

Chinese International Student Campus Involvement and  
Friendship Network Patterns in the United States

BY

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## Abstract

In 2013, Chinese students are the largest group of international students in the United States, with over 230,000 Chinese students comprising more than 28% of America's international student population. One common assumption is that Chinese international students are not integrating with their host campus communities. This study examines two key areas in Chinese student campus integration: involvement in organizations and friendship network patterns. In particular, the influences of perceived English language ability and perceived cultural understanding of the United States are explored, along with their correlations with involvement and social networks. Chinese student involvement and friendships with the American host population are also compared to overall satisfaction with their university experience and their sense of belonging at the institution. Results are based on three original research questionnaires that were administered to 74 first-year Chinese international students at the University of Kansas in the United States over the course of one academic year. The data also includes in-depth interviews with 15 of these students. Previous studies suggest that English language and cultural understanding influence student involvement. However, this study found that neither perceived English language ability nor perceived cultural understanding of the United States correlated with Chinese student participation in campus organizations or the number of friendships made with Americans. However, despite the lack of direct correlation, both variables were shown to influence the types of engagements that Chinese students have with organizations and their American peers. Participants in this study demonstrated relatively low levels of involvement with campus organizations and significantly fewer friendships with American students than with fellow Chinese students. Despite this, participants still demonstrated an overall contentment with their American university experience and showed a

sense of belonging at their institution. One explanation for this could be that the Western cultural lens and assumptions often used to observe international student integration are culturally biased and, therefore, incomplete. This study suggests that Western notions of campus involvement and engagement might not fully translate to students from non-Western backgrounds.

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## Chapter I: Introduction

### Background

Chinese students are the largest group of international students in the United States, with over 230,000 Chinese students studying at American universities in 2013 (Institute of International Education, 2013). This was not always the case, however. In 2000, there were only around 55,000 Chinese international students in the United States (Institute of International Education, 2000). This rapid growth of Chinese students, which now make up over 28% of America's international student population, has created an urgent need for universities to understand their academic and social experiences in order to better serve their needs.

Astin's Theory of Involvement (1984) shows that the university experience is not just about what goes on inside the classroom. Rather, he argues that students gain meaningful and important experiences through their involvements outside of the classroom as well. This notion is supported by numerous studies (Bok, 2003; Russell et al, 2010; Severeins and Wolff, 2008; Edwards & Waters, 1982; Napoli & Wortman, 1996; Tinto, 2012; Moore et al, 1998; Shulman, 2007). Involvement theory has led many American universities to focus resources and policies on student involvement (Astin & Astin, 2000; Boatman, 1999).

Although Astin does not address it in his Theory of Involvement, current research also demonstrates that friendship networks are an important piece of the university experience (Bagwell, Newcomb, & Bukowski, 1998; Berndt, 1982; Chango, McElhaney, & Allen, 2009; Meeuwiesse et al, 2010). Friendship networks have been shown to be especially important to the international student adjustment process (Crockett et al, 2007; Wierzbicki, 2004; Choi & Thomas, 2008; Zhou et al, 2008). Although co-national friendships (with those from the same culture) provide important benefits, the literature suggests that cross-cultural friendships (with

those from other cultures) are also essential to sojourner integration (Li & Gasser, 2005; Amir, 1983; Basu & Ames, 1970; Kim, 1988; Al-sharideh & Goe, 1998). These explanations are often based on increasing the cultural diversity and Western experience of academic integration for international students.

Despite the importance of these two concepts, research on Chinese international students tends to focus on their academic (Yan & Berliner, 2009; Li, Chen, & Duanmu, 2009) or psychological (Poyrazli, 2003; Sodowsky & Plake, 1992; Zhang & Goodson, 2005) needs and adjustments. Few studies have looked at Chinese international student *social* needs and adjustments. Research currently does suggest that Chinese international students are struggling to socially integrate with their campus community (Gareis, 2012; Abe, Talbot & Geelhoed, 1998; Sodowsky & Plake, 1992; Rajapaksa & Dundes, 2002; Ying, 2002; Yan, 2008; Hofstede, 2001; Chen, 2006; Trice, 2007). These studies have suggested that Chinese students are not integrating into American academic institutions because of Chinese cultural factors, such as Confucian or collectivist values. However, another explanation may be that the cultural lens and assumptions used to observe student integration are problematic. More research is needed at this time about the campus involvement and social network patterns of Chinese international students at American universities in order to better provide for their social needs. This study contributes to this body of needed research.

### **Statement of Problem**

This study aims to explore the campus involvement and friendship network patterns of Chinese international students in the United States. In particular, the study seeks to address the suggestion that Chinese international students are not socially integrating with their host American universities. Although current research has pinpointed that Chinese students face

difficulties integrating at American universities (Poyrazli et al, 2004; Abe, Talbot, & Geelhoed, 1998; Sodowsky & Plake, 1992), few studies address the specific patterns of Chinese student involvement and friendship networks. This study aims to explore and describe these patterns.

Current research also tends to focus on either student involvement or student friendship networks. At present, few studies have looked at these two important concepts in tandem. In particular, Astin's Theory of Involvement (1984), which is a key theory in most research about student involvement, does not address the role of friendship networks. This is problematic because research has shown that friendships serve an important role in the university experience (Bagwell, Newcomb, & Bukowski, 1998; Vaquera, 2009; Berndt, 1982; Meeuwisse et al, 2010). For this reason, this study aims to look at both concepts to determine how they together influence the Chinese student experience abroad at American universities.

Lastly, current research assumes that a sense of belonging with the institution is influenced by campus involvement (Wolf-Wendel et al, 2009; Edwards & Waters, 1982; Napoli & Wortman, 1996; Tinto, 2012). The current assumption is that Western theories of campus involvement can be projected onto the experiences of non-Western students. This is grounded in the Western notion of civil society and diversity group membership. The alternative is that students may maintain communal and natural interaction with in-group members *and* still feel they belong to the university. To test this, this study aims to compare Chinese student involvement and friendship network patterns with their overall satisfaction with their university experience and their sense of belonging at their institution. This comparison can help determine if these Western-derived notions of the connection between involvement and belonging are indeed universal for all students at higher education institutions or whether a new approach to enhancing the international student experience abroad should be considered.

## Research Questions

This study explores the following research questions:

*RQ1:* What are the factors that encourage Chinese international students to participate in campus organizations at American universities?

*RQ2:* What are the factors that encourage Chinese international students to form friendships with American students at American universities?

*RQ3:* Does involvement in campus organizations influence Chinese international students' sense of belonging to their institution at American universities?

## Approach

This study utilizes a mixed-method longitudinal approach with a quantitative focus. A group of Chinese international students from all study levels were surveyed during their first year of study at the University of Kansas. The same group of students was surveyed three times throughout the year: (1) shortly after their arrival to the university in August, (2) near the end of their fall semester in December, and (3) near the end of their spring semester in April. A selection of the study participants were also asked to take part in a semi-structured interview. These interviews were informed and guided by results from the first two questionnaires.

## Significance

This research explores the needs of a growing population that is currently understudied. Chinese students are the largest group of international students in the United States and their number continues to grow rapidly. As American institutions increasingly look to further internationalize their enrollment numbers, the needs and concerns of this growing group of students must be understood.

This study contributes to the literature that tends to focus on the academic or psychological needs of Chinese international students. Few studies have researched the social needs of these students outside of the classroom, despite the fact that research demonstrates the

importance of involvement and friendship networks to the university experience. This study seeks to address this gap and further clarify the patterns of Chinese student social integration.

Although separate studies have demonstrated the importance of both campus involvements and friendship networks for higher education students in general, few studies have looked at these two factors in tandem. In particular, Astin's Theory of Involvement (1984) does not include social networks, despite the vast amounts of literature that demonstrate its importance to the university experience. More research is needed to determine how these two factors relate to one another and to the university experience as a whole. This study incorporates both concepts to see how they influence the Chinese student university experience in the United States

Finally, this study challenges the notion that Western-derived ideas of involvement and engagement, such as those outlined in Astin's Theory of Involvement, can be translated wholesale to non-Western students. However, few studies have looked at the relationship between campus involvement and sense of belonging to the institution for non-Western students. This study seeks to expand upon this gap in the literature.

This study will provide important insights into the social needs of Chinese international students at American universities. It seeks to expand upon the current research on Chinese international students (as summarized in Chapter 2) and aims to fill gaps in our current understanding about their social experiences in the United States. In doing so, this study contributes to the field of higher education and can be used as a resource for future research and policy decisions regarding Chinese international student integration.

## **Summary**

This chapter has outlined the background and direction of this study. Next, a review of the current literature is presented in Chapter 2, including an overview of involvement theories, friendship network theories, and the roles of perceived English language ability and perceived cultural understanding. Chapter 3 explains the methodology used to complete and analyze the study, including research hypotheses, quantitative and qualitative data collection, research measures, and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 summarizes the study's findings and Chapter 5 discusses the findings in relation to the research hypotheses. Finally, concluding remarks are given in Chapter 6, including the study's limitation, suggestion for further research, and policy recommendations.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter reviews the literature related to Chinese students' social integration at American universities. Part one gives a brief historical overview of Chinese students in the United States. Part two touches upon common motivations for Chinese students to study in the United States. Sojourner acculturation and social adaptation is discussed next in part three, including an overview of perceived cultural understanding. Part four explains the role and importance of student involvement and engagement in campus integration. Next, part five reviews the role of friendships and social networks, with information about co-national and cross-cultural friendships. Finally, influences of English proficiency are explained in part six.

### History of Chinese Students in the United States

#### *Prior to the People's Republic of China*

The first wave of Chinese international students arrived to the United States between the years 1872 and 1875. This initial group of only 120 students was sponsored by the Chinese Qing imperial government with the goal "to learn about the sciences related to army, navy, mathematics, engineering, etc., for ten-odd years, so that after they have completed their study and returned to China...the nation may begin to grow strong by its own efforts" (Wang, 1965, p. 78). Following China's defeat to Japan in 1895, Chinese officials looked more seriously to foreign education as a way to develop China's technology and industry, periodically sending small groups of Chinese men abroad on government scholarships (Wang, 1965).

Following the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1912, China's Tsinghua College began sending students abroad yearly for university-level study. These students were required to study technical subjects, such as agriculture, engineering, or mining. The number of Chinese students in the

United States remained relatively small, however, due to the United States' restrictive policies toward Chinese immigrants. (Wang, 1965)

By the 1930s, wealthy families in China had become increasingly interested in self-supporting their children to study in the United States without government scholarships (Wang, 1965). Chinese emigration restrictions also eased in the coming decades, leading to increased numbers of Chinese students in the United States. By 1946, the United States was host to around 660 Chinese international students (Wang, 1965). Study goals also became more personal, as Chinese families and students increasingly viewed an American degree as prestigious and a gateway to success (Ch'en, 1979; Wang, 1965).

#### *After the Formation of the People's Republic of China*

Following the 1949 formation of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the newly formed Chinese government placed strict limitations on Chinese studying abroad. In fact, China remained relatively closed to most of the world until after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). During these years, virtually no Chinese students studied abroad in the United States (Institute of International Education, 1950-1979).

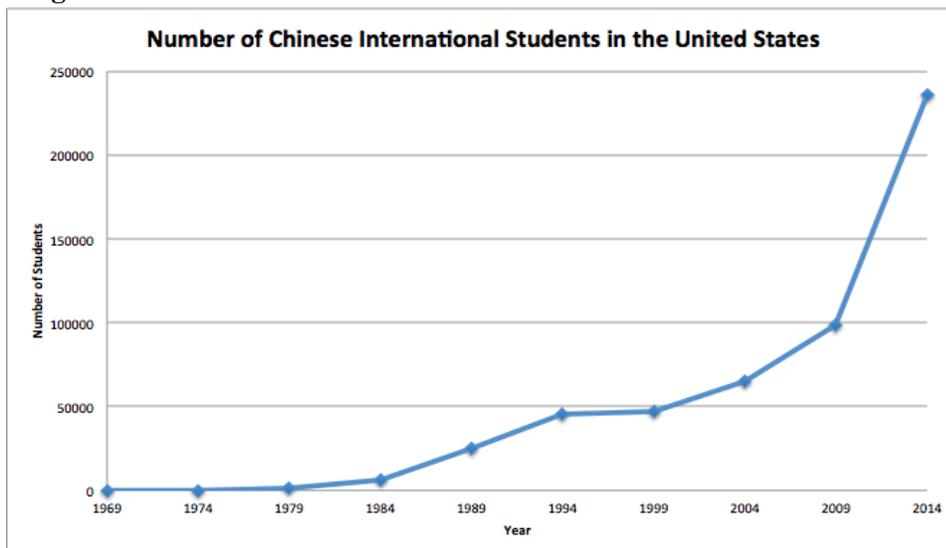
However, ties between China and the United States strengthened following the death of PRC leader Mao Zedong and under China's new leader Deng Xiaoping. The new Chinese leadership began promoting study abroad as a means of modernization for China, which in turn led to an increase in Chinese students attending American universities (Lampton et al, 1986). By 1988, over 20,000 Chinese students were studying in the United States (Institute of International Education, 1988), a number that doubled to 40,000 by 1993 (Institute of International Education, 1993). Throughout the 1990s, Chinese students steadily comprised around 10% of the

international student population in the United States, with steady numbers of around 40,000 students throughout the decade (Institute of International Education, 1990-1999).

### *Current Numbers of Chinese International Students in the United States*

Since the turn of the millennium, the number of Chinese international students has skyrocketed and they are now the largest group of international students in the United States. The Institute of International Education (2013) estimated that in 2013 there were 235,597 Chinese students in the United States out of 819,644 total international students. These numbers have increased rapidly since the 1990s. In 2000, there were only 54,466 Chinese international students in the United States (Institute of International Education, 2000), comprising just over 10% of the entire international student population. Chinese students now make up over 28% of the total international student population in the United States, a more than 300% increase in just over a decade. Driving this increase was a surge in Chinese undergraduate enrollment, a study level that was nearly unrepresented by Chinese students previously. The motivations for this surge will be discussed in the next section. See Figure 1 for a summary of Chinese student enrollment patterns in the United States.

**Figure 1**



*Source: Institute of International Education (1969-2014)*

## **Chinese Students' Motivations to Study Abroad**

The rise of Chinese international students in the United States is motivated by several “push” and “pull” factors. These include, but are not limited to, domestic competition for university acceptance, the growth of the Chinese middle class, the influence of American culture in China, recruitment by American universities, and the perceived superiority of an American degree. These motivations provide important insights into the minds of Chinese students studying in the United States.

### *Domestic Competition for University Acceptance*

One “push” factor is intense domestic competition in China for acceptance to a Chinese university. In 2012, there were 2,442 higher education institutions in China (*China Statistical Abstract 2012*). Total enrollment in higher education institutions in that year was 23.9 million students (including undergraduate and graduate programs) (*China Statistical Abstract 2012*). In 2006, a total of 33.5 million students graduated from secondary school in China (*China Statistical Abstract 2006*). Not all of these students were university-bound; some elected to enter trade school or go straight into the workforce. However, the Ministry of Education of China (2010) reported that in 2006, 9.5 million high school students (28%) elected to take the national college entrance examination (*gaokao*), vying for one of only 5.5 million university openings. This is a successful admission rate of 57% of entrance examination test-takers and only 16% of total high school graduates. These numbers leave around 4 million college hopefuls and 28 million total high school graduates without admission to a domestic university each year.

University acceptance in the United States, by way of comparison, is not nearly as competitive. The National Center for Education Statistics shows that in 2012, there were 20.9 million post-secondary students in the United States (including both undergraduate and graduate

programs) enrolled in 4,703 higher education institutions. In 2010, 3.4 million American students graduated from secondary school and 2.2 million of these students (65%) went on to enroll in a higher education institution during the fall 2010 semester. These numbers demonstrate that, on average, competition for American university acceptance is much lower when compared with the university acceptance rates in China. The enrollment capacity for American universities also serves as an important “pull” factor for Chinese students.

Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) surveyed over 2000 East Asian high school graduates who were intending to study at a foreign university. Students were asked about their motivations for not attending university in their home country. Of the 689 mainland Chinese students they surveyed, 39% indicated that difficulties gaining entry to a domestic university was a factor in their decision to study abroad. This number indicates that domestic competition for higher education influences a relatively large portion of students aiming to study abroad.

#### *Growth of the Chinese Middle Class*

Another “push” factor is the growing Chinese middle class, which allows more Chinese families to afford the high price of self-sponsored international tuition. Although wide economic gaps remain between urban and rural citizens in China, the urban middle class has grown exponentially over the last ten years. In 1999, the average per capita urban annual disposable income in China was 5,854 Chinese yuan (around 930 American dollars) (China Statistical Abstract, 1999). In 2012, this number skyrocketed to 24,564 Chinese yuan (around 3,931 American dollars), a more than 300% increase (China Statistical Abstract, 2012). This rising disposable income is coupled with the fact that Chinese parents often place enormous importance on education-related expenses for their children. Croll (2006) cites a Gallup survey where two-thirds of interviewed Chinese families stated that their child’s education was their top savings

goal.

### *Influence of American Culture*

Since China's opening to the world in the 1980s, China has seen a growing influence of American popular culture, providing a "pull" factor for Chinese students electing to study in the United States. English language, for example, is taught in China starting as early as primary school and is a tested subject on the college entrance examination (*gaokao*). American movies and television are also extremely popular in China. In 2012, for instance, foreign films accounted for nearly a quarter of the films shown in Chinese movie theatres and over 52% of box office sales in China (China Daily, 2013). Nine of China's top 20 all-time grossing films come from the United States (Ent Group, 2013). American television is also widely watched online. The season two opening episode of American television show *2 Broke Girls*, for instance, has over 10 million views on Youku (a Chinese video-hosting website, similar to YouTube) (Youku, 2012). Additionally, the American fast food industry has soared in China: KFC has over 4000 franchises in the country (Yum!, 2013) while McDonald's has nearly 2000 Chinese franchises (Chalabi & Burn-Murdoch, 2013). As further support, Mazzarol & Soutar's study (2002), a full 91% of Chinese student respondents noted that they wished to study abroad in order to gain a better understanding of Western culture.

### *Recruitment by American Universities*

Recruitment by American universities is another "pull" factor that motivates Chinese students to study in the United States. Recently, American universities have increasingly turned to the international community, and particularly to China, to recruit new students. The Institute of International Education's Open Doors report (2013) surveyed 380 American higher education institutions and found that 79% reported an overall increase in their general international student

population. Their report found:

“Among institutions reporting a growth in new international students, the major reasons for the reported increases appear to be largely related to continued active recruitment efforts (68%), the growing reputation and visibility of U.S. campuses abroad (61%), the growth of the middle class in rapidly developing economies (43%), and an increased number of linkages with institutions in other countries (31%).” (Institute of International Education, 2013)

Additionally, 99% of the institutions surveyed stated they had increased recruitment efforts and resources in Eastern Asia. This overall trend of internationalization in higher education is an important factor to consider as some increase in international students from China may be attributed to a general shift in focus by American universities.

#### *Perceived Superiority of American Universities*

A perceived superiority of American universities is yet another “pull” factor that influences Chinese students to study in the United States. In Mazzarol & Soutar’s study (2002), 62% of the Chinese students surveyed indicated that they believed courses abroad to be better quality than their domestic options. Zhao (2005) argues that students are motivated to study in the United States due to a “zealous valorization of American culture, education, and technology.” Brzezinski (1994) found that Chinese international students believed an American degree to be superior to domestic options and that obtaining one would lead to greater career opportunities. An American degree was also considered a token of “Western know-how” in this study, which was believed to bring prestige in the workplace. Pang (2001) shows that pressures for career advancement or success lead Chinese students to study abroad.

#### *Summary*

The variety of “push” and “pull” factors demonstrates that the Chinese student experience abroad has both professional and cultural motivations. For this reason, their acculturation to life

in the United States is a valuable piece of that experience abroad. To highlight that process, sojourner acculturation and social adaptation will be discussed next.

### **Sojourner Acculturation**

Acculturation to life in the United States is key to the Chinese student experience at American universities. Acculturation is a process encountered by all people when in contact with new or unfamiliar surroundings. Berry (2001) defines acculturation as “a process that entails contact between two cultural groups, which results in numerous cultural changes in both parties” (p. 1). Current research shows that acculturation is a two-dimensional process toward both the home culture and the host culture (Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001).

Berry (2001) argues that acculturation typically occurs in one of four ways: (1) *assimilation*, when the individual does not wish to retain their cultural identity and seeks to replace it with that of the host culture, (2) *separation*, when the individual wishes to retain their home culture and avoid the host culture, (3) *integration*, when the individual wishes to both retain their home culture and join the host culture, and (4) *marginalization*, when the individual has little interest in retaining their home cultural or integrating with the host culture (Berry, 2001). Ward (1996, 1999) argues that individual personality and coping strategies play a large role in deciding which direction a person’s acculturation process may take.

Some acculturation processes are healthier than others. Research has indicated that individuals in the marginalization group experience the most stress and adjustment issues (Berry, 1997; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). On the other hand, individuals categorized in the integration group tend to have a more positive adjustment experience and demonstrate lower stress levels (Berry, 1997; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). Kim (2001) found that mental health is

best supported by integrative acculturation. For this reason, this study aims to explore how Chinese international students are integrating into their American universities.

### *Social Adaptation*

An important piece of the acculturation process is social adaptation. Social adaptation can be described as “the ability to acquire and perform culturally appropriate social skills and behavioral competence to fit in the host culture” (Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). Ward (1996, 1999) argues that social adaptation relies on external factors, such as time spent in the host culture, language ability, or personal experiences. Ward & Rana-Deuba (2000) show that individuals who identify more strongly with their home culture are more likely to have difficulties with social adaptation.

Social adaptation plays an important role in a positive university experience, particularly for minority or international students. Baker and Siryk (1999), for instance, found that students’ social adaptation at universities positively influenced academic studies. Research also indicates that minority students’ adjustment to life at American university campuses is positively correlated with integration (Tinto, 1982). Furthermore, the first year of study at a new university has been shown to involve intense and rapid social adaptation for successful students (Crissman, 2001; Davis, 1992).

### *Integration Issues for Chinese International Students*

Many studies have demonstrated that international students in general face significant academic, social, and psychological adjustment difficulties (Gareis, 2012; Anderson & Myer, 1985; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Church, 1982; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Misra et al, 2003; Wei et al, 2007; Wilton & Constantine, 2003; Johnson & Sandu, 2007). Research demonstrates that being immersed in new surroundings can lead to anxiety and self-identity confusion (Zhou et al, 2008;

Deaux, 1996). Common characteristics of this anxiety include homesickness and a longing for a more familiar environment (Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007).

Tierney (1992) argues that the American university culture tends to reflect the culture of the dominant group, which forces minority students to deal with a period of cultural adjustment upon arrival. Sewell and Davidson (1956) note that culture shock may lead some minority students to socially or emotionally detach from their host institution. Lin and Yin (1997) also indicate that a lack of familiarity with American culture can lead to social isolation for some international students in the United States.

Asian students are shown to experience more psychological distress than other groups of students at American universities (Poyrazli et al, 2004). Chinese students in particular report higher stress levels than any other international student group in the United States (Abe, Talbot, & Geelhoed, 1998; Sodowsky & Plake, 1992). Yan (2008) found that dealing with cultural differences was a top source of stress for Chinese students. In addition, Yingyi et al (1995) found that Chinese international students were often surprised by the amount and severity of cultural adjustment difficulties they faced upon arrival to the United States. As mentioned previously, these explanations also point to problems with the student and Chinese culture, rather than a problem with the theory or assumptions.

This literature lends support to this study's hypothesis that perceived cultural understanding of the United States positively correlates with campus involvement and friendships with American students for Chinese international students.

#### *Characteristics of an Integrated Student*

This study will test two characteristics that the literature presents as factors in university integration: (1) student involvement and engagement, and (2) friendship networks. More

information about these topics and their connection to sojourner acculturation will be discussed next.

### **Student Involvement and Engagement**

The literature suggests that student involvement and engagement on campus is important to integration. Astin (1984) defines student involvement as “the amount of physical and psychological energy that a student devotes to the academic experience” (pp. 297). Astin’s Theory of Involvement (1984) argues that learning occurs at universities both inside the classroom and through experiences outside the classroom. He describes an “involved student” as one who is active in the classroom, is an active member in campus organizations, and spends a large amount of time on campus. Involvement, according to Astin, is highly student-driven and positively influences the overall learning experience.

In the United States, the Theory of Involvement is oftentimes associated with involvement in campus organizations and extracurricular activities. Jackson et al (2011) describe campus involvement as “behavioral engagement in campus-related activities with peers or faculty, such as joining academic clubs, attending university sports events, attending on-campus public presentations, and participating in other university-related events” (pp. 799). Research on the importance of involvement has led many American universities to adopt involvement and leadership into their mission statements (Astin & Astin, 2000; Boatman, 1999). In fact, one can visit virtually any American university's website and find a department associated with student organizations and campus involvement.

Closely connected to student involvement is student engagement. Kuh (2003) defines student engagement as “the time and energy students devote to educationally sound activities inside and outside of the classroom, and the policies and practices that institutions use to induce

students to take part in these activities” (pp. 25). Engagement is about more than simply attending social events or organizations and spending time on campus. Rather, it denotes *active* participation and contribution to these activities. Wolf-Wendel et al (2009) emphasize that student engagement constitutes both energies put forth by the student and actions taken by the institution to ensure success. According to Kuh (2001), key factors in positive student engagement include positive academic challenges, active and collaborative learning, interaction with faculty, enriched educational experiences, and a supportive campus environment.

Current literature suggests that individual student involvement and engagement on campus is essential to a positive university experience. Severeins and Wolff (2008) note that students who participate in extracurricular activities are more likely to finish their academic program. Participating in campus organizations is also believed to influence social adaptation and promote positive academic performance (Bok, 2003; Russell et al, 2010; Severeins and Wolff, 2008), as well as promote a sense of belonging to the institution (Edwards & Waters, 1982; Napoli & Wortman, 1996; Tinto, 2012). The literature also suggests that cognitive development increases the more students are involved with campus organizations (Moore et al, 1998). Student engagement on campus is additionally believed to develop habits that promote learning and personal development (Shulman, 2007).

The literature also suggests that this type of individual campus involvement and engagement can benefit the acculturation and social adaptation processes for international students. Ward et al (2005) demonstrate that international students who experience more acculturative stress tend to be less involved and engaged on campus. Hoffman (2002) argues that campus involvement helps international students look outside their own ethnic or cultural identity to provide a more rewarding experience abroad. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) also

show that engaged experiences with out-group members lead to thought complexity, higher self-esteem, and cultural openness. Lastly, research suggests that intergroup involvements help alleviate culture shock for international students in the initial months after arrival to the United States (Chapdelaine & Alextich, 2004).

Current literature supports the notion that involvement in campus organizations is positively correlated with a more rewarding university experience. This notion is also the assumed position of many higher education institutions in the United States. At present, research assumes this phenomenon is universally true for all nationalities and cultures represented at university campuses. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that involvement in campus organizations will positively correlate with Chinese international students' satisfaction with their university experience and perceived sense of belonging to their institution.

### **Role of Friendships**

Astin's Theory of Involvement does not address how friendships and social networks influence the university experience. However, the literature suggests that, in addition to campus involvement, friendship networks are vital to the university experience. Having strong friendships has been shown to positively correlate with increased student self-esteem (Bagwell, Newcomb, & Bukowski, 1998), more campus involvement (Vaquera, 2009), and stronger leadership skills (Berndt, 1982), as well as a decreased prevalence of depression (Chango, McElhaney, & Allen, 2009) and loneliness (Parker & Asher, 1993). Meeuwiesse et al (2010) note that university students who fail to complete their academic programs often cite an insufficient social network as a reason for leaving the university.

The literature suggests that friendship networks are of particular importance to international students as they navigate the acculturation and social adaptation processes.

Pedersen (1991) shows that psychological well-being can be adversely affected by the absence of known social networks (as in the case of moving abroad). Crockett et al (2007) indicate that social support in a new environment can alleviate the stress and anxiety of acculturation.

Friendship networks also serve as a source of support throughout the acculturation process (Wierzbicki, 2004), and can serve as tools for dealing with real or perceived discrimination (Noh & Kaspar, 2003). Supportive friendship networks are an indicator for acculturation attitudes and predicting which acculturation category sojourners may experience (Choi and Thomas, 2008).

Portes (1998) explains that individuals with strong social networks are less likely to experience acculturative stress and are more likely to have an increased overall sense of well-being. Social networks have also been found to influence international student academic adjustment and performance (Zhou et al, 2008).

For sojourners, different friendship types can provide varied experiences. Co-national friendships, friendships with those from the home culture, and cross-cultural friendships, friendships with those from outside the home culture, will be explored next.

### *Co-National Friendships*

The literature suggests that co-national friendships can provide a number of benefits, particularly for short-term sojourners. Co-national support has been shown to positively influence the acculturation process (Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000). Co-national support early in the acculturation process has also been found to alleviate anxiety and depression (Ryan & Twibell, 2000). In addition, interacting with fellow co-national students allows international students to enhance their own understanding of their experience abroad (Woolf, 2007) and can help alleviate the stresses associated with living abroad (Kim, 2001). Lastly, co-national

friendships can provide emotional support for international students as they deal with culture shock and acculturative stress (Maundeni, 2001).

Despite these benefits, the literature suggests that there can also be negative effects of strong co-national friendships. Kim (2001) found that co-national friendships can offer short-term benefits but tend to impede long-term social adaptation. The literature also suggests that strong co-national friendships can also lead to in-group reliance and can discourage sojourners from making connections with the host population (Searle & Ward, 1990; Church 1982). Co-national friendships have also been shown to have negative effects on English language acquisition and sojourner integration in the United States (Maundeni, 2001).

For international students, strong co-national social networks have been shown to lead to limited participation in American campus life (Sewell and Davidson, 1956) and lead to apathetic feelings towards campus involvement (Al-sharideh & Goe, 1998). Importantly, a top complaint of students studying abroad is the lack of interaction with the host population (Kudo & Simkin, 2003; Ward & Masgoret, 2004). Hendrickson et al (2011) found that international students with many co-national friendships were more likely to report dissatisfaction with their lives abroad. However, this research tends to focus on co-national friendships as a temporary source of support until sojourners make host-country friendships. An alternative explanation is that perhaps sustained, long-term co-national friendships provide group or collective acculturation and integration.

### *Cross-Cultural Friendships*

Chinese international students in the United States have the opportunity to make cross-cultural connections and friendships with both American students and fellow international students from countries other than China. These friendships have been shown to provide many

benefits. Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory (1954) argues that friendships with out-group members reduce biases and promote positive out-group images. This idea has been supported by numerous studies (Aberson et al, 2004; Antonio, 2001; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000; Astin, 1993; Eller & Abrams, 2003; Wagner et al, 2003).

For international students, the literature suggests that cross-cultural friendships are a significant factor in social adaptation (Amir, 1983; Basu & Ames, 1970). Cross-cultural friendships have been found to decrease acculturative stress (Wagner et al, 2003; Abe, Talbot, & Geelhoed, 1998; Olaniran, 1993) and aid in adjustment to new environments (Kim, 1988). Al-sharideh & Goe (1998) found that international student friendships with the host population positively correlated with self-esteem and emotional gratification. Friendships with the host population have also been found to be a top indicator of sojourner satisfaction with their experience abroad (Rohrlich & Martin, 1991; Searle & Ward, 1990). Research also indicates that international students in the United States who have regular and meaningful interactions with Americans are more likely to feel more socially adapted (Li & Gasser, 2005). However, this research focuses on individual acculturation and integration without considering the roles of group or collective acculturation and integration.

#### *Friendship Patterns of Chinese International Students*

Despite the benefits of cross-cultural friendships, research shows that many international students have a general tendency to make friendships with students from their own country (Rajapaksa & Dundes, 2002). This tendency may be a result of fewer cultural barriers or differences (Nicholson, 2001; Ying, 2002). Sewell and Davidson (1956) argue that minorities who feel isolated by the majority culture at universities tend to seek companionship amongst those from their own culture. Research also indicates that individuals who define their personal

identities along cultural lines have a tendency to make more friendships with those whose cultural identities match their own (Strom, 1988).

Recent research suggests that international students in general struggle to make friendships with Americans at universities in the United States. Gareis (2012) shows that 38% of international students surveyed stated they have no close American friends. For students of East Asian origin, this study demonstrates that over half of those surveyed indicated no close friendships with Americans (Gareis, 2012). Research also suggests that students of Asian origin are more likely to have more co-national friendships than other international student groups (Hendrickson et al, 2001). This has been shown to be particularly true with Chinese students (Yan, 2008). Current literature suggests that Chinese students tend to rely on co-national friendships for support through difficult times more than other groups of international students (Brien & David, 1971).

Chinese international students face a number of difficulties in making friendships with American students. Although international students typically find Americans warm and inviting, research indicates that their interactions with them tend to be brief and limited in scope (Stewart & Bennett, 2005). Chinese students in particular often lack the cultural background necessary for meaningful interactions with American students. China's collectivist society is shown to be particularly at odds with the strong individualistic tendencies of American society (Hofstede, 2001; Chen, 2006). Skills necessary to form friendships with Americans, such as small talk or sarcasm, are often underdeveloped in newly arrived Chinese international students (Trice, 2007). In addition, the Chinese values of humbleness, restraint, and saving face do not often coincide with the more fast-paced and forward conversational styles of Americans (Kim, Atkinson, & Umemoto, 2001).

Chinese international students also encounter barriers from the American host population when attempting to form friendships. International students in general note little interest on the part of American students in forming friendships with them (Gareis, 2012), which may be due in part to Americans' perceptions that international students lack English proficiency (Chen, 2006). Research indicates that Asian immigrants in the United States tend to be regarded the least favorably by Americans (Simon Anholt, 2009). Research also shows that Asian students are most frequently stereotyped by American students as "nerdy" and are the least likely to be approached for social purposes on university campuses (Zhang, 2010). One other possible barrier is the difficulty of "breaking in" to pre-established groups, particularly for students who spend one or more semesters in remedial English courses and must then work to integrate with classmates in regular academic courses. Despite these trends, East Asian students have a tendency to blame their lack of friendships with Americans on their own personal faults (such as low language proficiency or shyness) rather than on the host population itself (Gareis, 2012).

### **English Proficiency**

The literature suggests that individual English language ability is an important factor in Chinese international student integration into their campus community abroad. English language barriers have been indicated in numerous studies as a cause for limited interaction between international students in general and their host population (Chen, 1999; Hayes & Lin, 1998; Nicholson, 2001). However, Poyrazli (2003) shows that international students who have a higher perceived English ability are more likely to report better adjustment.

Communicating in English has been deemed a source of stress for Chinese students in particular in numerous studies (Perkins, 1977; Kao, 1987; Liu, 1995; Lin, 1998; Chang, 1990; Ye, 1992; Sun & Chen, 1997; Yeh, 2000; Wan, 2001). Ying (2002) also demonstrates that low

English language ability is a top predictor for depression in Taiwanese international students. Managing the large differences between the Chinese and English languages has also been shown to lead to anxiety and cultural insecurities for Chinese sojourners (Chen, 2006). In addition, English language proficiency is a top predictor for Chinese students' social adaptation (Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). Wei et al (2007) found that Chinese students tend to deem low English ability as a personal failure, making English comprehension a source of stress.

This literature supports this study's hypothesis that perceived English language ability positively correlates with Chinese student involvement in campus organizations and the number of friendships made with American students.

### **Summary**

This literature review has explored the current research regarding the Chinese student social experience at American universities. The literature shows that acculturation and social adaptation are important to the sojourner experience abroad. For sojourners, the best acculturation process is integration, where the home culture is retained while elements of the host culture are simultaneously explored and adopted. In this study, two key areas of university integration are explored: campus involvement and social network circles. This study also aims to address how perceived English language ability and perceived cultural understanding of the United States influences these two areas. In addition, Chinese student satisfaction and their sense of belonging to their institution will be explored.

There are numerous gaps in the existing literature on the Chinese international student social experience at American universities. These gaps have driven the research questions and hypotheses of this study. Few studies have explored campus involvement and engagement patterns of Chinese international students. Furthermore, little is known about Chinese students'

social network and friendship patterns, and relatively few studies have looked at these two important areas in tandem. Finally, the current literature assumes that Western notions of involvement translate to the experiences of non-Western students. The current research focuses on the Western notion of individual experience. One alternative explanation could be that group or collective experiences provide for a sense of belonging to the institution for non-Western students.

The current literature influences the hypotheses of this study. Based on current research, this study assumes that perceived English language ability and perceived cultural knowledge of the United States will positively correlate with Chinese students' campus involvement and friendships with the American host population. This study also hypothesizes that campus involvement will positively correlate with Chinese students' sense of belonging at their American institution.

The study's methodology will be discussed next in Chapter 3, followed by analysis of the data in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 will discuss the data in relation to the study's research questions and hypotheses. Finally, Chapter 6 will add concluding remarks, including the limitations of this study, recommendations for further study, and policy recommendations.

### Chapter III: Methodology

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the campus involvement and friendship network patterns of Chinese international students at American universities. This study adopted a mixed-method design; three original questionnaires were administered to the same participants over the course of one academic year with supplementary in-depth interviews of select study participants. This mixed-method design was chosen to avoid method errors and to provide a more clear answer to the research questions (Behrens & Smith, 1996). In this chapter, the methodology used in the study will be discussed, starting with an outline of the research hypotheses. A description of the study participants is also provided, followed by an explanation of the quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Based on the literature and previous studies, variable measures are explained. Finally, ethical considerations of this study are highlighted.

#### Research Hypotheses

As outlined in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, this study aims to address the following research questions and accompanying hypotheses:

*RQ1:* What are the factors that encourage Chinese international students to participate in campus organizations at American universities?

*H1:* Perceived English language ability correlates positively with Chinese international student involvement in campus organizations at American universities

*H2:* Perceived cultural understanding of the United States correlates positively with Chinese student involvement in campus organizations at American universities.

*RQ2:* What are the factors that encourage Chinese international students to form friendships with American students at American universities?

*H1:* Perceived English language ability correlates positively with the number of friendships with American students that Chinese international students make at American universities.

*H2:* Perceived cultural understanding of the United States correlates positively with the number of friendships with American students that Chinese international students make at American universities.

*RQ3*: Does involvement in campus organizations influence Chinese international students' sense of belonging to their institution at American universities?

*H1*: Involvement in campus organizations correlates positively with Chinese international student sense of belonging to their institution at American universities.

These hypotheses were explored using both quantitative and qualitative methods, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

### **Participants**

The population sampled in this study consisted of first-year Chinese international students in degree-seeking programs at the University of Kansas, a public research university in the Midwest region of the United States. Participants in this study began their full-time, degree-seeking academic program in the fall 2013 semester. Participants were identified through coordination with the Chinese Student and Scholar Friendship Association (CSSFA), a campus student organization for Chinese international students. CSSFA hosts an orientation program with high attendance rates at the beginning of each academic year to help acclimate and assist new Chinese international students. At their fall 2013 orientation program, information about the study was presented in English, which was then verbally translated into Chinese by the CSSFA president. Those interested in participating in the study were asked to visit a separate room during the lunch break. Interested participants were given a physical copy of the International Review Board (IRB) informed consent form in English and the form was summarized verbally in English with Chinese translations. Next, interested participants signed the physical informed consent form and were given a copy for their records. Participants were then given the initial questionnaire to complete. Participants were free to leave or end their participation in the study at any time. Those who completed the initial questionnaire were offered a coupon to a local restaurant as a token of appreciation.

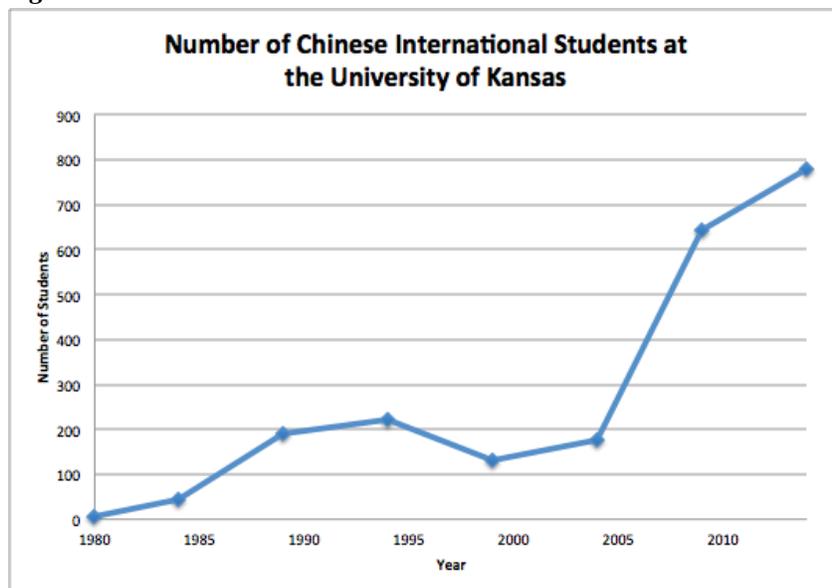
Participants provided their names and email addresses, which were used for follow-up contact purposes only. This information was kept separately from the questionnaire data. Two subsequent questionnaires in electronic form were sent by email to participants in December, near the end of the fall semester, and in April, near the end of the spring semester. A reminder email was sent to participants who had not yet completed the questionnaire.

### *Background of Participants*

Background information collected in the questionnaires provides an overview of the participants in this study. Participants were asked their age, gender, study level, location of residence (on or off campus), and academic study area, as well as whether they were taking remedial English courses. See Table 1 in Appendix A for an illustration of the descriptive statistics of study participants.

### **Study Site**

This study took place at the University of Kansas, a public research institution in the Midwestern region of the United States. The University of Kansas is located in Lawrence, Kansas, a mid-sized town with nearly 90,000 residents. The relative number of Chinese international students at the University of Kansas mirrors national trends in the United States. In 2014, the university had 778 Chinese students out of a total 2114 international students (Office of Institutional Research and Planning, 2014), comprising 37% of the total international student population. As is demonstrated in national trends, these numbers have surged in recent years. See Figure 2 for a summary of Chinese student enrollment patterns at the University of Kansas.

*Figure 2*

*Source: Office of Institutional Research and Planning (1980-2013)*

## **Quantitative Data Methods**

Three questionnaires were used in this study to provide raw data that was analyzed to better understand the involvement and friendship network patterns of Chinese international students. Quantitative data from questionnaires has previously been shown to provide important perspectives for research in the social sciences (Trochim, 2001). In this study, two questionnaires were completed by participants before interviews were conducted. The interview direction was informed and influenced by preliminary quantitative data analysis, as suggested by Creswell & Plano-Clark (2007).

### *Questionnaire Construction*

The design of the three questionnaires was influenced by a review of the current literature (as summarized in Chapter 2), as well an analysis of gaps in current research on Chinese student involvement and friendship network patterns. This information was combined with research methods on cultural adjustment analysis (Xia, 1992; Ye, 1992; Wang, 1992) and cross-cultural research design methods (Chuang, 1988; Zhang, 1992). General questionnaire design methods

were also consulted (Babbie, 1973; Converse & Presser, 1986; Foddy, 1993; Moser & Kalton, 1972). This literature contributes to the questionnaire foundation and design validity.

Because study participants were English Language Learners, special precautions were taken with the questionnaires to ensure that the participants would interpret questions correctly. The questionnaires were originally written in English, and then translated into Chinese by a native speaker with professional translation experience. The Chinese translations were then crosschecked with an additional native Chinese speaker to ensure translation accuracy. Questionnaires were presented to participants with both Chinese and English translations available for each question and answer. A few of the questions on the questionnaires required written responses. Participant responses in Chinese were translated by a native speaker for analysis.

#### *Questionnaire Distribution*

Three questionnaires were administered to the same participants over the course of one academic year. The first questionnaire was a physical, paper document given to interested participants to complete at the CSSFA orientation program. This questionnaire was administered in August at the beginning of the fall 2013 semester. Next, two additional electronic questionnaires were sent to participants via email addresses which they provided. The second questionnaire was administered in December near the end of the fall 2013 semester and the final questionnaire was administered in April, near the end of the spring 2014 semester.

Initial participation in this study was 86 students. However, 4 participants did not complete the second questionnaire in the longitudinal series and 8 participants did not complete the third questionnaire in the longitudinal series. The data of those participants who did not complete all three questionnaires in the study were not used in the analysis. Altogether, data

from 72 participants were analyzed. See Table 1 in Appendix A for descriptive statistics of the study sample.

### *Analysis of the Data*

In order to analyze the quantitative data, the results from the three questionnaires were first coded and combined into one dataset. Dummy variables were created for nominal variables, such as major. The dataset was then examined for data coding errors and imported into Stata for analysis. Participant background and demographic information was compared to stated involvement levels and friendship network circles to determine correlations. For categorical variables, chi-square tests and *p*-values were utilized to determine statistical significance of any perceived correlations. Some questionnaire questions were presented in a 1 to 4 or 1 to 5 scale. The means and standard deviations of these data points were analyzed and compared to find trends and correlations. For continuous variables, regression analysis was conducted using logit functions for dichotomous variables and ordered logit functions for ordinal variables.

### **Qualitative Data Methods**

The goal of the qualitative component of this study was to complement and expand upon quantitative themes that emerged from the questionnaire responses. By engaging participants in semi-structured interviews, more detailed information about participant experiences and perceptions could be analyzed. Manning (1992) explains that qualitative research is particularly helpful when study participants are university students as it allows for a reflection of the campus experience that is difficult to capture in quantitative questionnaires. Mulhall et al (2004) discuss the benefits of using qualitative data to offer a new perspective to collected quantitative data. In addition, Greene et al (1989) argue that qualitative research that is informed by quantitative data provides a “triangulation” of data that gives a more well-rounded analysis of the problem. In this

study, engaging participants in in-depth interviews about their experiences provided a more comprehensive insight into the research questions at hand.

### *The Sample*

Fifteen participants were interviewed for this study. Interview participants were selected based on demographics and questionnaire answers. As a general rule, diversity in gender, age, study level, and academic discipline was sought. Participants were also selected based on three categories: (1) those that appeared to be heavily involved and engaged on campus with a varied friend group, (2) those that appeared somewhat involved and engaged on campus with minimal variation in friend group, and (3) those that appeared uninvolved and unengaged on campus with mostly co-national friends. See Table 2 in Appendix B for a comprehensive list of interview participants.

### *Interview Structure and Format*

Participants selected for an interview were contacted by email, which made clear that the interviews were optional and that participants may end their participation in the study at any time. Guiding interview questions were written to form a basic structure for the interview (See Appendix G). However questions were adapted, deleted, or added in response to the dialogue as needed. Interview questions were compiled based on the literature review and by analysis of the first two questionnaires. Interview questions were divided into four sections: (1) student expectations and preparations prior to arriving to the United States, (2) campus involvement and associations, (3) friendship networks and social adjustments, and (4) cultural adjustments and acculturative challenges. Interviews were conducted in English with some supplemental definitions or explanations in Chinese by the interviewer if participants did not understand the question in English.

To ensure response validity, several steps were taken. Interviews took place on campus in locations convenient and familiar to participants, most often in private rooms in a campus library or the student union building. Interviews averaged 45 minutes in length so as not to be too tedious or strenuous on the participant. Although the interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis, participants were assured that transcriptions would not be filed with their names or identifying information and that recordings would be deleted after transcription. After transcription, the documents were sent electronically to participants to review. Participants were allowed to make edits, additions, or adjustments if they wished. Only two participants asked for transcription changes. Both participants requesting changes wished to add more information to one of their question responses.

#### *Analysis of Interview Data*

The qualitative analysis process began by organizing and categorizing the interview transcriptions, as stressed by Creswell et al (2007). Participant responses were coded by pre-determined themes and categories, which were designed prior to the start of interviews, as encouraged by Miles & Huberman (1984). These categories were then examined to determine any expected or unexpected themes that emerged from the data (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975). Next, participant responses were compared to discover similarities or differences. These findings were then cross-examined with the study's quantitative data findings. Some information gathered from the interviews influenced survey question additions for the final questionnaire in this study.

#### **Measures**

Dependent and independent variables were measured based on questionnaire and interview answers. Key concepts in this study were measured as follows:

### *Participant Campus Involvement*

Campus involvement in this study was measured by participant involvement and engagement with campus organizations. This concept was measured by participant answers to the study questionnaires. Participants were asked in the first survey about their plans to join a campus organization. Actual participation during the academic year in campus organizations was measured by the second and third questionnaire. Interview participants were also asked about their campus involvement and motivations for joining or not joining a campus organization.

### *Participant Friendship Networks*

Types of friendships were split in this study between three categories: those with fellow Chinese students, those with American students, and those with international students not from China. Participants were asked to identify the number of friendships they had in each category in both the second and third questionnaire. The quality of friendships was also measured by asking participants to rank their agreement to statements such as, “I have at least one close American friend,” or “I have at least one close Chinese friend.” Friendship preferences were also measured by asking participants to rank their agreement to statements such as, “I wish I had more American friends.” Interview participants were asked to describe their friend groups, including how and when friendships were made, activities they do with friends, and difficulties encountered in forming friendships.

### *Perceived English Language Ability*

Perceived English language ability was measured by asking participants in each of the questionnaires to rank their own ability on a 1 to 5 scale. Participants also provided information such as whether they were enrolled in remedial English courses and the level of remedial English

courses they were taking. Participants were asked to rank their agreement to a number of statements related to their perceived English ability, such as “I have had deep and meaningful conversations in English” or “I feel comfortable using English in my daily life.” Interview participants were also asked to describe difficulties faced with using English and how their English ability related to participation in organizations and forming friendships with American students.

#### *Perceived Cultural Understanding of the United States*

Perceived understanding of American culture was measured by asking participants in each of the questionnaires to rank their own understanding on a 1 to 5 scale. Participants were also asked to rank their agreement to statements such as, “I actively try to learn more about American culture and customs” or “I have participated in American cultural events.” Interview participants were asked about their experiences with cultural adjustment and how this affected their participation in campus organizations and friendships with American students.

#### *Participant Satisfaction and Sense of Belonging*

Participant satisfaction with their university experience was measured in the second and third survey. Participants were initially asked if they felt they belonged and were a part of the University of Kansas. String variables were collected by asking students to explain why they do or do not feel a sense of belonging to their institution. They were also asked to rank on a 1 to 5 scale their satisfaction with choosing to study in the United States and with their selection of the University of Kansas. Finally, participants were asked to rank their agreement to statements such as, “I am satisfied with my current social life at KU,” or “I feel accepted by KU students.” Interview participants were also asked about their sense of belonging and overall satisfaction with their experience abroad.

## **Ethical Considerations**

Participation in this study was voluntary and confidential. Participants were given ample information about the study in writing, as well as verbally in both English and Chinese before deciding to participate. Participants were also informed throughout the course of the study of its voluntary nature, their choice in participation, and their ability to withdraw from the study at any time.

Careful consideration was taken to protect the privacy of each participant. Although names and email addresses were collected in order to maintain contact throughout the longitudinal study, questionnaire answers and interview transcriptions were kept separately from all identifying information. Physical questionnaire documents and IRB consent forms were kept in a locked drawer in the primary researcher's on-campus office to which only she has a key. Electronic data was kept in a password-protected spreadsheet to which only the primary researcher retained access. All interview recordings were deleted following transcription and transcription files were kept in a password-protected folder to which only the primary researcher retained access.

## **Summary**

This chapter presented the methodology of this study, including research questions, study participants, quantitative and qualitative methods used, measurements, and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 presents the study findings and data analysis, followed by a discussion of the findings in regard to the research questions and hypotheses in Chapter 5. Chapter 6a summarizes the study limitations, suggestions for further research, and policy recommendations.

## Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze and illustrate the results of the statistical analysis of the study questionnaires, as well the analysis of qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews. The analysis is divided into sections, mapping to the study's core concepts: (1) participant involvement in organizations, (2) social network patterns, (3) influences of perceived English language ability, (4) influences of perceived cultural understanding, and (5) overall satisfaction levels with the university and sense of belonging to the institution.

### Chinese Student Participation in Campus Organizations

#### *Quantitative Analysis*

The main assumption is that participation in student organizations and friendships with American students will positively influence Chinese student integration and experience at American universities. The key measure is participants' stated sense of belonging. Eighty-nine percent ( $n = 65$ ) of the sample in this study believed they belong at the University of Kansas. According to the literature, we should observe greater participation in campus organizations and larger numbers of American friends.

Participants were asked in the first questionnaire (administered in August, shortly after their arrival to the University of Kansas) about whether they *intended* to participate in campus organizations during the academic year. To this, 28% stated yes, 50% stated maybe, and 22% stated no. A variety of factors were analyzed with intent to join a campus organization using two-way tables and chi square tests (see Table 3). Gender did correlate with statistical significance with intent to participate in organizations, with males more likely to respond yes than females. Perceived English language ability was also shown to be a factor; those with

higher perceived language ability were more likely to state yes or maybe. Those with a lower stated perceived understanding of American culture were also more likely to select yes or maybe. Factors with little statistical significance include age, study level, enrollment in remedial English courses, academic major, and housing accommodation.

*Table 3*

**Two-way table chi square tests for intent to participate in campus organizations**

<b>Factor compared</b>	<b><i>p</i>-value</b>
Age	.259
Gender	.027*
Study level	.187
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.169
Academic major	.373
Housing accommodations	.082
Perceived English language ability	.026*
Perceived understanding of American culture	.041*

\*  $p < .05$

Participants were then asked at the end of the fall semester about their actual participation in campus organizations. Participants demonstrated relatively low levels of involvement, with only 20% of participants stating they did participate in a campus organization (see Figure 3). Participation in campus organizations during the fall semester was compared with several factors using two-way tables and chi square tests (see Table 4). Participation in organizations did not significantly correlate with a number of factors, including gender, study level, enrollment in remedial English courses, academic major, housing accommodations, perceived English language ability, or perceived understanding of American culture. Participation among those stating at the beginning of the semester that they planned to join a campus organization was also not found to significantly correlate to actual participation during the fall semester. In fact, only 29% of participants who stated “yes” (they planned to join a campus organization) did in fact end

up joining an organization in the fall semester. Of those who originally stated “maybe” (they might join a campus organization), 24% joined an organization in the fall semester.

Interestingly, of those who stated “no” (they did not plan to join a campus organization), 0% joined an organization during the fall semester.

Statistical analysis did indicate a significant correlation between participation in organizations during the fall semester and age, with younger students (age 23 and younger) more likely to join an organization than older students (age 24 and older) in the first semester.

Participants who had previous involvement with organizations in high school were also shown to be more likely to participate in organizations at the university-level during the fall semester in this study.

**Table 4**

**Two-way table chi square tests for fall participation in campus organizations**

<b>Factor compared</b>	<b><i>p</i>-value</b>
Age	.042*
Gender	.258
Study level	.480
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.962
Academic major	.954
Housing accommodations	.111
Perceived English language ability	.914
Perceived understanding of American culture	.738
Previous high school involvements	.044*
Previously stated intent to participate	.069

\* $p < .05$

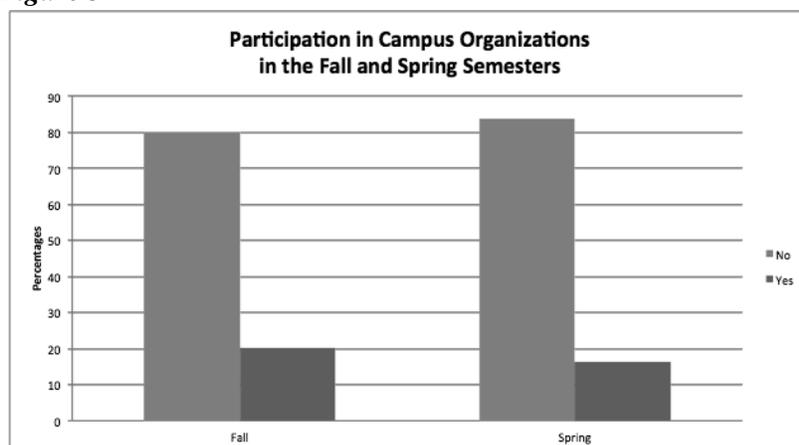
In the final questionnaire, administered in April, participants were asked about their participation in organizations during the spring semester. Participants showed a relatively static involvement rate in the spring semester compared to the fall semester, with 16% stating they did participate in campus organizations (see Figure 3). Again, participation in organizations in the

spring was compared with several factors using two-way tables and chi square tests (see Table 5). Once again, participation in campus organizations during the spring semester did not correlate significantly with gender, study level, enrollment in remedial English courses, academic major, housing accommodation, perceived English language ability, or perceived understanding of American culture. Previously stated intent to participate in clubs did not correlate significantly with actual participation in organizations during the spring semester. After the first semester, neither age nor participation in organizations in high school correlated significantly with participation in organizations.

**Table 5**  
**Two-way table chi square tests for spring participation in campus organizations**

Factor compared	<i>p</i> -value
Age	.471
Gender	.170
Study level	.152
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.952
Academic major	.579
Housing accommodations	.099
Perceived English language ability	.215
Perceived understanding of American culture	.331
Previous high school involvements	.093
Previously stated intent to participate	.155

**Figure 3**



Source: author survey

Despite low involvement levels, participants did note a desire to be more involved with campus organizations in the future. At the end of the fall semester, when asked to rank on a 1 to 4 scale (1= strong disagree, 4= strongly agree) their agreement to the statement, “I would like to be more involved in extracurricular programs,” 35% ( $n = 26$ ) stated they “strongly agree” and 53% ( $n = 39$ ) stated they “somewhat agree” ( $M = 3.2$ ,  $SD = .67$ ). These sentiments did not change by the end of the spring semester ( $M = 3.1$ ,  $SD = .69$ ).

Participants also noted some common involvements on campus that were *not* associated with formal campus organizations. These included attending welcome week events at the start of the fall semester (43%,  $n = 31$ ), sporting events (53%,  $n = 39$ ), academic presentations (54%,  $n = 40$ ), and visiting campus museums (35%,  $n = 26$ ). Participants also demonstrated some common informal involvements in the community, including visits to the local movie theater (35%,  $n = 27$ ), the downtown shopping district (52%,  $n = 39$ ), local places of worship (47%,  $n = 35$ ) the lake outside of town (28%,  $n = 21$ ), and surrounding cities (58%,  $n = 43$ ).

### *Qualitative Analysis*

Interview participants cited academic stress as a cause for their lack of participation in campus organizations. Participants explained:

“Actually, I am not very sociable here I think, especially in the last semester, I struggled in my courses and with homework and with projects. I didn’t have time to put an emphasis on other things.” (Participant 2)

“I think that working on my English and my English language classes are more important, so I’m just studying now. I will maybe consider clubs later.” (Participant 10)

“When I have some extra time, I just want to be relaxed, not participate in things. Maybe later when I’ve gotten used to this study life, but just not at this time.” (Participant 8)

Other participants indicated a prioritization of academic learning over participation in extracurricular activities:

“I think this [not being involved in extracurricular activities] is a difference about the culture, because even after I get used to the studies and get better at the skills in English, I think I will still choose to focus on studying because that is a top value of Chinese culture, and then the social circle comes next.” (Participant 1)

“I really need to focus on my studies and it is a lot of reading and materials to do. That is more important than things that are for fun.” (Participant 4)

“I came here to learn. That is my principal reason for being in the United States. Maybe if I came here for fun or leisure, I can join in with these things [campus organizations], but I’m not here for that right now.” (Participant 14)

Even participants already involved with campus organizations noted that academic pressures influenced their level of involvement. Participants noted:

“I love being involved, but it is just too hard for me. For example, just recently ISA [the International Student Association] had an event and all of the members were going, but I stayed up doing homework instead until 3 am. I just don’t have the energy to keep up with it.” (Participant 7)

“I was involved with a group for people in my major last semester and this semester I just didn’t go there anymore. I was also a member of the Chinese association but for this semester I was not so interested in organizations anymore. I’m much busier than I thought I would be studying and I need to spend a lot more of my time on that right now.” (Participant 9)

Despite low involvement levels in organizations, nearly all of the interview participants recognized a value in being involved on campus:

“Attending clubs and some other social activities can expand students’ outlooks and enrich their experience and make them understand the society better.” (Participant 2)

“It [being involved with organizations] helps you meet different people and participate in new activities and know the campus better and how it works.” (Participant 6)

“I could have taken English classes in China instead of here, but I came here because America is an English-speaking country and if I became involved in this culture I can improve myself more than in China. In China, I can only speak with my friends in Chinese, but here I can talk to them in English or maybe even learn other languages. If I was involved in the campus, I would know more about what Americans think about and what they care about.” (Participant 10)

Participants also noted an overall desire to be more involved on campus:

“I don't [participate in campus organizations], I feel so bad about it. I was about to, but other things came up and I just didn't, but I am going to someday. Now, I am trying to attend more activities like international student activities. I hope to be better about it later.” (Participant 3)

“[If you are involved on campus] you can speak and practice more English, make more friends, and get involved with the culture. That's very important. I'm very aware of the downside of my lifestyle. I would like to make more friends here and learn about the social life here, I just don't have the time to do that right now.”  
(Participant 8)

A lack of understanding about how to find information about campus student organizations and available campus resources was also demonstrated by the many of those interviewed:

“I just don't know how to get more information about these clubs. It seems like a lot of work to find them.” (Participant 10)

“When I first came here, I went to some events where lots of clubs had tables and you could go around and find out more about them. I was so shy, though, and too afraid to go up and just start talking. I knew there were some clubs that might be fun, like one was about volunteering, but I can't remember their names and I don't know how to look them up now.” (Participant 3)

Participants were also asked about resources they wished were provided by the university or types of programs they would be interested in joining if they existed. Several participants described organizations or events that already existed on campus, yet were unaware of their existence:

Participant 8: “I wish that KU had some kind of club that paired up an international student with an American student to make friendships. That sounds like the kind of club I would join and one that would be a benefit to people like me who are nervous about making friends.”

Interviewer: “Are you aware of the Global Partners program on campus? It's an organization at KU that does just that.”

Participant 8: “Really? I didn't know that you could do that on campus. I don't think I've ever heard about that.”

Participant 15: “I think it would be nice if KU had some kind of special day or maybe even a week just for international students to share their culture. We could do things like share our food or our music with people who don't know much about it.”

Interviewer: “Do you know about the International Awareness Week? It's a week of

events that ISA [the International Student Association] hosts every year to help celebrate international students and their culture.”

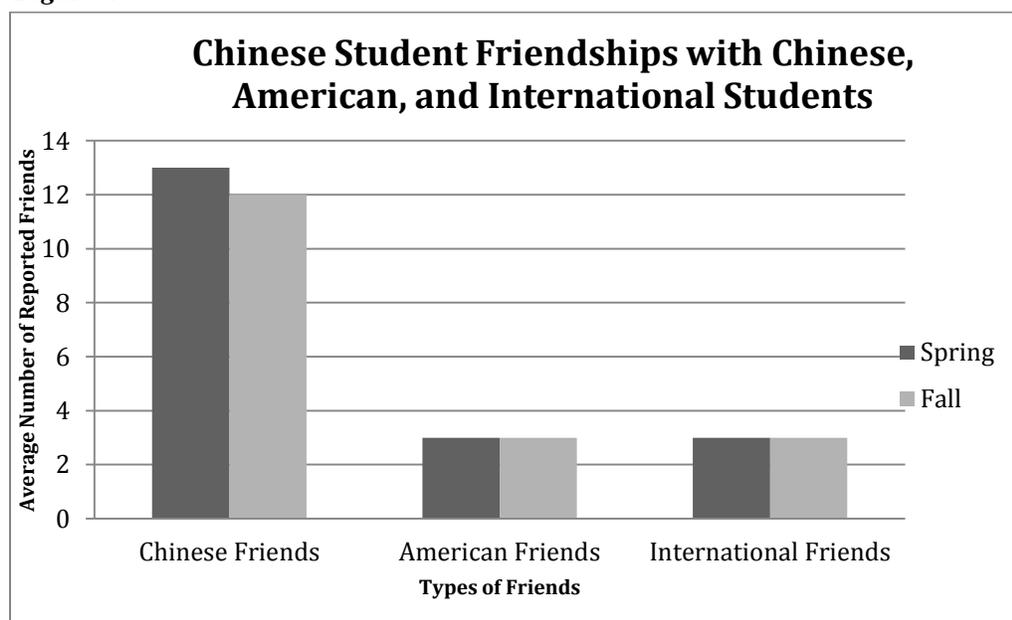
Participant 15: “No, I don’t know about that but I would like to know more and maybe join that to teach people about China.”

## Friendship Network Patterns

### *Quantitative Analysis*

Participants were asked near the end of the fall semester and near the end of the spring semester about the number of Chinese, American and international student friendships they had made since their arrival. The number of Chinese friends indicated was significantly higher than the number of American or international student friends indicated (see Figure 4). Number of friends in each category remained relatively static throughout the course of the academic year.

**Figure 4**



*Source: author survey*

The number of friendships with fellow Chinese students reported was compared to a number of factors using two-way tables and chi square tests (see Table 6). The number of Chinese friends was not found to correlate with statistical significance with gender, study level,

enrollment in remedial English courses, academic major, perceived English language ability, perceived understanding of American culture, or involvement with campus organizations. Interaction with Chinese students in the classroom was also not found to correlate with statistical significance with the number of friendships made with Chinese students. The number of friendships made with Americans also did not correlate with statistical significance with the number of friendships made with Chinese students. Age, however, was found to be significantly correlated with the number of Chinese friends during the first semester, with younger students more likely to have more Chinese friends.

**Table 6**

**Two-way table chi square tests for fall friendships with Chinese students**

<b>Factor compared</b>	<b><i>p</i>-value</b>
Age	.023*
Gender	.648
Study level	.911
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.323
Academic major	.066
Perceived English language ability	.155
Perceived understanding of American culture	.982
Involvement with campus organizations	.454
Interaction with Chinese in the classroom	.096
Number of American friends	.157

\* $p < .05$

The number of friendships with American students after the first semester was not found to significantly correlate with age, gender study level, enrollment in remedial English courses, academic major, perceived English language ability, or perceived understanding of American culture (See Table 7). Involvement with campus organizations also did not correlate with the number of friendships made with Americans. However, more interaction with American

students inside the classroom was shown to correlate with strong statistical significance with higher numbers of friendships with Americans in the first semester

**Table 7**  
**Two-way table chi square tests for fall**  
**friendships with American students**

<b>Factor compared</b>	<b><i>p</i>-value</b>
Age	.779
Gender	.977
Study level	.365
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.605
Academic major	.697
Perceived English language ability	.447
Perceived understanding of American culture	.214
Involvement with campus organizations	.339
Interaction with Americans in the classroom	.000***
Number of Chinese friends	.157

\* $p < .001$

The number of friendships made with international students not from China in the first semester was not found to correlate with statistical significance with gender, study level, academic major, perceived English language ability, or perceived understanding of American culture (See Table 8). Participation in campus organizations also did not correlate with statistical significance with the number of friendships made with other international students. Age, however, was shown to be a factor, with students aged 21-23 being the most likely to have more international student friends. Enrollment in remedial English courses also correlated with statistical significance, with students who were enrolled in courses through the Applied English Center more likely to claim higher numbers of international friends.

Table 8

**Two-way table chi square tests for fall friendships with other international students**

Factor compared	<i>p</i> -value
Age	.027*
Gender	.482
Study level	.105
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.049*
Academic major	.166
Perceived English language ability	.676
Perceived understanding of American culture	.287
Involvement with campus organizations	.473

\* $p < .05$

Participants were also asked about their friendship networks near the end of the spring semester. For the most part, friendship patterns remained relatively stable (see Figure 4). Once again, friendships with fellow Chinese students were more common than friendships with Americans or other international students. First-semester friendship numbers correlated with second-semester friendship numbers with strong statistical significance for friendships with Chinese students ( $p = .000$ ), with American students ( $p = .000$ ), and with other international students ( $p = .000$ ).

The number of friendships with fellow Chinese students in the spring semester did not correlate with statistical significance with age, gender, study level, enrollment in remedial English courses, academic major, perceived English language ability, or perceived understanding of American culture (See Table 9). Interaction with Chinese students in the classroom still did not correlate with statistical significance with the number of Chinese friends in the spring semester. Although participation in campus organizations was not a statistically significant indicator of the number of friendships made with fellow Chinese students in the fall, it was a statistically significant correlation in the spring semester. Participants with fewer campus involvements by the end of the spring semester stated a larger number of Chinese friends.

*Table 9*

**Two-way table chi square tests for spring friendships with Chinese students**

<b>Factor compared</b>	<b><i>p</i>-value</b>
Age	.402
Gender	.352
Study level	.299
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.531
Academic major	.308
Perceived English language ability	.360
Perceived understanding of American culture	.283
Involvement with campus organizations	.020*
Interaction with Chinese in the classroom	.120

\* $p < .05$

The number of friendships with American students in the spring semester did not correlate with statistical significance with age, gender, study level, enrollment in remedial English courses, academic major, perceived English language ability, or perceived understanding of American culture (see Table 10). In the second semester of study, contact with Americans in the classroom setting was also no longer a statistically significant correlation. Besides the previously mentioned correlation between the number of American friends in the fall and the number of American friends in the spring, there were no other statistical indicators in this study that explained numbers of friendships with Americans in the spring semester.

*Table 10*

**Two-way table chi square tests for spring friendships with American students**

<b>Factor compared</b>	<b><i>p</i>-value</b>
Age	.483
Gender	.217
Study level	.290
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.373
Academic major	.928
Perceived English language ability	.101
Perceived understanding of American culture	.123
Involvement with campus organizations	.135
Interaction with Americans in the classroom	.719

The number of friendships in the spring semester with international students not from China did not correlate with statistical significance with gender, study level, academic major, perceived English language ability, or perceived understanding of American culture (see Table 11). Enrollment in remedial English courses was no longer found to be a statistically relevant correlation in the spring semester. Age, however, was once again found to correlate with statistical significance, with students aged 21-23 the most likely to report more international student friends.

**Table 11**

**Two-way table chi square tests for spring friendships with other international students**

Factor compared	<i>p</i> -value
Age	.042*
Gender	.632
Study level	.386
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.265
Academic major	.773
Perceived English language ability	.608
Perceived understanding of American culture	.427
Involvement with campus organizations	.682

\* $p < .05$

Near the end of the spring semester, participants were asked to rank their agreement on a 1 to 4 scale (1= strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree) to the statement, “I have a strong friendship with at least one Chinese student at KU.” Results were overall positive ( $M = 3.46$ ,  $SD = .66$ ). When asked to rank agreement on the same scale to the statement, “I have a strong friendship with at least one American student at KU,” results were less positive with high variation ( $M = 2.6$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ). Participants were also asked to rank on the same scale their agreement to the statement, “I wish I had more Chinese friends at KU” ( $M = 2.9$ ,  $SD = .82$ ) and the statement “I wish I had more American friends at KU” ( $M = 3.43$ ,  $SD = .66$ ).

### *Qualitative Analysis*

Despite relatively low numbers of friendships with Americans, interview participants noted a strong interest in making American friends, as well as an acknowledgement of the benefits of making friendships with the host population:

“I think for Chinese students maybe they are good at studying math or something like this, but I think American students are experts in other areas, such as creating and communicating and giving speeches. Their abilities in these areas are much better than ours, so we can learn a lot. We can feel and learn a lot of new information from them. We can experience something new from making friends with American students.” (Participant 1)

“If you have American friends, you can realize the American culture. A lot of things are very different between China and the United States, so if I had more Americans I could get involved in American life faster and better.” (Participant 2)

In particular, participants noted the benefit of improving their English and learning more about American culture by having more American friends:

“I think it [having American friends] can help you improve your English skills and you can know about people who live in another country, to see what they think about China and what they think about Chinese people. You can know your own life better and make comparisons with their lives.” (Participant 8)

“There are some parts of language that you can only learn from native speakers, like how to use slang or the way people really talk in real life. I think I am good at reading and knowing English from a textbook, but having American friends could help me be more natural sounding.” (Participant 13)

Despite these benefits, participants discussed difficulties in making friendships with American students. Many of those interviewed blamed this on troubles connecting with classmates:

“In China you make friends not just from outside of school but a lot from your classmates. You just meet them and hang out after class. That’s normal in China but here you don’t really make friends with everyone in the class. You might know them but you don’t do things after class. I think Chinese students are open to making friends in class, but my experience is that even though my classmates are mostly American students, I make friends with them as study buddies, maybe to study for tests or something like that, but it’s not like hanging out besides studying.” (Participant 3)

“It’s easy to make friends with classmates in China. In the Chinese education system, a lot of the classes have fixed classmates. We go to school at the same time and have the

same class schedule every day. Because you spend four years together with the same schedule, so most of your best friends are from class. But here it is not easy to make friends in class. There are hardly breaks between classes so you get there a few minutes before and you can maybe say hi or goodbye, but there's no time for you to make that next step." (Participant 7)

"In China, we have the same class for the whole four years with the same students. The schedule is settled, but here when you pick individual classes you have all different people. Because it is designed this way, we have less of an advantage to make friends. By the end of the semester, maybe I've had a few conversations with one person, but when the semester is over it's too awkward to contact them again." (Participant 8)

In China, most high schools and universities adopt a cadre-based system where the same classmates are in the same courses throughout the span of the program. In this setting, the educational experience and pressure is similar, inviting a more collective experience. This factor argues for a more institutional influence, rather than a strictly cultural explanation for the lack of integration for Chinese international students.

### **Perceived English Language Ability**

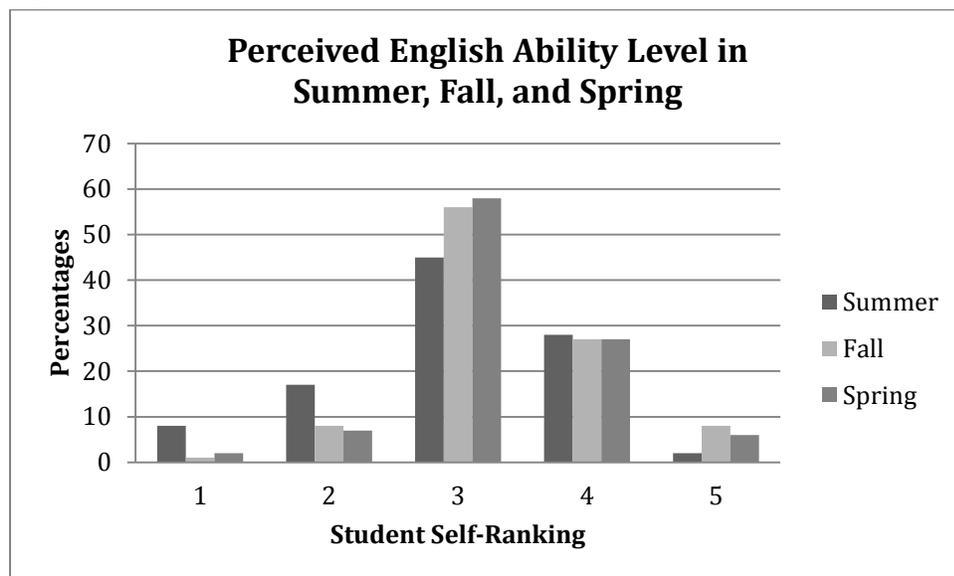
#### *Quantitative Analysis*

Participants were asked at the start of the fall semester to rank on a 1 to 5 scale (1 being lowest, 5 being highest) their perceived English language ability. To this, participants reported relatively medium levels with variation ( $M = 3.04$ ,  $SD = .913$ ). Students at the University of Kansas who take remedial English courses at the Applied English Center (AEC) are placed according to five levels, with those testing out of the AEC having demonstrated English proficiency greater than level 5. However, when compared in a two-way table using chi square tests, enrollment in remedial English courses did not correlate with statistical significance with participants' initial perceived language ability ( $p = .582$ ) nor did AEC course level placement ( $p = .265$ ).

Perceived English ability showed little change by the end of the fall semester ( $M = 3.37$ ,  $SD = .781$ ) or by the end of the spring semester ( $M = 3.29$ ,  $SD = .789$ ) (see Figure 5). In all three

questionnaires, perceived English language ability was not shown to correlate with statistical significance with age, gender, major, study level, or enrollment in remedial English courses (see Table 12).

**Figure 5**



*Source: author survey*

As outlined previously, perceived English language ability was not shown to significantly correlate in the fall or spring semester with involvement in campus organizations, the number of friendships made with Chinese students, the number of friendships made with American students, or the number of friendships made with other international students (see Table 12). Perceived English language ability did, however, correlate with statistical significance with accommodation choices; participants ranking their perceived English language ability low were more likely to live in an on-campus residence hall ( $p = .039$ ). Perceived English language ability and perceived understanding of American culture also correlated with strong statistical significance ( $p = .000$ ); participants with a lower perceived English ability often also reported a lower perceived understanding of American culture. Participants with a lower perceived English

ability were also more likely to make contact with Chinese students at the university prior to arrival ( $p = .043$ ). Finally, perceived English language level was shown to have a nearly direct correlation with stated happiness with the decision to study in the United States ( $p = .000$ ), with students with a higher perceived English level more likely to report higher satisfaction with their decision to study abroad. Perceived English language ability, however, did not appear to influence participants' overall happiness with their choice in attending the University of Kansas ( $p = .196$ ).

*Table 12*

**Two-way table chi square tests for perceived English language ability**

Factor compared	August <i>p</i> -value	Fall <i>p</i> -value	Spring <i>p</i> -value
Age	.287	.967	.386
Gender	.112	.367	.199
Academic major	.667	.093	.124
Study level	.384	.467	.592
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.709	.278	.620
Remedial English course level placement	.265	----	----
Perceived understanding of American culture	.000***	.000***	.000***
Intended campus organization involvement	.026*	----	----
Involvement with campus organizations	----	.914	.215
Number of Chinese friends	----	.155	.360
Number of American friends	----	.447	.101
Number of international friends	----	.676	.608
Happiness with decision to study abroad	----	----	.000***
Happiness with decision to study at KU	----	----	.196

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

*Qualitative Analysis*

Participants frequently cited their English language ability as barriers to their social lives in the United States:

“If you can’t express your own opinions or say what you want to say, it’s really hard. I think some Chinese students are good at reading or writing but not good at speaking, so that stops them. Speaking really needs time to practice, it’s not something you can just learn. If you are not really good at speaking, it can be hard because some Americans

have patience and some Americans don't. It's important to keep trying, but sometimes you have difficulties when you can't say what you want to say." (Participant 3)

"Speaking speed is difficult when talking to Americans. Native speakers talk so quickly and I can't understand them. When I ask them to repeat, they will do it, though and they are almost always helpful. It's just easier when talking to Americans who know me and my English level, but if I talk to Americans I don't know, it's just difficult." (Participant 10)

"I think language is a big barrier, but mostly because it affects my confidence level. I don't feel confident enough to talk to some native speakers, even though I think my English is relatively good. I'm just afraid to make mistakes or look stupid or seem like I don't have anything good to say." (Participant 14)

In particular, participants noted difficulties when communicating with a group of native English speakers, in comparison to communicating with them in a one-on-one setting:

"Say, if I talk to you one-to-one, that is much easier because perhaps you know I'm a foreigner and you will talk differently than the way you will talk to Americans. If I sit with a lot of American students, their conversation will be pretty difficult for me to understand and it is much faster. I get left behind and the people don't really notice." (Participant 9)

"When I communicate one-on-one, the person can be more focused on my speed and the way that I am thinking, you can feel what I am talking about. But when there are two or more American students, their reaction is faster than me and I can't keep up." (Participant 4)

"I think when there are groups of Americans, they start to debate different things and one person says something that I don't understand, and then another person responds with another thing I don't understand and it ends up that the whole thing just confuses me." (Participant 8)

"I don't like to be in groups. Americans act differently around each other than they do if they just talk to me. They seem to forget that English is not my first language when we're around other Americans and they are not as accommodating to my struggles. I know it isn't their fault because they are just talking like normal, but my English is not good enough for normal." (Participant 15)

Participants also pointed to a lack of knowledge in specialized vocabulary, making meaningful communications more difficult for them:

"I think most of the difficulties are not about the actual grammar or use of language. It's like, yes the English is a challenge, but it is not the most challenging part. It isn't the words but what the words mean. Like, English has words that all mean the same thing

but are maybe slightly different. I find I can communicate the words but somehow the meanings get mixed up.” (Participant 8)

“Everyday life vocabulary is easy, but when it comes to topics outside of economics, which is my major, it will be difficult for me to understand. I just don’t know enough vocabulary to have enough to say.” (Participant 9)

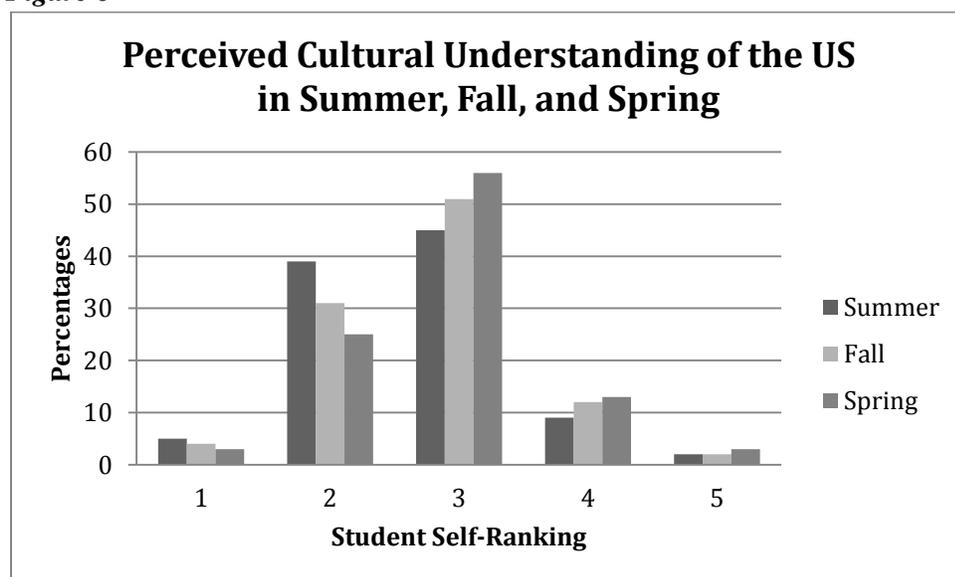
“I think if it’s just a simple conversation or some academic questions with the professor, I think my English is okay. If it’s something I’m not really very familiar with, I get confused really easily.” (Participant 2)

## Perceived Understanding of American Culture

### *Quantitative Analysis*

Participants were asked in all three questionnaires to rank their perceived understanding of American culture on a 1 to 5 scale (1 being low and 5 being high). At the start of the academic year, participants noted relatively medium levels of perceived cultural understanding with variance ( $M = 2.59, SD = .826$ ). These numbers showed little change by the end of the fall semester ( $M = 2.79, SD = .811$ ) or by the end of the spring semester ( $M = 2.94, SD = .809$ ) (see Figure 6). In all three questionnaires, perceived understanding of American culture was not shown to correlate with statistical significance with age, gender, major, study level, or enrollment in remedial English courses (see Table 13).

**Figure 6**



Source: author survey

Participants who had previously visited the United States generally noted a higher perceived understanding of American culture upon first arrival to the university. However, this was no longer a statistically significant correlation by the end of the fall semester or at the end of the spring semester. Participants who stated they frequently watched American movies or television were also more likely to rank their perceived understanding of American culture more highly at the start of the year. However, this was also no longer a statistically significant correlation at the end of the fall semester or at the end of the spring semester.

*Table 13*

**Two-way table chi square tests for perceived cultural understanding of the United States**

Factor compared	August <i>p</i> -value	Fall <i>p</i> -value	Spring <i>p</i> -value
Age	.066	.403	.785
Gender	.184	.862	.860
Academic major	.959	.740	.474
Study level	.711	.951	.751
Enrollment in remedial English courses	.298	.992	.592
Perceived English language ability	.000***	.000***	.000***
Intended campus organization involvement	.041*	----	----
Involvement with campus organizations	----	.738	.331
Number of Chinese friends	----	.982	.283
Number of American friends	----	.214	.123
Number of international friends	----	.287	.427
Happiness with decision to study abroad	----	----	.620
Happiness with decision to study at KU	----	----	.758
Previous visit to the United States	.000***	.215	.560
Frequently watch American movies	.049*	.596	.317

\**p* < .05, \*\*\**p* < .001

As outlined previously, perceived understanding of American culture was not demonstrated to correlate with statistical significance in the fall or spring semester with involvement in campus organizations, the number of friendships made with Chinese students, the number of friendships made with American students, or the number of friendships made with other international students. Perceived understanding of American culture also did not correlate

with statistical significance with participant satisfaction with studying in the United States or participant satisfaction with studying at the University of Kansas.

### *Qualitative Analysis*

Although participants frequently cited difficulties with English when communicating with American students, the more common complaint was about the lack of shared cultural background. Participants expressed concerns with finding common ground upon which to build friendships:

“I think the difference is mainly in what we choose to spend our time on and the balance between social and study. Like if I want to be closer to Americans, I should chose some current events like the Super Bowl and do some research about it and then I start the communications with that so they will talk a little. It feels like this is better than just talking about studies. But this is also more work and requires more preparation, which can be a little exhausting.” (Participant 1)

“The cultural differences have a lot to do with what you do after class when you aren’t studying. Like in China, people watch popular shows on TV and everyone talks about it online and in their daily lives. But here if you are not watching American shows or if you don’t attend to the social life here, it’s hard to talk about it and you don’t have anything in common with Americans.” (Participant 3)

“I find that Americans and Chinese people are interested in quite different things. Like, Americans students will sit together and watch football, but we almost never play football. I was never interested in that. Music is another big problem, it is totally different from China. It’s really hard for me to say any opinions or thoughts about American music or things like that because I know little about that.” (Participant 9)

“Even if you speak good English, you get here and people are talking about daily life or some TV shows or history stuff and I can’t understand it. It’s a lot about vocabulary and the cultural side. You don’t have that kind of experience so you have no idea what people are talking about.” (Participant 7)

A general lack of understanding of American humor was also a common theme:

“I can’t understand their jokes. They laugh and are very happy, but I’m just like ‘What’s the point?’ Part of the reason is because I can’t catch the pace of their words. The other part of the reason is the different cultural background, like say they will joke about their high school life and I know nothing about that.” (Participant 9)

“What Americans like to talk about and their laugh points are different from Chinese cultural things and what we want to talk about and what are our laughing points. The sense of humor is just different.” (Participant 3)

“When we [American students and I] start to communicate, the information background is different. Sometimes if there is a common laugh point, we can laugh together, but many American students, I feel like we have different laugh points, so when we communicate, I feel like it’s hard to catch them.” (Participant 1)

“I just don’t get American humor and Americans never find my jokes very funny either. Something about the humor doesn’t translate.” (Participant 15)

However, most participants referenced an overall vague feeling of “cultural difference” that they felt unable to properly explain or pinpoint:

“Last week I took a trip with my classmates. I found that they were all very agreeable and nice, but I always find there is a little bit of cultural gap. I don’t know what it is but it’s just different.” (Participant 4)

“The background is different and our knowledge is different. We have different understandings for the same things. We just see the world in different ways.” (Participant 6)

“I feel like Americans and Chinese are all the same people with the same goals in life, we just have different ways of achieving those goals and sometimes they don’t make sense to one another.” (Participant 8)

“The American way of life is just different. I don’t know why and I wish I could understand it better. Maybe it’s our history or our philosophies. There is just some kind of barrier there that gets in the way of being good friends.” (Participant 13)

## **Overall Contentment and Sense of Belonging**

### *Quantitative Analysis*

When asked near the end of the spring semester to rate their overall happiness with their decision to study in the United States on a 1 to 5 scale (1 being lowest, 5 being highest), on average participants reported moderately high satisfaction ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD = .53$ ). They also demonstrated moderately high satisfaction with variance with their decision to study at the University of Kansas ( $M = 3.78$ ,  $SD = .75$ ). Participants were also asked, “Do you feel that you belong and are a part of the University of Kansas,” to which 89% ( $n = 65$ ) of participants

reported yes. Common string variables included a connection to the university mascot, friendliness of faculty and staff, and pride in their studies. Responses to this question did not correlate with statistical significance with participation in campus organizations ( $p = .737$ ). No correlation was found between the number of friendships with Americans and the stated sense of belonging to the institution.

Participants were also asked to rank on a 1 to 4 scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree) their agreement to a number of statements regarding their interactions with American students and faculty on campus. To the statement, "I feel accepted by KU students," participants reported an overall agreement ( $M = 3.14, SD = .60$ ). Participants also reported disagreements with some variance to the statements, "I feel out of place at KU," ( $M = 1.79, SD = .71$ ) and "I feel confused about how to fit in at KU," ( $M = 1.95, SD = .76$ ). To the statement, "I find Americans open and inviting towards me," participants stated general agreement ( $M = 3.2, SD = .59$ ). Participants also stated overall disagreements to the statements, "I often feel discriminated against by faculty and staff at KU" ( $M = 1.69, SD = .59$ ), "I often feel discriminated against by American students" ( $M = 1.75, SD = .59$ ), and "I feel I am at a disadvantage at KU because I am Chinese" ( $M = 1.85, SD = .82$ ).

### *Qualitative Analysis*

Interview participants noted overall satisfaction with their university experience so far.

Some participants stated:

"I'm definitely glad I'm here. I've had some really good experiences and I'm learning a lot about myself. Being here at KU has helped me with that." (Participant 2)

"Even if I get frustrated sometimes, coming here was my best decision. I know when I go home it will be worth it. Studying in the United States was a good decision." (Participant 15)

They also noted a sense of belonging to their institution:

“When I am on campus, I see everyone here is wearing Jayhawk [the school mascot] things and I have to think, ‘Wow, this is my school and this is my life.’ I take a lot of pride in being here and being a part of this school.” (Participant 9)

“I am definitely a Jayhawk. Everyone who goes to school here gets to be a part of something like that. KU is an important part of my life now.” (Participant 12)

“Everyone here is so kind to me, I can’t help but feel included. My professors constantly try to help me succeed and the staff is kind too. The students here will smile and say things like, ‘Hi, how are you?’ even when you have never met. I feel happy here because of that.” (Participant 6)

Additionally, participants discussed a sense of pride in their studies:

“I get a lot of great opportunities here. I get to learn from good professors and KU has lots of opportunities to network and practice new skills. I work really hard here and I get a lot in return, which is a nice feeling.” (Participant 8)

“I spent a lot of effort to come here and I spend a lot of effort to do well here. I feel like I will be able to leave KU with lots of new skills and that I can contribute to academic things here to make them better. I do research here and I feel happy to add to my field.” (Participant 11)

## **Conclusion**

This chapter demonstrated and analyzed the data gathered from the three questionnaires and fifteen in-depth interviews conducted in this study. Next, Chapter 5 will discuss these findings as they relate to the research questions and hypotheses. Chapter 6 will discuss the study limitations, suggestions for further research, and policy recommendations based on study findings.

## Chapter V: Discussion

This chapter will discuss the study's findings outlined in Chapter 4 as they apply to the research questions and hypotheses. This chapter is divided into three sections that each correlate with one of the research questions.

### Research Question 1

*What are the factors that encourage Chinese international students to participate in campus organizations at American universities?* The answer is that very few factors seem to encourage Chinese student involvement.

Participants in this study demonstrated relatively low levels of involvement with campus organizations (20% in the fall semester and 16% in the spring semester). For Hypothesis 1, I found that perceived English language ability did not correlate with Chinese international student involvement in campus organizations at American universities. For Hypothesis 2, I also found that perceived cultural understanding of the United States also did not correlate with Chinese student involvement in campus organizations at American universities. For this reason, both hypotheses were shown to be incorrect.

Other factors found to not correlate with statistical significance with campus involvement in the fall and spring semester include gender, study level, academic major, enrollment in remedial English courses, and housing accommodations. This overall lack of cultural or demographic factors that correlate with involvement with campus organizations suggests that institutional factors are influencing Chinese student campus involvement.

Participants age 23 and younger, however, were found to be more likely to participate in campus organizations during their first semester of study. Previous involvement in organizations in high school was also initially found to positively correlate with involvements at the university

level. However, neither age nor high school involvement were a factor in university-level involvement during the second semester of study. This indicates that although younger participants and participants with previous high school involvement are more encouraged to initially be involved in campus organizations, neither are factors in the longevity of their involvement.

Despite low levels of involvement, a much higher percentage of participants stated at the start of the academic year that they were considering involvement with a campus organization, with 28% ( $n = 21$ ) indicating “yes” and 50% ( $n = 37$ ) indicating “maybe”. However, there was not a statistically significant correlation between anticipated involvement and actual involvement. This suggests that other factors, perhaps at the institutional level, are influencing Chinese student involvement shortly after their arrival to the university. However, this study did not find any statistically significant correlations that might explain this post-arrival influence.

One such institutional factor that influences Chinese student involvement is the demands of academic coursework. Interview participants consistently pointed to academic pressures, which both discouraged them from initially participating in organizations and influenced declining engagement with the programs throughout the course of the academic year. Participants also showed an overall higher emphasis on academic learning, while simultaneously viewing extracurricular activities as a secondary concern. These high academic demands, coupled with the lack of student cohort, are institutional factors that discourage Chinese students from participating in organizations and forming friendships with the host population.

Interview participants also noted a general confusion about how to find campus social resources and student organizations. When asked about what services or organizations the university could provide to encourage their involvement on campus, participants often described

resources that already exist. This demonstrates that the university should make better efforts to reach out to Chinese international students. It also shows that Chinese students themselves are unlikely to search for campus resources. This is supported by the fact that very low percentages of study participants stated they had visited the International Student Services (ISS) website (12%,  $n = 9$ ), used the ISS pre-arrival materials (9%,  $n = 7$ ), or visited websites about the town of Lawrence (11%,  $n = 8$ ) prior to their arrival to campus. Just as students were not utilizing web resources for pre-arrival concerns, they may also be not utilizing web resources to enhance their social needs after arrival. This overall lack of knowledge about campus social resources could be discouraging some Chinese international students from participating in campus organizations and activities.

Despite a lack of involvement with student organizations, participants did demonstrate some involvements with the campus and community outside of formal organizations. Most of these involvements were one-time events with a relatively short time commitment, such as attending sports games or academic presentations. These involvements suggest that Chinese students *are* interested in social resources on campus and may be particularly encouraged by campus involvements that are relatively informal and require a small commitment. Participants in this study also demonstrated an understanding of the value of engaging with their campus. However, this did not lead to actual involvement in organizations, suggesting that Chinese students value other forms of involvement.

This study found relatively few factors that explain why some Chinese international students are more motivated to participate in organizations than others. Qualitative analysis demonstrates that perhaps personality traits play a role in the decision to become involved, which is also supported by the literature (Ward, 1996, 1999). Interview participants noted:

“I had a plan before I came here. Before I arrived, I knew that most Chinese students hang out with only other Chinese students and lived with them and just spoke Chinese every day, so it’s no difference whether they live here or live back in China. I didn’t want to be one of them. Before I came here, I wanted to be totally involved in American life. I wanted to have an American roommate and I wanted to join student organizations on campus. I wanted my friend circle to be full of Americans and native speakers.” (Participant 7)

“I think I am more outgoing than other Chinese students. I know I will make mistakes with my English and I’m okay with that. I’m going to put myself out there and try while I’m here. That’s just the kind of person I am.” (Participant 12)

“Chinese people are not bold, but I am bold. When I came here, I thought ‘Who cares if I look dumb?’ I just want to have a good experience so I try everything. I think that’s why I have a lot of American friends, because I don’t want to just have Chinese friends and I want to make the most of this experience.” (Participant 13)

More research on Chinese student personality traits and coping mechanisms, perhaps by using personality tests such as the Big Five, is recommended to explore whether these factors correlate with Chinese student involvement on campus.

## **Research Question 2**

*What are the factors that encourage Chinese international students to form friendships with American students at American universities?* While most factors in this study had little influence, classroom integration has some correlation to the number of friendships made with American students.

For Hypothesis 1, I found that perceived English language ability did not correlate with the number of friendships with American students that Chinese international students make at American universities. For Hypothesis 2, I found that perceived cultural understanding of the United States also did not correlate with the number of friendships with American students that Chinese international students make at American universities. For this reason, both hypotheses were shown to be false.

Because few studies have looked at Chinese international student friendship patterns,

exploratory information on this topic was initially sought by this study. Analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data both demonstrated that participants tend to have more friendships with fellow Chinese students than with American students or other international students. This finding is in line with the current literature on international student co-national friendships (Rajapaksa & Dundes, 2002). Despite this, only 8% of participants stated they had no American friends and 11% of participants stated they had no friends from other countries at the end of the spring semester. This shows that Chinese international students *are* indeed making friendships outside of their in-group, even if the numbers and closeness of these friendships are not equal in number to that of friendships with fellow Chinese students.

Looking specifically at friendships with fellow Chinese international students, the majority of participants (36%,  $n = 26$ ) stated they had between 10 and 14 Chinese friends at the end of the spring semester. Friendships with Chinese students did not correlate with statistical significance with most factors tested in this study for both the fall and the spring semester, including gender, study level, enrollment in remedial English courses, academic major, perceived English language ability, perceived understanding of American culture, or interaction with Chinese students in the classroom. Although younger participants were more likely to initially form friendships with fellow Chinese students in the fall semester, this was no longer a statistically significant correlation in the spring semester. One explanation for this could be a growth in maturity levels and confidence, leading younger students to branch out of their comfort zones. Altogether, the overall lack of demographic factors that correlate with the number of friendships made with Chinese students demonstrates that perhaps a more overarching cultural connection is driving the larger number of friendships between Chinese students and their co-national peers. It also lends support to the notion of group, collective experience for

these students.

Qualitative analysis supports this idea. Participants often noted the relative ease of making Chinese friends over making American friends. One participant noted:

“I just didn’t have to try to make Chinese friends. We all came here and are experiencing the same things. I don’t have to explain my culture or my background to them because they already know. There’s a lot more effort needed for making American friends. They don’t know about China or about who I am or about my culture. I like being friends with Americans but it just takes more work. It’s easier when friendships are made with people from my own culture.” (Participant 13)

This finding is also in line with the literature, which points to the lack of cultural differences as a factor for strong co-national friendships for sojourners (Nicholson, 2001; Ying, 2002).

Although participation with campus organizations did not correlate with statistical significance with the number of Chinese friends in the fall semester, there was a negative correlation with statistical significance in the spring semester. In this study, participants with fewer campus involvements in the spring semester stated a higher number of friendships with Chinese students. One explanation for this is that a lack of campus involvement by the second semester of study strengthens the ties to the co-national community for Chinese international students. Another explanation could be that strong ties to the co-national community discourage campus involvement by the second semester. Either way, this data supports the importance of the first semester in encouraging Chinese student involvement and integration.

Looking specifically at friendships with the host population, the majority of participants (36%,  $n = 26$ ) stated they had between 1 and 4 American friends by the end of the spring semester. This is significantly fewer than the average reported number of Chinese friends. The number friendships made with American students were not influenced in the fall or spring semester by gender, age, study level, enrollment in remedial English courses, or academic major. Neither perceived English language ability nor perceived understanding of American culture

correlated with statistical significance with the number of friendships made with American students.

However, interaction with Americans in the classroom during the first semester of study did positively correlate with strong statistical significance with higher numbers of American friends. This correlation was no longer statistically significant in the second semester of study, however. This highlights that the classroom is an important space, particularly in the first semester, for Chinese students to form friendships with the host population. Coupled with the relatively stable number of friendships with Americans between the fall and spring semester, it also highlights the importance of Chinese students being able to interact in the classroom with Americans during the first semester. These data further suggest that institutional factors play a role in Chinese student friendships with American students.

This institutional influence was noted by many of the interview participants. A strong theme in interviews was the idea that communication with classmates is more accessible in China than it is in the United States. This difference was noted by undergraduate students speaking of their high school experience and by graduate students speaking of their university experience at Chinese universities. Participants often noted that in a Chinese high school or university, courses are taken with the same group of people throughout the entire program, which made friendships with classmates more natural. Students in China also typically stay in the same classroom while the teachers change rooms, rather than the system in the United States where students move between classrooms for each course. At their American university, participants noted difficulties in connecting with classmates who they might see for only for a short timespan a few days a week. One participant noted:

“I’m not sure I like the way things are set up here. I guess I thought things would be like in China, where I took my classes with the same people. We really got to know each

other then and it felt kind of like a family by the end. We knew each other's strengths and weaknesses and knew about each other's lives and families. Here, I have different classmates in every single class and no one talks to each other and no one even knows each other's names. It just feels different and I wasn't really prepared for that." (Participant 15)

These institutional differences at American universities proved difficult for many of the participants and contributed to the lack of Chinese student integration.

In addition to friendships with Chinese and American students, participants also demonstrated friendships with international students from countries other than China. These numbers were relatively similar to friendship numbers with Americans; the majority of participants (32%,  $n = 23$ ) stated they had between 1 and 4 international student friends. Numbers of international student friends did not correlate with statistical significance with gender, study level, academic major, perceived English language ability, or perceived understanding of American culture. Participants enrolled in remedial English courses during the first semester did demonstrate higher numbers of international student friends. This was no longer a statistically significant factor in the spring semester, however, which again highlights the importance of the first semester in friendship building. It also supports that the classroom is an important space for Chinese students to build friendships.

Although international students are, like American students, often from vastly different cultures than Chinese students, interview participants noted a relative ease of making close friendships with fellow English Language Learners who were going through similar adjustment experiences. Participants noted:

"I get along better with my international friends than with American students. I think it is because we are both using the second language so it is easier to understand what we are talking about. Also, the experience of both being in the United States makes us more related. I feel like we understand what each other is going through." (Participant 4)

"My first friendships here were with other international students because that's who I was with at orientation. But I have just found that it is easier to be with international students

in general because I don't feel as judged or as worried that I will mess up or say something stupid. We all are in this together." (Participant 13)

"I have a lot of international students in my AEC [Applied English Center] classes. We became friends because we see each other every day in class and we can talk about our struggles and what we miss from home. I wish that I had more American friends, but I feel good about international friends because I have learned so much about the world from them." (Participant 14)

Data from this study shows that friendships with non-Chinese international students provide worthwhile and important experiences during their time abroad. Many participants noted gaining the same benefits from their international student friends as they did from their American friends, such as learning about another culture and practicing their English. This highlights that perhaps cross-cultural friendships with international students not from China may substitute for the benefits of host-culture friendships. More research about this phenomenon is suggested.

#### ***Other Factors Related to Perceived English Language Ability***

As previously shown, perceived English language ability was not found to correlate with statistical significance in the fall or spring semester with involvement in campus organizations or the number of friendships made with American students. Perceived English language ability was also not shown to correlate with friendships made with other Chinese students or with international students not from China. For these reasons, perceived English language ability does not appear to be a direct factor in Chinese student involvement and friendship network patterns.

However, that is not to say that English language ability does not *affect* the social experiences of Chinese students at American universities, even if it is not a statistically significant correlation. Perceived English ability may not determine whether or not Chinese students are involved on campus or make American friends, but it does influence the *types* of engagements Chinese students have with each. The effects of English language on the campus

experience are reiterated by qualitative analysis. In particular, participants spoke of relative disappointment with their communications with Americans due to English language difficulties.

One participant noted:

“The Americans on my floor [in the residence halls] will sit in the lobby and chat and play games, or something like that. I seldom go there because I went there once or twice and just sat there and struggled to understand what they were talking about....After that, I seldom went there anymore.” (Participant 9)

Interview participants also noted a lack of confidence in their communication skills or a lack of specialized vocabulary necessary for conversations about unknown topics. They explained that these factors made for more superficial friendships with Americans. One participant noted:

“I like Americans and I have American friends, but I don’t think the friendships with them are very good. Like, if I have troubles in my life and I need some advice, I wouldn’t go to my American friends, mostly because I wouldn’t know how to talk about my troubles in English without it being stressful. I think they are fun to do things with, like maybe go to movies or eat some meals, but we don’t talk about things that are too important. I don’t really think we will stay friends after I graduate and leave here.” (Participant 2)

These sentiments are in line with the literature on international student friendships with the host population, which highlights the prevalence of international students forming superficial friendships with the host population (Stewart & Bennett, 2005; Gareis, 2012). These superficial friendships with Americans may be encouraging more group collective connections within the Chinese international student cohort in order to provide for the emotional and psychological needs of these students in their unfamiliar setting.

Difficulty communicating in English is supported by the relatively stable levels of perceived English language ability throughout the course of this study. Although participants reported slightly higher levels of perceived English ability after the fall semester and after the spring semester, reported perceived English levels did not show the kind of increase that one might expect (see Figure 5 in Chapter 4). Even after a full academic year of living in the United

States, taking coursework in English, and, in the case of 45% of participants, taking remedial English courses, perceived English language ability showed little improvement. This is summarized nicely by one interview participant:

“I came to study in the United States because it is an English-speaking country and I want to be fluent in English. I knew when I came that my preparation of English in China was not enough. I thought coming here that I would get better and that I would see improvements quickly, but I think that maybe my English is still not that good. I even sometimes think my English is worse than I thought it was. I realize now how much I don’t know and how much I still need to learn. I don’t think one year here is enough to fix the problems I have with my English.” (Participant 11)

This lack of perceived improvement suggests that Chinese international students have low confidence in their communication skills, which may influence involvement and social networks patterns at American campuses. It also demonstrates that students may overestimate their English language ability upon arrival and experience stress due to struggles with communication in ways they had not previously considered.

Perceived English ability also did not correlate with statistical significance with actual participation in campus organizations. However, perceived English language ability was found to correlate with statistical significance with initial interest in participating in organizations at the start of the fall semester. Data from this study showed that participants with a higher perceived English language ability were more likely to initially consider being involved with campus organizations (stating “yes” or “maybe” to the question of whether they intended to join an organization during the academic year). However, interest in joining organizations at the start of the semester and actual involvement in organizations during the fall and spring semesters were not found to correlate with statistical significance. One explanation for this could be that institutional factors, such as the demands of academic coursework and adjustment to the new academic culture, are influencing student involvement after their arrival, rather than perceived English language ability.

### *Other Factors Related to Perceived Cultural Understanding*

As previously shown, perceived understanding of American culture was not found to correlate with statistical significance with participant involvement in campus organizations or the number of friendships made with American students. Perceived understanding of American culture was also not shown to influence friendships made with other Chinese students or with international students not from China. For these reasons, perceived understanding of American culture does not appear to be a direct factor in Chinese student involvement and friendship network patterns.

However, as with perceived English language ability, that is not to say that perceived understanding of American culture does not have an *effect* on Chinese student involvement and friendship networks, even if it is not a statistically significant correlation. Perceived cultural understanding may not determine whether or not Chinese students are involved on campus or make American friends, but it does influence the *types* of engagements they have with each.

Qualitative analysis supports this indirect connection. The effects of cultural understanding were frequently cited by interview participants and are supported by the literature (Nicholson, 2001; Ying, 2002; Rajapaksa & Dundes, 2002). Participants frequently noted difficulties communicating with American students due to a lack of shared cultural background.

For instance, one participant noted:

“When I talk to Americans, we tend to talk about things like our classes or the weather or our weekend plans, things like that. It tends to be, how do I say, more about the present. Our backgrounds are so different that it is hard to talk about things other than what is going on right now. For instance, an American friend of mine was talking about her prom in high school the other day. I didn’t have a prom and we don’t have things like that in China, so I didn’t really know what to say besides ‘oh cool’ and things like that. It wasn’t really a conversation.” (Participant 10)

Participants also noted difficulties understanding American humor and stated that Americans, likewise, did not understand Chinese humor. Another common theme was the lack of shared

popular culture background; participants noted difficulties contributing to conversations about American movies, music, television, or popular events like the Super Bowl. These difficulties contribute to the quality and type of friendships that Chinese students are making with American students, even if not directly influencing the number of friendships they make with Americans. It may also be lending to this perceived superficiality of friendships with Americans.

Difficulty grasping American culture is supported by the relatively small changes in perceived understanding of American culture during their first year of study in the United States. Participants did demonstrate some minimal, positive changes in perceived understanding of American culture after the fall and spring semester (See Figure 6 in Chapter 4). However, these changes are small compared to what one might expect or assume. Even after a full academic year of living in the United States, perceived understanding of American culture remains relatively unchanged. This suggests that participants are lacking a cultural understanding about their surroundings in the United States.

Participants who had previously visited the United States or stated they often watched American movies were more likely to state a higher perceived cultural understanding of the United States at the beginning of the academic year. However, neither correlated with statistical significance at the end of the fall semester or at the end of the spring semester. Interview participants noted this disconnect between their initial perception of the United States and the reality. One participant explained:

“In China I watched a lot of American movies and thought American college life seemed so crazy. When I came here, I expected parties everywhere and that things would be so fun. My life is not like that at all though. They don’t show people in movies sitting and studying for hours.” (Participant 9)

“I watched a lot of American movies before I came here and I had a lot of ideas of what America might be like, but I think I was mostly wrong about that. I thought life here would be all fun and parties, but I spend most of my time in the library instead. I think my perception was a little wrong.” (Participant 2)

This demonstrates that perhaps some Chinese students are arriving with idealized or unrealistic expectations of American culture, leading to higher levels of culture shock.

Interview participants also noted surprise in the amount of adjustment difficulties that they encountered, which is in line with the literature (Yingyi et al, 1995). Participants noted:

“I thought I had enough preparation before I came because I personally think my pronunciation is much better than other Chinese student around me. But when I came here, but I found my English is efficient enough to be able to study, but sometime I can’t catch up with oral communication. I didn’t think that would be a problem for me.”  
(Participant 7)

“I didn’t put in a lot of effort when I first came here because I didn’t know I would need to. Things were more difficult than I expected.” (Participant 3)

“Things didn’t come as easy here as I thought they might and I found I needed to put a lot more effort in. I’ve learned a lot from my experience so far and a lot of that was the hard way. I’ve learned that if I want to live a full live here, I have to make it myself.”  
(Participant 4)

This trend suggests that Chinese students are not receiving enough preparatory information prior to the arrival or shortly after their arrival about the types of problems they may face in their new environment. It also points to a lack of understanding about the campus culture and the types of efforts required to make friendships with the host population.

### **Research Question 3**

*Does involvement in campus organizations influence Chinese international students’ sense of belonging to their institution at American universities?* I found that involvement in campus organizations does not correlate with Chinese international student sense of belonging to their institution at American universities. For this reason, the hypothesis was shown to be incorrect. Further, no correlation was shown between the number of stated American friends and stated sense of belonging to the institution.

The literature suggests that campus involvement strengthens the sense of belonging to the institution (Astin, 1984; Edwards & Waters, 1982; Napoli & Wortman, 1996; Tinto, 2012).

However, this is not the case with students in this study. Despite low levels of involvement, participants still noted an overall sense of belonging to their institution. They also demonstrated happiness with their decision to study abroad, happiness with their choice of institution, and feelings of acceptance at their institution. Disagreement was demonstrated to questions about feeling out of place, feeling discriminated against, or feeling unsure about how to fit in.

One criticism of this study's data supporting students' sense of belonging at their institution could be that participants felt uncomfortable speaking critically about their experience at the university, therefore biasing their responses. However, other factors make this notion unlikely. Students were not afraid to express honesty about what might be considered "unfavorable" actions in other portions of the study, such as lack of campus involvement or lack of friendships with Americans. Because of these candid answers to other questionnaire answers, it can be assumed that the data involving participant sense of belonging can be trusted to be authentic.

Student responses to why they feel they belong to the institution are telling. When asked in the questionnaire to explain why they felt they were a part of the university, some of the string variables included:

"People here treat me friendly and I have a good life and good studies here."

"All of the students, staff, and professors are so kind to me. It makes me feel good."

"I study here and I live here and all of it makes me so happy."

"I can see the Jayhawk everywhere and I feel like I am a Jayhawk now too."

"I am a part of the university because I am contributing to make it a better place of academic study. It is becoming a part of me and reforming me."

While these responses are limited in scope, they do highlight the notion that the experience of being abroad may, in the larger context, lend to Chinese student satisfaction towards their

university experience and add to an overall sense of belonging to their institution. Interview participants noted:

“I worked so hard to be in the United States. When I came here, I thought ‘Wow! This my life now!’ I just couldn’t believe it. I couldn’t believe that I could have this kind of opportunity to learn and be in a different country.” (Participant 8)

“I know I won’t stay in the United States, but when I go home I’ll always think about my time here. I’ll always be a part of the KU family and I think anywhere I go, if I meet people who went to KU, we will have something in common and something to talk about.” (Participant 14)

In the absence of involvement, Chinese international students are finding alternative ways to build a sense of belonging at their institution. The current literature focuses on individual experiences to build this. However, another explanation might be that the group or collective experience is leading to an overall sense of belonging with the institution rather than previously assumed Western ideas of individual involvement. Although involvement has been shown to benefit the university experience, other important aspects to consider are the benefits that students gain from the overall experience of simply being abroad. By building strong co-national connections and experiencing the campus and community together through informal involvements, non-Western students may be able to strengthen their sense of belonging and overall content with their university experience in absence of formal involvements with organizations. This overall sense of satisfaction and belonging, despite low involvement, is at odds with the current literature and suggests flaws in currently assumed theories. Further, it demonstrates the need for researchers to reconsider whether Western notions of involvement can be translated to the experiences of non-Western students.

## **Conclusion**

This study aimed to describe the campus involvement and social network patterns of Chinese international students at American universities, as well as demonstrate the influences of

perceived English language ability and perceived cultural understanding of the United States on these patterns. Findings from this study conclude that Chinese international students have relatively low levels of involvement with campus organizations. Chinese international students also demonstrate higher numbers of Chinese friends in comparison to American friends or international student friends from other countries. Although perceived English language ability and perceived cultural understanding were not shown to directly correlate with involvement and social network patterns, both were demonstrated to affect the types of experiences that Chinese students have at American universities. This study also concludes that institutional factors are important in encouraging Chinese international students' campus involvement and communications with the host population. As there are still many significant gaps in the current research about the Chinese international student social experience outside of the classroom, more research on this topic is recommended in order to better support Chinese student integration to their new lives at American universities.

Despite low levels of involvement and few cross-cultural friendships, Chinese international students in this study still demonstrated an overall sense of belonging to their institution and satisfaction with their university experience in the United States. These findings challenge the current literature on student involvement and friendship networks. Current research on student involvement focuses on the Western notion of individual experience. However, results of this study suggest that more attention should be paid to the benefits of group and collective experience for international students, especially those from non-Western cultures. Chinese international students in this study demonstrated that a sense of belonging to the institution can be created in the absence of traditional student involvement with campus

organizations. This study, therefore, suggests that further consideration is needed about whether Western notions of involvement fully translate to the experiences of non-Western students.

## Chapter VI: Concluding Remarks

This chapter will outline the limitations of this study and give suggestions for further research. Policy considerations for Chinese student social integration at American universities are also recommended.

### Limitations of Study

The following limitations of this study are acknowledged:

- *Limited in scope:* This study was conducted with a relatively small number of participants at one university in the United States. To fully understand the involvement and friendship network patterns of Chinese international students, a wider range of participants at varying institutions would be ideal.
- *Relatively short timespan:* This study evaluates the involvement and social network patterns of Chinese international students during only their first year of study in the United States. A more comprehensive study would follow the same students throughout the course of their entire academic program. Keeping in mind the acculturation process, some answers in this study may be skewed due to acculturative stress or adjustment frustrations. The relatively short timespan of one academic year also does not demonstrate how student integration and social network patterns might change after their initial year in the United States.
- *Interview limitations:* More interview participants would have strengthened this study and allowed for more data in the analysis. By interviewing more study participants, overarching trends could have been better identified and could have ensured a lack of interferences from outside variables. The interviews were also conducted in English by someone who works for the university and may have been recognized by some of the

participants. Interviews in the native Chinese language would have been more ideal and allowed for more in-depth and accurate responses. Because some of the participants may have interacted with the interviewer previously and may have recognized her as an American employee of the university, some responses to interview questions may have been biased. Participants may have felt nervous about being too critical toward the university or their experience in the United States.

### **Suggestions for Further Study**

This study opens the doors for many other research areas worthy of exploration. They include:

- *Friendships between Chinese and other international students:* This study indicated that Chinese students have a significant number of friendships with international students from other countries. At present, the literature on this subject is weak. Further research is suggested on the role of cross-culture friendships with fellow international students and how they influence the integration process for Chinese students. More research is also needed to compare the roles and benefits of Chinese student friendships with Americans and friendships with other international students.
- *Cross-examination with other international student cohorts:* More country-specific research on international student cohorts is needed. Replications of this study with other large groups of international students could help identify how the international student experience is similar for students from different countries and how it differs.
- *Institutional effects on Chinese student involvement and friendship networks:* Data in this study suggests that institutional actions are affecting Chinese student involvement and friendship network patterns. The influence of institutional actions is also supported by the literature (Wolf-Wendel et al, 2009). In particular, challenges of navigating the

academic system and adapting to changes from the system in China were noted. More research is suggested on institutional interventions that provide measurable results for Chinese student involvement and friendships with the host population.

- *Student involvement for non-Western students:* Results of this study suggest that Western notions of campus involvement might not translate to the experiences of non-Western students. More research comparing involvement theories with international student campus experiences, particularly in comparison with their satisfaction and sense of belonging to the institution, is recommended.
- *Collective versus individual experience:* Current research on involvement and friendship networks for university students focuses on the Western notion of individual experience. However, this study suggests that the group or collective experience may provide important benefits for non-Western students. More study on the collective experience of international student cohorts is recommended.
- *Involvement for non-Western students:* This study suggests that currently assumed theories of university student involvement perhaps do not apply to students from non-Western cultures. More research about this phenomenon and a reconsideration of involvement theories are suggested.

### **Policy Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following policy considerations are recommended to help ease the social adjustment for Chinese international students, as well as encourage involvement and connections with host-national students:

- *Cultural education:* Chinese international students in this study showed relatively small changes in perceived cultural understanding over the course of the academic year. They

also demonstrated surprise at the number of difficulties they encountered in their new environment. Universities should provide Chinese students with opportunities to learn about American culture and tools to compare it with their own Chinese culture. Pre-orientation programming and materials would be helpful prior to their arrival to the United States. Orientation programming after arrival should also cover some basic information about cultural differences with additional programming throughout the first year of study.

- *Connections in the classroom:* Chinese international students in this study were more likely to make friendships with Americans when they had classroom interactions with them during the first semester. For this reason, universities should consider implementing cross-cultural courses for American and Chinese students with the aim of collaborative learning. Academic programs should also look more in-depth at the benefits of cadre-based course schedules. Departments should also consider providing opportunities for students of similar academic disciplines the chance to interact socially on a regular basis. This recommendation is in line with the literature (Rienties et al, 2013).
- *Finding campus resources:* Chinese international students in this study demonstrated confusion about how to access and learn about campus social resources. Interviewed students expressed interest in hypothetical programs that they did not realize already exist on campus. For this reason, social activity planners and organization leaders should look at new methods to reach out to Chinese international students. Some considerations might include better utilization of social media, coordination with Chinese student associations for outreach, or the creation of Chinese language translations of materials.

- *One-on-one interaction:* Interview participants in this study reported more difficulties with group interactions in English than one-on-one communications. This should be kept in mind when designing social programming for Chinese international students. Programs aimed at Chinese students should allow for one-on-one interaction with the host population. The host population participants should also be informed and educated on special considerations for interacting with English Language Learners, as well as given a basic explanation of major Chinese cultural influences.
- *Informal social activities:* Chinese international students in this study noted that academic pressures discouraged them from making long-term commitments to campus organizations. However, they did demonstrate interest in more informal interactions with the campus and community. Universities should consider organizing more informal, one-time events at times that do not coincide with important academic deadlines. This may encourage Chinese students to engage and interact with the university without the fear of committing large amounts of time.
- *Importance of group collective membership:* This study demonstrated that Chinese international students are able to build a sense of belonging to their institution in the absence of participation with campus organizations. Important factors for Chinese student sense of belonging included informal involvements with the campus and community and group, collective membership to their co-national cohort. However, most universities in the United States focus on building community and sense of belonging through Western-notions of individual involvement in campus organizations, even for students from cultures to which this does not translate. In the case of non-Western students, resources should be allocated to encourage the benefits gained from their group,

collective experiences and informal experiences abroad, rather than simply encouraging students to adopt Western notions of involvement.

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**Appendix A:**

## Descriptive Statistics Table

**Table 1**  
**Descriptive Statistics for Study Participants**

Variable	N	%	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std. Deviation
Gender						
<i>Male</i>	44	0.59				
<i>Female</i>	30	0.41				
Age			22.49	18	37	2.98
<i>18-20 years</i>	22	0.30				
<i>21-23 years</i>	29	0.39				
<i>24-27 years</i>	19	0.26				
<i>Older than 27</i>	4	0.05				
Study Level						
<i>Undergraduate Freshman</i>	22	0.30				
<i>Undergraduate Transfer</i>	11	0.15				
<i>Graduate Master's</i>	21	0.28				
<i>Graduate PhD</i>	20	0.27				
Remedial English Course Enrollment						
<i>Enrolled</i>	33	0.45				
<i>Not Enrolled</i>	42	0.55				
Housing Accommodations						
<i>On Campus</i>	46	0.62				
<i>Off Campus</i>	28	0.38				
Academic Major						
<i>Business &amp; Economics</i>	16	0.21				
<i>Engineering</i>	26	0.35				
<i>Natural Sciences &amp; Math</i>	12	0.16				
<i>Social Sciences</i>	10	0.14				
<i>Undecided</i>	10	0.14				

**Appendix B:**

Interview Participant Description Table

Table 2

**Descriptive Statistics for Interview Participants**

Variable	N	%	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std. Deviation
Gender						
<i>Male</i>	8	0.53				
<i>Female</i>	7	0.46				
Age			20.73	18	25	2.37
<i>18-20 years</i>	7	0.46				
<i>21-23 years</i>	6	0.40				
<i>24-27 years</i>	2	0.13				
<i>Older than 27</i>	0	0.00				
Study Level						
<i>Undergraduate Freshman</i>	5	0.32				
<i>Undergraduate Transfer</i>	2	0.13				
<i>Graduate Master's</i>	4	0.27				
<i>Graduate PhD</i>	4	0.27				
Remedial English Course Enrollment						
<i>Enrolled</i>	9	0.60				
<i>Not Enrolled</i>	6	0.40				
Housing Accommodations						
<i>On Campus</i>	9	0.60				
<i>Off Campus</i>	6	0.40				
Academic Major						
<i>Business &amp; Economics</i>	4	0.26				
<i>Engineering</i>	5	0.33				
<i>Natural Sciences &amp; Math</i>	1	0.07				
<i>Social Sciences</i>	3	0.20				
<i>Undecided</i>	2	0.13				

**Appendix C:**

IRB Informed Consent Form

## **Permission to Take Part in a Human Research Study**

**Title of research study:** Cultural Integration of Chinese International Students: University Experiences in the United States

**Investigator:** Jenna Mittelmeier

### **Why am I being invited to take part in a research study?**

We invite you to take part in a research study because you are a new Chinese international student in your first year of study at The University of Kansas.

### **What should I know about a research study?**

- Someone will explain this research study to you.
- Whether or not you take part is up to you.
- You can choose not to take part.
- You can agree to take part and later change your mind.
- Your decision will not be held against you.
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

### **Who can I talk to?**

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to the research team at [jenna.lm21@gmail.com](mailto:jenna.lm21@gmail.com) or (620) 228-2364.

This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (“IRB”). You may talk to them at (785) 864-7429 or [irb@ku.edu](mailto:irb@ku.edu) if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

### **Why is this research being done?**

The purpose of this study is to learn how Chinese international students are becoming involved on American college campuses. We are interested in determining factors that may lead to students not connecting to their local environment in the United States. These findings will be shared with campus offices and clubs to determine areas of need that can be addressed to make for an easier transition for current and future Chinese international students.

**How long will the research last?**

We expect that you will be in this research study during the 2013-2014 school year. You will be contacted three times to take a short, 15-minute survey: once at the beginning of the Fall 2013 semester, once at the end of the Fall 2013 semester, and once at the end of the Spring 2014 semester. Some participants may be contacted to take part in an in-person interview during the Fall 2013 or Spring 2014 semesters. These interviews are voluntary and would take approximately 30 minutes.

**How many people will be studied?**

We expect about 150 people here will be in this research study out of 150 people in the entire study nationally

**What happens if I say yes, I want to be in this research?**

**We will ask that you fill out a brief 15-minute survey today. We will then contact you at a later date at the email you provide on the survey to participate in further surveys.** You will be contacted at the end of the Fall 2013 semester and at the end of the Spring 2014 semesters. These surveys will be completed online and should take around 15 minutes each.

Some participants, based on their responses to the survey questions, may be contacted by email to participate in an in-person interview. These will be individually scheduled with the researcher at a time that fits your schedule. These interviews will take around 30 minutes. You can expect communication about such interviews at any time during the Fall 2013 or Spring 2014 semester.

Throughout the course of the study, you will be in contact with the primary researcher, Jenna Mittelmeier.

**What happens if I do not want to be in this research?**

You can leave the research at any time and it will not be held against you.

**What happens if I say yes, but I change my mind later?**

You can leave the research at any time it will not be held against you.

**Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me?**

We do not anticipate any risks in participating in this study.

**Will being in this study help me any way?**

We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from your taking part in this research. However, possible benefits include the possibility of improved programs at The University of Kansas to better suit the adjustment of Chinese international students.

**What happens to the information collected for the research?**

Efforts will be made to limit the use and disclosure of your personal information, including research study and medical records, to people who have a need to review this information. We

cannot promise complete secrecy. Organizations that may inspect and copy your information include the IRB and other representatives of this organization.

**What else do I need to know?**

If you agree to take part in this research study, you will be given a \$5 gift certificate to Panda Garden, a local Chinese restaurant, for your time and effort.

**Signature Block of Capable Adult**

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research

_____ Signature of subject	_____ Date
_____ Printed name of subject	
_____ Signature of person obtaining consent	_____ Date
_____ Printed name of person obtaining consent	

08/28/2013

IRB Approval Date

**Appendix D:**  
First Questionnaire

为了确认身份，请填写以下资料。本页资料会跟问卷答案分开存档。您的名字不会被记在调查结果上。问卷上有问题以便将来调查需要。

**For identifying purposes only, please provide the following information. These items will be stored separately from your survey answers. Your answers will remain anonymous in the study results. We will only use these questions to make communication with you for future surveys in this study.**

中文姓名

Chinese name: \_\_\_\_\_

拼音

Chinese name in pinyin: \_\_\_\_\_

英文名字 (如果你有一个)

English name (if you have one): \_\_\_\_\_

电子邮箱

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

请根据自己的实际背景情况回答下列问题：

**Please answer the following questions about your background and demographics:**

1. Date of birth:生日日期:
2. Gender 性别:
  - a. Male 男性
  - b. Female 女性
3. Do you plan to take Applied English Center coursework this Fall 2013 semester?你预备要在 2013 秋季上 AEC 的语言课程吗?
  4. If so, what level courses are you taking?  
假如回答是肯定的，那么哪一级别的课程是你需要的?
5. What is your current academic class ranking?你现在的学术状态是?
  - a. Applied English Center coursework-only AEC 全课程在读
  - b. Undergraduate Freshman 本科新生
  - c. Undergraduate Transfer 本科转学生
  - d. Graduate (Master's) 研究生
  - e. Graduate (Phd)博士生

6. How would you personally rank your current level of English? (1 = poor, 5 = very good)  
你如何评价自己现在的英语水平? (1=极需提高, 5=非常好)

1      2      3      4      5

7. Major (or anticipated major following your AEC coursework):你的专业或理想专业是:  
\*If unsure of your major, please list as "Undecided"\*如果暂时不确定, 请填“待定”。

8. Have you attended a different university prior to attending The University of Kansas?在来到 KU 之前, 你有在别的大学上过大学课程吗?

- a. 有 Yes  
b. 无 No

If so, which university:如果答案是肯定的, 那么你曾就读过的大学名称是:

9. Hometown in China:国内的家乡:

10. What is your first language?你的第一语言是(方言亦可):

11. Please list all languages that you currently speak:请列出所有你掌握的语言(包括方言):

**我们希望了解你在高中时期的课外活动情况, 以及你对开始大学生生活作了怎样的准备。We would now like to learn more about your high school activities and college preparation.**

12. 你曾经参加过任何课外的研究项目、社团或组织吗?(如田径队、街舞社、学生会等)

Did you participate in any non-required extracurricular programs in high school (such as sports teams, clubs, student government, etc)?

- a. 有 Yes  
b. 无 No

假如回答是肯定的, 请列出你曾参加过的课外机构组织: If yes, please list:

13. Please answer the following: 请回答下列问题:

- a. Did you apply to universities in China? 你投报过国内的大学吗?

i. Yes 是 ii. No 否

- b. Did you apply to other universities in the United States besides The University of Kansas? 除了 KU 以外, 你申请过其他美国的大学吗?

i. Yes ii. No

- c. Did you apply to universities in other foreign countries (not China or the United States)? 你申请过其他除中国和美国以外的大学吗?

i. Yes ii. No

- d. Was attending a university in China your first preference? 在中国上大学是你的第一选择吗?

i. Yes ii. No

- e. Would you have rather attended a university in China than a university in the United States? 对比起在美国上大学, 你更愿意留在国内上大学吗?  
i. Yes ii. No
- f. Was studying in the United States your first choice? 在美国上大学是你的第一选择吗?  
i. Yes ii. No
- g. Was studying at The University of Kansas your first choice? 堪萨斯大学是你的第一志愿吗?  
i. Yes ii. No
14. Did you take the college entrance exam in China? 你参加过高考吗?  
a. Yes No
15. What type of high school did you attend in China? 你在中国上的是什么类型的高中?  
a. Public high school 公办高中  
b. Private high school 民办高中  
c. International school 国际学校  
d. High school in the United States 美国高中  
e. Other, please explain 如有其它, 请列明。(如中专)

**Now we would like to ask about your previous experiences with the United States and Americans.** 我们希望了解你在来到美国之前对美国文化的了解。

16. Have you met any Americans in China? 你在中国结识过美国人吗?  
a. Yes b. No  
If yes, were they: 假如答案是肯定的, 那么他们是:  
b. Classmates 同学  
c. Teachers 老师  
d. Tutors 辅导老师  
e. Tourists 游客  
f. Other, please explain: 如有其它, 请列明
17. How often did you watch American movies or television in China? 你在国内看美国电影或电视节目的频率是?  
a. Never 从来不看      b. Rarely 很少看      c. Sometimes 有时看 d. Very often 经常看
18. Have you ever visited the United States before this trip? 你以前来过美国吗?  
a. Yes b. No

19. How would you rank your current knowledge and understanding of American culture? (1 = no knowledge at all, 5 = exceptionally knowledgeable) 你如何评价自己目前对美国文化的了解和认知? (1=完全不了解 5=驾轻就熟)
- 1      2      3      4      5
20. Which of the following preparations did you take part in prior to your arrival to The University of Kansas? (please check all that apply) 在来到堪萨斯大学之前你都做了哪些准备工作 (请勾选所有符合选项)
- Researched about American life (对美国文化的探究)
  - Researched about things to do in Lawrence (查询劳伦斯的相关事宜)
  - Learned American slang words (学习美国俚语)
  - Attended a pre-arrival orientation in China (在国内参加介绍会)
  - Talked to acquaintances that have already visited the United States (向有相关留美经历的人事请教)
  - Watched American movies or television (观看美国电影或美剧)
  - Researched academic resources on campus (查阅校内相关文献资料)
  - Researched ways to become involved on campus (查阅能使自己尽快融入校园的渠道)
  - None of these (都不是)
21. Which of the following people did you speak with to learn more about studying at The University of Kansas or studying in the United States prior to arriving? (please check all that apply) 在你抵达堪萨斯大学或留美之前, 下列哪些人群是你更倾向于请教关于留美学习相关问题的?
- Current Chinese students at The University of Kansas (现任堪萨斯大学中国留学生)
  - Current non-Chinese students at The University of Kansas (任堪萨斯大学非中国留学生)
  - Chinese acquaintances who have previously or are currently studying in the United States (曾有或现任留美经历的中国熟识朋友)
  - Non-Chinese acquaintances who have previous or are currently studying in the United States (曾有或现任留美经历的非中国熟识朋友)
  - Faculty or staff at The University of Kansas (堪萨斯大学任职工作人员)
  - Faculty or staff at your high school (高中职员)
  - Online forums (网上论坛)
  - None of these (都不是)
22. Which of the following did you consult with prior to your arrival to The University of Kansas? (please check all that apply) (下列选项中, 哪些方式是你抵达堪萨斯大学前了解学校的方式)

- a. The University of Kansas website (堪萨斯大学官网)
- b. The International Student Services website (国际留学生服务中心网页)
- c. Recruitment materials from the International Recruitment & Undergraduate Admissions office (招生办发放的宣传材料)
- d. Pre-arrival materials from the International Student Services office (国际留学生服务中心发放的预习材料)
- e. The Chinese Student & Scholar Friendship Associations (CSSFA) QQ page (中国学生会 QQ 主页)
- f. The Chinese Student & Scholar Friendship Associations (CSSFA) Renren page (中国学生会人人主页)
- g. Websites about Lawrence ([www.lawrence.com](http://www.lawrence.com), [www.visitlawrence.com](http://www.visitlawrence.com), etc) (劳伦斯相关网页)
- h. None of these (全不是)

**We would now like to learn about your anticipated experiences at The University of Kansas during the 2013-2014 school year.** 下面我们想要了解您对在堪萨斯大学 2013-14 学期的体验与感受展望

23. How many hours **per week** do you anticipate you will spend preparing for classes at The University of Kansas (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, or other activities)?每周您预期将要花在预习上的时间为
- a. 0 - 2 hours
  - b. 3 - 5 hours
  - c. 5 - 10 hours
  - d. 10 - 15 hours
  - e. 15 - 20 hours
  - f. more than 20 hours
  - g. I do not know
24. How many hours **per week** do you anticipate you will spend relaxing at The University of Kansas (watching TV, exercising, playing on the computer, reading for pleasure, etc)?每周您预期花在休闲娱乐上的时间为
- a. 0 - 2 hours
  - b. 3 - 5 hours
  - c. 5 - 10 hours
  - d. 10 - 15 hours
  - e. 15 - 20 hours
  - f. more than 20 hours
  - g. I do not know
25. How many hours **per week** do you anticipate you will spend socializing at The University of Kansas (visiting friends, going to parties/bars, eating meals with friends, etc)?您每周预期花在社交上的时间为

- a. 0 - 2 hours
  - b. 3 - 5 hours
  - c. 5 - 10 hours
  - d. 10 - 15 hours
  - e. 15 - 20 hours
  - f. more than 20 hours
  - g. I do not know
26. How many organized social events (sports games, club activities, etc) do you anticipate you will attend **per week** at The University of Kansas?您每周预期用来参加社团活动的时长为
- a. 0 - 2
  - b. 3 - 5
  - c. 5 - 8
  - d. 8 - 10
  - e. more than 10
  - f. I do not know
27. Do you plan to get a job during the Fall 2013 semester?您有工作的打算吗?
- a. Yes
  - b. Maybe
  - c. No
  - d. I don't know
28. Did you attend the "YOU at KU" international student orientation (August 14 - 21)?您有参加 "YOU at KU" 的新生见面会吗
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I do not know what "YOU at KU" orientation is 我不知道什么是新生见面会
29. Did you attend Hawk Week events at The University of Kansas (August 23-30)?您有参加 "Hawk Week" 期间的相关活动吗?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I do not know what Hawk Week is 我不知道什么是 Hawk Week
30. Did you attend the Chinese Students & Scholars Friendship Association (CSSFA) new student orientation?您有参加中国学生会举办的新生见面会吗?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I do not know what the CSSFA orientation is 我不知道学生会有举办新生见面会
31. Where will you live during the 2013-2014 school year?您在 2013-14 学期的住宿地是?
- a. On-campus residence hall 校内学生宿舍楼
  - b. On-campus apartment (Jayhawker Towers, Stouffer Place)校内学生公寓
  - c. Off-campus apartment 校外公寓
  - d. Off-campus house 校外私宅
  - e. I do not know 我不了解

32. How many roommates do you have in your 2013-2014 housing arrangement?您在 2013-14 学期将有几名室友

- a. 0
- b. 1
- c. 2
- d. 3
- e. more than 3
- f. I do not know

33. What nationality is your roommate(s)?您的室友国籍为

- a. Chinese
- b. American
- c. Other
- d. I do not know

**We are now interested in the type of friendships you plan to make at The University of Kansas.**现在我们对您在 KU 希望寻获何种友情予以了解

34. Please select one of the following statements:请选择下列中任一项

- a. I am very interested in making friends with other Chinese students at KU 我十分希望与其他中国留学生成为朋友
- b. I am a little interested in making friends with other Chinese students at KU 我希望与其他中国留学生成为朋友
- c. I am not interested in making friends with Chinese students at KU 我对与其他中国留学生成为朋友不感兴趣
- d. I do not know 我不清楚

35. Please select one of the following statements:请选择其中任一项

- a. I am very interested in making friends with American students at KU 我十分希望与其他美国学生成为朋友
- b. I am a little interested in making friends with American students at KU 我希望与其他美国学生成为朋友
- c. I am not interested in making friends with American students at KU 我对与其他美国学生成为朋友不感兴趣
- d. I do not know 我不清楚

36. Do you plan to join a campus club or sports team this 2013-2014 school year?您计划加入校内任一校内社团或体育团队吗

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

If yes, which ones?如果是，请列举

37. Please select the types of social media you currently actively use:请列举您现在使用的社交媒介

- a. Sina Weibo 新浪微博
- b. RenRen 人人网
- c. Tencent QQ 腾讯 QQ
- d. Facebook 脸书
- e. Twitter 推特
- f. Google+
- g. Tumblr
- h. LinkedIn
- i. Myspace
- j. Other (please list):

38. Do you intend to return to China immediately after you graduate from The University of Kansas?您计划毕业后立即返回中国吗

- a. Yes
- b. Maybe
- c. No
- d. I do not know

39. Would you consider accepting a job in the United States after you graduate from The University of Kansas?您会考虑毕业后在美国本土工作吗

- a. Yes
- b. Maybe
- c. No
- d. I do not know

40. How often do you plan to contact your family and friends in China?您与中国国内亲人朋友联系的频率是

- a. Very frequently 十分频繁
- b. Occasionally 偶尔
- c. Infrequently 不频繁
- d. No contact 没有联系
- e. I do not know 不清楚

41. Did you have contact with Chinese students at The University of Kansas prior to your arrival to the United States?在抵达 KU 之前，您与现任 KU 学生之间有过交流吗

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, what kinds of communications did you have with them?

如有，请列举你们之间的交流话题

42. Would you be willing to be contacted to participate in an interview to further elaborate on your experiences at The University of Kansas?为了能更好地完善您在 KU 的相关学习体验，您愿意参加相关的访谈或问答吗

- Yes
- No

**Appendix E:**

Second Questionnaire

你在KU预备要在2014春天上课吗?

Do you intend to attend The University of Kansas for the Spring 2014 semester?

- Yes
- No

你如何评价自己现在的英语水平? (1=极需提高, 5=非常好)

How would you personally rank your current level of English? (1 = poor, 5 = very good)

- | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> |

你的专业或理想专业是:

What is your major (or anticipated major following your AEC coursework)?:

\*如果暂时不确定, 请填“待定”。

\*If unsure of your major, please list as “Undecided”

我们希望对你在**2013**秋季学期期间的时间安排进行了解。

We would now like to learn about how you used your time during the Fall 2013 semester at The University of Kansas.

2013秋季学期间, 你每周大约花多少小时的时间在进行KU课业相关的准备上? (学习、阅读、写作、演出排练或其他课程活动)?

Roughly how many hours **per week** during the Fall 2013 semester did you spend preparing for classes at The University of Kansas (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, or other activities)?

- 0 - 2小时(hours)
- 3 - 5小时(hours)
- 5 - 10小时(hours)
- 10 - 15小时(hours)
- 15 - 20小时(hours)
- 二十小时以上(more than 20 hours)
- 不知道(I do not know)

2013秋季学期间, 你每周大约花多少小时在娱乐活动上? (看电视、户外/室内运动、玩电脑、阅读课外书籍等)

Roughly how many hours **per week** during the Fall 2013 semester did you spend relaxing at The University of Kansas (watching TV, exercising, playing on the computer, reading for pleasure, etc)?

- 0 - 2小时(hours)
- 3 - 5小时(hours)
- 5 - 10小时(hours)
- 10 - 15小时(hours)
- 15 - 20小时(hours)
- 二十小时以上(more than 20 hours)

不知道(I do not know)

2013秋季学期间, 你每周大约花多少小时在社交活动上? (拜访朋友、聚餐、参加聚会、去酒吧等)  
Roughly how many hours **per week** during the Fall 2013 semester did you spend socializing at The University of Kansas (visiting friends, going to parties/bars, eating out with friends, etc)?

---

- 0 - 2小时(hours)
- 3 - 5小时(hours)
- 5 - 10小时(hours)
- 10 - 15小时(hours)
- 15 - 20小时(hours)
- 二十小时以上(more than 20 hours)
- 不知道(I do not know)

2013秋季学期间, 你每周大约花多少小时在学校组织的活动上? (运动比赛、社团活动、学生会活动等)  
How many organized social events (sports games, club activities, etc) did you attend per week at The University of Kansas during the Fall 2013 semester?

---

- 0 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 5 - 8
- 8 - 10
- 十小时以上(more than 10)
- 不知道 I do not know

你在2013秋季学期间有进行校内打工吗?  
Did you hold a job during the Fall 2013 semester?

---

- Yes
- No

你一般在哪些地方学习? (多选)

Where did you typically study during the Fall 2013 semester? (please select all that apply)

---

- 独自在家学习 (At home by myself)
- 在家与朋友或同学一起学习 (At home with friends or classmates)
- 独自在图书馆学习 (In the library by myself)
- 在图书馆与朋友或同学一起学习 (In the library with friends or classmates)
- 在咖啡店学习 (At a coffee shop)
- 在朋友家学习 (At a friend's house)
- 其他 (other)
- 不确定 (I do not know)

现在我们希望了解你在**2013**秋季学期期间的社交和活动参与度。

**Now we are interested in learning about your friendships and involvements during the Fall 2013 semester at The University of Kansas.**

---

你在KU大概有多少位中国朋友？

Roughly how many Chinese friends do you have at the University of Kansas?

---

你是怎么认识这些朋友的？（多选）

How did you meet your Chinese friends at KU? (select all that apply)

---

- 课堂上 (in class)
- 通过KU中国学生会 (Through a Chinese student organization)
- 通过非中国学生组织 (Through a non-Chinese club or student organization)
- 住在同一宿舍/同一小区 (In my residence hall or apartment complex)
- 在KU新生见面会期间认识 (At the "YOU at KU" international student orientation)
- 在聚会或酒吧 (At a party or bar)
- 网上 (online)
- 其他（请注明）(Other, please explain)
  
- 不清楚 (I do not know)

你在KU大概有多少位美国朋友？

Roughly how many American friends have you made at The University of Kansas?

---

你是怎么认识这些朋友的？（多选）

How did you meet your American friends at KU? (select all that apply)

---

- 课堂上 (in class)
- 通过KU中国学生会 (Through a Chinese student organization )
- 通过非中国学生组织 (Through a non-Chinese club or student organization)
- 住在同一宿舍/同一小区 (In my residence hall or apartment complex)
- 通过共同的朋友 (through mutual friends)
- 在KU新生见面会期间认识 (At the "YOU at KU" international orientation)
- 在聚会或酒吧 (At a party or bar)
- 网上 (Online)
- 其他（请注明）(Other, please explain)
  
- 不清楚 (I do not know)

你在KU大概有多少位国际生朋友？（除中国美国以外其他国家）

Roughly how many foreign, non-Chinese friends (students not from the United States or China) have you made at The University of Kansas?

---

你是怎么认识这些朋友的？（多选）

How did you meet your foreign, non-Chinese friends at KU? (select all that apply)

---

- 课堂上 (in class)
- 通过KU中国学生会 (Through a Chinese student organization )
- 通过非中国学生组织 (Through a non-Chinese club or student organization)
- 住在同一宿舍/同一小区 (In my residence hall or apartment complex)
- 通过共同的朋友 (through mutual friends)
- 在KU新生见面会期间认识 (At the "YOU at KU" international orientation)
- 在聚会或酒吧 (At a party or bar)
- 网上 (Online)
- 其他（请注明）(Other, please explain)
- 不清楚 (I do not know)

你会为自己现在对美国文化的了解打多少分？（1 = 几乎没有任何了解，5 = 非常了解）

How would you rank your current knowledge and understanding of American culture?

---

- |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |
| <input type="radio"/> |

你在2013秋季学期期间有参与过学校的社团或运动组织吗？（如果有，请注明是何组织）

Were you involved in campus clubs or sports teams at KU during the Fall 2013 semester? (If yes, please list which clubs or teams you participated in)

---

- Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- No \_\_\_\_\_

下学期你希望参加哪些课外社团或运动组织？

What extracurricular programs (clubs or sports teams) do you intend to be involved with during the Spring 2014 semester?

---

现在我们希望了解一下你平时在KU与其他学生的互动情况。

**Now we would like to ask you about your interactions with students at The University of Kansas.**

---

你在KU与其他中国学生接触的程度是  
During my time at The University of Kansas, I...

... 在KU期间, 我

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
在课堂上与其他中国学生有基本接触 (have regular contact with Chinese students in my classes)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
在课余时间与其他中国学生有基本接触 (have regular contact with Chinese students in my spare time outside of class at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
积极参与中国学生会的组织和活动 (actively participate in a Chinese student group, like CSSFA)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
积极尝试与更多中国学生成为朋友 (actively try to meet and make friends with other Chinese students)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
与至少一个中国学生关系密切 (have a strong friendship with at least one Chinese student at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

你在KU与美国学生的接触程度是——  
During my time at The University of Kansas, I...

... 在KU期间, 我

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
在课堂上与美国学生有基本接触 (have regular contact with American students in my classes)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
在课余时间与美国学生有基本接触 (have regular contact with American students in my spare time outside of class at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
积极参与非中国学生组织 (actively participate in a non-Chinese student specific group)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
积极尝试与更多美国学生成为朋友 (actively try to meet and make friends with American students)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
与至少一个美国学生关系密切 (have a strong friendship with at least one American student at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

针对文化风俗和在美国的生活，我们希望了解你的看法。

**Now we would like to ask questions regarding culture and American life.**

对于以下选项你的认可程度是——

During my time at The University of Kansas, I...

... 在KU期间，我

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
积极尝试了解美国文化和习俗 (actively try to learn more about American culture and customs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
敢于对美国的文化、习俗和价值观提问 (ask questions about American culture, customs, and values)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
参加过美国民俗文化性质的活动 (have participated in American cultural events or customs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
尝试过新事物以便更好地了解美国 (have tried new things in order to learn more about the United States)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
观察过美国人的行为以便更好地适应人群 (have observed the behavior of Americans in order to fit in better)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

你用餐选择美国食物的频率是？

How often do you eat American food?

- 一个月几次 (A few times a week)
- 一周几次 (A few times a week )
- 每日 (Daily)
- 每日数次 (Several times a day)
- 从不 (Never)
- 不确定 (I do not know)

这学期你新尝试了何种美国食物？

What new American foods have you tried this semester?

你曾参加过以下哪些社区活动？（多选）

Which of the following community events or activities have you taken part in? (please select all that apply)

- 劳伦斯农夫市场 (Downtown Lawrence Farmer's Market)
  - 参观南瓜田或农场 (Visiting a pumpkin patch or area farm)
  - 劳伦斯节日游街 (Parade in downtown Lawrence )
  - 劳伦斯传统节日或传统活动 (Festival or event in downtown Lawrence )
  - Final Fridays
  - 校外社区性质的戏剧或音乐会 (An off-campus community play or concert)
  - 校外的画廊或展览 (An off-campus art gallery or exhibit)
  - 去电影院看电影 (Watching movies at the movie theater)
  - 在马塞诸瑟街逛街 (Shopping on Massachusetts Street)
  - 观克林顿湖 (Visiting Clinton Lake)
  - 去周边临近城市游玩,如堪萨斯城、托皮卡等 (Exploring nearby towns, such as Kansas City or Topeka)
  - 参加本地教会活动 (Visiting local religious places of worship)
  - 其他,请注明 (Other, please list)
- 
- 以上均无 (None of the above)

你曾参加过以下哪些学校活动? (多选)

Which of the following University activities or events have you taken part in? (please select all that apply)

---

- 返校节相关活动 (Homecoming events - Sept 29 to Oct 5)
  - 观看KU体育比赛,橄榄球、篮球、排球等 (Watching a KU sporting event, such as basketball football, volleyball, etc)
  - 篮球赛季开球典礼 (Late Night in the Phog )
  - 学术讲座、座谈会 (Academic presentation, panel, or discussion not for class )
  - 校内戏剧或音乐剧表演 (campus plays or musical performances)
  - 校内免费电影 (Campus movies, sponsored by Student Union Activites)
  - 下午三点下午茶 (Tea at Three)
  - 参观校内博物馆 (Visiting campus museums)
  - 其他 (请注明) (Other, please list)
- 
- 以上均无 (None of the above)

本学期你参加过任何美国节日庆典或传统活动吗? 如万圣节和感恩节期间?

Have you participated in American holiday celebrations or traditions this semester, such as Halloween or Thanksgiving?

---

- Yes
- No

有过拜访或住在美国家庭的经历吗?

Have you spent time in the home of an American?

---

- Yes

No

## Now we would like to ask about your use of English

以下选项你的赞同程度是  
During my time at The University of Kansas, I...

... 在KU期间, 我

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
适应了在日常生活中使用英语 (Feel comfortable using English in my daily life)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
在课外时间时常实用英语与人交流 (use English often in my social life outside of the classroom)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
定期尝试提高英语理解能力 (regularly attempt to improve my understanding of the English language)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
遇到不懂的单词会去查找 (look up definitions for English words I encounter and do not understand)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
看英文电影和电视节目 (Watch English language movies or television)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
时常用英语参与日常对话 (regularly participate in informal conversations in English)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
曾使用英语进行长时间对话 (have had long conversations in English)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
曾使用英语进行深层次的交流 (have had deep and meaningful conversations in English)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

你因为不想说英文而避免参加社交活动的频率是  
How often do you avoid social situations that require the use of English?

- 非常频繁 (Very often)
- 相对频繁 (somewhat often)
- 偶尔 (Occasionally)
- 从不 (Never)
- 不确定 (I do not know)

我们希望了解你对目前在**KU**生活的总体感觉。

**We would now like to ask you about your general experiences and feelings about your life at The University of Kansas.**

以下选项你的赞同程度是

During my time at The University of Kansas, I...

在KU期间，我

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
感觉被KU学生所接纳 (feel accepted by KU students)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
感觉在KU无所适从 (feel out of place at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
感到困惑不知该如何适应(feel confused about how to fit in at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
乐于与美国人分享我们国家的文化风俗 (feel comfortable sharing my culture and customs with Americans)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
感到美国人愿意与我沟通并接纳我 (find Americans open and inviting towards me)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
时常感到被学校工作人员和教员区别歧视 (often feel discriminated against by faculty and staff at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
时常感到被美国学生歧视 (often feel discriminated against by American students)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
觉得身为中国人是自己在KU的一项劣势 (feel I am at a disadvantage at KU because I am Chinese)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

以下选项你的赞同程度是

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
我在KU有许多中国朋友 (I have many Chinese friends at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我希望在KU能有更多的中国朋友 (I wish I had more Chinese friends at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我在KU有许多美国朋友 (I have many American friends at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我希望在KU能有更多的美国朋友 (I wish I had more American friends at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## American friends at KU)

我希望参与更多课外活动 (I would like to be more involved in extracurricular programs)

我对目前的社交状况感到满足 (I am satisfied with my current social life at KU)

我感到我的社交需求得到了学校的支持 (I feel that my social needs are supported by my university)

请用1 – 5 表示你来美国留学的开心度。(1 = 非常不开心, 5 = 非常开心)

Please rate your overall happiness with your decision to study in the United States:

(1 = Not happy, 5 = exceptionally happy)

---

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>				

请用1 – 5 表示你来KU学习的开心度。(1 = 非常不开心, 5 = 非常开心)

Please rate your overall happiness with your decision to study at The University of Kansas:

---

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>				

你觉得自己是属于KU的一份子吗?

Do you feel that you belong and are a part of The University of Kansas?

如果是, 请解释原因 (If yes, please explain)

如果不是, 你认为KU应该如何改善? (If no, do you have suggestions on what KU can do to help change this?)

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix F:**

Third Questionnaire

Did you take Applied English Center coursework during the Spring 2014 semester?

- Yes  
 No

你在KU预备要在2014秋天上课吗?

Do you intend to attend The University of Kansas for the Fall 2014 semester?

- Yes  
 No

你如何评价自己现在的英语水平? (1=极需提高, 5=非常好)

How would you personally rank your current level of English? (1 = poor, 5 = very good)

- | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> |

你的专业或理想专业是:

What is your major (or anticipated major following your AEC coursework)?:

\*如果暂时不确定, 请填“待定”。

\*If unsure of your major, please list as "Undecided"

我们希望对你在**2014**春季学期期间的时间安排进行了解。

**We would now like to learn about how you used your time during the Spring 2014 semester at The University of Kansas.**

2014春季学期间, 你每周大约花多少小时的时间在进行KU课业相关的准备上? (学习、阅读、写作、演出排练或其他课程活动)?

How many hours **per week** during the Spring 2014 semester did you spend preparing for classes at The University of Kansas (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, or other activities)?

- 0 - 2小时(hours)  
 3 - 5小时(hours)  
 5 - 10小时(hours)  
 10 - 15小时(hours)  
 15 - 20小时(hours)  
 二十小时以上(more than 20 hours)  
 不知道(I do not know)

2014春季学期间, 你每周大约花多少小时在娱乐活动上? (看电视、户外/室内运动、玩电脑、阅读课外书籍等)

How many hours **per week** during the Spring 2014 semester did you spend relaxing at The University of Kansas (watching TV, exercising, playing on the computer, reading for pleasure, etc)?

- 0 - 2小时(hours)
- 3 - 5小时(hours)
- 5 - 10小时(hours)
- 10 - 15小时(hours)
- 15 - 20小时(hours)
- 二十小时以上(more than 20 hours)
- 不知道(I do not know)

2014春季学期期间, 你每周大约花多少小时在社交活动上? (拜访朋友、聚餐、参加聚会、去酒吧等)

How many hours **per week** during the Spring 2014 semester did you spend socializing at The University of Kansas (visiting friends, going to parties/bars, eating out with friends, etc)?

---

- 0 - 2小时(hours)
- 3 - 5小时(hours)
- 5 - 10小时(hours)
- 10 - 15小时(hours)
- 15 - 20小时(hours)
- 二十小时以上(more than 20 hours)
- 不知道(I do not know)

2014春季学期期间, 你每周大约花多少小时在学校组织的活动上? (运动比赛、社团活动、学生会活动等)

How many organized social events (sports games, club activities, etc) did you attend **per week** at The University of Kansas during the Spring 2014 semester?

---

- 0 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 5 - 8
- 8 - 10
- 十小时以上(more than 10)
- 不知道 I do not know

你在2014春季学期期间有进行校内打工吗?

Did you hold a job during the Spring 2014 semester?

---

- Yes
- No

你一般在哪些地方学习? (多选)

Where did you study during the Spring 2014 semester? (please select all that apply)

---

- 独自在家学习 (At home by myself)
- 在家与朋友或同学一起学习 (At home with friends or classmates)
- 独自在图书馆学习 (In the library by myself)

- 在图书馆与朋友或同学一起学习 (In the library with friends or classmates)
- 在咖啡店学习 (At a coffee shop)
- 在朋友家学习 (At a friend's house)
- 其他 (other)
- 不确定 (I do not know)

现在我们希望了解你在**2014**春季学期间的社交和活动参与度。

**Now we are interested in learning about your friendships and involvements during the Fall 2013 semester at The University of Kansas.**

---

你在KU大概有多少位中国朋友？

Roughly how many Chinese friends do you have at the University of Kansas?

---

你是怎么认识这些朋友的？（多选）

How did you meet your Chinese friends at KU? (select all that apply)

---

- 课堂上 (in class)
- 通过KU中国学生会 (Through a Chinese student organization)
- 通过非中国学生组织 (Through a non-Chinese club or student organization)
- 住在同一宿舍/同一小区 (In my residence hall or apartment complex)
- 在KU新生见面会期间认识 (At the "YOU at KU" international student orientation)
- 在聚会或酒吧 (At a party or bar)
- 网上 (online)
- 其他（请注明）(Other, please explain)
- 不清楚 (I do not know)

你在KU大概有多少位美国朋友？

Roughly how many American friends have you made at The University of Kansas?

---

你是怎么认识这些朋友的？（多选）

How did you meet your American friends at KU? (select all that apply)

---

- 课堂上 (in class)
- 通过KU中国学生会 (Through a Chinese student organization)
- 通过非中国学生组织 (Through a non-Chinese club or student organization)
- 住在同一宿舍/同一小区 (In my residence hall or apartment complex)
- 通过共同的朋友 (through mutual friends)

- 在KU新生见面会期间认识 (At the "YOU at KU" international orientation)
- 在聚会或酒吧 (At a party or bar)
- 网上 (Online)
- 其他 (请注明) (Other, please explain)
- 不清楚 (I do not know)

你在KU大概有多少位国际生朋友? (除中国美国以外其他国家)

Roughly how many foreign, non-Chinese friends (students not from the United States or China) have you made at The University of Kansas?

---

你是怎么认识这些朋友的? (多选)

How did you meet your foreign, non-Chinese friends at KU? (select all that apply)

---

- 课堂上 (in class)
- 通过KU中国学生会 (Through a Chinese student organization)
- 通过非中国学生组织 (Through a non-Chinese club or student organization)
- 住在同一宿舍/同一小区 (In my residence hall or apartment complex)
- 通过共同的朋友 (through mutual friends)
- 在KU新生见面会期间认识 (At the "YOU at KU" international orientation)
- 在聚会或酒吧 (At a party or bar)
- 网上 (Online)
- 其他 (请注明) (Other, please explain)
- 不清楚 (I do not know)

你会为自己现在对美国文化的了解打多少分? (1 = 几乎没有任何了解, 5 = 非常了解)

How would you rank your current knowledge and understanding of American culture?

---

- |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |
| <input type="radio"/> |

你在2014春季学期期间有参与过学校的社团或运动组织吗? (如果有, 请注明是何组织)

Were you involved in campus clubs or sports teams during the Spring 2014 semester? (if yes, please list which ones)

---

- Yes
- No

下学期你希望参加哪些课外社团或运动组织?

What extracurricular programs do you intend to be involved with during the upcoming 2014-2015 academic

year?

现在我们希望了解一下你平时在KU与其他学生的互动情况。

**Now we would like to ask you about your interactions with students at The University of Kansas.**

你在KU与其他中国学生接触的程度是

During my time at The University of Kansas, I...

... 在KU期间, 我

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
在课堂上与其他中国学生有基本接触 (have regular contact with Chinese students in my classes)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
在课余时间与其他中国学生有基本接触 (have regular contact with Chinese students in my spare time outside of class at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
积极参与中国学生会的组织和活动 (actively participate in a Chinese student group, like CSSFA)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
积极尝试与更多中国学生成为朋友 (actively try to meet and make friends with other Chinese students)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
与至少一个中国学生关系密切 (have a strong friendship with at least one Chinese student at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

你在KU与美国学生的接触程度是——

During my time at The University of Kansas, I...

... 在KU期间, 我

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
在课堂上与美国学生有基本接触 (have regular contact with American students in my classes)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
在课余时间与美国学生有基本接触 (have regular contact with American students in my spare time outside of class at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
积极参与非中国学生组织 (actively participate in a non-Chinese student specific)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

group)

积极尝试与更多美国学生成为朋友 (actively try to meet and make friends with American students)

与至少一个美国学生关系密切 (have a strong friendship with at least one American student at KU)

针对文化风俗和在美国的生活，我们希望了解你的看法。

**Now we would like to ask questions regarding culture and American life.**

对于以下选项你的认可程度是——

During my time at The University of Kansas, I...

... 在KU期间，我

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
积极尝试了解美国文化和习俗 (actively try to learn more about American culture and customs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
敢于对美国的文化、习俗和价值观提问 (ask questions about American culture, customs, and values)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
参加过美国民俗文化性质的活动 (have participated in American cultural events or customs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
尝试过新事物以便更好地了解美国 (have tried new things in order to learn more about the United States)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
观察过美国人的行为以便更好地适应人群 (have observed the behavior of Americans in order to fit in better)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

你用餐选择美国食物的频率是？

How often do you eat American food?

- 一个月几次 (A few times a week)
- 一周几次 (A few times a week )
- 每日 (Daily)
- 每日数次 (Several times a day)
- 从不 (Never)
- 不确定 (I do not know)

这学期你新尝试了何种美国食物？

What new American foods have you tried this semester?

---

你曾参加过以下哪些社区活动？（多选）

Which of the following community events or activities have you taken part in? (please select all that apply)

---

- 劳伦斯农夫市场 (Downtown Lawrence Farmer's Market)
- 参观南瓜田或农场 (Visiting a pumpkin patch or area farm)
- 劳伦斯节日游街 (Parade in downtown Lawrence )
- 劳伦斯传统节日或传统活动 (Festival or event in downtown Lawrence )
- Final Fridays
- 校外社区性质的戏剧或音乐会 (An off-campus community play or concert)
- 校外的画廊或展览 (An off-campus art gallery or exhibit)
- 去电影院看电影 (Watching movies at the movie theater)
- 在马赛诸瑟街逛街 (Shopping on Massachusetts Street)
- 观克林顿湖 (Visiting Clinton Lake)
- 去周边临近城市游玩,如堪萨斯城、托皮卡等 (Exploring nearby towns, such as Kansas City or Topeka)
- 参加本地教会活动 (Visiting local religious places of worship)
- 其他,请注明 (Other, please list)
  
- 以上均无 (None of the above)

你曾参加过以下哪些学校活动？（多选）

Which of the following University activities or events have you taken part in? (please select all that apply)

---

- International Awareness Week
- 观看KU体育比赛,橄榄球、篮球、排球等 (Watching a KU sporting event, such as basketball football, volleyball, etc)
- 篮球赛季开球典礼 (Late Night in the Phog )
- 学术讲座、座谈会 (Academic presentation, panel, or discussion not for class )
- 校内戏剧或音乐剧表演 (campus plays or musical performances)
- 校内免费电影 (Campus movies, sponsored by Student Union Activites)
- 下午三点下午茶 (Tea at Three)
- 参观校内博物馆 (Visiting campus museums)
- 其他 (请注明) (Other, please list)
  
- 以上均无 (None of the above)

本学期你参加过任何美国节日庆典或传统活动吗？比如情人节和圣帕特里克节等等？

Have you participated in American holiday celebrations or traditions this semester, such New Year's, Valentine's Day, or St. Patrick's Day?

Yes No

有过拜访或住在美国家庭的经历吗?

Have you spent time in the home of an American?

 Yes No**Now we would like to ask about your use of English**

以下选项你的赞同程度是

During my time at The University of Kansas, I...

... 在KU期间, 我

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
适应了在日常生活中使用英语 (Feel comfortable using English in my daily life)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
在课外时间时常实用英语与人交流 (use English often in my social life outside of the classroom)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
定期尝试提高英语理解能力 (regularly attempt to improve my understanding of the English language)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
遇到不懂的单词会去查找 (look up definitions for English words I encounter and do not understand)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
看英文电影和电视节目 (Watch English language movies or television)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
时常用英语参与日常对话 (regularly participate in informal conversations in English)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
曾使用英语进行长时间对话 (have had long conversations in English)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
曾使用英语进行深层次的交流 (have had deep and meaningful conversations in English)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

你因为不想说英文而避免参加社交活动的频率是

How often do you avoid social situations that require the use of English?

- 非常频繁 (Very often)
- 相对频繁 (somewhat often)
- 偶尔 (Occasionally)
- 从不 (Never)
- 不确定 (I do not know)

我们希望了解你对目前在KU生活的总体感觉。

**We would now like to ask you about your general experiences and feelings about your life at The University of Kansas.**

以下选项你的赞同程度是

During my time at The University of Kansas, I...

在KU期间，我

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
感觉被KU学生所接纳 (feel accepted by KU students)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
感觉在KU无所适从 (feel out of place at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
感到困惑不知该如何适应 (feel confused about how to fit in at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
乐于与美国人分享我们国家的文化风俗 (feel comfortable sharing my culture and customs with Americans)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
感到美国人愿意与我沟通并接纳我 (find Americans open and inviting towards me)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
时常感到被学校工作人员和教员区别歧视 (often feel discriminated against by faculty and staff at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
时常感到被美国学生歧视 (often feel discriminated against by American students)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
觉得身为中国人是自己在KU的一项劣势 (feel I am at a disadvantage at KU because I am Chinese)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

以下选项你的赞同程度是

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	十分同意 (strongly agree)	基本同意 (somewhat agree)	基本不同意 (somewhat disagree)	非常不同意 (strongly disagree)	不确定 (I don't know)
我在KU有许多中国朋友 (I have many Chinese friends at KU)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

many Chinese friends at KU)

我希望在KU能有更多的中国朋友 (I wish I had more Chinese friends at KU)

我在KU有许多美国朋友 (I have many American friends at KU)

我希望在KU能有更多的美国朋友 (I wish I had more American friends at KU)

我希望参与更多课外活动 (I would like to be more involved in extracurricular programs)

我对目前的社交状况感到满足 (I am satisfied with my current social life at KU)

我感到我的社交需求得到了学校的支持 (I feel that my social needs are supported by my university)

-	-	-	-	-
<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/>				

请用1 – 5 表示你来美国留学的开心度。（1 = 非常不开心，5 = 非常开心）

Please rate your overall happiness with your decision to study in the United States:  
(1 = Not happy, 5 = exceptionally happy)

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>				

请用1 – 5 表示你来KU学习的开心度。（1 = 非常不开心，5 = 非常开心）

Please rate your overall happiness with your decision to study at The University of Kansas:

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>				

您计划毕业后立即返回中国吗？

Do you intend to return to China immediately after you graduate from The University of Kansas?

- Yes 是
- Maybe 也许
- No 否
- I do not know 不清楚

您会考虑毕业后在美国本土工作吗？

Would you consider accepting a job in the United States after you graduate from The University of Kansas?

- Yes 是
- Maybe 也许
- No 否
- 
- I do not know 不清楚

你觉得自己是属于KU的一份子吗?

Do you feel that you belong and are a part of The University of Kansas?

如果是, 请解释原因 (If yes, please explain)

如果不是, 你认为KU应该如何改善? (If no, do you have suggestions on what KU can do to help change this?)

---

Yes

No

**Appendix G:**

Interview Guide

**Expectations and Preparation:**

When did you decide to study in the United States?

Why did you decide to study in the United States?

Why did you choose the University of Kansas?

Before your arrival to Lawrence, how did you prepare for your study in the United States?

Did you have any materials or introduction to life at an American university before you came to KU?

How did you prepare your English for studying in the United States? Did you have enough preparation in China?

Before your arrival to Lawrence, how did you picture your social life at KU? What kind of friendships did you hope to make?

**Campus Events and Groups**

Are you involved in any organizations, clubs, or groups on campus (such as cultural clubs, religious clubs, sports teams, academic groups, etc)?

If yes ... Which?

How did you find out about these groups?

Why did you choose these groups to become involved with?

If no ... Why do you not participate in any activities on campus?

What would encourage you to be more involved on campus?

How do you normally hear about events on campus? (email, facebook, word of mouth, online calendar, etc)

In your opinion, do you see any benefits to being involved on campus?

What changes would you like to make to your current involvement on campus?

**Friendships**

Can you tell me about your group of friends at KU?

Are they Chinese?

American?

From another country?

If you have American friends where and how did you meet them?

In your opinion, what are (or would be) the benefits of making friendships with Americans?

How did you meet your friends at KU? When did you meet them?

What kinds of activities do you often do with your Chinese friends? Where do you spend time together?

Do you think you have more Chinese friends or American friends at KU?

Why do you think this is?

Why do you think some Chinese students at KU choose to have friendships with mostly fellow Chinese students rather than American students?

What would you change about your group of friends, if anything?

Do you think you will keep in touch with your friends at KU after you have graduated?

Why or why not?

**Adjustments**

What has been the biggest cultural challenge for you while living in the United States?

What aspects of adjustment in your life have been easy for you?

Have you adjusted to American food?

How often to eat American food?

How often do you eat Chinese food?

In your opinion, how does the language barrier influence your interactions with Americans?

Besides language, what other barriers or difficulties have you encountered when communicating with Americans?

What stereotypes have you encountered that Americans have about people from China?

What stereotypes do your Chinese friends have about Americans?

What frustrates you the most about communicating with or making friendships with Americans?

What aspects of American culture are confusing to you?

What could KU do to help you become more involved on campus?