

Attaining Global Perspective: Preparing Undergraduate Students for an
Interdependent World

By

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Abstract

International Studies programs have been in existence for quite some time, however with the world becoming more interdependent, their necessity is more important now than ever. The international education surge is possibly due to the fact that the 21st century requires vastly different skills from those of the past. Students entering the workforce are now confronted with the need for highly specialized skill sets that were once not necessary, but are now essential to stay competitive for jobs in the global economy. The purpose of this preliminary research is to gain a better understanding of the current level of student awareness regarding global perspective and whether pursuing international studies will prepare students to be more open to diverse attitudes than other majors at Texas State University—San Marcos. This research will use Robert G. Hanvey's, *An Attainable Global Perspective*, as the basis for what an international studies curriculum should include to foster student perspective change and willingness to understand global interdependence and its implications. This will be done by operationalizing Hanvey's article into a usable survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was created by taking each of Hanvey's five dimensions and breaking them down into measurable categories.

The results of the questionnaire show that both groups of students are often equal in their awareness of global perspectives. The questions that showed significant differences between the groups did favor the International Studies students as more cognizant of the topic discussed. However, this did not occur often enough to prove that International Studies premajors at Texas State University have a better grasp of global perspective than the other group of students.

About the Author

Alison Nicole Villarreal was born in August 1979, and is a native of Corpus Christi, TX. She followed in her father's educational footsteps by attending Southwest Texas State University, where she graduated in 2002 with a degree in Political Science and a minor in Psychology. Alison has always enjoyed working in educational settings, whether it was working in after-school programs, teaching adult ESL courses or interning with the Texas Education Agency. This led to her interest in international education and the importance of global awareness as the world becomes more interdependent. Alison currently works for the Texas Education Agency in the Office of State Initiatives.

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Chapter I: Introduction

International studies programs have been in existence for quite some time yet interest in these programs is greater than ever. A report from the American Council on Education found that slightly more than one-third of all institutions of higher education included international education in their mission statements (Siaya & Hayward, 2003). The international education surge is possibly due to the fact that the 21st century requires vastly different skills from those of the past. Students entering the workforce are now confronted with the need for highly specialized skill sets that were once not necessary, but are now essential to stay competitive for jobs in the global economy. Dr. Maryann Cusimano Love, a member of the United States International Policy Committee states,

“...resources devoted to international education tend to focus overwhelmingly on the needs of that small proportion of students who pursue a major in some international field of study.... while there is no doubt room for improvement in the quality of these courses and programs at many schools, the most glaring shortcomings in international education concern the vast majority of students who will not specialize in international studies, yet nevertheless need some degree of global awareness and inter-cultural competence. These students are generally poorly served by our dominant approaches to international education” (2007, 6).

As Dr. Cusimano stated, international education is not something that can be devoted to students who choose to pursue this field of study. Internationally-themed courses need to be integrated into the core curriculum of all major fields of study so that every student will be aware of the current economic and global climate. This will allow for students to stay competitive and relevant in an interdependent and changing world. However, addressing these and future challenges will require an education system that, from kindergarten through postsecondary education, prepares future citizens and employees to act and lead in a global context. This type of international education is necessary to

prepare students for the twenty-first century challenges facing the United States economy, national security and society (CED 2006, 13).

Research Purpose

The purpose of this preliminary research is to gain a better understanding of the current level of student awareness regarding global perspective and whether pursuing international studies will prepare students to be more open to diverse attitudes than other majors at Texas State University—San Marcos. This research will use Robert G. Hanvey's, *An Attainable Global Perspective*, as the basis for what an international studies curriculum should include to foster student perspective change and willingness to understand global interdependence and its implications. The research will focus on two groups of students, pre-majors in the International Studies program and a cross-section of students in varying majors at Texas State University.

Chapter Descriptions

To achieve the research purpose, this study has been divided into five chapters. Chapter Two discusses the current literature concerning the history behind international studies programs, the need for these programs and the obstacles facing international education. Chapter Three discusses the methodology used to conduct this research and the reasoning behind the various methods to collect and analyze the data. Chapter Four contains the results and analysis of the research conducted and Chapter Five, the final chapter, summarizes the overall project and discusses ideas for future research.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Chapter Purpose

This chapter examines the scholarly literature pertaining to international studies programs, including why they were created and how they have evolved over the years as the world has become increasingly more connected. The literature provides background of and rationale for the effectiveness of these programs as a positive method of achieving global unity. This information is necessary to understand how a global perspective can be attained through successful international studies programs.

Introduction

International studies programs are devoted to expanding knowledge and understanding about people and culture and have flourished in recent years. According to the Texas State International Studies website, “the goal is to help solve the problems that the world is facing by increasing awareness and empathy of the deep and rich cultures of the world among leaders who make decisions and make a difference in the lives of everyday people”¹. Richard Hanvey describes international education as “education for the attainment of a global perspective”, which he defines as “that learning which enhances the individual’s ability to understand his or her condition in the community and the world and improves the ability to make effective judgments”(1976, 2). Hanvey includes in his definition the study of nations, cultures, and civilizations. He includes the United States with its pluralistic society and the societies of other peoples, with a focus on understanding how they are interconnected and how they change, and on the

¹ For more information on Texas State International Studies please visit <http://www.txstate.edu/InternationalStudies/>

individual's role in this process. "It provides the individual with a realistic perspective on world issues, problems and prospects, and an awareness of the relationships between an individual's enlightened self-interest and the concerns of people elsewhere in the world" (Hanvey 1976, 1). Americans are starting to recognize the need for the next generation to be internationally competent and culturally aware" (NAFSAa 2006). In light of recent events, not only in the United States but abroad, it is clear that the world has become more interdependent. According to Jerry R. Ladman, an Associate Provost at Ohio State University,

this need is brought home to us almost daily as we assimilate the news about internal ethnic or political conflicts within countries and try to understand them in the context of their local cultures. We now know that national security is not just about armed forces and military hardware, but also it depends on intimate understanding of other societies, their cultures and their languages (2005,1).

The literature about international studies programs explores public opinion regarding these programs as well as their justification.

History

American education has evolved with the needs of its citizens. As the nation has become more complex, the schools have adapted to accommodate the changing face of society. As the world enters into the 21st century, new accommodations must be made to prepare the next generation of students for a world that is more culturally diverse globally interdependent.

The first multicultural contacts came through military clashes, which bred curiosity and eventually led to knowledge about neighboring enemies (Speakman 1966, 2). "It was the 19th century imperialistic impulse which directly related the diplomatic contact with cultural aspects causing governments to initiate planned programs of

educational activities having an international dimension” (Speakman 1966, 4). During this time, the world underwent vast changes which initiated a trend toward international exchange and international studies programs.

In 1900, shortly after the Berlin Conference, the world had only 40 nations. In 1975, there were 150 and as of 2007 there were 192 members in the United Nations.² “In the 1940s, the number of U.S. scholars able to comprehend these changes in foreign areas was small; as was the number of university foreign area studies programs” (Mehlinger, O’Meara and Ma Newman 2001, 12). The world was in flux and even the most knowledgeable U.S. citizens did not fully understand the ramifications of these changes. As the world moved closer to war, the need for foreign area studies in higher education was more clear than ever.

Besides the need for trained personnel and a desire by students to learn about foreign people, many believed that war could be avoided in the future if people learned more about each other (Speakman 1966, 18). Ironically, although the war revitalized interest in international affairs and cultural differences, few U.S. universities offered post graduate degrees in anything other than Western European studies. In fact, only 400 post graduate degrees were awarded in foreign or international affairs in the United States. (Mehlinger, O’Meara and Ma Newman 2001, 12). After the war, the United States government found it needed reliable advice about its many new foreign commitments which meant it needed personnel versed in the culture and needs of previously ignored geographical areas. These new pressures led to the development of some of the early schools of international affairs (Speakman 1966, 17). “Also instrumental in the push to

² For more information on UN member states visit (<http://www.un.org>)

develop U.S. International expertise during this period was a group of liberal influential senators, representatives, some foreign policy experts and interested citizens who actively supported U.S. participation in the League of Nations (1918-40) and the subsequent formation of the United Nations in 1945” (Mehlinger, O’Meara and Ma Newman 2001, 13). One of the influential senators was newly elected J. William Fulbright, who, building on his own experience as a Rhodes Scholar in 1928, authored the Fulbright Act in 1946 to institutionalize federal support for research, teaching, and graduate study abroad. Fulbright was supported by a bipartisan coalition of senators with a visionary international outlook, including Texas State University’s own Lyndon B. Johnson (Mehlinger, O’Meara and Ma Newman 2001, 13). However, the appearance in October 1957 of the Russian space satellite *Sputnik*, caused the United States to question the senators once thought of as “visionary”. “*Sputnik* and all it signified, was the catalyst that finally pushed the United States government, in 1958, to create the National Defense Education Act (Mehlinger, O’Meara and Ma Newman 2001, 13).

NDEA thus heralded a major U.S. commitment to devoting new attention to the world beyond its borders—first to teach more of the uncommonly taught foreign languages, and then to learn in depth about the histories, societies, cultures, and political systems of the key foreign powers as well as the rapidly multiplying “Third World” nations (Mehlinger, O’Meara and Ma Newman 2001, 13).

Shortly after the establishment of the NDEA, the U.S. Congress passed the Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 known as the “Fulbright-Hays Act,” to provide for training programs overseas. That same year Title VI was transferred to the Department of Education. In 1977 President Carter convened the Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies. After interviewing representatives of business, government, universities, and other nonprofit institutions the commission issued its

report. The problem, as defined by the Commission, was Americans' "scandalous" incompetence in foreign languages. The report also concluded, "Nothing less is at issue than the nation's security" (CED 2006). These foreign and domestic programs thrust the United States into a global leadership role, a role still not fully realized due to the lack of strong international studies programs.

International studies programs teach students the global perspective that is necessary to cope with an interdependent world. The ability to study internationally-focused curriculum makes possible the present phenomenon of international education and cultural diplomacy.

Why is International Education Important?

International education is important because it fosters an open mind towards cultures and people unfamiliar to each other. Through the familiarization process, United States foreign policy and international leadership is strengthening. Over the past half-century, United States foreign policy leaders have consistently acknowledged international education as one of the nation's most valuable foreign policy tools (NAFSAb, 2006). Understanding the issues and cultural differences of other countries teaches individuals how and why conflicts arise and how best to assist other countries or cultures. It stands to reason that cooperation on non-political levels will lead to political cooperation and, thus, lessen the chance of war; most believe that, "if foreigners could only see what we are really like, they would not fight with us" (Speakman 1966, 18). This statement is not only relative to the United States but the other countries, as well.

Due to the demands of globalization the United States cannot expect to retain its competitive edge if its workforce lacks strong international and cross-cultural knowledge

and skills (NAFSAd, 2006). The United States depends on its educated citizens. “This transformation is being shaped by the demands to prepare labor for participation in the global economy and to prepare citizens to participate in the international polity” (Zhai and Scheer 2004, 39). In order to stay competitive, American universities and schools must produce strong and competent graduates, able to meet the demands and expectations of the new global economy. “Today, more than ever, American businesses value employees who possess an understanding of other cultures, as markets diversify and the world becomes increasingly complex” (Johnston & Edelstein, 1993). Students benefit with they possess basic knowledge of other cultures. This knowledge and diversity training will be a marketable skill in the new global system. Deardorff (2004, 9) suggests that, “the expansion of trade partners in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America demands knowledgeable, competent workers to make the most of the global market place”. The continuous influx of immigrants means that American workers will need to be able to work with people from different cultures, as well as work effectively in diverse environments.

The United States education system must also prepare students for average Americans lack of even minimal knowledge of foreign relations and a diminutive ability to communicate in a foreign language. This ignorance not only impairs their capacity to lead in the future, “it fuels anti-Americanism by making us appear arrogant and uninterested in other cultures” (NAFSAd 2006). International studies programs train students to examine and understand international perspectives. Paralleling the emphasis on foreign area studies in the United States are American-studies programs in more than 100 countries abroad. “This is reciprocity, toward mutual understanding” (Sussman 1992,

88). “A coherent and coordinated international education strategy will help us meet the twin challenges of preparing our citizens for a global environment while continuing to educate future leaders from abroad” (Clinton 2000). It is not solely the responsibility of other nations to understand Western ways of thinking, as many Americans would like to believe. It is instead necessary for Americans to understand the ideas of others and to forge a community of mutual understanding through education.

Countries benefit in many ways by educating the next generation of world leaders and attracting the world’s scientific, technological and intellectual elite. International students help American students by demystifying different cultures and teaching them to work in a diverse setting. The United States is currently disengaged, content to compete with speeches, sound bites and photo ops (NAFSAb 2006). For the first time, the US seems to be losing its status as the destination of choice for international students (NAFSAb 2006). One reason for the loss of international students is that the competing countries have adopted and implemented strategies for capturing a greater share of the student market (NAFSAb 2006). In an article by Tony Blair published in the *Guardian* (2006), he pledged to commit seven million pounds to international education so universities and colleges can continue attracting students from abroad. Blair said, “this is vital to maintaining the thriving cosmopolitan base of students we have, and will also deepen our global education links” (Blair 2006). Australia and Canada have also increased funding to attract international students. Also attracting international students are the signatories of the Bologna Declaration. “Under the Bologna Process, the signatories, 45 in all, are pledged to create a seamless higher education system by a target date of 2010, with credits transferable among their higher education institutions”

(NAFSAb 2006). Finally, countries once thought of as “sending countries”—those that send their students abroad for higher education—are building up their indigenous higher education capacity and are encouraging students to stay home for their education so as not to lose them to the United States (NAFSAb 2006). China and India are encouraging their students to study at home; these countries constitute 25 percent of all international students in the United States (NAFSAb (2006). The United States must overhaul its immigration process and offer incentives in order to remain competitive in the international student market. These students stimulate the country economically and are an invaluable source of knowledge to American students and professionals. “We are fortunate to count among our staunchest friends abroad those who have experienced our country and our values through in-depth exposure as students and scholars” (Clinton 2000).

Obstacles to International Studies Programs

International studies programs throughout the world, share a lack of uniformity. Although differences in presenting subject matter, is to be expected, there has never been a specific global perspectives and understanding common to international studies programs. Some scholars have applied a loose definition of international studies. “As Popkewitz (1980, 304) notes, the term *global education* operates as an educational slogan—a positive emotive label that creates a ‘unity of feeling and spirit about the tasks to be confronted in schooling³” (Case 1993, 318). While the definition of international studies programs vary, there is an underlying sense of unity among global education

³ Case quotes Thomas S. Popkewitz’s “Global Education as a Slogan System.” *Curriculum Inquiry*10 (1980): 303-16.

enthusiasts. “A plurality of global educators—some focusing on environmental concerns, others on human rights issues, and still others on impediments to economic development that jointly contribute to a common cause, namely helping to prepare students for the world they must face” (Case 1993, 318). Some believe that a clear definition of international education might divide and possibly alienate educators. Others believe that a clear definition is necessary to give international education validity. Case (2003, 318) contends that the most compelling reason to achieve clarity is that global educators may “otherwise squander a historic opportunity”. Public interest in international studies is growing, especially with global issues appearing more frequently in the media. International education, without clear goals and objectives, could be stifled by political and educational red tape. Tye and Case both realize that now is the time to fuse international curriculum into the current educational realm presented to students:

The possibility that support for global education will decline, even though world problems are bound to persist or intensify, suggests that global educators should capitalize on the significant, but likely limited opportunity to build into the educational infrastructure a sound global component (Tye 1990, 43).

An unambiguous definition and a defined set of goals for the field would indicate that international education is not a passing fad but rather a valid course of study providing American students with a needed edge in a globally-connected and dynamic world.

Another issue facing international studies programs is the unintended implications of poorly prepared curriculum for students; such as the reinforcement of stereotypes. “Insufficient attention to the implicit and explicit views of the world communicated to students threatens to undermine the legitimate goals of global education” (Case 1993, 319). Case discusses the “food, costumes, and customs” approach that many educational programs adopt when examining other cultures, meaning that most international studies

programs “adopt relatively superficial features of their lifestyles” (1993, 319). Many students’ international exposure consists of pot-luck “ethnic dishes” and religious ceremonies. This type of limited exposure will hardly prepare students for a diverse world. Case references Schuncke⁴ (1984, 249) who states that, “by attending to limited, and to some extent trivial, cultural dimensions, global educators may actually reinforce stereotypical perceptions” (1993, 319). Curriculum often also gives students outdated information and negative portrayals of developing countries. Considering this type of negative reinforcement, it is clear why many students view other cultures with arrogance. Case (1993, 319) suggests that, “simply teaching more about the world is not the solution—merely having more information may not advance students understanding”. Curriculum based on other cultures and people must be prepared and presented in a thoughtful manner so as to give students a broad understanding and appreciative, rather than an anecdotal, view of life outside the United States.

Preceding are just a few challenges facing the current global education movement. Without clearly defined educational goals, international education stands to lose the support of its advocates. In reference to the spiritless nature of global perspective, former U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett said, “When I hear geography and history, I am pleased; when I hear global perspectives, I’m usually a little nervous” (Rothman 1987, 16)⁵. Mr. Bennett’s concerns might be allayed by a resolution to these issues through a more focused and steadfast approach to defining international studies curriculum goals

⁴ Case quotes George M. Schuncke from, “Global Awareness and Younger Children: Beginning the Process.” *Social Studies* 75 (November/December 1984): 248-251.

⁵ For the full article by Robert Rothman, see “Report Urges Schools to Think Globally in Changing World.” *Education Week*, 20 May 1987: 15-16.

and objectives. International studies education is vitally important for current and future students.

Goals of International Studies Programs

When implementing a new program, or updating an existing program such as international studies, it is important to define the program goals as well as the expected results. Hanvey recommends five dimensions that promote a global perspective in International education programs. These dimensions are: Perspective Consciousness, “State of the Planet” Awareness, Cross-Cultural Awareness, Knowledge of Global Dynamics, and the Awareness of Human Choices (1976, 1).

Perspective Consciousness

The recognition or awareness on the part of the individual that he or she has a view of the world that is not universally shared, that this view of the world has been and continues to be shaped by influences that often escape conscious detection, and that others have views of the world that are profoundly different from one's own (Hanvey, 5) .

Hanvey (1976, 5) suggests that “few of us in our lives can actually transcend the viewpoint presented by the common carriers of information and almost none of us can transcend the cognitive mapping presented by the culture we grew up in”. People are influenced in a number of ways, whether it is by their parents or the society in which they live, thus making it difficult for them to discern the difference between appropriate views and those that are simply acceptable because they have never been challenged. An important aspect of perspective consciousness is determining the difference between perspective and opinion. Opinion is the “surface layer, the conscious outcropping of perspective”

(Hanvey 1976, 5). Opinions can be influenced by discussion or research. But there are deep and hidden layers of perspective that may be more important in orienting behavior (Hanvey 1976, 6). These deep layers are where societal tendencies are determined and developed, generally over an extensive period of time. Perspective is harder to change, primarily because these attitudes are rarely challenged. Change of perspective occurs on four levels: the personal level, the societal level, the national level, and the global level.

The personal level is the most profound because after a person begins to view their own perspective differently, it is easier to begin viewing life from another person's point of view. The personal level of perspective usually originates from beliefs held by parents, friends or neighbors, beliefs ingrained from an early age. Since these beliefs have been reaffirmed for an extensive period of time, change at the personal level is not easy but rather a continuous process. Remy, Nathan, Becker and Torney contend that, "Every individual's particular configuration of political knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and values is developed over a lifetime through a process of political learning" (1975, 5). Political learning begins in infancy. People continually learn new ideas and alternate ways of thinking sometimes unconsciously. This unconscious learning is what shapes the personal level of perspective, making it difficult to change. However, through international studies programs and interaction with different cultures, personal perspectives can change. This change begins when students understand that their view of the world is not universally shared, and that people

have varying views with equal merit and validity. Once this occurs the student can grow and develop new ideas, encouraging shared cooperation among people.

Perspective change at the societal level refers to a change in the way people view their immediate surroundings, including the cultural differences among the people in that environment. At the rudimentary level, society is a collection of people in a specific region who are united together by a bond of propinquity. However, society changes because of the influence of people from varying parts of the world migrating at a record pace. It is now more important than ever for citizens to have a better understanding of cultural diversity and to gain an appreciation for new ideas and traditions that accompany this societal change. International studies programs allow students to learn about different cultures in a non-threatening way. Students also come to understand and appreciate the unique customs and values that are shaping the new American landscape. Changes in societal perspective prepare students for life in a multicultural and diverse world and help alleviate prejudice. The next step in perspective consciousness occurs at the national level.

Perspective change at the national level means understanding how the American government and its policies affect people from other countries. Often Americans disregard governments and policies of other nations. Students who are exposed to the traditions and values of other countries understand the interconnectedness of the world and question American political policies that may negatively impact people of other cultures. This new understanding takes perspective consciousness beyond national borders and provides a greater

appreciation for the plight of other nations and their valid viewpoints on international situations. Once students recognize this perspective they will view other people in the world as part of the same human family, from a global perspective, leading to the final perspective which occurs at the global level.

Change at the global level, the highest level of perspective change, comes with the realization that all people are part of one global family. This understanding helps individuals make wise decisions concerning issues that could have a global impact; such as problems concerning the environment, healthcare, population, and human rights. This new cognizance changes the lens through which people view various situations all over the world. This enhanced outlook works to eliminate stereotypes and to change previously held socioeconomic perceptions and biases based on cultural differences, while allowing for people to be valued regardless of their differences. Understanding perspective consciousness is the first step in conceptualizing the state of the planet in a more meaningful and proactive way.

“State of the Planet” Awareness

Awareness of prevailing world conditions and development, including emergent conditions and trends, e.g. population growth, migrations, economic conditions, resources and physical environments, political developments, science and technology, law, health, inter-nation and intra-nation conflicts, etc (Hanvey, 7).

Scholars point to a lack of mobility as an important influence on “State of the Planet” Awareness because people often need to visually see the plight and conditions of other cultures and nations in order to appreciate them. Some movement “occurs as a direct result of conditions—economic, political, social, and environmental—which make

it impossible for people to remain in the places where they were born. Extreme poverty, wars, and other political upheavals, natural disasters such as drought or earthquake, the systematic persecution of certain ethnic or religious groups –these are examples of reasons why people willingly or reluctantly leave home to seek a safer, better life somewhere else” (Tye and Tye 1992, 5). Still for most people in the world, direct experience beyond the local community is infrequent or nonexistent (Hanvey 1976, 7). The vast majority of Americans will spend their lives within 60 miles of where they were born reiterating this point, Hanvey (1976, 7) points out the high likelihood of meeting a resident of a Chicago neighborhood who has never traveled the few miles to the central business district. If this trend is true for a geographically mobile society like the United States, it is even more true for other parts of the world.

It is difficult to discuss awareness, without first considering the access to information that people have from around the world. However, the information available does not always portray the world as it actually is. Most people receive their information through communication media such as internet, radio, and television. Hanvey (1976, 8) suggests that, “here we must ask, do the messages received on those millions of transistor radios and television sets contribute meaningfully to a valid picture of world conditions?” In other words, Hanvey is questioning whether the news media can provide a truly global perspective. ‘Through the media, young and old alike are constantly bombarded with facts, ideas, biases and impressions about what is happening in the world today’ (Remy, Nathan, Becker and Torney 1975, 74). The news media often sensationalizes the world’s true condition. The quotient of misfortune and violence in international news coverage usually exceeds the quotient of misfortune and violence in national news coverage.

International society, then, is all too frequently equated in the media as a society of hostility, explosion and catastrophe, while domestic society is characterized by a range of activities from harmony to disruption (Remy, Nathan, Becker and Torney 1975, 75). We cannot disregard the transmission of more than the news. The local community's images of the world outside are also drawn from the make-believe world of cinema and television drama (Hanvey 1976, 8). The distorted portrayals of different cultures in the entertainment industry often represent the most exaggerated version of a particular ethnicity or racial group. With no previous exposure to these groups of people, it is easy to understand why cultural stereotyping is so rampant.

There are other limits to understanding besides media exploitation; political ideology is another example of this type of constraint. Political ideology chokes off the flow of some information. Also, some nations suffer from security syndrome and block information. Further blocking this flow of information is selective disinterest (Hanvey 1976, 8). Embargoes and sanctions against countries such as Cuba keep Americans from fully understanding the nature of conditions there. Also there is much information withheld from the public not only by other countries but from one's own country, often in "their best interest". Lastly, it is common for people to dismiss information about countries with little influence on their day to day activities, and even less likely for people to take notice of countries of whom they have never heard. Often, people are oblivious to and disregard the loss of human life in other countries because it does not directly affect their own lives. Yet, because the world is interconnected, the actions of people abroad affect the United States just as much as actions taken here. Politicians and activists in the United States and in other countries make decisions that directly affect the

lives of people in other parts of the world. Only with individual awareness one question these decisions. Only through questioning and understanding can individuals find awareness.

The last tenet of “state of the planet” awareness is the technical level of world data. Vast resources exist regarding the state of the planet. These resources, filled with charts and statistics; unfortunately provide, data in such a way that makes it difficult for the average person to fully comprehend. The technical level of world data is above the average education level of most of the world’s citizens. Average citizens interested in gaining a better understanding are often disheartened because they are unable to grasp the specialized data. This technical information remains in the hands of a select few, leaving the problems without the shared concern of the masses.

The “state of the planet” can be interpreted in many ways. Courses in international studies can empower individuals seeking to understand the true state of the planet. International studies programs and the acknowledgment of their importance lead to greater citizen awareness.

Cross-Cultural Awareness

Awareness of the diversity of ideas and practices to be found in human societies around the world, of how such ideas and practices compare, and including some limited recognition of how the ideas and ways of one’s own society might be viewed from other vantage points (Hanvey, 10).

Hanvey suggests that, as a goal, cross-cultural awareness is the easiest concept to understand and the most difficult to obtain. It is one thing to have some knowledge of world conditions, it is another to comprehend and accept the consequences of the basic human capacity for creating unique cultures. Further the differences in outlook and practice manifested among societies may be profound (Hanvey 1976, 10). He suggests

that these differences are widely known at the levels of myth, prejudice, and tourist impression. A myth is a story that over time has gained acceptance as to the nature of a culture, people or tribe. Prejudice is a negative opinion held without due cause and sufficient examination. Tourist impression is the initial feeling resulting from exposure to a different place or culture, which lacks participation and further understanding of the culture or place. Cross-Cultural Awareness is more than just acknowledging another group of people or sect of society, it is truly understanding their way of life from their perspective. One might question whether understanding is directly correlated to contact or if contact is simply a superficial meeting that has no bearing on future contact. “One of the most underrepresented and undervalued aspects of intellectual exchanges is the impact scholars make on their society after studying and researching in the United States” (Sussman 1992, 80). It is not enough to merely tolerate a foreign country or group of people, it is necessary to value the worth and authority of that specific community’s standards of conduct and living. Learning to relate to people in other cultures requires self-awareness, that is, a sense of one’s own cultural identity (Remy, Nathan, Becker and Torney 1975, 76).

Hanvey (1976, 14) suggests that the missing ingredients for cross-cultural awareness are respect and participation. Becoming cross-culturally aware means understanding the life of a person from a completely different culture. “The only way to arrive at understanding is through the elimination of friction, and international friction can only be lessened by a willingness to understand another’s point of view which is different from one’s own” (Meras 1932, 251). Friction arises through misinterpretation of opposing viewpoints. What is right for one is not necessarily right for another, and rather

than oppose it on instinct, it is important to understand the actions of others. Respect and participation can lessen friction and encourage a willingness to participate within a culture by acknowledging customs and values. Participation is a solid display of respect which allows for continued involvement, leading to deeper understanding of and allowing further exploration into a culture. Once an individual embraces these philosophies, they will participate as willing and active learners. Active or experiential learning, as defined by Keeton and Tate (1978) is “learning that occurs as a result of being in direct contact with a culture other than one’s own”.⁶ In order to achieve cross-cultural awareness, one must possess an active awareness of understanding and recognition of other people’s perspectives. Cross Cultural Awareness is necessary to obtaining a truly global perspective, as is a basic knowledge of Global Dynamics.

Knowledge of Global Dynamics

Some modest comprehension of key traits and mechanisms of the world system, with emphasis on theories and concepts that may increase intelligent consciousness of global change (Hanvey, 19).

Hanvey suggests that the world works as a system, meaning individuals must put aside simple notions of cause and effect. People interact in complex and surprising ways. “Effects” often become “causes” which then have “effects” (Hanvey 1976, 20). This is an illustration of how the world is connected. Rather than adopting a simplistic approach to a problem, individuals must give thoughtful consideration as to the complex issues facing the world today. “Human issues become global issues as people search for employment, acquire resources, access oceans and their resources move, around the world, grow in

⁶ Keeton and Tate (Keeton, M.T. and Tate, P.J. (eds). New directions for experiential learning: Learning by experience: What, why, how no. 1. San Francisco: Josey-Bass, 1978 as quoted in Neff, Charles B. editor (1981). New directions for experiential learning: Cross-cultural learning. Josey-Bass Inc., Publishers: San Francisco.

population, maintain and share water, use and abuse air, and, of course, struggle to understand each other” (Baker 1999, 98). Because the world is a system develops in the Western hemisphere can have negative ramifications, with the converse being true as well. What seems irrelevant to one country may actually contribute to world conditions. The introduction of a new element in any culture allows for both positive and negative effects. Hanvey uses the example of a pond that supports different types of species of animals and plant life living within it. One day a new species is introduced to this pond. What seems an innocent addition can have dramatic ramifications for the pond. “The population of some species may dwindle, others explode and yet others may perish altogether” (1976, 22). This new element, whatever it might be, directly affects the relationships and equilibrium already in place and change the system of the pond. These unintended consequences illustrate the need for understanding the principles of change and growth in a system. “Fundamental changes that make today’s world qualitatively different from yesterday’s include the spread of atomic weapons to many nations, the worldwide growth of literacy, the development of a global electronic communications network, the emergence of a truly global cultural milieu, and the expansion of a network of cross-national organizations and associations” (Remy, Nathan, Becker and Torney 1975, 1). Change has, in fact, made life easier through technological advancement; and, this change has also allowed for growth, which can be both positive and negative. Growth consists of two facets, one which promises improvements in material welfare and the other that defines human population growth by consumption of resources and growth in pollution. Both facets are a part of global dynamics. Since global dynamics focus on the world as a system with a consciousness of change, the advances that bring so much good

are also contributing to the destruction of valuable resources. These resources are even more limited because with medical advancements, people are living significantly longer. This leads to overpopulation, pollution, and the depletion of forests and wildlife preserves for urbanization, not only in the United States but throughout the world.

Awareness of Human Choices

Some awareness of the problems of choice confronting individuals, nations, and the human species as consciousness and knowledge of the global system expands (Hanvey, 34).

The final dimension to a proposed Global Perspective is an awareness of human choices. Hanvey suggests that, as people gain a better understanding of global dynamics, their ability to rationalize certain choices will diminish leading to a global cognition when making and executing future decisions. “Students are now flooded by new knowledge of how social and physical systems work and interact on the global stage, sensing trends and patterns never sensed before, newly able to see into the distance of time and imagine the future consequences of present actions” (Hanvey 1976, 34). Educators must help students understand that decisions made at home may have drastic consequences for people around the world, not only now but in the future, thus “allowing the student to appreciate and accept people of other cultures as equals because they belong to the same human family” (Mungazi 2001, 81). Through strong international studies programs students will realize that global events can have local impact and that all people have a stake in what happens around the world (NAFSAA 2006). Hanvey uses the example of dangerous pesticides such as DDT that have been outlawed in the United States and other Western nations, but are still widely used in some countries. After discovering the harmful side effects of pesticides on food and drinking water, western

nations stopped using these dangerous products, indicating awareness and the emergence of change. According to Hanvey, this is just one example of the major cognitive revolution that is underway. “Many practices once [considered] essentially automatic, whose benefits were assumed, are now questioned. They are questioned because we know new things” (Hanvey 1976, 35). This new global cognition will allow countries to begin forecasting and planning for the future rather than merely reacting to the immediate. In spite of a cognitive revolution for some countries, others still seem to resist the revelation that decisions made today affect the future. The previous four goals (Perspective Consciousness, “State of the Planet” Awareness, Cross-Cultural Awareness, and Knowledge of Global Dynamics) will help students reach a new level of global cognition and to understand the importance of examining issues facing the United States as affecting the people of the world. “When such knowledge becomes an operational base of studying other societies and their culture, it enriches the educational experience of students as they begin to see how societies are more similar than different” (Mungazi 2001, 85). Once social goals and values are made explicit, they become vulnerable to challenge. Nations begin to see that their interests and activities are inseparable from the interests and activities of others (Hanvey 1976, 39). This new cognition emerges as a result of constructive self-learning through educational programs. “Educating students is to have an opportunity to shape the future leaders who will guide the political and economic development of their countries” (NAFSAd 2006). The next generation of students will be better prepared because they will have learned about the consequences of their actions on the world rather than only caring about the interests of their respective nations. “Therefore any change in human conditions and relationships poses much more

meaningful implications for global security when education becomes a central consideration in an endeavor to accept the concept of the universal being” (Mungazi 2001, 120).

Cultural exchange and international studies programs are invaluable. Students who develop an awareness and understanding of other cultures in the world will not only facilitate better communication among countries, but will help increase their security. Using Hanvey’s article as a model, this research will assess the international studies program at Texas State University to determine its ability to foster a global perspective and prepare students for a future with a greater emphasis on cultural understanding and awareness. In order for Americans to function effectively and responsibly in their role as citizens, workers, consumers, leaders, and human beings, they must have access to an educational curriculum firmly grounded in a global perspective (Tye and Tye 1992, xvii).

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework provides a structure that allows the researcher to organize and describe the goals of international students and international studies programs (Shields 1998, 57). The purpose of this research is to describe the goals of international studies programs and their importance for students preparing for the future. The conceptual framework uses Descriptive Categories. Table 2.1 illustrates the connection between the goals of international education programs and the literature. The goals are to provide: Perspective Consciousness, “State of the Planet” Awareness, Cross-Cultural Awareness, Knowledge of Global Dynamics and Awareness of Human Choices.

Table 2.1: Connection of Descriptive Categories to the Literature

Conceptual Framework: International Education Goals	
Elements	Sources
Perspective Consciousness - distinction between opinion and perspective - political learning	Hanvey, 1976 Remy, Nathan, Becker and Torney, 1975 Bu, 2003 Klooster, Steele and Bloem, 2001 Tye and Tye, 1992
“State of the Planet” Awareness - mobility - communication media - political ideology - selective disinterest - technical level of world data	Hanvey, 1976 Remy, Nathan, Becker and Torney, 1975 Tye and Tye, 1992 Bu, 2003 Klooster, Steele and Bloem, 2001 Ruther, 2002
Cross-Cultural Awareness - myth, prejudice and tourist impression - respect and participation	Sussman, 1992 Hanvey, 1976 Remy, Nathan, Becker and Torney, 1975 Meras, 1932 Mungazi, 2001 Keeton and Tate, 1978
Knowledge of Global Dynamics - systems theory - principles of change and growth	Hanvey, 1976 Remy, Nathan, Becker and Torney, 1975 Mungazi, 2001
Awareness of Human Choices - global cognition - long term planning	Hanvey, 1976 Mungazi, 2001 NAFSAa, 2006 NAFSAd, 2006 Tye and Tye, 1992

Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on the importance of international studies programs with a global perspective. The chapter also covered the history and relevance of international studies programs to American students, why these programs are important, and how they are preparing students for their role in a diverse and complex world. The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between the goals and the international studies programs. The next chapter will discuss the methodology used for this research.

Chapter III: Methodology

This chapter explains the methodology used to assess the level of global perspective achieved through international studies courses by students at Texas State University. The conceptual framework developed in Chapter 3 is operationalized by creating survey questions with measurable responses. This chapter includes a table linking the questions to the conceptual framework. The evidence of each learning dimension is measured through a series of questions relating to each topic. Two focus groups as well as personal interviews were used to help construct the survey questions.

Research Techniques

Survey Research

Survey research is a common method used in descriptive research, especially those “that have individual people as the units of analysis” (Babbie 2004, 243). In fact, according to Babbie, survey research, “is probably the best method available to the social researcher who is interested in collecting original data for describing a population too large to observe directly” (2004, 243). Survey data allows flexibility in analysis (Babbie 2004, 274) allowing one to develop operational definitions from the observations of the survey. Although there are several strengths to using survey research, there are also weaknesses. Survey research can lack validity because the respondents are given standardized options that may or may not fit their exact belief on the subject. This may limit the depth of respondents’ actual responses, potentially yielding inaccurate results (Babbie 2004, 274-275). In response to this weakness, an open-ended question was included at the end of the survey allowing the respondents to further discuss their opinions on the subject.

In order to assess the descriptive categories discussed by Robert Hanvey, a survey was conducted with two groups of juniors and seniors at Texas State, one group enrolled in international studies courses (pre-majors in the department) and one group enrolled in various other majors. Questions were measured on a 5-point scale with the score of one representing “strongly disagree” and the score of five representing “strongly agree”. All surveys were distributed to students through electronic mail or through hand delivery. The respondent’s answers were documented in a manner that kept respondents anonymous.

Pre-Test Inquiry

In an effort to create the most meaningful survey possible. The researcher conducted personal interviews to help flesh out each question. The use of focus groups and personal interviews helped decipher which questions were best for each category and also helped to ensure that the meaning of each question was clear and written as concisely as possible.

Focus Groups

Focus groups, "allow for the collection of preliminary information about a topic; they may be used in pilot studies to detect ideas that will be further investigated using another research method" (Wimmer and Dominick 1997, 97). In order to develop the questionnaire, two focus groups were held with approximately 20 students in each group. Two different meetings were held with students of varying majors and a wide array of opinions on the questions posed to the group. The students in the focus groups critiqued the questions for clarity as well as provided assistance in streamlining the questions, so

that there was minimal ambiguity in the wording. The focus groups helped to decide which questions should and should not remain a part of the final questionnaire.

Morgan contends that “as a form of qualitative research, focus groups are basically group interviews, although not in the sense of an alternation between a researcher’s questions and the research participants’ responses. Instead the reliance is on interaction within the group, based on topics that are supplied by the researcher who typically takes the role of a moderator” (Morgan 1997, 2). Morgan also says that the “hallmark of focus groups is their explicit use of group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group” (Morgan 1997, 2). This interaction was vital to this study, since the scope of the research includes the overall ability of the current program to foster a global perspective through its curricula. However, focus groups are not without some weaknesses, one being uncertainty about the accuracy of what participants say as results may be biased by the presence of an opinionated member, thus not allowing more reserved members an opportunity to talk.

Personal Interviews

Personal interviews were also used to help gather information for the questionnaire. Four International Studies students as well as an International Studies advisor were interviewed about their opinions on what international studies courses were like at Texas State and to get their opinion on the preliminary questionnaire format.

Frey and Oishi state that personal interviews, “allow questioning to be guided as you want and you can clarify points that need to be made more clear” (1995, 3). This allows for a more complete understanding of the information given to the students as well

as an opportunity to discuss ideas that were not originally apparent. According to Wimmer and Dominick “the personal interview approach is flexible, providing a large amount of detail and the intensive situation that the interview is conducted in, may in itself allow information to be gained without directly asking for it” (1997, 157). There are disadvantages to personal interviews, such as the amount of time they require and working with the availability of the person to be interviewed. Also, the amount of information given to the interviewer is at the discretion of the student. A lack of information given can be attributed to a number of reasons, such as lack of understanding, lack of time, or poor rapport between the interviewer and the respondent.

Sample

This study utilized two types of sampling: a non-probability sampling technique and random sampling. The researcher used judgment sampling, a type of non-probability sampling to select the International Studies students. She sent an email to 142 International Studies pre-majors currently attending classes at Texas State University. She chose these students due to their upper-classmen status at the university and their longevity in the international studies program. Of the 142 students queried, 50 responded for this sample.

The probability sampling technique of random sampling provided a cross-section of students with a variety of majors. The researcher chose students randomly from the main quad on campus, ensuring the high probability of reaching a large number of students. The first 50 non-International Studies junior and senior students to complete the questionnaire made up the sample. Table 3.1 outlines the demographics of both groups of students that participated in the survey research.

The results of this research lead to suggestions for further study and recommendations for current and future improvements of the current programs in use at Texas State and surrounding universities.

Table 3.1: Student Sample Demographics

Type of Student	Number of Respondents	Average Age of Students	Classifications	Student Major
International Studies	50	22.8	47 Seniors 2 Juniors 1 Sophomore	50 I.S. Pre-Majors
Non-International Studies	50	22.3	24 Seniors 16 Juniors 5 Sophomores	14 Liberal Arts 10 Other 9 Education 8 Business 5 Fine Arts 2 Health 2 Science

Operationalization

Table 3.2 connects the conceptual framework to the research technique. The survey research evaluated the level of consciousness among the current students enrolled at Texas State on current global issues. The survey questions were designed to identify the level of understanding the students have in regard to the subject matter represented.

The survey consisted of a few demographic questions such as age, classification and major, followed by 45 questions that allowed the students to select answers from a 5-point Likert Scale. There was one open-ended question that allowed further comments or information the student wished to provide to the researcher. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in **Appendix A**.

Table 3.2: Operationalization of the Descriptive Categories

Operationalization Table	
Descriptive Category	Survey Questions International Studies Students
<p>Perspective Consciousness - personal level</p>	<p>1. My religious beliefs are correct and all other religions are false.</p> <p>2. Most of my political views are the same as my parents.</p> <p>3. Most of my religious beliefs are the same as my parents.</p> <p>4. I do not consider myself a member of the global community. †</p> <p>5. I sometimes feel irritated with people from other countries because they do not understand how we do things here. †</p> <p>6. Really, there is nothing I can do about the problems of the world. †</p> <p>7. I am tolerant of the behavior of people from other countries because we are all bound by our own customs and cultures.</p>
<p>- societal level</p>	<p>8. American society is more tolerant of cultural differences than any other society in the world.</p> <p>9. My opinions about national policies are based on how those policies might affect the rest of the world as well as the United States.</p> <p>10. I believe that aid to developing countries should be focused on countries that are evolving toward the types of social, economic and political systems that exist in the United States.</p> <p>11. I am frustrated by people who speak poorly of the United States. †</p>

Table 3.2: Operationalization of the Descriptive Categories Continued

Operationalization Table	
Descriptive Category	Survey Questions International Studies Students
- national level	<p>12. The United States is responsible for the well-being of the rest of the world.</p> <p>13. The United States is destined to rule the world.</p> <p>14. America should follow the will of the world community.</p>
- global level	<p>15. Our political system is superior to all others. Therefore, other countries should model their political system after ours.</p> <p>16. International conflict can be easily solved through American interference.</p> <p>17. As a result of my college courses I have a greater understanding of international conflict.</p>
<p>“State of the Planet” Awareness</p> <p>- world population growth and migration</p>	<p>18. Western European countries are suffering from a gradual population decline.</p> <p>19. The 21st century will be marked by migration of millions of people to countries other than their own.</p> <p>20. Western European countries are suffering from social and cultural clashes due to the heavy migration of millions of non-Western people into their region.</p>
- economic conditions	<p>21. Half of the world's population has little access to medicine, electricity, safe water and reliable food supplies.</p> <p>22. For the last several years, the value of the United States dollar has declined in comparison to other major currencies.</p>
- natural resources	<p>23. We have reached a point where we can no longer waste the natural resources of the earth.</p>

Table 3.2: Operationalization of the Descriptive Categories Continued

Operationalization Table	
Descriptive Category	Survey Questions International Studies Students
<p>- environment</p>	<p>24. Global warming is caused by natural cyclical factors.</p> <p>25. Rising seas and desertification are presenting severe social and economic challenges for many parts of the world.</p> <p>26. The United States is the top donor of foreign aid to impoverished countries.</p> <p>27. Global warming is negatively affecting every country in the world.</p> <p>28. My personal actions are too small to have a significant effect on the ecosystem. †</p>
<p>Cross-Cultural Awareness - myth, prejudice and tourist impression</p>	<p>29. I enjoy learning about other cultures.</p> <p>30. There are many different cultures in the world and they all have positive elements that we should learn from.</p>
<p>- respect and participation</p>	<p>31. I respect and understand the cultural beliefs and values of other countries.</p> <p>32. I generally find it stimulating to spend an evening talking with people of other cultures.</p> <p>33. All students should learn about cultures other than their own.</p>
<p>Knowledge of Global Dynamics - systems theory</p>	<p>34. Solving the world's problems requires a collective effort from all the countries in the world.</p> <p>35. Poverty and hunger are not just national or regional problems, but they are human problems that should be addressed globally.</p> <p>36. The world is economically, politically and technologically interconnected.</p>

Table 3.2: Operationalization of the Descriptive Categories Continued

Operationalization Table	
Descriptive Category	Survey Questions International Studies Students
- principles of change and growth	<p>37. Other countries are more dependent on us than we are on them.</p> <p>38. Actions of other countries have minimal impact on us.</p> <p>39. Political developments/changes in a country can have severe consequences for us.</p> <p>40. In the long run, America will benefit from the fact that the world is becoming more interconnected.</p>
Awareness of Human Choices - global cognition	<p>41. There are always simple solutions to global problems.</p> <p>42. Global problems require long-term planning rather than short-term fixes.</p> <p>43. Solutions to world issues always have both good and bad consequences that can affect uninvolved parties.</p>
- long term planning	<p>44. I often think about the kind of world we are creating for future generations.</p> <p>45. It is important that we educate people to understand the impact of our current national policies on the future of our planet.</p>

† Negatively worded questions.

All questions are measured on a 5-point scale with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Human Subjects

As previously described, students at Texas State University were asked to participate in this research by sitting for a personal interview, completing a survey, or by participating in focus groups. There were no foreseeable risks for participating in this research. Participation in the survey, focus groups or personal interviews did not harm the student's current status at Texas State nor disrupt the community spirit among the students at the university. While there was no financial or material benefit for respondents, their answers and participation may foster a better understanding of what

works and what is lacking in the current programs at Texas State. Participation in the mode of observation was voluntary and respondents could discontinue their participation at any time. The confidentiality of respondents was protected, as none of their survey responses were tied to identifying data and focus group and personal interview answers were credited where permission had been given. Participants may contact Alison Villarreal at 361-779-7370 or at Alison_villarreal@yahoo.com, or the faculty supervisor of this research, Dr. Hassan Tajalli, at Texas State University - San Marcos at 512-245-3284 or at tajalli@txstate.edu with any questions or concerns related to this research.

This research paper was granted an exemption by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) allowing for this research to be conducted on human subjects. A copy of the IRB exemption can be found in **Appendix B**.

Chapter IV: Results

Purpose

This chapter examines the results of the survey given to a sample of International Studies premajors and a sample of non-International Studies students at Texas State University.

The results of the analysis appear in tables that correspond to each dimension of Hanvey's, *An Attainable Global Perspective*. The purpose of the preliminary research is to determine whether or not international studies premajors recognize the global issues that will face them in the future in a different way than non-International Studies students.

Summary of Results

Dimension One: Perspective Consciousness

The first dimension Hanvey describes as necessary to attain a global perspective is Perspective Consciousness. Perspective Consciousness refers to a student's awareness that his beliefs are not universally shared. This researcher believes that International Studies students possess a greater degree of awareness, understanding and tolerance of diverse views, not necessarily shared by the general population of the United States. Within the perspective consciousness dimension are four sub-categories: the Personal Level, the Societal Level, the National Level, and the Global Level. The questionnaire contained questions corresponding to each subcategory to rate the students' level of awareness at that particular level of consciousness. A t-test was conducted to test the differences in the mean scores of each question between International Studies students

and non-International Studies students in all of the subcategories. As Table 4.1 shows, in the Personal Level subcategory, although not statistically significant as a whole, three of the seven questions did result in significantly different responses between the groups. International Studies students disagreed with the negatively worded question regarding global membership. These students, significantly more than non-International Studies students view themselves as a member of the global community ($t = 2.51, \alpha < .05$). Also there was a significant difference between the two groups when they responded to the negatively worded question about people who do not understand the way of life in the United States. International Studies students were more likely to disagree with that statement than non-International Studies students ($t = 2.05, \alpha < .05$). In other words, International Studies students are significantly more tolerant of the views of people from other countries. Lastly, within the Personal Level subcategory, International Studies students disagreed more often with the negatively worded question of whether or not they felt there was nothing they could do to help the problems of the world. International Studies students seem to feel a higher level of personal responsibility for working towards solutions to the world's problems ($t = 3.06, \alpha < .05$). There was no significant difference between the two groups of students at the Societal Level of Perspective Consciousness.

Although the two groups did not significantly differ overall on Perspective Consciousness at the National Level composite, they diverged on one question. Non-International Studies students are significantly more optimistic that the United States will ultimately rule the world ($t = 2.26, \alpha < .05$). The Global Level of Perspective Consciousness produced significantly different responses between the groups ($t = 2.13, \alpha$

< .05). The question relating to international conflict resolution was significantly different between the groups with International Studies students more likely to strongly disagree that interference by the United States would easily solve global conflict.

Table 4.1: Perspective Consciousness Summary Results

Categories/Elements	Pre-IS Majors	Non –IS Majors	t-value
Perspective Consciousness			.80
Personal Level			1.05
My religious beliefs are correct and all other religions are false.†	2.34	1.96	1.46
Most of my political views are the same as my parents.	2.46	2.82	1.72
Most of my religious beliefs are the same as my parents.	2.76	3.12	1.42
I do not consider myself a member of the global community. †	4.24	3.60	2.51*
I sometimes feel irritated with people from other countries because they do not understand how we do things here. †	3.86	3.40	2.05*
Really, there is nothing I can do about the problems of the world. †	4.20	3.60	3.06*
I am tolerant of the behavior of people from other countries because we are all bound by our own customs and cultures.	2.54	3.48	.26
Societal Level			.15
American society is more tolerant of cultural differences than any other society in the world.	2.78	2.88	.42
My opinions about national policies are based on how those policies might affect the rest of the world as well as the United States.	3.38	3.32	.30
National Level			.41
I believe that aid to developing countries should be focused on countries that are evolving toward the types of social, economic and political systems that exist in the United States.	2.92	2.94	.10
I am frustrated by people who speak poorly of the United States. †	2.84	2.78	.24
The United States is responsible for the well-being of the rest of the world.	2.54	2.24	1.36
The United States is destined to rule the world.	1.68	2.20	2.26*

Table 4.1: Perspective Consciousness Summary Results

Categories/Elements	Pre-IS Majors	Non –IS Majors	t-value
Perspective Consciousness			.80
Global Level			2.13*
America should follow the will of the world community.	2.64	2.88	1.36
Our political system is superior to all others. Therefore, other countries should model their political system after ours.	2.20	2.44	1.33
International conflict can be easily solved through American interference.	1.84	2.22	2.09*
As a result of my college courses I have a greater understanding of international conflict.	3.64	3.46	.85

All questions are measured on a 5-point scale with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree

* Significant at $\alpha < .05$

** Significant at $\alpha < .001$

† Negatively worded questions

Dimension Two: “State of the Planet” Awareness

“State of the Planet” Awareness is the second dimension Hanvey describes as necessary to attain a Global Perspective. “State of the Planet”, means understanding current world conditions and trends. The assumption behind the research is that the International Studies students will have a higher understanding of current global issues and consequences as compared to the non-International Studies students.

This dimension has four subcategories: World Population and Migration, Economic Conditions, Natural Resources and the Environment. Although, the aggregate measure of the “State of the Planet” Awareness dimension does not indicate a significant difference between the two groups ($t = 3.18, \alpha > .05$), a few questions under this dimension did show a significant difference. As Table 4.2 shows, the results suggest that both groups of students at Texas State University are somewhat aware of current world trends. Of the four categories under the “State of the Planet” Awareness dimension, only one category prompted a significant difference between the two groups of students. The overall understanding of emerging trends of World Population and Migration is

significantly higher among the International Studies students ($t = 3.55, \alpha < .001$). The difference, however, seems to center on questions relating to the students understanding of current trends in Europe rather than other parts of the world. In fact, under this dimension, no significant differences between the groups were apparent when considering questions regarding non-European global awareness issues. In other words, International Studies students at Texas State University are not more aware of non-European global trends as compared to the other students at the university.

Contrary to the expectations of this research, International Studies students demonstrate a more conservative view of the causes of global warming. The results show that International Studies students attribute the cause of global warming to natural cyclical factors rather than human activities ($t = 2.03, \alpha < .05$). When comparing the means for several of the questions within this dimension, both groups of students answered the questions in a manner that would suggest that they have an acute knowledge of current global issues and trends.

Table 4.2: “State of the Planet” Awareness Results Summary

Categories/Elements	Pre-IS Majors	Non IS Majors	t value
“State of the Planet” Awareness			3.18
World Population & Migration			3.55**
Western European countries are suffering from a gradual population decline.	3.70	3.06	3.51**
The 21 st century will be marked by migration of millions of people to countries other than their own.	3.58	3.34	1.22
Western European countries are suffering from social and cultural clashes due to the heavy migration of millions of non-Western people into their region.	3.64	3.02	3.51**
Economic Conditions			1.28
Half of the world's population has little access to medicine, electricity, safe water and reliable food supplies.	3.90	3.84	.314
The United States is the top donor of foreign aid to impoverished countries.	3.56	3.18	1.85
For the last several years, the value of the United States dollar has declined in comparison to other major currencies.	3.88	3.70	.81
Natural Resources			.86
We have reached a point where we can no longer waste the natural resources of the earth.	3.16	2.88	1.68
Environment			1.90
Global warming is caused by natural cyclical factors.	3.70	3.30	2.03*
Rising seas and desertification is presenting severe social and economic challenges for many parts of the world.	3.68	3.34	1.58
Global warming is negatively affecting every country in the world.	3.18	3.32	.62
My personal actions are too small to have a significant effect on the ecosystem. †	3.90	3.72	1.01

All questions are measured on a 5-point scale with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree

* Significant at $\alpha < .05$

** Significant at $\alpha < .001$

† Negatively worded questions

Dimension Three: Cross-Cultural Awareness

Cross-Cultural Awareness is the third dimension mentioned by Hanvey needed to gain a global perspective. Cross-Cultural Awareness is the full comprehension of the diversity of ideas and practices in societies around the world; as well as the understanding that American society might be viewed differently by people from other cultures. The supposition is that International Studies students will have a greater degree of comprehension of these concepts.

Cross-Cultural Awareness consists of two subcategories: Myth, Prejudice and Tourist Impression and Respect and Participation. As Table 4.3 shows, there is no significant difference in the overall Cross-Cultural Awareness dimension. There was also no significant difference in the first subcategory of Myth, Prejudice and Tourist Impression. However, in the category of Myth, Prejudice and Tourist Impression, both groups answered positively to all the questions signifying that they appreciate and value learning about other cultures and their beliefs. In the second subcategory, Respect and Participation, the results show that, when comparing International Studies and non-International Studies students, there is a significant difference in the students' attitudes the students have in regard to spending time with people from another culture. The results show, that International Studies students are more apt to spend time with students of another culture than the non-International Studies students ($t = 2.18, p < .05$). Overall, both groups of students demonstrated a heightened sense of Cross Cultural Awareness contradicting the earlier supposition that International Studies students would have a significantly higher cultural awareness.

Table 4.3: Cross-Cultural Awareness Results Summary

Categories/Elements	Pre-IS Majors	Non-IS Majors	t value
Cross-Cultural Awareness			1.16
Myth, Prejudice & Tourist Impression			.71
I enjoy learning about other cultures.	4.06	3.94	.44
There are many different cultures in the world and they all have positive elements that we should learn from.	4.08	3.84	1.08
I respect and understand the cultural beliefs and values of other countries.	4.04	3.96	.37
Respect & Participation			1.75
I generally find it stimulating to spend an evening talking with people of other cultures.	4.08	3.56	2.18*
All students should learn about cultures other than their own.	4.18	3.96	1.01

All questions are measured on a 5-point scale with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree

* Significant at $\alpha < .05$

** Significant at $\alpha < .001$

† Negatively worded questions

Dimension Four: Knowledge of Global Dynamics

Knowledge of Global Dynamics is the fourth dimension of Hanvey's, *An Attainable Global Perspective*. Knowledge of Global Dynamics is the awareness of key traits and mechanisms about the world system allowing for greater understanding of how global changes happen. The conjecture of the research is that International Studies students will have a better understanding of Global Dynamics than other students at Texas State University.

The fourth dimension has two subcategories: Systems Theory and Principles of Change and Growth. According to the results on Table 4.4, there is no significant difference in the Knowledge of Global Dynamics Dimension or the first subcategory, Systems Theory. Yet, when examining the means of the questions, both groups of

students answered in a manner that would suggest that they have a strong understanding of the ideas behind Systems Theory.

The second subcategory, Principles of Change and Growth did contain a question that yielded a significant difference in responses. The subcategory, Principles of Change and Growth deals with the cause and effect relationship between the countries of the world. There was a significant difference between the two groups when discussing whether they felt countries are more dependent on the United States than the United States is on other countries. The results indicate that non-International Studies students are significantly more likely to agree with the statement than International Studies students ($t = 2.30, p < .05$). When comparing the mean of the questions for the second subcategory, both groups have a strong understanding of the Principles of Change and Growth. This negates the idea that International Studies students have a greater comprehension of Global Dynamics than other students at Texas State University.

Table 4.4: Knowledge of Global Dynamics Results Summary

Categories/Elements	Pre-IS Majors	Non-IS Majors	t value
Knowledge of Global Dynamics			.15
Systems Theory			1.55
Solving the world's problems requires a collective effort from all the countries in the world.	4.22	3.98	1.08
Poverty and hunger are not just national or regional problems, but they are human problems that should be addressed globally.	4.26	4.06	.95
The world is economically, politically and technologically interconnected.	4.24	3.84	1.78
Principles of Change and Growth			1.68
Other countries are more dependent on us than we are on them.	2.76	3.30	2.30*
Actions of other countries have minimal impact on us. †	3.68	3.76	.44
Political developments/changes in a country can have severe consequences for us.	3.82	3.72	.59
In the long run, America will benefit from the fact that the world is becoming more interconnected.	3.34	3.54	1.11

All questions are measured on a 5-point scale with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree

* Significant at $\alpha < .05$

** Significant at $\alpha < .001$

† Negatively worded questions

Dimension Five: Awareness of Human Choices

The fifth and final dimension Hanvey discusses is the Awareness of Human Choices. This dimension discusses the awareness of choices confronting people and societies as global consciousness and knowledge of the global system becomes more apparent. The assumption behind this research is that the International Studies students will have a greater awareness of human choices and their consequences.

This dimension has two subcategories: Global Cognition and Long-Term Planning. As Table 4.5 shows, there are no significant differences in the results in this dimension, however, in this category the International Studies students and the non-International Studies students gave almost identical responses to these questions. The

means in the first subcategory suggest that both groups have global cognition and understand that there are no quick fixes for the world’s problems. In the second subcategory, Long-Term Planning, the students had an identical mean on the question regarding educating people about the impact of current national policies. Both groups strongly agreed that it is important that people should be educated on national policies and their impact on the future of our planet. The responses to the questions in this dimension illustrate that the students know the importance of the choices they make today and the impact of those decisions on the future.

Table 4.5: Awareness of Human Choices Results Summary

Categories/Elements	Pre-IS Majors	Non-IS Majors	t value
Awareness of Human Choices			.40
Global Cognition			1.23
There are always simple solutions to global problems.	2.08	2.12	.19
Global problems require long-term planning rather than short-term fixes.	4.26	3.98	1.48
Long-Term Planning			.00
Solutions to world issues always have both good and bad consequences that can affect uninvolved parties.	3.74	3.76	.11
I often think about the kind of world we are creating for future generations.	3.82	3.80	.10
It is important that we educate people to understand the impact of our current national policies on the future of our planet.	4.14	4.14	.00

All questions are measured on a 5-point scale with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree

* Significant at < .05

** Significant at < .001

† Negatively worded questions

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the results of the survey given to International Studies and non-International Studies students. This survey was written with the goal of discovering if International Studies students are more conscious of the global issues they will face as the world becomes more interdependent. The results of the questionnaire show that both groups of students are often equal in their awareness of global perspectives. The questions that showed significant differences between the groups did favor the International Studies students as more cognizant of the topic discussed. However, this did not occur often enough to prove that International Studies premajors at Texas State University have a better grasp of global perspective than the other group of students.

Chapter V: Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the applied research project as a whole. This project began with the understanding that the world is becoming increasingly more interdependent. The goal of the project was to discover if International Studies pre-majors have attained global perspective, which would prepare them to develop a more open attitude to the diverse cultures of the world than other majors or pre-majors at Texas State University—San Marcos. Hanvey’s article, *An Attainable Global Perspective*, was the starting point to answering this question. His five dimensions, Perspective Consciousness, “State of the Planet” Awareness, Cross-Cultural Awareness, Knowledge of Global Dynamics, and Awareness of Human Choices laid the foundation for what a global perspective might look like and how best to put these ideas into practice within the constraints of the current education system.

The research for this project was conducted by operationalizing Hanvey’s article into a usable survey questionnaire. In the article, *An Attainable Global Perspective*, Hanvey discussed several elements in each of his five dimensions that he felt were important to an overall global understanding. The questionnaire was created by taking each of the elements in Hanvey’s dimensions and breaking them down into measurable categories. Two groups of Texas State students, junior and senior premajors in international studies and those who were not. These two groups of students were selected to answer a survey questionnaire that related to each of Hanvey’s five dimensions. The students, who fall into the latter category, have majors ranging from Liberal Arts to the Applied Sciences. In each of the five categories, the students rarely statistically differed in their responses. The students in both groups responded to the questionnaire with

answers signifying that they do have a sense of global perspective in each of the five dimensions. Although there were some significant differences in some responses in the smaller subcategories, however, these instances were not enough to suggest a deficiency by either group in their overall understanding of current global issues. Although, one noticeable difference, after studying the means of each group shows that International Studies premajors tend to have a clear opinion on most subjects, while the non-International Studies students often remained neutral en masse on the majority of the questions. The bulk of the responses from the non-International Studies students were in the neutral range on the 5-point scale. This neutral attitude may be due to no real opinion or a lack of exposure to the subject matter, which would in fact warrant an answer with no basis in life experience or real global awareness.

Hanvey's paper stresses the need for students today to understand their role in the larger global community. The idea of a global community is the basis for learning to appreciate people from all over the world in a thoughtful and productive way. Although Hanvey admits that influencing students' perspectives is difficult in the customary classroom, he does speak to the fact that schools that specialize in the area of international studies should be competent in preparing students for the changing world. Since pre-majors in international studies were chosen as a part of this project, it is interesting that such pre-majors were only slightly more aware of current global issues than the students who had not explicitly selected international studies as their pre-major.

Future Research

Future research on this topic should first address the shortcomings of this project. The sample of International Studies pre-majors was chosen from the list of seniors and juniors given to this researcher by the Office of University Statistics. However, certain caveats need to be made about this sample:

- Although the list of IS pre-majors was provided by the Office of University Statistics, such students are only tentatively accepted in the program. For a student to graduate from the program, he/she needs to earn at least a 3.0 GPA. Therefore, the list of International Studies pre-majors who were used for the purpose of sampling in this study should be correctly labeled as “tentative majors” or “Pre-majors”.
- It is not clear to this researcher whether the surveyed IS students had already taken their capstone course or not. The Capstone Course is taken exclusively by graduating seniors who had maintained a 3.0 GPA. This course is one of the most important courses in this program.
- Although 47 of the 50 International Studies students are listed as seniors, it is not clear whether these students have had the majority of their courses in the IS Program while also maintaining a 3.0 GPA. A senior can be someone who has completed courses that numerically disqualify him from being a junior, but such a quantitative status does not say much about quality.

- The sample of International Studies pre-major students in this study does not take into consideration transfers from other universities who select IS as their major and have the GPA to qualify because of work done at the other university, but who lack the rigor of the Texas State IS Program.
- The sample of IS students used in this study does not distinguish among the major tracks, separating out, for example, international business majors from foreign policy majors or travel and tourism majors. Given the model that Hanvey proposes and is the base of this study, foreign policy or international relations majors would have been the key group to target to find out about global perspective. The IS student on a different graduation track is exposed to some internationally broadening courses, particularly in political science and history and languages, but they-also might be specializing in applied skills that the College of Business might offer.
- Finally, the lack of significant differences might be due to the fact that those students who identified themselves as IS students in the sample might be students who have not benefitted from the substance of the IS Program and thus no different than any other student or major at Texas State University

In terms of overall research methodology improvements, a larger group of students should be surveyed, as well as students from more than one university, as this paper focuses only on the students at Texas State University as the sample population. Also, surveying only graduating seniors in the international studies program would give a more accurate representation of the programs impact on their global awareness. The addition of more open-ended questions regarding student's experiences abroad might also help to

explain the differences in opinions amongst the students in both groups, as well as provide deeper understanding as to how well each student truly understands the idea of global perspective. Lastly, because the group of non-International Studies students was mixed, an interesting follow-up to this research might be to use equal numbered groups of the varying majors to see how well each major is doing in relation to each other in educating students in international studies. The current research can only rely on the fact that all students are required to take core classes; however, it is unknown what other courses in each major might embed global perspectives in their curriculum. A more in-depth approach to the research might help to put a well-rounded and more balanced curriculum together for all students.

Since the optimum time to affect a change may well be when society is in a transitional period, the time to introduce global education is now, while society is adjusting to new conditions of world interdependence (Tye and Tye, 1992).

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Appendix A: Student Questionnaire

June 2007

I would like to respectfully request your participation in a study in partial fulfillment of my MPA degree requirements. The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept confidential. None of your identifying information will be tied to your responses. However, the results will be published in an aggregate form.

Upon completing the survey please submit when finished either to the survey provider or email to me at Alison_villarreal@yahoo.com. I thank you in advance for your participation in this study and wish you continued success in your course of study at Texas State University. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, you may contact Alison Villarreal at 361-779-7370 or my email address (see above) or you may contact the faculty advisor of this research, Dr. Hassan Tajalli, at Texas State University at San Marcos at 512-245-3284 or at tajalli@txstate.edu.

Please take your time to answer the following questions where you:

1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree

1. My religious beliefs are correct and all other religions are false.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Most of my political views are the same as my parents.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Most of my religious beliefs are the same as my parents.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I do not consider myself a member of the global community.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I sometimes feel irritated with people from other countries because they do not understand how we do things here.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Really, there is nothing I can do about the problems of the world.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am tolerant of the behavior of people from other countries because we are all bound by our own customs and cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
8. American society is more tolerant of cultural differences than any other society in the world.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My opinions about national policies are based on how those policies might affect the rest of the world as well as the United States.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I believe that aid to developing countries should be focused on countries that are evolving toward the types of social, economic and political systems that exist in the United States.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am frustrated by people who speak poorly of the United States.	1	2	3	4	5
12. The United States is responsible for the well-being of the rest of the world.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The United States is destined to rule the world.	1	2	3	4	5
14. America should follow the will of the world community.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Our political system is superior to all others. Therefore, other countries should model their political system after ours.	1	2	3	4	5
16. International conflict can be easily solved through American interference.	1	2	3	4	5
17. As a result of my college courses I have a greater understanding of international conflict.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Western European countries are suffering from a gradual population decline.	1	2	3	4	5
19. The 21 st century will be marked by migration of millions of people to countries other than their own.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Western European countries are suffering from social and cultural clashes due to the heavy migration of millions of non-Western people into their region.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Half of the world's population has little access to medicine, electricity, safe water and reliable food supplies.	1	2	3	4	5
22. For the last several years, the value of the United States dollar has declined in comparison to other major currencies.	1	2	3	4	5
23. We have reached a point where we can no longer waste the natural resources of the earth.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Global warming is caused by natural cyclical factors.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Rising seas and desertification is presenting severe social and economic challenges for many parts of the world.	1	2	3	4	5
26. The United States is the top donor of foreign aid to impoverished countries.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Global warming is negatively affecting every country in the world.	1	2	3	4	5
28. My personal actions are too small to have a significant effect on the ecosystem.	1	2	3	4	5

1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree

29. I enjoy learning about other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
30. There are many different cultures in the world and they all have positive elements that we should learn from.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I respect and understand the cultural beliefs and values of other countries.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I generally find it stimulating to spend an evening talking with people of other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
33. All students should learn about cultures other than their own.	1	2	3	4	5
34. Solving the world's problems require a collective effort from all the countries in the world.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Poverty and hunger are not just national or regional problems, but they are human problems that should be addressed globally.	1	2	3	4	5
36. The world is economically, politically and technologically interconnected.	1	2	3	4	5
37. Other countries are more dependent on us than we are on them.	1	2	3	4	5
38. Actions of other countries have minimal impact on us.	1	2	3	4	5
39. Political developments/changes in a country can have severe consequences for us.	1	2	3	4	5
40. In the long run, America will benefit from the fact that the world is becoming more interconnected.	1	2	3	4	5
41. There are always simple solutions to global problems.	1	2	3	4	5
42. Global problems require long-term planning rather than short-term fixes.	1	2	3	4	5
43. Solutions to world issues always have both good and bad consequences that can affect uninvolved parties.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I often think about the kind of world we are creating for future generations.	1	2	3	4	5
45. It is important that we educate people to understand the impact of our current national policies on the future of our planet.	1	2	3	4	5

I am an: **American Student** **International Student**

Age: _____

Classification:

Freshman **Sophomore** **Junior** **Senior** **Other** _____

Major: (1) International Studies

(2) Liberal Arts other than International Studies

(3) Business

(4) Education

(5) Sciences

(6) Health

(7) Arts

(8) Other _____

Comment(s):

Appendix B: IRB Exemption Notice

Subject: Exemption Request

Exemption Request

Based on the information in the exemption request you sent February 26, your project has been found exempt.

Your project is exempt from full or expedited review by the Texas State Institutional Review Board.



Becky Northcut, CIP
Compliance Specialist

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