CHAPTER I: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The Problem and Its Underlying Framework: Overview of the Study

In recent years, a trend in higher education has been seen in institutional interest to develop international components to programs offered at colleges and universities. This intensified interest in international and global issues is reflected in an increased emphasis on student learning and the outcomes that are expected as a result of global experiences. A college or university is called to identify why it values adding a global perspective to its mission and programs. Liberal arts colleges experience pressure to adapt to a changing society, and as a result, the traditional general education curriculum is evolving to meet the diverse and changing needs of today’s world. One key component of an expanding knowledge base is an understanding of global issues, which is considered necessary for the graduate to function in societies that cross national borders (King, Brown, Lindsay, & VanHecke, 2007).

Many colleges and universities are adding programs to meet organizational goals for graduates to achieve a global perspective, or global awareness. A college is called to identify indicators it may use to measure the development of a student’s global perspective. Faculty must be prepared to provide learning experiences that meet the goal. One example of a liberal arts college undergoing an internationalization process is Marymount College, in Southern California. By using this college as a case study, a better understanding of a process to assess faculty engagement and preparedness to incorporate learning experiences that lead to the student achievement of global awareness may be achieved. Through evaluation using an innovation Gap Analysis Process Model
(GAP or gap analysis) (Clark & Estes, 2008; Smith & Ragan, 2005), the findings from this study may be studied by other liberal arts colleges seeking to internationalize and be prepared to effectively measure student achievement of global perspective learning outcomes.

While institutions of higher education have varying means of accomplishing learning outcomes, many colleges and universities share a similar understanding of the global perspective. These are often stated as outcomes reflecting knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors that students should know or be able to do in order to succeed as citizens in a global environment (Olson, Evans, & Shoenberg, 2007). When articulated as a specific organizational learning goal, accreditation standards necessitate that an institution collect and measure evidence that this global perspective is actually attained by the students.

The American Council on Education (ACE) is actively pursuing the development of a framework they call “comprehensive internationalization”. This framework is based on an integrative approach that ties institutional strategies and initiatives to global learning outcomes. The approach provides a link between institutional actions and the impact they have on student learning (Olson, Green, & Hill, 2005). However, there is a gap found in many institutions between the rhetoric of internationalization and the reality of the activities and the outcomes that occur and can be actually measured (Olson et al., 2005). Closing the gap requires a commitment on an institution-wide level. Asking why the campus should internationalize, who should be involved in the process, how they should proceed, and what resources are needed are only a few of the questions to be addressed (Green & Olson, 2003). According to Childress (2010), faculty engagement is a highly critical component of successful internationalization efforts. It is the faculty
who will ultimately include international perspectives into their curriculum, involve themselves in international research, or participate in professional development programs. When these issues are clarified, an institution will be positioned to make critical decisions as to whether its student learning outcomes have been successfully achieved as a result of teaching and learning experiences provided by the college or university.

Marymount College is ready to expand its programming to provide meaningful international and global experiences. Under review by the institution is how to measure successful achievement of its organizational goal for students to develop recognition of multiple perspectives and global awareness. This case study will explore the development of an innovation model of Clark and Estes’ (2008) gap analysis process to identify and measure the achievement of the organization’s goal and the faculty’s knowledge and skills, motivation, and organizational gaps that may exist as barriers to achievement of the goal.

**Background of the Problem**

A global perspective is not developed solely through enrollment in a specific course or participation in a study travel trip. Reliance on study travel for developing a global perspective is no longer realistic for either non-traditional or traditional students. Financial concerns and work schedules make study abroad unrealistic for many students (Childress, 2010). The essence of a global perspective may be reflected by the synthesis of liberal education learning domains, leading students to locate themselves both historically and socially, with the ability to reflect on their role as responsible citizens. They are able to commit to the concept that the world is more important than themselves,
and that they have a moral and ethical conviction to work to the common good of humanity (Thomas, 2002).

Internationalization and globalization terminology is often used interchangeably (Altbach, 2004). These key concepts need clarification for use in the context of higher education and, most specifically, for clarity of ideas within this study.

**Globalization**

Globalization is driven by the current economy, national and international politics, and sociological issues that push 21st century higher education toward greater multinational involvement (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Globalization is the procedure by which nations become more incorporated through shifting of goods, labor, capital, and ideas (Bloom, Channing, & Chan, 2005). This is due to the knowledge investment by global capital such as seen in higher education and advanced training. A “knowledge society” now includes a service sector as well as a greatly increased reliance by many societies on highly educated personnel and knowledge products necessary for economic growth. Within higher education, globalization results in a greater integration of research, increased usage of information technology, and the use of English for scientific communication (Bloom et al., 2005). Globalization refers to the increased flow of students and faculty between countries around the world and an increased number of higher education partnerships and levels of collaboration between cross-border institutions (Hudzik, 2011). This is a paradigm shift away from the concept that higher education institutions are solely a local, regional, or national resource. Colleges and universities are becoming global resources as a result of greater global connectivity (Hudzik, 2011).
Internationalization

Internationalization occurs at the organizational and institutional level, with the creation of a campus environment as seen in teaching, research, and outreach (Page, 2005). Knight (1993) described the concept of internationalization as a process of integration between international and intercultural dimensions into an institution’s teaching, service, and service functions. Knight (2003) later expanded her concept by adding global dimensions into the purpose, function, and delivery of postsecondary education. Altbach (2006, 2010) presented the concept of internationalization as a primary response to globalization forces; the specific programs and policies that are undertaken in order to deal with globalization.

Olson, Evans, and Shoenberg (2007) placed internationalization in the context of multicultural knowledge of peoples and regions beyond the borders of the United States, with an understanding of the relationships between nation-states and of the wide variety in and among global trends and systems. Internationalization connects colleges and universities with the changing local and global environments, providing service to society that is relevant and meets the needs of students under changing realities (Hudzik, 2011).

Qiang (2003) provides a framework for internationalization that identifies current approaches to the internationalization process. These approaches represent the stance taken by senior leadership to promote and implement internationalization dialog and action on a college campus. The approaches include an “activity approach”, which is focused on student/faculty exchanges and international students. The “ethos approach” leads to the creation of an organizational culture or climate that embraces and values internationalization development. The “process approach” is seen through an infusion of
service, teaching, and research into the organizational processes. The fourth approach is the “competency approach”. This approach calls for the institution to examine the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values of the faculty, students, and staff. The competency approach recognizes the need for analysis and professional development for faculty and staff to gain the skills and knowledge needed for both internationalization and to lead students forward in the achievement of global perspective learning outcomes (Qiang, 2003). It is through the lens of Qiang’s competency approach that the context for this study is established.

**Comprehensive Internationalization**

The American Council on Education seeks to advance the concept of comprehensive internationalization as a process throughout higher education institutions. Comprehensive internationalization is a framework with an integrative approach. It links institutional inputs (mission, strategic plans, activities and programs) with the outcomes of student learning. The impetus for the concept lies in the need for higher education to prepare students to live and work in a world characterized by diminishing borders (Green, 2005). Comprehensive internationalization infuses an international or intercultural dimension into the teaching, learning, research, and service functions of an institution. It is designed to be a highly visible, strategic approach, evolving into the identity, or ethos, of an institution. It involves all levels of the institutional organization.

According to the ACE, the process of comprehensive internationalization leads to gradual institutional transformation. It is built on an institutional vision for internationalization. There are clearly articulated goals, and a strategy is developed to integrate the internationally and globally focused programs and activities provided
throughout and across the campus. In order to achieve comprehensive internationalization on a campus, the institution must be committed to the process on all levels, from senior leadership to faculty teaching and engagement down to individual departmental units. Institutions must carefully examine, evaluate, and assess their vision, mission, goals, and strategic plans. They need to look honestly and openly at inconsistencies, at barriers creating gaps in successful internationalization, and recognize the opportunities to solve the issues (Olson et al., 2005). Internationalization of the curricula will require faculty to have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to infuse global perspective concepts into courses. According to Childress (2010), “Faculty engagement in internationalization must be proactively encouraged and supported by campus leaders overseeing the implementation of internationalization plans” (p. 28).

**Student Learning Outcomes**

A general discussion on student learning outcomes and global learning will help provide the context within the scope of global perspectives. Learning outcomes articulate the expected knowledge, skills, and attitudes of students that are developed as a result of a learning experience (Suskie, 2004). The institution judges whether it provides sufficient opportunities to produce the intended learning and then assess if the evidence of actual student learning matches the institutional expectations. The results drive the improvement of existing programs, and create new ones if the results speak to poor student achievement of the outcomes (Olson et al., 2005).

**Global Learning**

The concept of global learning may be broken into three types of learning: global, international, and intercultural (Olson, Green, & Hill, 2006). Global denotes the
movement beyond national borders into the international world. International is the focus on the relationships between different nations. Intercultural focuses on the ability to understand and appreciate cultural differences and interact within a diverse society. Therefore, global learning is acquired through experiences that teach students to gain a deeper understanding of world cultures and events. Through these experiences, students are able to analyze global systems and develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that lead them to global understanding and application to their lives (Olson et al., 2006).

These key concepts provide the background necessary to continue the discussion of the types of indicators needed to measure student attainment of a global perspective and to evaluate the ability of the faculty to integrate learning experiences into the curriculum that help achieve the goal. Questions to be addressed include what knowledge, attitudes, and skills do students need in order to be “globally competent”? Which learning experiences, both inside and outside the classroom, foster that learning? How do institutions know if the learning experience leads to successful outcomes for students (Olson et al., 2005)? A critical component to this process that strengthens this process is to evaluate if faculty are prepared to engage in such teaching (Childress, 2010).

**Statement of the Problem**

Accreditation agencies call for evidence of successful attainment of an institution’s identified learning outcomes. Quality assurance in internationalization calls for evidence of global perspective learning outcome achievement (Burke, 2004; Altbach & Knight, 2007; Armstrong, 2007). Without indicators to assess student learning outcomes representing a global perspective, it will be difficult to provide the evidence of successful achievement of the outcome.
By utilizing an innovation gap analysis process (Clark & Estes, 2008) it is possible to examine a program in its conceptual stage and identify the goal of the program. When the gaps that exist between concept and program implementation are examined, an institution is able to identify the potential barriers to successful achievement of the organizational goal. These barriers may involve a lack of knowledge and skills in the faculty to infuse their curriculum with awareness of other cultures or global concepts. If a lack of motivation exists among faculty, it may be evidenced by an unwillingness to revise their course material or to infuse a sense of global awareness into student learning experiences. The organization culture itself may need infusion with processes leading to support of internationalization, such as release time to research and update syllabi and course content, funding to provide library resource materials, insufficient professional development, and travel funds for research and projects (Childress, 2010).

In order to identify the key components needed to help students achieve a global perspective, critical questions must be addressed. These include how the college will define the goal, and then how will it measure the achievement of this goal, providing the evidence that proves successful achievement of a global perspective student outcome. Who should be involved in the assessment process and how the college will proceed are essential components of the assessment (Green & Olson, 2003; Olson et al., 2005). When global learning outcomes are developed, the institution must articulate that which signifies competence and identify measures that demonstrate the learning (Olson et al., 2006).

When indicators by which to measure global perspective learning outcomes are
not in place, and assessment of the successful achievement of the learning outcomes is not undertaken, colleges may fall short in the accreditation requirements to link programs and teaching to successful attainment of such student learning outcomes. Without careful assessment of the institution in terms of internationalization dimensions at all levels of the organization, a college may not know the direction and resources that are needed to build successful programs leading to achievement of global perspectives by students (Olson et al., 2005).

Marymount College is an example of a liberal arts college seeking to provide learning experiences for its students that will lead to the development of a global perspective. It has articulated an organizational goal that an outcome of a Marymount baccalaureate degree will include the successful achievement of recognizing multiple perspectives and global awareness. Marymount articulates five organizational goals for student learning (institutional student learning outcomes): (1) Effective written, verbal, and digital presentation skills; (2) Analysis using relevant conceptual, quantitative, and technology tools; (3) Evaluation of competing options and reflection on values to support reasoned and ethical decision-making; (4) Recognition of multiple perspectives and global awareness; and (5) Experiential learning and collaborative skills for personal, social, civic, and global responsibility (Marymount College, 2010-11; 2011-12). The focus of this study is centered on the fourth outcome of multiple perspectives and global awareness. Throughout the study, the phrase “recognition of multiple perspectives and global awareness” will be used interchangeably with the term “global perspective” or “global awareness”.

Similar to other liberal arts colleges, Marymount is in need of specific indicators
to measure successful achievement of its graduate’s achievement of global perspectives and specify the type of evidence that will be collected and analyzed in order to demonstrate student learning (Olson et al., 2005). By using Marymount College as a case study, a process to assess faculty knowledge and skills, motivation, and organizational culture to determine how to move towards successful accomplishment of the organizational goal for student development of a global perspective will be identified.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine a process by which a college may identify and measure students’ successful attainment of a global perspective, using quantitative research methods as well as recommendations from the research literature. Formative evaluation, using an innovation model of Clark and Estes’ (2008) gap analysis process, will identify the process by which a liberal arts college can assess its faculty’s readiness to provide learning experiences supporting campus internationalization and thereby identify the knowledge and skills, motivation, and organizational gaps that may exist as barriers to achieving an organizational goal of a student learning outcome that reflect a global perspective. Marymount College has not yet operationalized its concept of a learning outcome of “global perspective”. It does not yet have a comprehensive program of internationalization. There is a 100% gap between the current status and meeting the college goal for developing global perspective in students. The innovation gap analysis process will help Marymount College evaluate basic questions regarding the specific organizational goals for student achievement of recognition of global awareness and what indicators would be used to measure this. As a college innovation, Marymount must address the potential faculty knowledge and skills, motivational, and organizational
challenges, or gaps (barriers), within the institution that may affect the successful achievement of the organizational goal. By using Marymount College as a case study, the broader issues experienced in other liberal arts colleges in the realm of measurement of student learning outcomes may be addressed.

This study will consider the following in the gap analysis: What is the operational definition of a global perspective? Are the barriers to successful student achievement of a global perspective due to gaps in faculty knowledge and skills, faculty motivation, or in the organizational culture? What are the potential solutions to address these causes and therefore close the identified gaps? The specific research questions for this study will seek to answer these questions. Based on the quantitative data gathered to operationalize the goal, faculty perception as to the barriers that may create faculty gaps, and the recommendations for solutions pulled from the current research literature, a process for organizational evaluation of whether the faculty gaps have been closed may be suggested, leading to a process for Marymount College to assess the successful achievement of a global perspective by graduates.

**Research Questions**

The research questions for this study are designed to examine the potential gaps in faculty knowledge and skills, motivation, and organizational culture that Marymount College, a liberal arts college undergoing transformative change, must close in order to achieve its organizational goal to provide curriculum and learning experiences for students that lead to recognition of multiple perspectives and a global awareness by its baccalaureate graduates. Due to a shift in 2011 from a two-year college to a four-year college, a 100% gap currently exists for
achieving this organizational goal. The first class of seniors graduates in May 2012. As such, the research questions for this study are:

1. What is the operational definition of and the measurable indicators for “recognition of multiple perspectives and global awareness” as stated in the organizational goal?

2. What are the gaps in faculty knowledge and skills, motivation, and organizational culture, which may affect the successful achievement of an organizational goal for development of a global perspective for students at Marymount College?

3. What are the potential solutions to address the gaps in faculty knowledge and skills, motivation, and organizational culture to achieve the organization’s goal of successful achievement of a global perspective by students at Marymount College?

Through analysis of the data from the research questions, a process will be recommended by the researcher by which Marymount is able to measure and evaluate successful achievement of a global perspective by graduates earning a baccalaureate degree from Marymount College.

**Significance of the Problem**

This study seeks to develop a process by which Marymount College may examine its faculty’s role and readiness to meet the student learning outcome of development of a global perspective. Liberal arts colleges, with missions historically grounded in teaching, have become familiar with student learning outcomes and assessment due to shifts in demands for accountability over the last two decades. Accreditation agencies, legislators, policy makers, businesses, and parents are concerned that there is a lack of evidenced
learning of what is taught in college. This demand for accountability is leading institutions of higher education to provide evidence by which student learning is measured (Olson et al., 2005).

As higher education programs expand internationalization efforts, a clear understanding of how experiences or programs lead to successful attainment of student outcomes is needed. It is no longer sufficient to simply provide a study abroad program or co-curricular activity. Through internationalization, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of students are enhanced. This may open career doors for graduates, allowing them to be effective and responsible global citizens. Measurement indicators need to be developed and in place for institutional assessment of successfully achieved outcomes. To accomplish this, the faculty needs to have the knowledge and skills, as well as the motivation, to provide appropriate learning experiences. In addition, the organizational culture must be positioned to support the faculty role.

This study is significant since “Outcomes assessment involves gathering and evaluating quantitative and/or qualitative information that demonstrates congruence between the institution’s mission, goals, and objectives and the actual outcomes of its educational activities” (Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2002). Accreditation calls for institutions to focus on making the assessment of learning outcomes a priority. Formative evaluation through a case study of one institution’s organizational goal for student recognition of global perspectives using an innovation of the GAP model (Clark & Estes, 2008; Smith & Ragan, 2005) will provide other liberal arts colleges a process for assessment of its global awareness outcomes.
Limitations and Delimitations

The focus of this study is to operationalize Marymount College’s global perspective goal and examine the barriers (gaps) among faculty that must be addressed to help lead BA students to successful achievement of the global perspective learning goal. The limitations of the study are that it is context specific and addresses the institution’s overall vision and mission. As other institutions have unique visions and missions, this case study cannot be generalized. Other institutions may find benefit in the application of this study’s use of Clark & Estes (2008) gap analysis process for innovative changes within its own programs.

The study is not intended to be one of summative evaluation. A limitation of the study is in the narrowing of the number of factors addressed. Student engagement, staff and administrative influence, research, and funding sources, are other important components of the large picture, but reside outside the scope of this study.

Organization of the Study

Six chapters are used to organize this study. This chapter provided the reader with the key concepts and terminology commonly found in a discussion of globalization and internationalization in higher education. Initial concepts of innovation gap analysis were introduced. The background, purpose, research questions, and significance of the problem were examined. Chapter II provides a review of current literature surrounding the scope of the study. Topics of comprehensive internationalization, global perspective, learning outcomes, quality assurance, the process of internationalization, the gap analysis process, and evaluation lead the reader forward in gaining a deeper understanding of the scholarly research in these areas. Chapter III details the gap analysis methodology and research
design for this study. In Chapter IV, the data and results are assessed and analyzed. Chapter V provides solutions, based on data and literature, for closing the perceived gaps as well as recommendations for an implementation plan for the solutions. Chapter VI concludes the dissertation with a synthesis of the research results and recommendations for summative evaluation of the implementation plan. Discussion of further research and study limitations are addressed on this topic of using innovation gap analysis to develop indicators to measure successful student achievement of a global perspective.