of
mine, lots of the exchange students were females, and her father and brother (2S2)
weren’t home. Her mother and two elder sisters (2S2) were, so I didn’t know how that
would turn out and I figured I would just stay in a hotel or something like that but it was
totally the opposite. They took me in for the whole time (2S3), which really shocked me
and it went against the whole stereotype of the Arabs and their cultural norms (2R1). It
really wasn’t an issue at all (2R3) even though we were in Morocco.

Student 1: Once I went to this mosque (2M1) with my friends and I thought it was going
to be all serious but they were, like joking around and laughing there (2C1). It kind of
blew my mind because I always thought the mosques were supposed to be such serious
places (2M1). Anyway, it showed me how different things can be than you expect (2R1),
(2R3).

Question 3: Think back to that encounter: If it was a successful encounter, what kind of
skills did you use to negotiate it? If it was not successful, what
skills were you lacking or
do you wish you had?

Question 3 categories and codes
Attitudes: open-mindedness (3A1), flexibility (3A3)
Skills: reasoning (3S1) language (3S2), humor (3S3), observation (3S4)
Exposure: getting out into the culture (3E1), relationships (3E2)

Student 4: I remember in my situation, it was one where my Arabic instructor, he was on
the trip with us. He told me, well you know how it is and people have to know where
you’re coming from, if that’s the only exposure they have then they are going to accept
some things as facts that you are not going to accept as facts and, at the end of the day, you are going to have your beliefs and they are going to have their beliefs and just because they say that they are right doesn’t mean that they are right and you are wrong or the other way around (3SI). So, it’s kind of like, I mean in a way it’s like we were traveling so fast that when we were in Jordan and then again when I went to Egypt it’s like we experienced so many different things I knew that it wasn’t, it wasn’t the norm for every single person (3AI). I realize that there are certain things with the culture that are common and then are certain things where people are going to vary on their opinions just based on individuals (3SI). And so when we were in Jordan we went to the house of this Jordanian officer who had been a cadet, he was on a FAEP here at the academy, and so he invited us over when were down near Petra and it was the same hospitality and everything and we just didn’t get on that topic and we just talked about general things. I mean, I think I realized that there are some people no matter what culture that are just going to rub me wrong and it’s not always just the culture that, like sometimes it’s the culture that is influencing it but it’s not determining that (3SI). There’s a lot of variance in how people are and how they act (3SI).

Student 2: I think one thing that helps is sort just playing dumb, like being able to just go with the flow (3A3) and don’t, you know, kind of like you said, don’t take people’s point of view as everything (3A1). It was like, we had this one kid in Egypt who took things personally, like if anyone said anything against Israel he would like, get mad and he went off on the entire culture based on this one experience. You know, he would just compile, and the fact that he wasn’t getting out of the dorm and didn’t really see anything. So I think if you, if you, can just make yourself feel comfortable in a conversation like when the Egyptians have something to say that you don’t like you can say, well, “that’s your opinion and you are very, like, entitled” even if you think it’s kind of weird, you know (3AI). That’s the way you have to deal with it if you want to get anything out of the experience.

Student 4: I agree with the playing dumb part, like once when we were in Egypt and one time that cadet had a bad experience because people are always trying to rip you off because you are an American and things like that. People are coming up with judgments and like we said earlier, um, if you’re kind of playing dumb and making a joke out of things (3S3), like we would say, “oh, I must be crazy,” and “I must be ignorant,” and things like that really helped because it gave us things to laugh about and helped us use Arabic that we wouldn’t have used otherwise (3S2). And, like, just making jokes (3S3) and even if the Egyptians didn’t understand them, like there was some reference to American pop culture in Arabic, like, it was kind of fun.

Student 5: I think, uh, you can’t take things personally because when someone says something to you or even when they’re not talking to at all like they were at the beginning for me. You can’t just think they are, like, terrible, I mean you have to know where they are coming from and also just keep an open mind (3A1) and realize there’s a reason for everything (3SI). There’s a reason why people are doing these things; they’re not just doing them because they are horrible people but because that is all they know, or that’s how they grew up (3SI).
Student 3: I would say a sense of humor was huge in everything (3S3). Even if it was, you know, something that made no sense the fact that you were trying showed. I remember there were several times when I was traveling by myself and, I don’t know, I’d meet some random person (3E2) like some shepherd or something. The conversations could end up going for a couple of hours starting with “hi, how are you” then “why are you some random American guy walking in the mountains?” Once you got past that it was always the war, and Bush, and, um, stuff like that and religion, which came up constantly. It was just very important for me to just, like, be able to laugh it off (3S3). If I didn’t have the language skills (3S2), or they didn’t either, to have an intelligent discussion about it we could still laugh it off (3S3). It was helpful to, like, compartmentalize stuff and not take it personally in Morocco (3S1).

Student 1: I think like it was said earlier, paying attention to small details about people (3S4) and knowing that if they do certain things there’s a reason behind it (3S1). One thing, too, is to have a sense of adventure (3E1). Like, we would go out every night and plan our route to make sure we hit different places (3E1), even some shady ones or places where nobody speaks English (3S2). I think if you want to get the most out of it you have to, like, you have to be able to plan out your time and use it well.

Student 2: I think you also need to make sure you get out of the dorm and away from other American students (3E1). I mean, a lot of the students from regular universities didn’t have the same experiences as we did and they weren’t there for the same reasons, and so their Arabic wasn’t as good (3S2) and they weren’t as serious about learning things (3S1). So, once a week we would plan to go out and smoke shisha with one of our friends (3E2) from the university who were Americans and we would end up speaking mostly English, but the next night or later on that day we would be, like, okay we’re going to go to this spot on the map (3E1) and we’re going pick this landmark and we’re going to tell the cab driver to go and we’re gonna go out and see what’s there. That was pretty much what we did.

Question 4: What are some ways the Army could identify and measure these skills?

Question 4 categories and codes
Experiential: observed immersion (4E1)
Institutional: academic performance (4I1), tests (4I2), interview SBA (4I3)

Student 5: Oh, sir, you have to be outgoing. You have to be willing to put yourself out there and be shot down. I mean, that person who is quiet is going to sit in the corner and they are going to spend all of their time on the internet.

Student 2: I think they tend to label you; I know in DFL they use grade point average (GPA) to choose but I think it’s, um, important to realize that academic performance might be counter to what you want (4I1). The people who perform well academically are people who tend to like a very structured learning environment, and that’s why they are, you know, doing very well at the academy (4I1). It’s like, I wake up at this time, I go to
these classes, I do this at a certain time. The people who did well on semester abroad were the opposite: on my semester abroad I couldn’t even tell you, like, what I was going to do in the next fifteen minutes.

Student 5: I, I have to answer, disagree with that because . . .

Student 4: [laughs] You get good grades (4II).

Student 5: Yeah, [laughs] but I was abroad with six other people and I would say that three of them were at the top of their class and three were at the bottom of their class. I would say that, um, the half that did well were not necessarily the half that were at the top or bottom: it was kind of a mixture (4II). I don’t think you can look at it GPA (4II) and say automatically, “I don’t think that cadet will work.” Some of the cadets with the lowest GPA’s would only, like, go out with other Americans, so I don’t think you can only look at GPA (4II). You have to look at a combination of the two (4II). I mean, you have to get someone who cares enough about school, you know, about academics, that they will want to go out there and learn (4II), but at the same time they can’t be so closed minded that they are always going to stay in their room and study. So I think it’s really important to have a combination of the two (4II). So, there should be a cutoff for GPA (4II) but the interview should have a lot of weight for semester abroad (4II) because the personality of the person is probably more important than, you know, the grades (4II).

Student 4: I think maybe you judge based on, maybe, how prior AIAD’s went (4EI). I know, like, when I went on AIAD’s there were people who, you know, did what I did in Egypt, who would like, go out at night and say, “see you later,” and we would meet back up at the hotel later that night (4EI). But there were some people who went straight back to the hotel and would swim and, uh, went to bed and they wouldn’t speak Arabic when we went to sites the next day (4EI). Like, from what I saw, those who went on to do semester abroad behaved almost the same way as that, especially when there’s not an instructor there to hold your hand and make you get out there (4EI).

Student 3: Maybe one thing you could ask is, like, what kind of pass do you take; what do you do with your time off (4II)? If you have someone who goes home and does laundry and their homework every time they have a pass maybe that’s not the kind of person you want going on a semester abroad (4II). I mean, maybe they are: maybe they’ll get immersed and love it but I would look at someone who just went to some random place in New York and, like, trashed my car and had a great time. That might be more of the kind person who would, you know, get something out of it.

Question 5: How well do you think the IDI and SBA captured your willingness and ability to adapt to an intercultural situation?

**Question 5 categories and codes**

IDI validity: too abstract (SIV1), perception/reality difference (SIV2), insight (SIV3)
IDI reliability: effect of test context and timing (SIR1)
SBA validity: too abstract (SSV1), insight (SSV2)
Utility of instruments: general (SU2)

Student 5: I remember taking the test and looking at some of the questions, like, what are they trying to say (SV1)? One of them was, “Is your culture more tolerant than others?” or something like that. I’m thinking, well, I was in France for a semester and France is, you know, much more tolerant, but maybe it’s just that one person was more tolerant than one in the United States. So, how do you answer that? “Yes, my culture is more tolerant” or not? Was I supposed to compare my culture to France or what?

Moderator: To you last cultural experience, wherever that was.

Student 5: Oh, I don’t think that was clearly explained and it might make a difference (IR1). That’s not how I answered the question at all (IR1).

Student 1: That’s how I answered it, so I was thinking of the religious differences and stuff that I saw when I was there. I think how you, like, answered the scenario one gave a pretty good idea about someone’s approach (SV2) but I think you could ask a few, even better questions about it (SV1). You could, um, ask about different views of it, like “what do you think about doing this?” So then it turns into a discussion or dialogue instead of just choosing one or the other option, you know. You could learn a lot more about the student that way.

Student 2: I think it’s interesting to know where you are on the scale (IV3), but one of the things I think is more interesting is that they told you were, like, going on this semester abroad and then you made it what you made it. It wasn’t gauged; it wasn’t, you know, graded. I don’t know if giving the test might kind of destroy that aspect of the program, but it might be interesting to see how I changed (IV3).

Student 3: I think it might be interesting to know, um, more about the test before you go, like, I had no clue about it when I took it and it might help me to know about how it works. Then when I come back it helps me look for some things that I did or should have done (IV3). Then it would be, like, it is with the language test and it would definitely be beneficial (IV3), (SU2).

Student 4: When you look at the difference between the perception and result scores, uh, I bet a lot of people have that similar pattern: thinking that we’re open but maybe we might not really be (IV2). It’s natural to think that, hey, you know, we’re pretty tolerant but maybe in different areas we might be intolerant. It could go either way: you look at the test and say “well, it’s just garbage” or somebody might actually take that information and use it (IV3), (SU2).

Student 2: I know a lot times my perception of where I am on a scale has changed and fluctuated since I got back (IR1) because I know when we hit the ground coming in to the States were, like, “Oh, thank God we’re on American soil.” But, you know, a couple of hours before that we were sad to be leaving Egypt (IR1). A month after that I was buying my car and, like, I seriously though I was going to be able to go to the dealership
and haggle with the guy and get the price down. And then I was going to New York City
and I got really pissed because there was this line to get in the subway car and I thought,
"I should just cut all these people and park myself right in the front of the line because
this is so inefficient and all of these people are just waiting and taking their time. If they
just had a guy behind the booth throwing tickets out at people I’d already be on the
subway.” And then there are times I thought, “Man, I’m glad I’m not in traffic now and
breathing carbonous fumes all day.”

Student 5: Yeah, it changes the longer you get back (SIRI). When I first got back I was,
like, France has this great culture and they are so open to other cultures but now that I’m
back I really like America (SIRI).

Student 3: It hit me, like, delayed (SIRI).

Question 6: How relevant do you think the IDI and SBA were to a military audience such
as that at West Point?

Question 6 category and codes
Level of applicability: individual soldier (6I), unit (6U), polyvalent (6P)

Student 2: I think it’s useful.

Student 4: Especially when you’re talking about, like in military science class, about
different types of officership and different tiers of knowledge like political and, um,
cultural. It can give you more information about yourself in that field (6I), just the way
taking MS (military science) class would give you more information about how you are
in your, you know, technical field.

Student 1: This is good knowledge about yourself (6I), like, what I’m learning about in
MS right now, this could be a way to see where you’re at, you know, in your cultural
awareness. I think all these things are good to know about, like if you are a platoon
leader and you about to go to Iraq and you aren’t very culturally sensitive or you know
how you perceive other cultures you could, like, focus on that before you go (6I).

Student 5: If you as a platoon leader, it depends on your branch, could give everyone in
your unit this test it could help you decide which squad leader you are going to use to go
out and talk to people and which one I’ll leave back in the rear area to do the defense
thing (6U). Like that guy that is all pissed off about the Iraqis isn’t, um, the one you are
going to send out there to a house but for searching someone’s family you would want
the one who is more understanding and who will show them some respect (6U).

Student 3: I think the test, this first one, might be a good way to quantify things but I
think that talking to someone and knowing your people, if you actually know someone,
you can pretty much tell who would be the better candidate, maybe even the better than
using the test (6U). I remember the questions were very trickily worded, they were...
Student 2: They were trying to see the perceived and real difference.

Student 5: Kind of like a combination of those two might open up things as a way to start the conversation (6U). So you say, "You scored this on the test, what do you think about that?" I'm sure a lot of platoon leaders coming out of here, how do we know how we are going to talk to our soldiers about different cultures (6U)? How do we even know where to, uh, begin that conversation (6U)? This might be a good starting point to launch an even deeper conversation about where they are coming from (6U).

Student 1: It's a good, like, conversation starter that way (6U).

Student 4: It kind of reminds me of PME (professional military education), you know, you kind of like discuss these situations that your soldiers face but in a cultural way (6I).

Student 2: Some people don't like to see numbers and all, and they might just sit there and not say a word, so I don't know if that would be good (6P).

Student 4: I don't think you have to worry about the numbers, it's the ideas, and you can, um, look at it more like what you would do than where you are (6P).

Student 5: I think it's more like a moral situation, cultural awareness.

Student 2: I think if you remember it's an assessment, a tool, and not, I don't think it can really mean, be a definitive answer on where you are, you know (6I). It can kind of give you an idea, because it's just like any test (6I). A test doesn't mean your performance is going to be good or the other way (6I). I've had friends who got, like, crappy scores on the DLPT (Defense Language Proficiency Test) but, you know, when I was with them in the Middle East they were talking up a storm and they know how to handle themselves. Then there's the other way around: there are people who know how to read and listen in Arabic but they can't speak. It's probably the same with culture, you know, they might give the wrong answer on a test but then go out and read the situation and act appropriately (6I).

Question 7: Did the IDI and SBA place an unreasonable demand on your time?

*Question 7 category and codes*

*Duration of test: not too long (7N), compensatory time (7C)*

[All students shake their heads] (7N).

Student 4: We got out of graduation week parades for it [laughs] (7C).

Question 8: Given the importance that the Army is placing on intercultural competence and the fact that it is a stated goal in *Educating Future Army Officers for a Changing World*, what advice would you give the Dean about the IDI and SBA?
Question 8 categories and codes

Instrument employment: developmental tool (8EI)
Program enhancement: immersion (8P1), instruments more than a grade (8P2)

Student 5: With this test, sir, I don’t think you can put a grade on it; it shouldn’t become part of our GPA (8P2). I think it could be used as a tool, but not as an assessment tool (8EI).

Student 4: It shouldn’t have anything to do with GPA or any of that (8P2).

Student 2: Like I said, this is something that can make me think about it but it is not a definitive answer on where or what I am or anything like that (8EI).

Student 1: It gets you thinking about the different, um, stages, but I don’t know if it’s the best way to get people thinking about that (8EI).

Student 3: Considering how much money they spent just to send us abroad and seeing how much just the plane ticket was, maybe the test is, like, worth it, (8P1).

Student 4: I think it depends on how you use it. If you explain it early on and then discuss the results and you see, “Hey, I’m really bad according to this test in this one category,” you can see just how you could be aware of that and then afterwards see if you were able to focus in on the particular area and move on the scale and, you know, affect that (8EI), (8P1).

Student 2: So you are constantly evolving and you can see how you are moving on the scale and being, like, more tolerant (8EI).

Student 1: I think it’s, uh, kind of hard to separate all of this from a specific country or culture like the tests did. Like what you would do might be different depending on which part of the country you are in and who is there and all.

Student 3: I don’t think the test is worth it as it is now but it could be developed more. I think you get a, you know, better understanding of where people’s cultural awareness is through a better test. If was better I would say, yeah, it’s worth the money but right now I don’t think so.

[Ran out of time and didn’t complete question 9]

Moderator: Thanks for participating; I’m sorry we ran out of time. Your ideas will be of great value to myself and West Point. Good luck as you leave Hudson Valley Trade School [students laugh - inside joke] and embark on your Army careers.

Focus Group Three - Coded
Moderator: Welcome to the language resource center, and thank you for agreeing to participate in our study. There is food and drinks here for you, so please make yourselves comfortable. I am going to ask you a series of questions about your time abroad and the two cultural competence assessment instruments you completed: the standardized test, IDI, and the written scenario based assessment.

Question 1: What is your previous experience abroad?

Student 1: I spent a semester in Morocco and did an AIAD (advanced individual academic development) in Egypt.

Student 2: I spent a semester at St. Cyr (the French military academy) and did an AIAD in Senegal with the French Marines.

Student 3: I was in China doing a semester abroad.

Student 4: Um, I was in Russia for a semester abroad. We stayed with a host family and went to a civilian university.

Student 5: I was in Egypt for a semester abroad and did an AIAD in Jordan.

Question 2: What was your most challenging intercultural encounter while abroad?

Question 2 categories and codes
Setting: food (2S1), family (2S2), time (2S3), appearance (2S5)
Metaphysics: religion (2M1)
Cultural differences: manners (2C1), personal space (2C2), language (2C3)
Reaction: difference noted (2R1), discomfort (2R2), adaptation (2R3)

Student 1: I was invited, um, to this Sheik’s house who was a friend of the family (2S2) of one of the guys I was in school with, and it was pretty intense. There was all of this food (2S1) and we were there really late (2S3) and the guy kept trying to convert me to Islam (2M1). It was, like, he kept telling me I would not get to heaven if I didn’t follow the Qu’ran and he was a Wahabbi so he was really strict about it all (2M1). I had never been around any fundamentalist (2M1) types so it was pretty weird (2R2) for me (2RI) and all. I wasn’t used to talking about religious things (2M1), but I knew it was important to them (2RI) so I hung with it (2R3). I couldn’t get over (2RI) how long they could talk about it (2M1), it’s like “don’t they have anything else to discuss but who is going to heaven and who isn’t?” The only thing that kept him from getting mad was the fact that I was trying to talk Arabic, and I guess the only thing that kept me from getting mad was cultural understanding (2R3). If it weren’t for me knowing how important religion (2M1) and the Qu’ran was to them I might have, you know, just left or gotten into a big argument.

Student 5: I got to climb Mount Sinai and, um, on the way up I met this Bedouin guy up there. We spent hours (2S3) talking to each other in, like, broken Arabic and English
It's amazing how much you can communicate if you try (2R3) and we got on some pretty deep subjects. We never got mad at each other even though we really had, like, big differences on religion (2M1) and politics. We laughed a lot and that helped (2R3).

Student 2: I was surprised (2R1) at how few French could speak English, or at least wanted to (2C3). I always thought, you know, Europeans all spoke English, so it was good for me to have to work on the French (2C3). Nobody ever got mad about the language thing but you could tell it was, um, a sore point that English was taking over (2C3). Being in a French military setting was a little different (2R1), too, because they are like us but have these differences like how important meals are (2S1). We just eat our chow to get ready for the next thing, you know, but to them it's like an event every time they sit down to eat (2S1). I guess dealing with markets and locals in Senegal was really different (2R1), too. You can't just buy something; it, like, turns in to this big deal and all and if you don't play the game they don't like it.

Student 4: In Russia I was amazed at the history and how much the U.S. has affected their culture (2R1). It's, like, everyone is trying to dress American (2S4) and they do rap and stuff like that. We also saw this stabbing in a park and it really made me think about crime there. I guess it's not much different over here but it still made me think. I wondered if that part of our culture came with the clothes (2S4) and music, like, what was Russia like during the Soviet times and has their crime increased since the (Berlin) Wall fell?

Student 3: Um, in China I just remember riding the trains and how crowded they were and how they were even more crowded than the subway in New York (2C2). There is no such thing as personal space (2C2) and there is a lot of pushing and shoving to get a seat and lines are a joke there and people spit on the ground (2C1) and, you know, it's all so different than here (2R1). Not only that, but the staring and picture taking (2C1): it's like I was some, like, zoo animal sometimes (2S4). If you were not Chinese (2S4) they would touch your hair (2C2) and it could make you really uncomfortable (2R2) at first. But then when I came back to the U.S. it was hard to deal with Americans, especially cadets, and I wanted to get back to the crowds (2C2) and rush (2S3).

Question 3: Think back to that encounter: If it was a successful encounter, what kind of skills did you use to negotiate it? If it was not successful, what skills were you lacking or do you wish you had?

Question 3 categories and codes
Attitudes: open-mindedness (3A1), flexibility (3A3)
Skills: reasoning (3S1), language (3S2), humor (3S3), observation (3S4)
Exposure: getting out into the culture (3E1), relationships (3E2)

Student 3: It's, like, you have to keep your own culture but learn to appreciate theirs (3A1). You can't just write them off as inferior or anything like that (3A1). That means you need to be patient with things you might think are outrageous like spitting or
pushing, you know. You also have to realize that your way of doing things may not always be the best one (3AI). What works in China works in China and if we tried to do things there the American way it might not work at all (3SI). You just have to go with it (3A3), I guess. Sometimes all you can do is laugh at a situation (3S3)! [laughs]

Student 1: I would say, “Know thyself.” You have to recognize (3S4) the, um, differences between you and them and the reasons for them. It’s not so much a bunch of do’s and don’ts but you have to make a personal connection with people (3E2). That means, like, watching and observing (3S4) and talking to them so you can see their point of view. If you can get their point of view you might, like, see why they are doing something and if you get close enough to them (3E2) you can even ask questions about it all.

Student 2: I guess patience, especially with yourself. Courage, too, because you can’t get through these things without being able to confront them (3E1). You have to get out in the culture (3E1) to see how it works (3S4) and all, and if you are always in your room or hanging out with other Americans you won’t get that at all. I know a lot of students were too nervous to try to use their language (3S2) or make local friends, and you can hide (3E1) in an English speaking group pretty easy, at least in France. Being at St. Cyr really forced me to, like, go with the flow (3A3) because they split up the English speakers (3S2) on purpose.

Student 5: You need to be diplomatic and use language (3S2) and, um, social skills to bridge the gap between the cultures. I don’t see how you can adapt if you don’t speak some of the language (3S2) because it’s such a big part of the culture and who they are. No matter how hard you try you can’t make those, um, relationships (3E2) without at least trying to use their language (3S2).

Student 4: I think the key is being persistent. You can’t get embarrassed all the time and you need to be able to stand your ground and be confrontational sometimes. If you’re not, like, assertive then you will get no respect. That doesn’t mean picking fights and all, it just means you have to be comfortable with yourself and know that differences are okay, you know (3AI). If you aren’t out there mixing it up (3E1) some you’ll never, like, figure out where other cultures are coming from.

Question 4: What are some ways the Army could identify and measure these skills?

Question 4 categories and codes
Experiential: observed immersion (4EI)
Institutional: academic performance (4I1), tests (4I2), interview SBA (4I3)

Student 5: I think you have to get the soldiers out of their comfort zone and observe how they do (4EI). The way to do that is to get them to interact with some other culture and watch them (4EI). If they get all huffy and lose their tempers right off that might be a good sign but if they can, you know, handle differences in a diplomatic way and try to meet the other guys halfway that might show some potential.
Student 4: Yeah, the only, um, way to really know how someone will react in this kind of thing is to get them to do it (4E1). It’s helpful to have some facts about the culture but the only way to really know is to get in a situation where you have to use them in a real setting (4E1). I guess it would perfect if you could send everyone abroad and watch them somehow (4E1), but in an Army as big as ours that wouldn’t work. Role players are a good idea, I guess, um, especially if they are really from another culture and are told to act naturally like they would at home (4I3).

Question 5: How well do you think the IDI and SBA captured your willingness and ability to adapt to an intercultural situation?

Question 5 categories and codes
IDI validity: too abstract (5IV1), perception/reality difference (5IV2), insight (5IV3)
IDI reliability: effect of test context and timing (5IR1)
SBA validity: too abstract (5SV1), insight (5SV2)
Utility of instruments: interview tool (5U1), general (5U2)

Student 2: I think the tests grouped “cultures” too loosely (5IV1), (5SV1). There should be different tests for each, um, culture or place because there are too many differences (5IV1), (5SV1). You can’t just make some generic test and expect students to be able to know what to do (5IV1), (5SV1). The one test with the bubbles was really hard to understand because it was just your opinion not based on anything real (5IV1). I don’t, um, see how they can rate using something like that (5IV1).

Student 1: I thought the difference between the perceived and real score was interesting (5IV2), but I the, um, the questions didn’t really fit the subject (5IV1). I mean, there are too many things that it, uh, didn’t take in to account like personality traits or just what’s going on that day (5IR1). I might score high one day because I’m in a good mood or had a good experience and then score low the next because I’m pissed off or something (5IR1). It’s like I could be way up on the scale one day and really low the next depending on how I feel (5IR1). Even with the experience abroad: some days I look back at my time in Morocco and feel really good about the culture but on others I don’t like it at all (5IR1). Same with the scenario: there were too many missing pieces to really answer the question (5SV1).

Student 5: I thought the IDI would be good as a teaching tool and for use in the whole Army (5IV3), (5U2). You could, um, use the scales to show people where they are and where they think they are then talk about how to move forward (5IV3). Even though it’s just a number if you, you know, explain what they mean it would be a good way to see yourself in that area (5IV3). The scenario was good for a military audience (5U2), especially if you could, like, see other cadets’ answers the way we can in the company leadership website (5SV2). I think the scenario is better than the IDI because it shows you more about what you might do in a real situation (5SV2), but the IDI was pretty good, too (5U2).
Student 4: If you got a low score on the IDI it might show you how to get better, but otherwise I don’t think it tells you much (5IV3). I mean, it’s really vague and hard to see what it all means, you know (5IV1). The questions made you think, though (5IV3). Um, the scenario was good at measuring your balance between your own culture and values and theirs (5SV2). That is something that we will have to do pretty soon and it will be hard. Where do you compromise your values, or do you? It might sound good to be really moral and all, but if it affects your mission and your soldiers die or something did you really do the right thing (5SV2), (5U2)? It’s hard.

Question 6: How relevant do you think the IDI and SBA were to a military audience such as that at West Point?

*Question 6 category and codes*

*Level of applicability: individual soldier (6I), unit (6U), polyvalent (6P)*

Student 3: I thought both were good for that (6P). The, um, IDI helped you know yourself while the scenario tested your decision-making (6I). I don’t think the audience matters too much because we all have to face different cultures no matter where we work (6P). You need someone to talk it over with you, though. Otherwise it’s just, like, another test that goes in a file somewhere and you don’t learn anything from it all.

Student 1: I think both are irrelevant because the military has to be culturally sensitive with the wars we are fighting right now (6U). Tests can’t really show this, it has to be observed on the ground. Neither of tests really showed anything real because they were on paper and asked really general questions (6U). I can’t see how that shows anything, you know, useful to a military audience where we’re going to be out there in foreign cultures all the time (6U).

Student 4: Yeah, but I think the scenario is a good tool for a commander to see how his soldiers will react to a strange situation (6U). It’s not something you grade, really, it just shows how you, um, react (6I). It’s like the things we do for MS (military science) like the Platoon Leader’s Challenge, just because it’s on paper doesn’t mean it’s worthless (6I). I learn a lot from those (6I). The IDI test might be good for special forces or FAO’s (foreign area officers) because they need more skills like this (6U). Maybe for the broader Army, too, though; these days we’re all, you know, going to be working with the people rather than fighting it out on a big battlefield against another big army (6U).

Question 7: Did the IDI and SBA place an unreasonable demand on your time?

*Question 7 category and codes*

*Duration of test: not too long (7N), compensatory time (7C)*

[Students shake their heads] (7N).

Student 3: The scenario took ten minutes and we did the other test during Dean’s Hours. It was a pain but not, um, unreasonable.
Student 5: It didn’t take too long but the questions were similar and repetitive.

Question 8: Given the importance that the Army is placing on intercultural competence and the fact that it is a stated goal in *Educating Future Army Officers for a Changing World*, what advice would you give the Dean about theIDI and SBA?

*Question 8 categories and codes*

*Instrument employment: developmental tool (8E1)*

*Program enhancement: immersion (8P1), instruments more than a grade (8P2)*

Student 2: I thought combining it with the immersion experience was good (8E1), (8P1). Like, it showed you where you were on a scale and helped you think about how the experience showed that (8E1). It’s good to think back on the experience (8P1) and see how what you did showed on the scale and how you might have, you know, done something different (8E1). I’d keep using the IDI, just make sure you, um, give feedback on it and don’t just keep the numbers somewhere (8E1), (8P2).

Student 5: I’d suggest putting the scenario on line like the Platoon Leader’s Challenge so we can see how others handled it. That way we can see other options and ways of seeing the situation and working with it. Whatever happens, um, West Point needs to share the information with us or its useless (8E1), (8P2).

Student 4: If they give us feedback on the IDI it’s good (8E1). We would need more than the score, though, because it is hard to interpret and just knowing you’re in, like, denial, is meaningless unless someone shows you what that means and how you can move on (8P2). The scenario is good, too, um, because it gives some generic feedback on how you make decisions in a strange situation (8E1). It should be shorter, though: I lost track of what I was, like, supposed to be doing because the story was so long.

Student 1: I thought the scenario was good (8E1) because it forced you to answer the “why” question instead of just the usual “what.” West Point gets too worried about the right answer sometimes. They need ask “why” here more because life doesn’t, you know, have a textbook answer (8E1). Putting it on line is a good idea, too.

Question 9: Our goal is to evaluate these two assessment tools for potential use here at West Point. Is there anything we overlooked that you would like to add?

*Question 9 categories and codes*

*Programmatic: immersion (9P1)*

*Academic: foreign language (9A2)*

Student 1: I think, like, the immersion experience has had a bigger impact on me than anything here, including academics (9P1). The culture part was especially important, more than the language. It helped me to figure out how to read in to a situation and take someone else’s, um, point of view (9P1). This really relied on our powers of observation
I think doing something for real rather than just, you know, reading about it and talking about it and taking a test on it means a lot. They definitely need to keep the immersion experiences and get everyone to do one.

Student 3: I don't know, I think the language is what helps you communicate and that is what makes the cultural part work. If I can't communicate I can't get immersed, you know. I do know we don't use the foreign cadets we have here right, like, they stay here and we just don't use the, um, opportunity to interact with them. All the language and culture they could teach us is wasted I think.

Student 5: Is cultural competence something we can attain here? Social skills are real important but we don't get to use them much. Um, West Point and the Army are always trying to box us in but to be good at something like this you need to open up. But you can't do that when you're, like, stuck on campus all the time and never get out to experience the real world. The ethical part is also hard to tie in but it's part of the picture, too. They work on that real hard here, but sometimes it's hard to tell, like, where the line is. You have to be ethical but you have to be effective in another culture; how do you, like, do that?

Student 2: Maybe a culture course would help fit the ethics in somehow. You could discuss, you know, how culture affects ethics and see where some things are universal but others depend on where you are at. The experiences I had in France and Senegal were real eye openers and showed how I was pretty, um, ethnocentric. West Point should get everyone abroad before they graduate like St Cyr does. The French are lucky in that.

Moderator: Thank you for your time; your views are very useful to us. Hopefully this will help us keep the immersion experiences going. Good luck with the rest of your studies and with your career.
Appendix I
Glossary of Terms

Acceptance. One of the scales used in the IDI, which “involves an acknowledgment that identifying significant cultural differences is crucial to understanding human interaction” (Hammer, 2008).

Adaptation. One of the scales used in the IDI, which “involves a more proactive effort on the part of an individual to use cultural differences and intercultural skills in ways which maximize his/her understanding and relationships with people from other cultures” (Hammer, 2008).

Cross-cultural competence (3C). For the purposes of this study, 3C is “a set of cognitive, behavioral, and affective/motivational components that enable individuals to adapt effectively in intercultural environments” (Abbe et al., 2007). This is the working definition of 3C currently being used in a U.S. Army Research Institute study of developing 3C in military leaders.

Defense. One of the scales used in the IDI, “which refers to a more explicit recognition of [cultural] differences coupled with more overt attempts at erecting defenses against them” (Hammer, 2008).

Denial. One of the scales used in the IDI. “Denial is the most basic stage of ethnocentrism and reflects an orientation which assumes there are no real differences among people from different cultures” (Hammer, 2008).

Feasibility. For the purposes of this study, feasibility refers to the degree to which the 3C assessment instrument fits within available resources, chiefly time and money in the case of USMA. This is the definition of feasibility contained in U.S. Army problem-solving doctrine (FM5-0, 2005).

Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). “The IDI is a statistically reliable, cross-culturally valid measure of intercultural competence. [It] is a 50-item, theory-based instrument that can be taken either in paper and pencil form or online” (Hammer, 2007). It includes the following scales from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativity: denial/defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, integration. This is the definition used by the creator and proprietor of the test. This study addresses the IDI in greater detail in the methodology section.

Integration. One of the scales used in the IDI, which “describes the effort to integrate disparate aspects of one’s cultural identity into a new whole” (Hammer, 2008).

Minimization. One of the scales used in the IDI, which “acts as a kind of transition between the polarization of difference in Defense and the nonevaluative recognition of difference in Acceptance” (Hammer, 2008).
Reversal. One of the scales used in concert with Defense in the IDI. It is “the denigration of one’s own culture and an attendant assumption of superiority of a different culture” (Hammer, 2008).

Scenario-based assessment (SBA). For the purposes of this study, a SBA is one or more hypothetical scenarios designed to test one’s situational judgment with respect to 3C. SBA’s are currently used by the U.S. Department of State to evaluate foreign service officer candidates (DLO, 2007).

Semester Abroad Program (SAP). For the purposes of this study, the SAP is a program administered by USMA’s Department of Foreign Languages (DFL) that sends cadets abroad to study in a foreign undergraduate institution for a semester, and CLCRS is responsible for administering pre- and post- SAP assessment. Because the goal of the program is to enhance the cadets’ foreign language proficiency, 3C, and regional knowledge, the program occurs in locations where the seven languages taught by DFL - Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish - are spoken.
References


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