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HOW ARTS INTEGRATION AFFECTS COLLEGE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS' CULTURAL COMPETENCE: A GROUNDED THEORY RESEARCH

Chang-Han Liu

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CULTURAL COMPETENCE: A GROUNDED THEORY RESEARCH

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Chang-Han Liu

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Chang-Han Liu   Catherine DiMartino, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

HOW ARTS INTEGRATION AFFECTS COLLEGE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS'

CULTURAL COMPETENCE: A GROUNDED THEORY RESEARCH

Chang-Han Liu

Research has shown the systemic biases and discrimination persist in higher education. While the literature has demonstrated how culturally responsive teaching (CRT) and culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) can help teachers and students develop their understanding of the otherness that they do not know exist (Bond, 2017; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Shaw, 2012), arts integration and the benefits of arts for non-arts majors students have been loosely tied into the awareness and development of cultural competence. The gaps in existing research have led to the need for examining the connection between cultural competence (as intended by CRT and CRP) and arts integration in higher education.

The purpose of this study was to propose a framework for examining college teachers and students' ability to be aware, observe, and understand cultural competence through their experience of arts integration in the curriculum. This qualitative study employed grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2014) methodology and was conducted in a two-year public community college with a racially and ethnically diverse student body. The researcher bridged the gaps in the existing literature by connecting the findings and implications from previous studies on CRT, CRP, arts education, arts integration, and cultural competence while focusing the setting within culturally related courses available for all students in the research site. The researcher triangulated the data collection of this

study by hosting focus group discussions with the students who have taken said courses, conducting individual interviews with teachers of said courses, and gathering course-related documents including syllabi and class observation memos. The data collected were analyzed to build a theoretical framework, based on concepts and themes emerging from the findings that demonstrated the variety, complexity, and possibility of using arts integration in culturally focused courses in higher education. As an innovative tool to tackle the systemic biases, discrimination, and inequalities in higher education, the framework allows practitioners, leaders, and policymakers to examine the connection, potentials, and feasibilities of utilizing arts integration to foster the cultural competence of college teachers and students.

DEDICATION

To my parents, Chi-Nien Liu and Mei-Ying Kuai, and my husband, Jeff, who have spoiled me with their support throughout my life, I would not have accomplished this without you.

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I want to express my sincere gratitude to all the teachers and students that were involved with this study. They were open and enthusiastic to share their experience, opinions, and feelings on arts-related activities in cultural-focused courses. Their input and insight have enriched the understanding of arts integration, cultural competence, and culturally responsive teaching in higher education. And to my BMCC Cohort, you are my rock.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Recent studies have shown the longstanding systemic biases and racism in higher education persist (Lang & Yandell, 2019; Lopez, 2020; Wilson & Kumar, 2017). Furthermore, the worsening biases and discrimination has resulted in an environment within higher education where certain populations were more negatively affected than others due to their unique cultural attributes (Hooper et al., 2020; Litam, 2020; Schild et al., 2020; Valbrun, 2020). For example, it was reported that the COVID-19 pandemic's negative impacts on individuals' access to education had been disproportional among African American and Latino communities compared to their White counterparts because of the disproportionate burden and challenge these groups faced in health and at work (Hooper et al., 2020). In addition, incidents of racial discrimination, xenophobia, and Sinophobia have increased throughout the country as studies showed racially targeted attacks affected students of particular ethnic origins (Litam, 2020; Schild et al., 2020). Employment-wise, the financial repercussions of the pandemic have disproportionally affected part-time employees and adjunct faculty members as higher education institutions resorted to layoffs to keep themselves afloat (Valbrun, 2020), which attested to the lack of attention and care for the growing number of adjunct faculty (Danaei, 2019). Therefore, it behooves all stakeholders in higher education to build a deeper understanding of one another, locally and globally, and to contribute actively to an affirming and anti-discriminatory environment that reflects and respects values, beliefs, and cultures (Drake & Reid, 2020).

However, as heeded by Cole (2020) who professed that "before current initiatives are implemented aimed at dismantling the longstanding, racially unjust systems in higher education," we need to remember "there are lessons to be learned from the past" (Cole, 2020, p. 18). In addition, as Roberto et al. (2020) noted, the unfair treatments faced by non-White people during the COVID-19 pandemic are the latest repercussion of a long-running "otherness" that Western society has attributed to Asian peoples. As such, I aim to learn from the past and bridge the gaps in the existing literature by exploring the connection of two concepts—arts and culture—with a goal to explore the possibilities of examining, developing, and evaluating college students and teachers' cultural competence in the curriculum that include arts-related experience.

Drawn from existing literature on the practices and benefits of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002) and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) as well as studies on arts integration and arts benefits, I will employ grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2014) to develop a theoretical framework for practitioners, leaders, and policymakers in higher education to contemplate or revisit how the combination of arts integration and cultural competence can be employed in higher education to tackle the ongoing and aggregating discrimination in all forms such as classism, genderism, homophobia, racism, sexism, xenophobia, etc. The results of this study will introduce a framework for college students and teachers to reflect on how artistic experience can enhance their awareness and understanding of the otherness. Innovative approaches to understanding otherness are of necessity, and this research attempts to be one designed to call attention from all stakeholders in higher education on the issues and possible solutions in discussion.

Several key concepts of this study warrant clear definitions. The first ones are related to culture. As will be discussed in my literature review, culture has been defined differently by different scholars in exiting literature. For the purpose of this study, I will follow Chun and Evan's (2016) definition that considers the fluidity and complexity of culture. This fluid and complex nature of culture is pertinent considering how interwoven the world has become and how connected every individual can be with one another no matter their backgrounds and localities. According to Chun and Evan's (2016), culture is a concept that encompasses a variety of dimensions and attributes that include, but not limited to "race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, socioeconomic status, parental education, geographic location, and military experience" (Chun & Evans, 2016, p. 22). While cultural competence is defined as the ability for one person to appreciate and celebrate their own cultures while gaining knowledge of any fluency in at least one other culture (Ladson-Billings, 1995), culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is defined as "using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Whereas both teachers and students' cultural competence will be the focus of this study, teachers will be asked to reflect on how the use of arts in class affects their awareness or ability to carry out CRT.

The other key concepts in this study have to do with arts. It is worth clarifying that, especially since recent literature on arts education have shown striking incongruence of participants, context, and setting (Milbrandt et al., 2018), this study will incorporate concepts in existing literature from both arts education and arts integration as the components of two conceptual frameworks (Figure 1 and Figure 2) in this study. Whereas

the literature on arts education has contributed primarily to arts-based disciplines, the existing typologies and frameworks (Eisner, 1999; McCarthy & Jinnett, 2001) surrounding the various benefits of arts will be employed to explore, examine, and refine the connection between arts integration and cultural competence. More details about arts education, arts integration and cultural competence will be discussed in literature review.

It is also worth noting that, arts has been argued to benefit individuals' capacities to empathize with other people and cultures as well as to observe and understand the world (McCarthy et al., 2004), which is an assumption based on which students' perception and experience of arts experience in higher education was examined in this study. As such, what was also investigated in this study is how non-arts teachers who incorporated arts experience in their curriculum perceived and reflected on their competencies in culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002), which requires them to teach with the consideration of students' diverse backgrounds.

Purpose of the Study

Aiming to explore a new framework for examining arts and culture as a pedagogical approach to combat the longstanding systemic biases and discrimination, I conducted a study to investigate college students and teachers' perceptions on arts integration and cultural competence. With a focus on a two-year, public community college over 70% of the student population is Black or Hispanic (City Center Community College, n.d.)[1] while nearly 50% of the entire faculty members are White and only 25% are Black and 13% are Hispanic or Puerto Rican (City Center

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[1] All data throughout the document about the research site are rounded up/down and anonymized intentionally to ensure that the information about the research participants cannot be traced.

Community College, 2016), this study will contribute to filling the gaps in the existing literature. At the end of the research, a preliminary theoretical framework was introduced to explain how both students and teacher may benefit from the experience of incorporating arts into their culturally responsive teaching (CRT) and culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) to develop and enhance students and teachers' cultural competence. By following the grounded theory research method (Corbin & Strauss, 2014), this study was empirical research designed to offer a framework that combines arts integration and cultural competence, through which implications for future research, practices, and policymaking can be further explored.

Statement of the Problem

As mentioned above, existing literature has shed light on the systemic biases and discrimination against people of certain cultural attributes. While efforts have been made to tackle a variety of issues in higher education (e.g., college preparedness, resources accessibility, racial profiling in admission, and food insecurity, etc.), colleges and universities as fabrics of the society still continue to seek solutions and practices to foster mutual understanding across cultural, racial, ethnic, and social differences on- and off-campus. Unfortunately, society has seen increasing clashes among groups holding disparate views, beliefs, or ideologies which have instigated and intensified fear and hate in recent years (Buffington, 2019; Paluck & Chwe, 2017). Adding to the complicated social atmosphere, the global health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has compelled all stakeholders to rethink and reimage the diversity, equity, inclusion, social justice, and multicultural discourses (Lopez, 2020) as cases of discrimination continue to occur in higher education to the degree that some instances

escalated into legal litigations. For example, a lawsuit was filed by current and formal students against the U.S. Department of Education, "asking that the religious exemption to a federal law prohibiting sex-based discrimination at educational institutions be declared unconstitutional in how it is applied to LGBTQ students" (Redden, 2021, para. 1). Another recent on-campus case that demonstrated conflicting ideologies involved discrimination that was allegedly based on staff's gender and race (Anderson, 2021).

Just as culture is viewed differently by people holding different perspectives, Bustamante et al. (2009) demonstrated that not everyone in higher education cares for the idea of diversity. In fact, one person in a leadership position was so against the concept of diversity as to say: "How can America achieve greatness when we spend all of our time and energy bringing up the mediocre?" while another person holding position of power in higher education suggested that we should "stop with the whole diversity bologna" (Bustamante et al., 2009, p. 813). More recently, diversity has been thought to be a concept that promotes "malign ideology" (Fuchs, 2020) or "anti-American propaganda" (Bur, 2020). While society as a whole tackle these issues in the era of "post-truth" and "alternative facts" (Larsen, 2018), stakeholders in higher education need to continue to examine within ourselves and find ways to tackle the issues to the best of our abilities in order to uphold higher education's goals to do good for the public. Since "any healthy society needs an educational system that helps to produce good citizens, good workers, and good social opportunities" 4/3/2022 12:02:00 PM, a look at the longstanding systemic biases and discrimination through the lens of cultural competence will help stakeholders to recalibrate what goodness higher education should and can believe in and produce.

This study addressed this problem by 1) using conceptual frameworks based on existing literature to examine college students and teachers' experience of arts integration and its effect on their awareness and development of cultural competency, and 2) introducing a preliminary theoretical framework for future practices and research on arts integration and cultural competence in higher education.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in this study is three-pronged. The first has to do with arts education. While criticizing studies for lacking robust empirical designs yet claiming the connection between young students' art experience and their academic achievements, Eisner called for our attention to the "content and forms arts display and the culture and time in which the work was created" (Eisner, 1998, p. 37). Adding to Eisner's constructs, Catterall articulated the importance of "the role artistic representation can play in developing understanding" (Catterall, 1998, p. 6–7). Eisner (1998, 1999) and Catterall's (1998) views on arts education offered a path on which I explored what arts education can/should do and "what a convincing study [of arts education/integration] would look like" (Eisner, 1999, p. 151).

Second, literature pertaining to the results and usefulness of arts integration in the curriculum also solidified of the conceptual framework employed in this study. For example, according to Arveklev et al. (2018), nursing students who participated in drama workshops developed higher levels of social ability and an understanding of others. In addition, Duma (2014) reported that building teachers' capacities to utilize arts integration across the curriculum not only yielded positive results on "student learning, engagement, and attitudes about learning, especially for low-performing

students" (Duma, 2014, p. 15), it also fostered teachers' understanding and support for arts integration and facilitated a positive change in school cultures that encouraged collaboration among faculty members.

Third, the education theories of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002) and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014) are utilized to enhance the robustness of the conceptual framework of my study. Defined as "using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching" (Gay, 2002, p. 106), culturally responsive teaching (CRT) requires faculty to note and correct several trends such as avoiding controversial issues, giving proportionally more attention to African Americans than other groups of color, and ignoring poverty, etc. On the other hand, Ladson-Billings (1995) posited that culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) as "good teaching" must enable students to "experience academic success, develop and/or maintain cultural competence, and develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160–163).

Built upon the three abovementioned educational theories and/or practices involving arts and culture, my study is an embodiment of learning from the past and moving toward findings a solution—a theoretical framework for stakeholders in higher education to contemplate how arts integration and cultural competence can be utilized and examined.

Significance of the Study

My study, an exploratory examination of college students and teachers' perceptions of arts integration and cultural competence, contributed to several gaps in the

existing literature. As will be further explained in Chapter Two, there is a dearth of study

on arts education in higher education that is not focused on the degree-granting

disciplines for art majors. There is also a lack of research that addresses how arts

integration can affect individuals' cultural competence in higher education despite

abundant studies on such topics that have been done in the K-12 setting. My empirical

study provided a theoretical framework that connects the dots, fills the gaps, and allows

stakeholders in higher education to contemplate whether the application of arts

integration and cultural competence can (or cannot) be a tool for students and teachers to

see and understand the otherness.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

1. How do students and teachers perceive the concepts of arts integration and
   cultural competence?

2. How do students and teachers reflect on the experiences of arts integration?

3. How does the experience of arts integration affect students and teachers'
   understanding of culture(s)?

Design and Methods

Research Design and Data Analysis

This study was a qualitative study using a grounded theory approach (Corbin &

Strauss, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Fraenkel et al., 2012; Miles et al., 2014) to explore

college students and teachers' perceptions of arts integration and cultural competence.

This study was conducted at a public, two-year community college in New York City in

the fall of 2021. The sample included teachers teaching and students enrolled in culturally

related courses. The teachers and students participated either by joining in my focus group sessions or individual interviews. The data sources were triangulated by the use of transcripts from the focus group sessions, transcripts from the individual interviews, and course-related materials such as syllabi and class observation memos. Data were analyzed through a series of coding processes following Corbin and Strauss's (2014) grounded theory method. More details about the methods and procedures will be explained in Chapter Three.

Participants

The participants for this study were recruited via purposeful sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2017) from a public, two-year community college in New York City. The identifies and demographics of all participants were recorded and used anonymously. Originally, I planned to conduct two focus group sessions with four to six participants in either session. I also planned to conduct eight individual interviews with students and teachers. Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and time constraints, three individual interviews and three focus group sessions were conducted remotely with the online tool Zoom. As a faculty member in higher education who had gone through three semesters of online teaching prior to collecting data for this study, I was familiar with the online tools and were able to make useful the digital platforms' strengths and advantages.

Definition of Terms

The following keywords are constantly referred to throughout this study and are worthy of clarification.

Culture

This study followed Chun and Evan's (2016) definition that considers the fluidity and complexity of culture. According to Chun and Evan's (2016), culture is a concept that encompasses a variety of dimensions and attributes that include, but not limited to "race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, socioeconomic status, parental education, geographic location, and military experience" (Chun & Evans, 2016, p. 22).

Cultural Competence

In this study, I adopted Ladson-Billings's (1995) assertion that cultural competence refers to the ability for one person to appreciate and celebrate one's own cultures while gaining knowledge of any fluency in at least one other culture.

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

Following Gay (2002) and Ladson-Billings (1995), in this study culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is defined as "using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively", which is based on the assumption that "when academic knowledge and skills are situated within the lived experiences and frames of reference of students, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). As opposed to aiming to develop or enhance students' awareness and understanding of culturally related content, CRT is a pedagogy that requires educators to consider how they can design and deliver the better teaching by improving their cultural competence in understanding and communicating with the increasingly diverse student population.

Arts Education

Instead of referring to arts education as the curriculum for students majoring in arts disciplines, the focus of this paper was on the experiences of students of all majors in higher education institutions through their participation in arts-related materials or activities. In addition, the teachers involved in this study were not arts teachers. Rather, the researcher recruited non-arts teachers to investigate their perceptions and practices on incorporating arts experience in their curricular activates. Also, while the researcher had found no definite clarification or differentiation in recent literature on higher education between art and arts, it should be noted that both *art education* and *arts education* can be seen in the existing literature and are sometimes used interchangeably.

Arts Integration

This study will follow the views and examples described by Burnaford et al. (2007) who defined arts integration broadly as an idea that is "related to structural, conceptual, and philosophical notions that are connected to curricular movements in schools" (Burnaford et al., 2007, p. 1) and categorized the practices and methods of arts integration into three groups: a) arts integration as learning "through" and "with" the arts; b) arts integration as a curricular connections process; and c) arts integration as collaborative engagement (Burnaford et al., 2007).

CHAPTER 2

Introduction

This chapter presents the conceptual framework of the current study and a thematic review of existing literature on related areas. The literature reviewed in this section includes articles from peer-reviewed journals, reports, news articles, education theories, and websites. This chapter begins with a discussion of the conceptual framework for the study and continues with the review of the literature. The findings from the literature review are organized into the following themes: 1) arts education; 2) arts integration; 3) benefits of the arts; 4) cultural competence; 5) culturally responsive teaching and curriculum design, and 6) evaluating cultural competence. This section concludes with a discussion of the gaps in the existing research literature, which this study directly addresses.

Conceptual Framework

A rich literature describes the interests, practice, studies, and theories on arts education (Catterall, 1998; Eisner, 1998; C. A. Farrington et al., 2019; C. Farrington & Shewfelt, 2020; Green, 2015; Lazarus IV, 1985; McCarthy & Jinnett, 2001; Milbrandt et al., 2018; Winner et al., 2013; Winner & Cooper, 2000), arts integration (Arveklev et al., 2018; Burnaford et al., 2007; Duma, 2014; Haidet et al., 2016; King & Anderson, 2004; Robinson, 2011, 2013), and cultural competence (Bustamante et al., 2009; Hong et al., 2013b; Johnson et al., 2006; Keane & Provident, 2017; Lai, 2009; Li, 2020; Overall, 2009; Rogers et al., 2007b). Despite existing literature in higher education tends to loosely connect arts education and its effects with cultural understanding, little attention has been focused on rigorously addressing how arts and culture can or should

be tied together for the betterment of higher education. As such, to make the case of combining arts integration and cultural competence in higher education, the researcher decided to embark on the exploration based on a three-pronged conceptual framework (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework A: Three Areas That Foster the Development and Understanding of Arts Integration and Cultural Competence
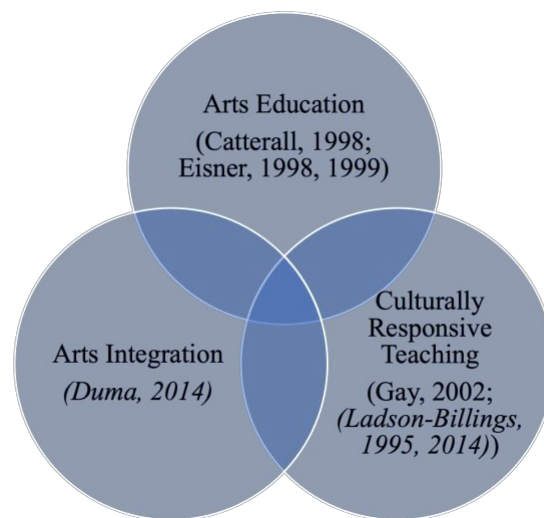
First, Eisner's (1998, 1999) and Catterall's (1998) views on arts education and its implications were used to construct the base of why and how arts education can be a tool for cultural competence. Second, the results and usefulness of arts integration in education drawn from recent research (Duma, 2014) on a ten-year execution of arts integration program shed light on how arts education can benefit students and teachers. Third, education theories on culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002) and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014) were utilized to enhance the theoretical robustness of how arts integration can be employed as a pedagogical tool to develop and increase teachers and students' cultural competence.

Eisner and Catterall's Views on Arts Education

Rather than detailing what constitutes arts education, this study focuses on the benefits and outcomes of arts education in existing literature (Catterall, 1998; Eisner, 1998, 1999). Despite research and studies that purported to examine and solidify the correlation between arts education and students' academic achievements, Eisner suggested that educators should justify arts education without using an ancillary rationale because "we do the arts no service when we try to make their case by touting their contributions to other fields" (Eisner, 1999, p. 158). That is, one should not subject arts education's success to how it affects students' scores in their tests on other academic disciplines. Furthermore, the literature showed that not only can artistic experience and activities be a productive way to teach and learn, to advance communication skills, and to cultivate interpersonal and intrapersonal understandings, there is also a robust association between involvement in the arts during middle and high school and students' subsequent achievement, persistence, and attitudes toward community (Catterall, 1998). In other words, the benefits of arts education are beyond the consideration of students' curricular performance.

Even though Eisner (1998) and Catterall (1998) held different views on how arts education's effects on students' academic achievement can and have been researched, they both articulated that arts education help students and those involved to achieve better understanding, not just of arts but of life and the lives of others. At the time when inequality and discrimination continue to worsen on- and off-campus, it behooves us in higher education to revisit some of the goals that arts education can achieve as a way to address the systemic biases and discrimination caused by misunderstanding or ill-

informed judgment. To that end, as identified by Eisner, arts education yields three dispositional outcomes: 1) a willingness to imagine possibilities that are not now, but which might become; 2) a desire to explore ambiguity, to be willing to forestall premature closure in pursuing resolutions; and 3) the ability to recognize and accept the multiple perspectives and resolutions that work in the arts celebrate (Eisner, 1998, p. 38). While noting that these outcomes can be applied to the non-arts domains, Eisner's perspective of and aspiration for what arts can do compelled educators to think about and practice arts in ways that go beyond simply the making of arts. Since "the quality of experience the arts make possible is enriched when the arts are experienced within a context of ideas relevant to them", the application of arts in the curriculum will be beneficial because "understanding the cultural context is among the most important ways in which such enrichment can be achieved" (Eisner, 1999, p. 156–157). To put it another way, bringing arts into students' learning experience will enhance their understanding of the "connection between the content and form that the arts take and the culture and time in which the work was created" (Eisner, 1999, p. 156). This view on arts education suggested a contribution that providing arts education for non-arts students in higher education can make—developing teachers and students' awareness and appreciation of the otherness that they don't already know exist by reflecting on the context in which the arts were created.

Results of Ten Years of Arts Integration

While arts integration can trace its root back to nearly 100 years ago (Burnaford et al., 2007), it was not until 1999 that a long-term, well-structured arts integration program called Change Education Through the Arts (CETA) was created, implemented, and

studied. After conducting an analytical review of three independent mixed-methods studies of CETA, Duma (2014) concluded that CETA's first 10-year (from 1999 to 2009) of endeavor to build teachers' capacities to employ arts integration across curriculum indeed yielded positive outcomes not only on students' learning but also on teachers' perspective and school's culture. In the face of criticism that called for more empirical studies on arts education and arts integration (Eisner, 1998; Winner & Cooper, 2000), the findings from the studies on the first 10 years of CETA's implementation provided a solid backdrop for the current research that seeks to construct a preliminary theoretical framework to examine the connection between arts integration and cultural competence in higher education. Below is a summary of the findings from the studies on CETA as they pertain to students, teachers, and schools. It should be mentioned that only one of the three evolution studies mentioned its research participants as teachers and students from a pre-K through 12 school; the other two studies did not identify the level of the schools where the research participants were learning, teaching, or employed.

Impact on Students. Studies showed that arts integration helped students to engage the learning experience in deeper, more meaningful ways. For example, students were described as "enthusiastic, excited, eager to participate and enjoying learning in a creative way" and they also were "more likely to take risks in their learning and show their knowledge in multiple ways" (Duma, 2014, p. 9). Teachers trained at CETA also reported that because arts integration was intended as an offering for all students, it motivated more students, especially those that were considered unfocused and frustrated learners, to be engaged in learning. Students' better engagement in learning also can be attributed to the fact that through arts integration they had the opportunity to make and

express personal connections with the curriculum as well as to find and own their voices. Teachers also found that arts integration helped students develop and improve cognitive skills by encouraging them to "give more thoughtful and thought-provoking response to questions rather than quick answers" and assisting them in "developing their critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and ability to approach ideas from multiple perspectives" (Duma, 2014, p. 10).

Impact on Teachers. Teachers who participated in CETA reported that the program provided them with instructional strategies through professional development that helped them feel empowered and make a difference for their students. More specifically, the tools and ideas teachers received through CETA helped them reach all types of learners, and consequently widen the opportunity for all students to become successful. For teachers themselves, arts integration impacted their pedagogy positively. For example, through a three-year observation, it was found that teachers using the CETA model were able to "increasingly use collaborative learning strategies" (Duma, 2014, p. 12). In addition, teachers reported "substantial comfort in replicating specific activities/units as well as adapting or extending the arts integration techniques they learned in [the CETA] workshops" (Duma, 2014, p. 13). It can be inferred that, through well-structured professional development, teachers who are not artists can learn how to utilize arts integration across disciplines.

Impact on Schools. Arts integration, as teachers reported, made the school atmosphere more positive and cohesive. Most noticeably, teachers saw an increase in their collaboration among peers, which helped to create an environment conducive to teacher innovation. Not only were the teachers able to teach better individually, but the

process of learning through the CETA model also made them more accepting of one another's feedback and suggestions on how to teach better (Duma, 2014). In fact, "the teachers and school leaders at one CETA school often referred to their school's growing learning community as a significant success" (Duma, 2014, p. 14).

More discussion on arts integration will be covered below in the thematic findings from a review of existing literature. However, it is important to note that according to the studies on CETA, researchers have found 1) arts integration impacts positively on students' learning, engagement, and attitudes; 2) ongoing professional development in arts integration can reinvigorate teachers' beliefs and practice in arts integration and reenergize their teaching; and 3) arts integration can transform the school atmosphere by creating a collaborative school culture (Duma, 2014). Therefore, the benefits of arts education, as illustrated above by Eisner's views, can have a wider impact since faculty who are not arts teachers can be trained to utilized arts-related materials and pedagogy to enhance the teaching and learning experience. To be more specific, the teaching of/about arts is not limited to artists or arts teachers. With adequate training and structure, faculty across the disciplines can benefit from arts by employing arts integration in their curriculum.

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

Defined as "using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively", culturally responsive teaching (CRT) has been a transformative tool in education based on the assumption that "when academic knowledge and skills are situated within the lived experiences and frames of reference of students, they are more personally meaningful,

have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). The following section summarized Gay's iteration of CRT pertaining to the knowledge base, curriculum designs, classroom environment, and the instructional styles.

Cultural Diversity Knowledge Base. In addressing how to adopt and conduct culturally responsive teaching, Gay (2002) professed that "there is no shortage of quality information available about multicultural education," which simply needed to be "located, learned, and woven into the preparation programs of teachers and classroom instruction" by teachers who might ambiguously disregard the responsibility and opportunity by saying "we can't teach what we don't know" (Gay, 2002, p. 106–108). Gay also noted several trends that teachers of CRT, including those who intended to provide an inclusive learning environment, should correct. These trends included "avoiding controversial issues such as racism, historical atrocities, powerlessness, and hegemony; focusing on the accomplishments of the same few high-profile individuals repeatedly and ignoring the actions of groups; giving proportionally more attention to African Americans than other groups of color; decontextualizing women, their issues, and their actions from their race and ethnicity; ignoring poverty; and emphasizing factual information while minimizing other kinds of knowledge (such as values, attitudes, feelings, experiences, and ethics)" (Gay, 2002, p. 108). To put it another way, teachers who embrace CRT should be prepared to embrace culturally related issues embodied in all aspects of their students' cultural identities as opposed to picking and choosing certain cultural norms based on their personal preference, familiarity, or sense of ease and comfort.

CRT Curricula. Gay (2002) summarized the three types of curricula for culturally responsive teaching as 1) formal plans for instruction, approved by the policy and governing bodies of educational systems; 2) the symbolic curriculum, such as the use of "bulletin board decorations; images of heroes and heroines; trade books; and publicly displayed statements of social etiquette, rules and regulations, ethical principles, and tokens of achievement," and 3) societal curriculum, which is "the knowledge, ideas, and impressions about ethnic groups that are portrayed in the mass media" (Gay, 2002, p. 108–109). Namely, there is a variety of ways to create a CRT environment in which the teaching/learning takes place. The actual practice depends on how a teacher thinks and navigates the creation of such curricular, who should be involved, and what content should be included to serve the students more effectively and efficiently.

A Caring and Sensitive Environment. According to Gay (2002), teachers should learn and practice how to provide a learning environment that allows diverse students more possibilities and options to learn. Gay's suggestions included 1) "creating classroom climates that are conducive to learning for ethnically diverse students"; 2) conducting "effective cross-cultural communication" that "reflects cultural values and shapes learning behaviors and how to modify classroom interactions" to better accommodate diverse students; and 3) "matching instructional techniques to the learning styles of diverse students" (Gay, 2002, p. 109–113). While noting such teaching capacities were not something that happened automatically, Gay offered eight specific components that teachers should be mindful of and configure differently depending on various groups as they continue to learn and craft their skills of CRT.

These eight components include: "preferred content; ways of working through learning tasks; techniques for organizing and conveying ideas and thoughts; physical and social settings for task performance; structural arrangements of work, study, and performance space; perceptual stimulation for receiving, processing, and demonstrating comprehension and competence; motivations, incentives, and rewards for learning; and interpersonal interactional styles" (Gay, 2002, p. 113). One might say these eight components echoed what Ladson-Billings (1995) had observed as "good teaching" when she first introduced the thought-provoking framework of culturally relevant pedagogy, which is the focus of the following section.

The (r)Evolution of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP)

Similar to Gay's attempt to promulgate "the knowledge and skills needed to prepare teachers to work more effectively with students who are not part of the U.S. ethnic, racial, and cultural mainstream" and to eventually lead to a teaching and learning environment where "classroom interactions and instruction can be changed to embrace these differences" (Gay, 2002, p. 114), Ladson-Billings's (1995, 2014) development on culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) provided further insight for faculty to reflect on as CRP continued to evolve in and adapt to the increasingly diverse world.

Origin of CRP. As a pedagogy that links schooling and culture, especially the culture of ethnic minorities, Ladson-Billings (1995) observed and categorized the criteria/propositions of what she considered as "good teaching": "(a) students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160).

With culture being the focal point of the development of CRP, Ladson-Billings offered practical solutions and examples that made it possible for teachers and students of the minority to experience a sense of success and accomplishment in the classroom while engaging consciously "with the world and others critically" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 162). The main takeaway from CRP as it was first introduced was that "teachers need not shy away from conducting their own research" as they develop their practices of CRP and that "their unique perspectives and personal investment must not be overlooked" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 163). Just as students are encouraged to bring their experiences and perspectives into the learning environments, teachers ought to bring theirs as well.

  CRP 2.0, a.k.a. Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy. Hoping scholars and teachers to learn from, not about, the experience of African American students in her earlier iteration of CRP, Ladson-Billings (2014) acknowledged the fluidity and complexity of culture as early on as she first mentioned of CRP in the 1990s. Consequently, she noted that a "remix" version of CRP was needed to address the social inequalities that perpetuated the vicious cycle where disadvantaged students and underachieving students' experience tended to continue with their children. Frustrated by the lack of teachers' discussions or intentions to discuss with students on critical issues that have a direct impact on their lives and communities, such as the rising incarceration rates, gun laws, and everyday school climate affecting what to dress and how to behave, etc., Ladson-Billings turned her attention to First Wave, a scholarship program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison that supported a learning community of spoken word and hip-hop artists. After a collaboration between participants in the

First Wave program and pre-service teachers, Ladson-Billings's younger colleagues, i.e., her students, provided the next iteration of CRE, known as culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP). What differentiated CSP from CRP was its departure from focusing on one racial or ethnic group. Instead, CSP pushed teachers to consider "the global identities that are emerging in the arts, literature, music, athletics, and film. It also points to the shifts of identity that now move us toward a hybridity, fluidity, and complexity never before considered in schools and classrooms" (Ladson-Billings, 2014, p. 82).

The transition and transformation among CRP, CSP, and CRT compel us stakeholders in education to continue to develop, practice, and examine the teaching/learning experience as it flows into the tributary where various aspects of cultures and multiple forms of arts merge, which will inevitably result in complex layers of lens through which students and teachers can perceive and reflect on the similarities and differences among themselves.

It is based on the foundation of the abovementioned theories and practices that I conducted the current grounded-theory research (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). With this research, I refined the conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 and presented a enhanced conceptual framework as seen in Figure 2, that illustrates the connection between several concepts related to arts integration and cultural competence. In this framework, each person experiences a linear process from being an isolated individual to becoming a part of a collective. As shown in the figure, the linear progress of experiencing arts integration encompasses three stages through which the individuals 1) become aware of the existence or lack thereof their cultural competence, 2) gain

knowledge that fosters or enhances their cultural competence, and 3) learn and practice the skills of cultural competence. At the end of the experience, it is expected that each individual can reflect on how the artistic experience has or has not contributed to the discovery and/or development of their understanding of their own culture or that of others. Due to the nature of this study that is "drawn to the fluid, evolving, and dynamic nature… as opposed to the more structured designs" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 5), this proposed framework was continuously reviewed, revised, and eventually morphed into the new theoretical framework as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework B: Connection between Arts Integration and Cultural Competence

| Isolated Individuals | Become Aware of Cultural Competence | Gain Knowledge of Cultural Competence | Learn the Skills of Cultural Competnece | Individuals As Part of A Collective |

Pre-arts integration   Arts Integration   Post-arts integration

Review of the Literature

The following section provides a review of literature in the field as related to this study.

Arts Education

Recent studies on arts education showed three areas of main focuses: 1) there appears to be a lack of robust empirical studies, 2) the majority of the research is focused on K-12 rather than higher education, and 3) the studies tend to focus more on

individuals' process of learning or making of art instead of the effects that arts might have on those who are not the artmakers (C. Farrington & Shewfelt, 2020; González-Zamar & Abad-Segura, 2020; Milbrandt et al., 2018; Norton & Gregson, 2020; Wienk, 2020). These three areas of focuses are discussed as follows.

Despite the differences of disciplines across music, visual arts, dance, drama, literary arts, etc., researchers acknowledged the naissance of research on arts education in the United States and the struggle that educators went through in the 1960s to only find the lack of robustness of the field still existed in recent studies (Eisner, 1999; Winner & Cooper, 2000). For example, Wienk (2020) pointed out that "evidence shown by previous research is however often ignored rather than taken as a starting point by succeeding researchers" and that "the claim that arts education has the potential to enhance transformational processes in education are not clearly defined yet" (Wienk, 2020, p. 18).

Milbrandt et al.'s (2018) meta-analysis discovered that while 40% of the research articles did not specify the student participants' age or level of education, 38% were done with a focus on students in K-12 and 21% percent focused on higher education and pre-service teachers. The authors also pointed out "the troubling discrepancies between the educator participant information and the context descriptions or non-specified students" (Milbrandt et al., 2018, p. 49). When it comes to the research strength, Wienk (2020) further noted that "literature references are often absent, and the word 'I' is frequently used," which shows "commitment to the living presence of art, next to the robust academic collection of scholarship and research, addressing the fact that research can at times seem distant from the experience of art" (Wienk, 2020, p. 8). In other words, not only more research on arts education in higher education is needed, but also it needs to

include and expand from the existing literature which tends to be based on the personal experience of the researchers. After analyzing studies in arts education published in two journals during 2014-2016, Milbrandt et al. (2018) concluded that "contemporary philosophical inquiry, concerned with a critical reflection about art, culture, and nature… should have a much more robust presence in art education research praxis" (Milbrandt et al., 2018, p. 52), which directly pointed to the significance of making the connection between arts education and the cultural-related influences it might have.

Evidenced by existing research on K-12, arts educators who believed that arts disciplines have a positive effect on children's and adolescents' social-emotional development have recently proposed a framework for how arts learning experiences across disciplines can help develop young people's social-emotional competencies (C. A. Farrington et al., 2019; C. Farrington & Shewfelt, 2020; Ghanbari, 2015). According to this framework, it is expected that "arts integration programs, cross-curricular professional development, and exposure to arts education as part of teacher training programs may provide teachers in all curricular areas with new ways of thinking about how to connect their own instruction to social-emotional learning" (C. Farrington & Shewfelt, 2020, p. 34). Such aspirations to bring about the benefits of arts education to instructors and students participating in the experience are also shared by several researchers who focused their study on the experience of college students (Mareneck, 2018; Miller & Dumford, 2015; Norton & Gregson, 2020), though the researched sample in higher education tended to only included those who were studying in art disciplines as opposed to non-arts students. For example, Mareneck (2018) focused on how the teaching pedagogy in a college theatre program can be improved to better serve the acting

students who are from diverse backgrounds; similarly, Miller and Dumford (2015) and Norton and Gregson (2020) explored in their qualitative research on how the art pedagogy or the institutional environment can affect visual arts students' critical thinking skills on and beyond campus.

While there has been little research focused on the support for or history of arts education for non-arts students in higher education, some tangential studies can shed light on how society views and treats arts and cultural activities in general. As shown in Figures 3, 4, and 5, despite the fluctuation of support from federal and state agencies for arts and cultural activities, private giving has steadily increased between 2008 and 2013 (Kushner & Cohen, 2016). Given the evidence mentioned above that showed recent research on arts education in higher education was primarily about arts major students, the funding trend— the drastic decrease in financial support from states agencies seen in Figure 4—implicate that there can be a decrease in the opportunities for non-arts major students in the post-secondary public school system to experience arts and cultural activities. It can also be inferred that, without systemic and strategic planning to ensure or increase post-secondary institutions' commitment to providing arts and cultural activities, disadvantaged teachers and students in higher education will be without resources of or exposure to arts integration. While the argument for or against public support for arts and cultural activities has oscillated since the "culture wars" (McCarthy et al., 2004) that began in the 1980s and 1990s, much of the discussion covered a wide spectrum from the social, ecumenical, and political issues surrounding art advocacy to how arts exactly enriched people's lives, which was a topic remains unexplained in an empirical way (McCarthy et al., 2004, p. xi).

Figure 3

Federal Government Arts and Culture Funding (Kushner & Cohen, 2016)
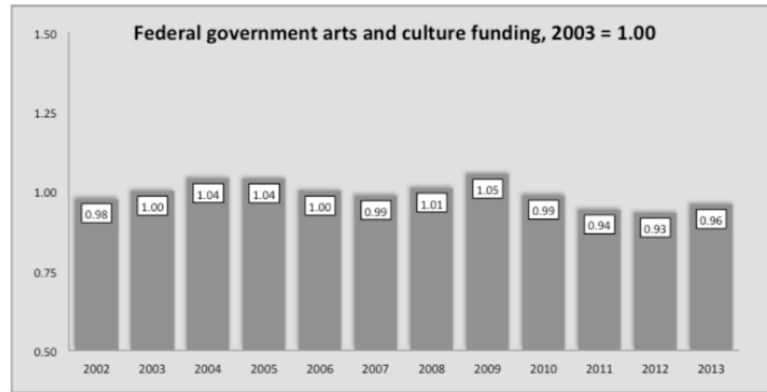
Figure 4

State Arts Agency Legislative Appropriations (Kushner & Cohen, 2016)
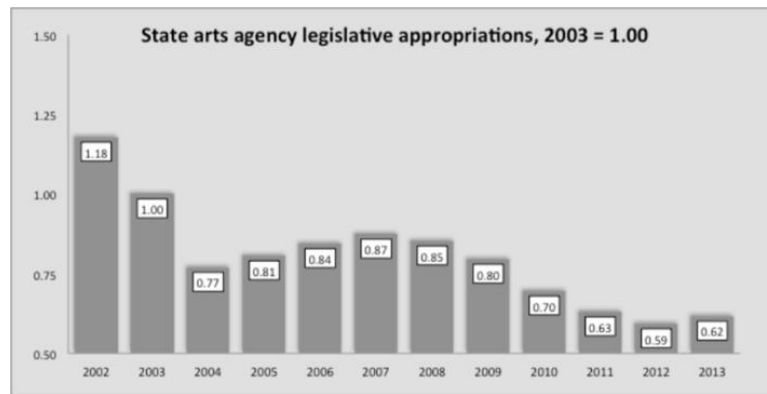
Figure 5

Private Giving to Arts and Culture (Kushner & Cohen, 2016)
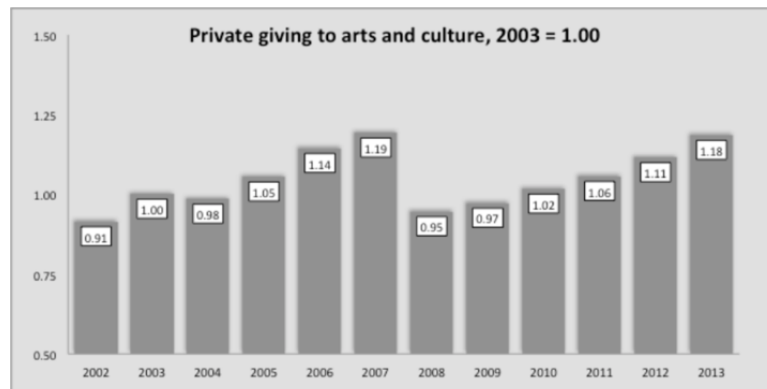
Such concerns on the effectiveness of research on arts and arts education can be intensified if one should make sense of the rationale that reduces the economic significance of arts and cultural activities:

The cultural industries contribute $70.9 billion to the U.S. annual GDP – an impressive sum, but the total U.S. annual GDP is $14 trillion, which basically means the entire cultural sector contributes .51% of the entire GDP in any given year. On any given day, 1.5 million people partake in our performing arts events, which sound impressive – but in any given year, per the Survey on Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), only 34% of the whole U.S. population, or about 78 million people, go to any performing arts at all – and many of those people go only once. Nothing to sneeze at but still, we're relatively tiny – important, but tiny. (Brown et al., 2012, p. 228)

Without a recent study that examines holistically the participation in or experience of arts in higher education, Brown et al.'s arguments implied that the majority of students in higher education either choose not to, don't have the opportunity, or cannot afford to consume or participate in arts and cultural activities in or outside of the schools. Coupled with the lack of state funding to support arts and cultural activities, the chance for an average public college student from a mid-to-low-income family to experience arts is not promising. As such, it behooves stakeholders in higher education to investigate the role of arts education for students who are non-arts majors, especially when evidence shows the positive impacts that artistic experience may have on students' cultural competence.

Arts Integration

Fortunately, student affairs professionals and educators in colleges have embarked on the empirical approach to the research of arts education on non-arts students—in the name of arts integration. The genesis of the term, arts integration, has not been thoroughly explored in existing literature, though similar concepts have been around since at least the early twentieth century (Burnaford et al., 2007). Many practitioners and organizations have offered tools and models on how to integrate arts in education (e.g., see John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' arts education "tool kit"). This section provides an overview of the concept and the research surrounding arts integration in recent literature.

Burnaford et al., (2007) combed through the historical background of what is now commonly referred to as arts integration. From fused curriculum in the early 1900s to reorganized subjects or correlated curriculum in the 1930s to curriculum integration in the 1960s, educators have continued to revisit the idea of an integrated model in education. Instead of asking and answering questions based on categories or disciplines, educators were encouraged to tackle issues using whatever knowledge is available and appropriate regardless of subject areas (Burnaford et al., 2007). Bresler (1995) also provided a historical overview of how arts integration found its roots in the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century by scholars like John Dewey and then was revived in the 1960s and 1970s with two prominent advocates: Harry Proudy and Elliot Eisner. Focused on K-12, Bresler observed how arts integration penetrated from the scholar world to the more practice-oriented circle of arts associations as early as the 1930s and then reemerged in the 1990s. Bresler also acknowledged arts integration was

"best examined by qualitative methodologies that involve extensive observation and immersion in the setting" (Bresler, 1995, p. 32). He further categorized the four approaches of arts integration as 1) the subservient style, 2) the co-equal, cognitive integration style, 3) the affective style, and 4) the social integration style, all of which are to be considered as theoretical constructs and practiced with fluidity and complexity.

Practitioners in education have followed Bresler's footprint and explored arts integration as an empirical research subject. For example, Robinson (2011, 2012, 2013) conducted a series of mixed-methods or qualitative research based on Brelser's framework to investigate the benefits of arts integration relating to young children's academic performance in grade schools. On the other hand, King and Anderson (2004), Tarantino (2012), and Creech and Zomorodian (2017) conducted narrative inquiries into how arts integration benefited the learning experiences of students in the higher education setting. Within K-12, Robinson (2013) incorporated a quasi-experimental approach and single-subject rubrics that were organized into three dimensions: causal design quality, implementation quality, and effects for targeted variables. After analyzing the responses from the forty-four students who participated in the arts integration program she created for disadvantaged students, Robinson concluded that various art disciplines could lead to various benefits that enhanced students' academic performance as well as improved school culture. For example, multi-arts integration was found to yield positive effects for disadvantaged students' reading achievement and potentially positive effects for math achievements. In addition, Robinson noticed that "arts integration is a potential positive practice to facilitate positive schoolwide changes in school organization, roles of teachers,

teacher planning, and differentiated instruction that allows different ways of demonstrating knowledge" (Robinson, 2013, p. 200).

In higher education, Tarantino (2012) conducted a case study to examine a semester-long theater production through which students across years in John Jay College experienced growth in problem-solving skills among various types of partnerships. Overwhelmingly, students participating in the art-making demonstrated their commitment to and care about differences "because they are actively forging their own identities with respect to others" (Tarantino, 2012, p. 158). Similarly, Creech and Zomorodian's (2017) qualitative inquiry documented the results of an arts integration program for first-year college students and concluded that arts integration as a "life-changing experience" had a positive impact on college students. Creech and Zomorodian (2017), who observed a cocurricular arts programming involving literary, theatrical, and visual arts as part of the first-year experience at the University of Notre Dame, found that the program "encouraged students to participate in cultural experiences that they would not otherwise have sought" (Creech & Zomorodian, 2017, p. 66), which implies the significant impact that arts integration—their first encounter of cultural experiences—may have on individuals in college years. Coupled with the experience of watching a live performance related to the selected literature, the arts program "created a community among students and provided opportunities for them to broaden their perspectives and integrate their learning through participation in the arts" (Creech & Zomorodian, 2017, p. 66). Though without stating the methodological approach and theoretical framework, King and Anderson (2004) suggested that participation in art and cultural activities enhanced four-year college

students' ability to view the world outside of the school. However, no information was provided in terms of the validity and reliability of these studies that were focused on non-arts students across disciplines in higher education.

While existing empirical studies on arts integration in higher education are still few and far between compared to their counterparts in the K-12 settings, the positive effects found in this literature review have demonstrated the benefits that arts experiences can offer to students in colleges and universities, such as expanding their world view and understanding of other cultures. The next section will explain how such benefits have been viewed in literature among other types of benefits that arts can provide.

Benefits of the Arts

The Dichotomy of Arts Benefits. For many years scholars and educators have debated on how to identify the benefits of the arts and which benefits should be focused on. Among the debates, the benefits of arts are usually regarded in a dichotomous view: extrinsic vs. intrinsic. For example, as mentioned earlier, Catterall (1998) and Eisner (1998) argued on the very idea of whether experience in the arts can boost academic achievement and how the achievement should be perceived, in which case the argument was about whether or not arts education or arts integration could provide the extrinsic benefits. Such benefits are also referred to as instrumental benefits (Eisner, 1998), that were argued as justification of using arts education to help students perform better academically across disciplines. While some researchers reminded us that no evidence was found to suggest the causal relationship between arts and academic skills/achievements, it has also been noted that the articles that claimed/concluded art

could enhance academic achievement were often designed for the purposes of arts advocacy (Eisner, 1998; Winner & Cooper, 2000), which can be viewed as a critical flaw of the validity related to research purposes.

After reviewing the contents of six journals during the10 years prior and a host of ad hoc publications that purported to provide evidence to support the idea that art as a curricular subject or activity is beneficial for non-arts subjects, Eisner (1999) implied that empirical approaches were much needed before research on this subject could look convincing. He proposed a three-pronged typology to classify the outcomes of arts education: art-based outcomes, arts-related outcomes, and ancillary outcomes (Eisner, 1999, p. 153–155). This typology can be interpreted as ways in which the outcomes of arts education can be categorized and/or designed according to the various goals that art was meant to achieve. According to Eisner, arts-based outcomes "reside in perceptions and discourse unique to the arts", such as students' ability "to hear and be able to talk discerningly about the form and content of a piece of music or of architecture" (Eisner, 1998, p. 36). Arts-related outcomes, on the other hand, involves "the perception and comprehension of aesthetic features in the general environment." For example, it could be students' ability to "notice and respond to the aesthetic configurations of phenomena such as cloud formations, the dynamic flow of a city street, [or] the cacophonies of a city during rush hour" (Eisner, 1998, p. 36). Based on such definition, the differences between arts-based outcomes and arts-related outcomes reside in the intentionality of the object at hand: a work created by an artist may be intentioned to be a piece of art whereas a tree in a general

environment simply exists, despite both objects (the artwork and the tree) can be discerned and discussed esthetically.

Ancillary outcomes, the third of Eisner's three-tiered typology in arts education, "pertain to outcomes that transfer skills employed in the perception, creation, and comprehension of the arts to non-arts tasks". Namely, the rationale that requires or demands justification from arts education in our schools "on the basis of advancing academic achievement in other subjects" is a rationale behind seeking the instrumental benefits of arts in education environments. However, instead of touting students' academic achievements as a justification for arts education, Eisner reminded us "at its best arts education should influence what psychologists call the conative aspects of cognition, that is the *desire* to frame the work as an object of enjoyed perception" (Eisner, 1998, p. 37, itilisized by author).

Attempting to justify arts education without using an ancillary rationale, Eisner was more interested in both what students could learn about the arts themselves and what they could learn about the aesthetic aspects of the general environment. That is, he was more focused on "the contributions arts education makes to both the arts and to life beyond them" (Eisner, 1998, p. 37). Eisner pointed out four particular outcomes that professionals in arts education should strive for: 1) "students should acquire a feel for what it means to transform their ideas, images, and feelings into an art form;" 2) "arts education should refine the student's awareness of the aesthetic qualities in art and life;" 3) "arts education should enable students to understand that there is a connection between the content and form that arts take and the culture and time in which the work was created," and 4) arts education should

cultivate learners' dispositions, which are difficult to assess, let alone measure, through the process of artistic creation (Eisner, 1998, p. 37–38). These four particular outcomes summarized, in Eisner's view, what arts education should be about and consequently how educators should assist students to perceive arts when it is offered to them. It is based on these outcomes that we will turn our attention to the instincts benefits of the arts.

Intrinsic Benefits of the Arts. Echoing Eisner's argument attempting to rid arts education of the responsibility to find and prove its outcomes in helping students obtain better grades, existing literature offers evidence arguing for the intrinsic benefits of art experience that affect individuals on a deeper level in areas that are unrelated to academic achievements (A. Brown et al., 2012; A. Brown, 2013; McCarthy et al., 2004; Novak-Leonard & Brown, 2011; Walmsley, 2013). While the quantitative data asserting the instrumental benefits of the arts are available (for example, see www.americanforthearts.org and www.arts.gov), there remains a dearth of data about the intrinsic benefits of arts experience in higher education. In this review, I provide a selection of scattered examples where practitioners in the arts community have touched upon the intrinsic benefits of arts or arts education.

First, Walmsley (2013) articulated extensively the intrinsic influence that arts may have on the participants who experienced an emotional release, a spiritual refuge, or a mechanism that broadened their world view. He also professed that that individuals' participation in the arts could result in "immediate" or "cumulative" impact (Walmsley, 2013, p. 85) that can be life-changing. Walmsley's qualitative

study on 42 individuals categorized the instinct benefits of arts experience with descriptions such as flow, distraction, catharsis and transformation, and world view.

On the other hand, McCarthy et al. (2004) offered a more robust framework detailing the intrinsic benefits of arts. McCarthy and his colleagues acknowledged the effort of previous research on the instrumental (such as economic, cognitive, behavioral, health-related, and social) benefits of the arts while noting the lack of empirical soundness and a comprehensive, theoretical explanation for the claimed benefits. Instead dissecting the instrumental aspects of arts benefits, they emphasized the intrinsic benefits as the missing link of the effects inherent in the art experience. Consequently, a framework was built to include three types of intrinsic benefits of arts: 1) immediate benefits, such as pleasure and captivation, 2) growth in individual capacities, such as enhanced empathy for other people and cultures, powers of observation, understanding of the world, and 3) benefits pertaining to the public, such as social bonds, and the expression of common values and community identity (McCarthy et al., 2004, p. 37–52).

Based on the framework developed by McCarthy et al. (2004), Brown and Novak-Leonard's (2007) conducted empirical study and offered an exemplary report that statistically assessed the intrinsic impacts of live performances on the audience members. Following the said framework, Brown and Novak-Leonard designed a survey questionnaire with six constructs/indexes, including *Captivation*, *Intellectual Stimulation*, *Emotional Resonance*, *Spiritual Value*, *Aesthetic Growth*, and *Social Bonding*. These indexes were further dissected into different series of instruments in the survey questionnaire with a five-point Likert-scale responses (depending on the

nature of the questions, 1 = Strongly Disagree or Not at All, 5 = Strongly Agree or Completely), designed to produce quantifiable data for statistical analysis. The survey was distributed among 4,269 audience members from 19 different live performances with a net response rate of 46%. As each index was measured by a different set of survey items, Brown and Novak-Leonard were able to provide detailed interpretation of each of the indexes using vocabulary established by McCarthy et al. (2004) to "identify patterns and begin to think about the underlying reasons why some performances lead to higher or lower levels of impact" (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2007, p. 41). Even though the study was not aimed to target college students (only 11% of the entire survey sample were identified as students and the level of education was not specified), Brown and Novak-Leonard demonstrated how an empirical study can be done to statistically assess and measure the intrinsic benefits of an arts experience. Under the six constructs in the survey, questions were designed specially to evaluate the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and social aspects of the impacts of the live performances. These questions, having been tested in an earlier pilot questionnaire, helped researchers examine the intrinsic benefits of the art experience by incorporating the intangible factors into a set of commonly understandable vocabulary. For examples:

- To what extent did you relate to, or feel bonded with, one or more of the performers?

- To what degree was it a transcendent experience for you, in the sense of passing into a different state of consciousness for a period of time?

- To what extent did the performance expose you to one or more cultures outside of your own life experience?

In this research, it was discussed, quantitatively and qualitatively, that "audiences at music concerts tended to report higher levels of emotional resonance than audiences at theatre programs" (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2007, p. 49). Coincidentally, "performances that received above-average scores for spiritual values were primarily music performances" (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2007, p. 52). More interestingly, "respondents who answered that they had been exposed to cultures outside their own life experience were also likely to answer that they left the performance with new insight on human relation or social issues" (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2007, p. 58), a finding that speaks directly to how arts experience can affect or enhance individuals' cultural competence.

Cultural Competence

This section provides an array of definitions of culture and cultural competence found in recent literature. As Chun and Evans (2016) professed, cultural competence is arguably one of the most crucial and heatedly debated concepts that have yet to be defined unanimously due to the complex and various definitions of culture. In the past two decades, literature has been published contributing to the essences and development of cultural competence in educational institutions (Bustamante, 2006; Bustamante et al., 2009; Chun & Evans, 2016; Deardorff, 2006; Gallegos et al., 2008; Hall & Guidry, 2013; Hong et al., 2013a). However, cultural competence is a term that is not only at times ill-defined but also, even when clearly defined, not widely understood or accepted by all leaders in higher education institutions (Bustamante et al., 2009; Chun & Evans, 2016).

Since the lack of a commonly accepted definition of cultural competence may be attributed to the lack of a commonly accepted definition of culture, it is critical to review a selection of definitions of culture. First, Overall (2009) defined culture as "acts and activities shared by groups of people and expressed in social engagements that occur in their daily activities" (Overall, 2009, p. 183). Hermond et al. (2018) and Lai (2009), without specifically defining culture, demonstrated the tendency of educators who perceived cultural differences only in terms of the differences among people from different countries or nations, implying that cultural differences are a synonymy of the difference caused by geographical boundaries. Such a provincial perspective and scope to look at culture can also be found in the field of international business where scholars believed cultural competence "is an individual's effectiveness in drawing upon a repertoire of skills, knowledge, and attributes to work successfully with people from different national cultural backgrounds, at home or abroad" (Johnson et al., 2006, p. 533). On the contrary, a broader definition of culture within the practices in higher education was articulated by Bustamante et al. (2009), who asserted that culture is "a learned meaning system of shared beliefs, values, norms, symbols, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that members of a group use to make sense of their world and foster a sense of identity and community" (Bustamante et al., 2009, p. 796). More recently, Chun and Evan (2016), defined culture broadly concept that encompasses a variety of dimensions and attributes that include, but not limited to "race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, socioeconomic status, parental education, geographic location, and military experience" (Chun & Evans, 2016, p. 22).

As a result, the definition of cultural competence varies. In Overall's (2009) view, cultural competence is a term used to describe the highly developed ability of "understanding the needs of diverse populations…and to understand and respect cultural differences and to address issues of disparity among diverse populations competently" (Overall, 2009, p. 176). Palombaro, Dole, and Black (2015) believed cultural competence is "a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations" (Palombaro et al., 2015, p. 83). Instead of defining what cultural competence is, Johnson et al. (2006) simply stated that an individual with cultural competence would have to: "(1) possess a strong personal identity, (2) have knowledge of and facility with the beliefs and values of the culture, (3) display sensitivity to the affective processes of the culture, (4) communicate clearly in the language of the given cultural group, (5) perform specially sanctioned behavior, (6) maintain active social relations within the cultural group, and (7) negotiate the institutional structures of that culture" (Johnson et al., 2006, p. 529).

Meanwhile, literature has shown examples where similar abilities or competencies were referred to by different terms such as cultural intelligence (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004) and diversity competence (Chun & Evans, 2016). Whereas cultural intelligence is used by Earley and Mosakowski (2004) to examine business professionals' abilities to interact with one another, diversity competence is promoted by Chun and Evans (2016) as an alternative framework built upon the existing narrative of cultural competence. Attempting to develop a formula with which individuals' cultural intelligence can be diagnosed, Earley and Mosakowski (2004) defined cultural intelligence (CQ) as "an

outsider's seemingly natural ability to interpret someone's unfamiliar and ambiguous gestures the way that person's compatriots would" (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004, p. 3). With a combination of cognitive CQ (the head), physical CQ (the body), and emotional/motivational CQ (the heart), Earley and Mosakowski further created a mathematical tool to categorize business professionals into various CQ profiles: the provincial, the analyst, the natural, the ambassador, the mimic, and the chameleon (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004, p. 5–6).

Compared to the pragmatism of cultural intelligence and its potential utilitarianism in business management, Chun and Evans (2016) offered a rather aspirational argument for the use of diversity competence, attempting to deconstruct and reconstruct what is known as cultural competence. According to the authors, such a decision to replace the word culture with diversity was due to the consideration of the increasing diversity of the student population. Chun and Evan proclaimed "the primary dimensions of diversity…involve protected classes under federal executive orders and anti-discrimination laws regarding race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability, as well as the secondary dimensions of socially acquired characteristics of diversity such as religion, socioeconomic status, parental education, geographic location, and military experience" (Chun & Evans, 2016, p. 22). After reviewing existing literature on intercultural competence, multicultural competence, and cultural or diversity competence, they defined diversity competence as "the awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to effectively communicate, collaborate, and engage with others who are different from oneself in meaningful ways through interactions characterized by reciprocity, mutual understanding, and respect" (Chun & Evans, 2016,

p. 45). Their scope and definition of diversity competency effectively and semantically expanded the dimensions of what constitutes culture while broadening the complexity and significance of cultural competence. To reframe the ecosystem in higher education to tackle the increasingly diverse populations, Chun and Evans' efforts were encompassing in that they attempted to construct a framework through which all stakeholders on/around campus can partake by becoming aware of, gaining the knowledge of, and building the skills/abilities of cultural competence.

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and Curriculum Design

This section includes findings from recent research and practices inspired or influenced by culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002) and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014). When arguing on the knowledge and skills needed to prepare teachers to work more effectively with students who are not part of the United States ethnic, racial, and cultural mainstream, Gay (2002) claimed that the preparation requires "a more thorough knowledge of the specific cultures of different ethnic groups, how they affect learning behaviors, and how classroom interactions and instruction can be changed to embrace these differences" (Gay, 2002, p. 114). And as mentioned earlier, Ladson-Billings (1995) had promoted CRT as a call for action and argued that culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP), which later transpired into culturally sustaining pedagogy, required teachers to provide the learning environment where: 1) "students must experience academic success;" 2) "students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence;" and 3) "students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order" (Ladson-Billings, 1995,

p. 160). The review of recent literature below demonstrates why and how CRT and CPR are crucial in the design of learning and teaching experience.

Instructional Design and Cultural Competence. Existing research has shown the necessity and impact of curricula when they were designed to develop or increase the cultural competence of teachers and students (Mestre, 2006; Molony, 2011; Overall, 2009). Mestre (2006) argued that when providing educational opportunities "it is essential that special attention be paid to developing resources that support students who require a more personalized, interactive learning environment" (Mestre, 2006, p. 31). Similarly, Overall's (2009) research indicated how incorporating "a cultural competence framework" in the Library and Information Science (LIS) may be an approach that "broadens traditional views of how humans come to know, how they acquire information, and how they become literate" and "expands traditional definitions of information, literacy, and culture" (Overall, 2009, p. 181). In addition, Molony (2011) asserted that "the loosely structured mobility that is the norm is not good enough for American students and that American institutions should be actively engaged in the programs delivered offshore as opposed to having students 'directly enrolling' with foreign institutions" (Molony, 2011, p. 219). Articulating the institutional support and coordination needed for good CRT practices on campus, Rogers et al. (2007) pointed out the multifaceted aspects of culture requiring that not only do the instructional staff or designers gain access to the feedback of frontline instructors, but they also depend on the support from leaders in the institutions.

While most articles argue for CRT as a pedagogy needed for instructors who consider themselves different from their students' racial or cultural backgrounds, West-

Olatunji et al.'s (2008) qualitative research pointed to an opposite observation. In a case study on three African American teachers teaching African American students, it was found that "even though they were of the same ethnicity as their students, [the teachers] did not see themselves as cultural beings… [and] taught in a manner that did not consider their own culture. Instead, their teaching methods reflect how they had been taught in a Eurocentric curriculum" (West-Olatunji et al., 2008, p. 32). Such a realization implies that the idea of culture when practicing CRT should include a conversation or reflection on how each individual identifies themselves as opposed to letting their culture be categorized simply by the conspicuous or assumed racial/ethnic characteristics, a point that predates and echoes Chun & Evans's (2016) argument on diversity competence.

CRT in Higher Education. Recent studies on practices of CRT in higher education are limited and tend to focus on the differences caused by the various localities of learners and teachers (J. S. Lee, 2020; Zaidi et al., 2016) and the effects resulting from experiential learning at a foreign locations (Hermond et al., 2018; Lai, 2009; Molony, 2011; Palombaro et al., 2015). However, these studies reflected educators and researchers' presumption that cultural differences are based on or triggered by distinctive races, locations, or nationalities.

In Zaidi et al.'s (2016) qualitative study, for example, it was found that a course with CRT can help faculty and students to "disrupt fixed beliefs and lead people to revise their positions and reinterpret meaning" (Zaidi et al., 2016, p. 296) and enables teachers to consider how to provide a safe online learning environment to allow for and facilitate meaningful exchange on cross-culturally stories that develop and foster critical consciousness. Meanwhile, faculty members' self-reflection is essential because, as Lee

(2011) demonstrated in his mixed-methods study, students of various backgrounds have various perceptions of teachers' role and therefore "[teachers] in multicultural online learning environments must incorporate the pedagogical and managerial roles that are commonly emphasized in classroom learning along with the technical, affective, and differentiating roles that have been perceived as important in a multicultural online learning environment" (D. Y. Lee, 2011, p. 932).

Studies have also shown that by incorporating experiential learning in the pedagogical design, students regardless of location will develop their cultural competence (Hermond et al., 2018; Lai, 2009; Molony, 2011; Palombaro et al., 2015). For instance, Palombaro, Dole, and Black (2015) conducted empirical research to prove "an integrated curriculum that includes experiential learning and exposure to a variety of cross-cultural encounters throughout a physical therapy curriculum can significantly increase self-ratings of cultural competence in graduate students" (Palombaro et al., 2015, p. 90). They further attested that "curricular integration of cultural competence development including traditional classroom as well as community-based service-learning opportunities yielded improvements in cultural competence" and that "increased exposure to service-learning and leadership opportunities provided these physical therapy students with the opportunity to improve their cultural competence in significant and measurable ways" (p. 92). Using a qualitative method to examine seventeen Hong Kong pre-service teachers' experience in a community project in Vietnam, Lai (2009) found that a deeper appreciation of cultural competence can be achieved by hands-on experience in a study-abroad program that enhanced students' sense of mutual care, generic skills, leadership

abilities, and cultural competencies while they worked collaboratively and supported each other to overcome difficulties (Lai, 2009).

The positive outcomes resulting from the combination of experiential learning and cultural competence are not exclusive to students only. It has been posited that arrangements of experiential learning have also shown positive effects on future education leaders (Hermond et al., 2018). In Hermond, Vairez, and Tanner's (2018) qualitative research, future education leaders who participated in a study-tour program reported that they "acquired substantial cultural intelligence and reflected on how their leadership behavior should change to meet the needs of others" (Hermond et al., 2018, p. 18). The participants also shared that the personal experiences allowed them to begin to question their views of the values and expectations of other cultures and adjust their behaviors to account for those reflections and discoveries. Some even pivoted their view of leadership and began to focus on their leadership as a form of service, developing a desire to hear and understand others, and to motivate them.

Contrary to Hermond et al. (2018) and Lai's (2009) cases where the learning experience in a foreign country successfully stimulated participants' cultural competence, Molony's (2011) study revealed the negative results of the cross-national learning experience. According to Molony's (2011) qualitative research examining the phenomenon of students spending a period of study in another country for academic recognition, the host institution "tend to do a good job at marketing and administering the programs…despite it remains the case that the experience is typically an isolated one for students with little formal connection to their university and academic experience more generally" (Molony, 2011, p. 229–230). His findings also showed that "at the host

institution the experience is often one of limited integration with local students with the exchange students more likely to socialize with other foreign students" (Molony, 2011, p. 218). Such findings suggest that the existence of experiential learning does not necessarily translate to the awareness or development of teachers or students' cultural competence in post-secondary institutions.

  CRT in K-12. While literature focused on CRT in higher education is still few and far between, recent studies of CRT in K-12 can shed light on how teaching methods can be explored, designed, and carried out in the face of an increasingly diverse student population (Bonner, 2014; Cahapay, 2020; Hos & Kaplan-Wolff, 2020; Kourea et al., 2016; Obiakor et al., 2020). In a qualitative study examining the success of CRT, Bonner (2014) recruited three teachers in elementary and middle schools using Ladson-Billings' (1994) "community nomination" method and explored the various settings, strengths, techniques, and personalities of these three teachers. She found that the commonality of the three instructors was that they all have a "warm demeanor" and utilized "purposeful movement" while teaching (Bonner, 2014, p. 395–396), which embodied the passion and attention as required by culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995). In addition, Kourea and Owens (2016) explored how the school's culturally responsive teaching can be designed by conducting ethnographic interviews with three Black parents whose kindergarten children had been identified by school personnel as at risk for behavioral difficulties. Their attempt was to "blend culturally responsive pedagogy and school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) for Black students showing risk by gaining parental knowledge regarding their cultures, lived experiences, and perspectives about school-wide expectations" (Kourea et al., 2016, p. 238). In the findings, the authors

professed that these qualitative data can enhance the design and practices of school's culturally responsive teaching because "a clear focus and open communication may decrease cultural misunderstanding from both parents and the school's perspectives, potentially decreasing disproportionate disciplinary actions against minority students" (Kourea et al., 2016, p. 239). Both Bonner's (2014) and Kourea et al.'s (2016) studies showed how CRT can be implemented and improved by teachers' endeavors on- and off-campus, intentionally to bridge the cultural differences that exist in the environment where teaching and learning take place.

Other research demonstrated how individual educators can implement CRT despite the perimeters and limitations forced upon them by the school system and policies (Cahapay, 2020; Hos & Kaplan-Wolff, 2020; Obiakor et al., 2020). Speaking in terms of teacher's process of unpacking and implementing curriculum, Cahapay's (2020) case study of a kindergarten in the Philippines showed that there was a misinterpretation of the principles of developmentally appropriate practices. Such an "error" incurred due to "the contents that are either not appropriate to the age or not relevant to the culture of the learners" (Cahapay, 2020, p. 6) and should be rectified with consideration of the maturity level and cultural experience of the learners to ensure that content is engaging for the learners.

On the other hand, attempting to tackle issues of teacher preparation, innovative teaching, and disparities in public health and environmental health, Obiakor et al.'s (2020) qualitative study on multiple cases concluded that "recognizing the origin of science and mathematics can motivate students, especially young culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) children and their parents" (Obiakor et al., 2020, p. 3). More

specifically, they offered eight areas where current and future teachers and practitioners must be educated on: 1) know who they are – their strengths and weaknesses, 2) learn the fact when in doubt, 3) change their thinking as needed, 4) use resource persons as needed, 5) build self-concepts, 6) teach with divergent techniques, 7) make the right choices, and 8) continue to learn.

Furthermore, Hos and Kaplan-Wolff's (2020) study on a yearlong classroom ethnography in an urban public secondary school in the United States revealed how teachers can challenge and resist the school system and find ways to resist "the totalizing effects of the scripted curriculum" (Hos & Kaplan-Wolff, 2020, p. 51). They reported that "the creativity and community-centered mentality [of a white, middle-class female in her mid-thirties teaching English to speakers of other languages] inspired in her students [at an urban secondary school] made for truly individualized instruction that would not have been possible with a limited scripted curriculum" (Hos & Kaplan-Wolff, 2020, p. 52). While the teacher "successfully managed to implement different components of the software along with her curriculum to meet the needs…and created a positive learning environment for [refugee] students and helped them adjust to the school in the United States, it was also pointed out that ultimately CRT requires teacher(s)'s courage, convictions, and comfort in risking their positions by disregarding school mandates (Hos & Kaplan-Wolff, 2020). In these cases, individual teachers demonstrated their willingness and dedication to conducting CRT as best as they could in spite of the challenges presented to them.

Evaluating Cultural Competence

The last common theme emerging from recent literature on cultural competence in higher education is whether/how cultural competence can be evaluated or assessed (Scartabello et al., 2018; Schwarz et al., 2015). For example, Schwarz et al. (2015) tested the reliability of the Healthcare Provider Cultural Competence Instrument (HPCCI) by qualitatively investigating the data of 242 participants in a large midwestern hospital that offered a comprehensive range of services. The statistical findings showed that not only could HPCCI effectively measure the cultural competence of health care providers, but it also provided useful professional feedback for practitioners and organizations seeking to increase individuals' cultural competence. In another more recent example, Scartabello, Abate, and Slimak (2018) demonstrated how the practice of a "structured electronic portfolio program" that documented longitudinal outcomes can be applicable to many other disciplines when assessing common general education or institutional outcomes such as critical thinking, cultural competence, and the ability to work on teams. Through their mixed-method research, a more tangible evaluation was conducted and documented on the outcomes that were often only tangentially related to the course content. Even though cultural competence was one of the five anticipated outcomes in Scartabello et al.'s (2018) research, it was concluded that similar programs can help develop students' self-assessment skills, including improvements that can be extrapolated to students across many academic disciplines. However, as they pointed out, one limitation of the study was that all of the scales are self-reports, which was particularly of concern for the measure of behavior. Therefore, the authors recommended that in future programs "having outsider

recorders for behavior verification is ideal" and "a psychometrically sound self-reported measure of behavior is a useful tool" (Scartabello et al., 2018, p. 7).

Gaps in the Research

While existing literature provides an abundance of theories, practices, and implications on the study of arts integration and cultural competence, there remain several gaps that my study will address. First, the connection between arts integration and cultural competence is an area that deserves more empirical research. Shockley and Krakaur (2020), who put arts integration at the core of culturally relevant pedagogy, conducted a qualitative study on this very connection by interviewing 15 pre-service teachers. They noted that "many K-12 educators and teacher educators are aware of culturally relevant pedagogy as a part of building cultural competencies but they "do not consistently capitalize upon the benefits of art integration as a resource for cultural competence" (Shockley & Krakaur, 2020, p. 6–7). My empirical study directly contributed to making the connection between arts integration and cultural competence in higher education institutions that was not focused on serving pre-service K-12 teachers.

In addition, as Milbrandt et al. (2018) suggested, future research in arts education needs to focus more on areas surrounding demographics, technology, assessment, and social justice. Given the specificities of my research site (see Chapter Three for details), the results of my shed light on how arts integration and cultural competence were perceived and experienced by students from disadvantaged populations during a time when education was being offered remotely online and the social/racial tensions among people were at an historical high. Furthermore, while existing literature has mostly contributed to the practices of CRT in K-12, my study contributed to the existing

literature by focusing on the higher education environment where the research on CRT is relatively nascent and has barely touched upon arts integration and its potential effects on cultural competence. Finally, by following Chun and Evans' (2016) explicit and expanded definition of culture, my study contributed to the empirical work on cultural competence by including more facets and layers of what constitutes culture while exploring the possibilities of foster the cultural competence of college students and enhancing college teachers' CRT.

CHAPTER 3

Introduction

This chapter provides information about research methodology, the methods of conducting focus group sessions, individual interviews, and document procurement, and procedures for data collection and analysis for this study. This study employed a grounded theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2014) to examine college students and teachers' perceptions of arts integration and its effect on cultural competence. Following Corbin and Strauss's (2014) guidelines, I went through a three-stage process of developing *description*, *conceptual ordering*, and *theory* based on the data collected and analyzed in the research. The researcher chose to use the grounded theory approach because this study was aimed to generate a general explanatory theory of "a process, an action, or an interaction" shaped by a number of participants (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 129). Grounded theory was used also because it is a form of research that allows "the researcher as much a part of the research process as participants and the data they provide" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 3). Epistemologically, this study employed a constructivist view (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Crotty, 1998) because this study involves theory development resulting from a process dependent upon the researcher's interactions with the research participants. The data were collected through triangulation: 1) three focus group sessions with students, who took a culturally related course during which they experience arts integration; 2) three individual interviews with three teachers of the culturally related courses; and 3) a review of documents including two syllabi, one reflection essay, and two class observation memos. The data collected at the earlier process of the study were coded and analyzed to refine the later process of data

collection, which constituted the cycle of data collection until the data reached the saturated point (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Grounded theory required and allowed the researcher to utilize various tools to make sense of the data collected in the study.

Methods and Procedures

Research Questions

The following research questions guided my study.

1. How do students and teachers perceive the concepts of arts integration and cultural competence?

2. How do students and teachers reflect on the experiences of arts integration?

3. How does the experience of arts integration affect students and teachers' understanding of culture(s)?

Setting

This study was conducted in fall 2021 in a two-year public community college in an urban area in a major metropolis in northeastern America. Among the total enrollment in the community college, 39% is Hispanic and 33% were Black. The male/female ratio was 43/57. Figure 6 shows a summary of the student population's demographic features in fall 2019. Meanwhile, approximately 50% of the faculty were White and only 25% were Black and 13% were Hispanic or Porto Rican (City Center Community College, 2016). It should be noted that, the research tried to obtain a newer summary of the student and faculty population, but no newer data have been found publicly as of the submission of this dissertation.

The decision of the research site was based on the combination of theoretical sampling and purposeful sampling. Theoretical sampling (Corbin & Strauss, 2014) is a

method of data collection "based on concepts derived from data… [collected] from places, people, and events that will maximize opportunities to develop concepts in terms of their properties and dimensions, uncover variations, and identify relationships between concepts" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 134). Purposeful sampling, as Creswell and Poth (2017) argued, is essential that all participants have experience of the phenomenon being studied and consequently better suited for this study "when all individuals studied represent people who have experienced the phenomenon" (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 220). Bounded by the homogeneity of the sample population, i.e., the students in this research have taken courses focused on culturally and ethnically related topics, this research will "confirm or disconfirm the conditions, both contextual and intervening, under which the model holds" (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 221). In other words, during the process of recruiting the participants, the researcher actively selected (or deselected) individuals based on whether or not they have experience in arts integration in the course.

Figure 6

Students Demographics of Research Site (City Center Community College, n.d.)
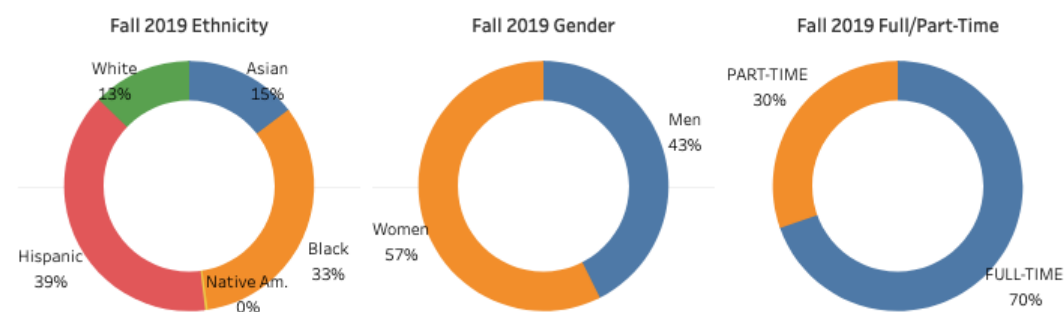
Participants

The participants in this study included teachers and students in culturally or ethnically related courses in a two-year public community college. Following the rationale on theoretical sampling (Corbin & Strauss, 2014) and purposeful sampling

(Creswell & Poth, 2017; Miles et al., 2014), the courses from which the participants were recruited were the courses that were offered at the Department of Ethnic and Race Studies. As a results, the courses included in this study were Chinese Culture and Heritage, Asian American History, The Latino Experience in the United States, Black Women in the Americas and in the Caribbean, People and Cultures of Latin America and the Caribbean, and African American History. As will be shown in Chapter Four, these are the courses where arts experiences were integrated into the course design while students were expected to develop competence on culturally related subjects. Following Corbin and Strauss's guidelines on theoretical sampling, there were "no definite number of participants or number of specific types because in theory construction it is important that researchers have the flexibility to sample participants and settings based on concepts in need of development" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 135). That said, the examples provided by the theorists suggested that sufficient amounts of data and analysis can be achieved when conducting qualitative research with 11 or 13 participants following the grounded theory guidelines (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 59–63). Originally, I had planned to recruit two to three teachers teaching culturally related courses and four to five of their respective students to participate in my research. Each teacher would participate in a semi-structured interview. Each student would participate in the individual interview and/or a focus group session.

To begin with the recruitment, I reached out to faculty members in the Department of Race and Ethnic Studies to obtain their permission and participation in this research. This is done after I obtained the approval from the research site's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for my study. Letters of consent and interview

protocols were provided to teachers who agreed to participate in the individual interviews. A student recruitment flyer with my contact information and a link to the sign-up form created on Google Drive were also provided to the teachers who agreed to participate. With the teachers' referrals, I then reached out to the students who were taking or have completed the culturally related courses where arts experiences were integrated into the curriculum. Letters of consent and protocols were also provided to students who agreed to participate in the focus group sessions. In addition to purposeful sampling and theoretical sampling, convenience sampling (Miles et al., 2014) also became part of the procedure as the research evolved. This was because, when the circumstance required, I reached out and contacted my former students to inquire about their participation in this study because they, who took my culturally related courses with arts integration, were accessible to me digitally and geographically.

Eventually, I recruited three instructors, each of whom participated in the semi-structured individual interviews; I also recruited eighteen students from three different courses who participated, respectively, in three focus group sessions. Table 1 shows the demographics of the participants in this research.

Table 1

Demographics of Research Participants

Pseudonym	Roles	Race/Ethnic Background	Age Group
Sam	Student	Arab or Middle Eastern	20-25
Rosa	Student	Hispanic or Latino	Over 50
Nina	Student	Black or African American	Younger than 20
Monique	Student	Black or African American	Over 50
Lee	Student	Hispanic or Latino	Younger than 20
Mary	Student	South Asian	20-25
Jenny	Student	White	20-25
Jacob	Student	Asian or Pacific Islander	20-25
Gary	Student	White	20-25
Debbie	Student	Black or African American	20-25
Zoe	Student	Asian or Pacific Islander	Younger than 20
Tina	Student	Asian or Pacific Islander	Younger than 20
Silvia	Student	White	25-30
Sharon	Student	Black or African American	20-25
Robert	Student	Black or African American	Over 50
Patricia	Student	Asian or Pacific Islander	Younger than 20
Emma	Student	White	20-25
Christian	Student	Hispanic or Latino	20-25
Xavier	Teacher	Asian or Pacific Islander	n/a
Rachel	Teacher	Black or African American	n/a
Amy	Teacher	Hispanic or Latino	n/a

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedures for this study followed Corbin & Strauss's (2014) guidelines and examples of grounded theory. The gathering of data last until "reaching the level of data 'saturation'" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 140). The saturation was reached when I have "explored each category or theme in some depth, identifying its various properties and dimensions under different conditions" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 140).

This qualitative study triangulated data collection by using focus group sessions, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis to enhance the validity and trustworthiness of the study. Since the exploration and development of codes, concepts, themes/categories was a continuous process until the saturation was achieved, the data collected earlier were analyzed and become "the basis for subsequent data collection" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 322). Therefore, depending on the availabilities of the research participants and the documents related to the courses, I adjusted the protocols designed for the focus groups and individual interviews while the concepts were being coded during the data collection process.

The data collection was originally to be done in summer 2021. However, due to a delay in the process of the research site's Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewing and approving the study, the researcher was not able to start recruiting participants and collecting data until fall 2021. The following sections further explain the rationale and results of each data collection procedure.

Interviews

Three individual interviews were conducted respectively with the three teachers following the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix E) in fall 2021. Due to the ongoing healthy-related concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, all three interviews were conducted with online meetings via Zoom. The first interview last 62 minutes, the second interview last 46 minutes, and the third interview last for 42 minutes. Each interview was recorded electronically and transcribed into paper copies. The transcriptions of the interviews were sent to the corresponding participants. All three instructors replied to either confirmation on the accuracy or to provide further

clarifications on the transcriptions. As explained above, the data collected from the earlier

interview(s) were used to formulate initials codes or concepts based on which the

protocols for the later interview(s) and focus groups sessions were revised.

Individual interviews were used so that the researcher could focus the questions

on "understanding how individuals experience the process and identify the steps in the

process" (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 135). This procedure was crucial because the data

collected from the interviews helped formulate the codes, concepts, and

themes/categories that connected the two concepts—arts integration and cultural

competence—as perceived by the participants. The initials questions in the protocol were

revised from the constructs developed by Brown and Novak-Leonard (2007) in their

study that investigated the intrinsic (such as intellectual, emotional, and social) influences

on the audience members from 19 live performances.

Examples of questions that were asked during the individual interviews included

"To what extent did the experience cause you to reflect on your opinions of culture?" and

"How did the experience affect your understanding of your or others' culture?" Following

the constructivist viewpoint that "concepts and theories are constructed by researchers

out of stories that are constructed by research participants who are trying to explain and

make sense out of their experiences and lives" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 26), the

individual responses to the interview questions provided data based on which codes,

concepts, and themes/categories that are formed and analyzed into a theoretical

framework as "practical applications of knowledge" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 26).

Focus Group Sessions

I conducted three focus group sessions using a semi-structured protocol (Appendix C) to guide the conversations. The recruited students were either enrolled or have completed a culturally related course in the research site where multiple art experiences were integrated into the curriculum. The protocol was utilized because a systematic procedure helped facilitate a more effective focus group session, especially for the beginner facilitator (Berg & Lune, 2012). The three focus group sessions were all conducted online via Zoom. Each session was electronically recorded and then transcribed into a word document for analysis. The first session last 59 minutes, the second session last 42 minutes, and the third session last 36 minutes.

Samples of the questions that were used in the sessions included "What did the experience tell you about culture?" and "How did that experience affect your understanding of your or another culture?" The data collected from the earlier sessions of individual interview or focus group were used to formulate initials codes or concepts based on which the protocols for the later sessions will be revised.

It is worth noting that, while the individual interviews went smoothly as all three teachers were able to elaborate on their thoughts and experience in much detail, the focus group sessions with the students challenged the researcher's ability to motivate and facilitate the conversations. While in each focus group session there were students who shared more freely, the researcher was aware of those who were shyer. As such, during each session, the research would spend time to encourage the shyer participants to speak more or type in the chat feature in Zoom in hopes to maintain the balance of everyone's speaking time.

Course Documents

Collecting course documents for this research was part of the data triangulation strategy. In accordance with the guidelines as permitted in the research site's Institutional Review Board (IRB), I obtained two syllabi related to two of the courses taught by the interviewed teachers who incorporated arts experience into their curriculum. One of the two syllabi was for the course titled The Latino Experience in the United States. The other syllabus was for the course titled Asian American History. In addition, I kept memos during my observation in two in-person class meetings. These two class meetings contained the exact same course agenda which was taught by the same teachers who incorporated movie and poetry in the classroom activities that were observed. I initially hoped to obtained transcripts of students' assignments but ended up only receiving one essay from a student, who provided detailed reflection on their experience of arts in the class.

To sum up, I obtained two syllabi, two class observation memos, and one reflection essay. Adding to the transcripts from the interviews and focus group sessions, all of the data provided helpful information to draw a fuller picture of how the teachers and students experienced arts integration and how that experience was to them individually. In another word, with these documents, I was able to establish conceptually the environment through which the arts integration is developed for and/or experienced by the research participants. Following the Document Analysis Protocol as in Appendix F, Table 2 presents the summary of the course documents that were obtained to support this research.

Table 2

Document Analysis Summary

Name	Source	Date	Purpose	Creator
ASN 114-1401_Fall2021_Syllabus	Provided by instructor	September 16, 2021	Describing the overview of the goals and content of the course	Xavier
LAT 150-1000-fall 2021	Provided by instructor	September 10, 2021	Describing the overview of the goals and content of the course	Amy
Class Observation Amy 20211123 1000	Memos based on the notes taken during class observation	November 23, 2021	Observation made during an in-person class meeting	Researcher: Chang-Han Liu
Class Observation Amy 20211123 1200	Memos based on the notes taken during class observation	November 23, 2021	Observation made during an in-person class meeting	Researcher: Chang-Han Liu
Class Reflection	Provided by student	November 16, 2021	Reflection on one gallery visit as part of the curriculum	Nina

Trustworthiness of the Design

To ensure the trustworthiness of this study, several tactics were employed. First, the triangulation (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Fraenkel et al., 2012; Miles et al., 2014) tactic, where multiple sources of data were utilized to substantiate the findings and narratives, were used in the data collection process. For this study, the data sources included the transcripts of three focus groups with students in the identified sample and setting, the transcripts of three individual interviews with teachers and, and the documents related to the courses where the research participants had the experience of arts integration in the course designed to develop their cultural competence. Second, the member checking

(Fraenkel et al., 2012; Miles et al., 2014) tactic, where a copy of the focus group session and interview transcripts were given to the respective participant or representative for reviewing purposes, were employed in the process. This tactic allowed participants to have an opportunity to review what they said, add more information if they wanted to, and clarify/edit what they said. Third, the outsider-professional (Fraenkel et al., 2012) tactic, where peers in the fields were invited to review the research methods and procedure, were utilized so that the interview protocols can be validified to enhance the reliability of the study. For this study, the researcher obtained abundant feedback from his mentor. In addition, the researcher reached out to three fellows who were doctoral students from another university but participating in a humanity project at the research site during the time when the data collection was taking place. One of them responded positively after quickly reviewing the findings of this study. In exploratory research using ground theory methodology that aims to form the connectivity between arts integration and cultural competence, the three tools mentioned above also help establish the authenticity (Creswell & Poth, 2017) of this research.

Research Ethics

The ethics of conducting qualitative research demand that I did not jump to conclusions about the meaning and that "every attempt is made to explore all possibilities and then to check these out against data or with participants"(Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 102). Ethical responsibilities were applied not only to the data collection procedure but also to the process of analyzing the data including memoing and drawing diagrams.

After receiving approval from the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), letters of consent were sent out via email to teachers and their students to participate in

the individual interviews and focus group sessions. All of the sessions were audio recorded. Participants were informed that they may review the audio recordings and request that all or any portion of the recordings that included their participation in the focus group sessions or individual interviews be destroyed. During the transcription of the qualitative data in the focus group sessions and individual interviews, each individual was given a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality. The collected qualitative data were stored securely, with password protection, in the computer program Dedoose.

Considering the process of collecting and analyzing data, I have noticed several issues pertaining to the validity or trustworthiness of this study. They included holistic fallacy, participants' bias, and the researcher's bias (Miles et al., 2014). Each of the issues and their respective strategies are discussed below.

First, the holistic fallacy, also referred to as sloppy research by Miles et al., made its appearance in my literature review frequently. Given that many of the existing articles and studies about arts integration have little or no empirical grounding yet tend to claim the positive effects of arts education or arts integration, I constantly reminded myself of this fallacy as I designed and conducted a research that will bear a higher empirical quality, instead of producing another advocacy article, which Eisner (1999) has alerted those in the fields of arts education.

Second, while I managed to recruit participants for the focus group sessions and individual interviews, the participants in my research were teachers teaching and students learning in the courses that were designed to enhance people's cultural competence. This positionality implied that these participants might have had personal attachment or attitude favoring the subjects at hand (such as believing the benefits of arts or the

upholding the significance of cultural competence). Staying cognizant of their innate positive attitude towards the topic of this research was crucial to avoid "overweighting data from articulate, well-informed, usually high-status participants and underrepresenting data from less articulate, lower-status ones" (Miles et al., 2014, p.293).

Lastly, my professional background as a performing artist, arts administrator, and non-profit professional in cultural organizations and as an educator teaching culturally related courses have made it almost impossible for me to take a neutral stance on the subject of this study. This experience of mine reminded me to constantly reflect on whether the decisions that I made during the data collection and data analyses were being affected by my personal interest or preference.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process in this study followed Corbin and Strauss's (2014) grounded theory methodology that outlines the process of opening coding, concept developing, memoing, diagrams, verbalizing the context, and integrating concepts into themes/categories. Additional guidance from Creswell and Poth (2017) and Miles et al. (2014) also helped me code and analyze the qualitative data collected through the focus group sessions and individual interviews. The qualitative nature of the data in this study, such as what the process of arts integration was and how the experience of arts integration correlated with each participant's cultural competence, helped contribute to the development of a preliminary theory in a process that resembled Corbin and Strauss's (2014) pyramid of Grounded Theory (as shown in Figure 7) that illustrates how the concepts transform from the lower level to the higher level.

Figure 7

Constructing a Grounded Theory – Building a Pyramid with Each Level of Concepts

Standing on Top of the Others (Corbin & Strauss, 2014)

Grounded Theory

Core Category

Categories

Lower-Level Concepts
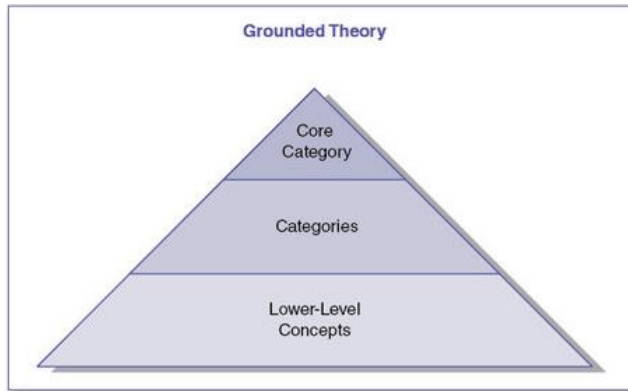
During the analysis process, I sought to "systematically develop a theory that explains process, action, or interaction" (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 132) on the subject of arts integration and cultural competence as perceived by students and teachers. A grounded theory approach to qualitative research is often utilized when there is little existing research about a social phenomenon. In this study, the connection between arts integration and cultural competence was at the core of the examination. As explained in my literature review, while both arts integration and cultural competence have respectively been discussed, conducting a qualitative study using a grounded theory approach allowed me to develop a theoretical framework that can be focused specifically on the connection of both. During this study the coding process was initiated at the conclusion of each round of data collection and continued until the theory "feels right." (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 57, 58, 65, 300). For example, the data from the earlier sessions of individual interview(s) yielded significant clues for the following sessions of individual interviews and focus group sessions. While the initial coding process began

with "verbalizing the research findings in a few sentences" and "writing a summary memo," (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 299), diagrams of sorts were also explored to help me to contemplate on the connection between various concepts and themes/categories and identified "where the gaps in logic exist" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 217).

Memoing is the process whereby triangulated data from focus group sessions, one-on-one interviews, and documents can be analyzed. During the memoing process, my initial observations and reactions to the transcripts and classroom activities were noted for future analysis and interpretation that drove subsequent rounds of data collection. Coupled with diagrams, memos were the information from which the findings based on collected data in this study were drawn.

According to Corbin and Strauss, the two basic analytic strategies that should be used throughout the research process are *the making of comparisons* and *the asking of questions*. The following approaches were employed as I analyzed the data: making comparisons, thinking about the various meanings of a word, using the flip-flop technique, making use of life experience, waving the red flag, looking at language, looking at emotions that are expressed, looking for words that indicate time, thinking in terms of metaphors and similes, and looking for the negative case (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 89–95).

The data analysis process helped me to "determine codes or concepts and to ultimately sort them into categories." This sorting was "a dynamic process that occurred throughout the analysis of each interview transcript and the constant comparisons that were applied to the data" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 167). The first step in this study's data analysis was to perform a process of open and focused coding of the data to identify

prominent concepts emerging from the raw data and memoing. In a grounded theory study, the purpose of analyzing data through open coding is to ultimately create a new theory that is grounded in data. The early stages of open and focused coding were conducted sitting at a desk, whether working pencil and paper, whether using specific software. Essentially, this was a process of "conceptualizing, identification, and exploration" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 243). The results of my initial, open coding process yielded a total of 94 codes that reflected the wide array of concepts brought up during the individual interviews and focus group sessions. Example of these preliminary codes includes 27 concepts (nouns or adjectives) that described what culture is and 17 ways of defining what art can be. A full list of the 94 codes can be found in the Appendix G.

The second step was to further analyze data into themes, also referred to as categories: elaborating the ones that already existed and identifying new ones at the same time. In this step, axial coding was employed, "locating and linking action–interaction within a framework of subconcepts that give it meaning and enable it to explain what interactions are occurring, and why and what consequences real or anticipated are happening because of action–interaction" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 156). This process was repeated until all categories are "saturated" and "feel right."

Lastly, to enhance the validity of this analytical process, the interpretation, categorization, and analysis of coded data in this study was validated through a peer-review process. In addition to the feedback from the researcher's doctoral mentor, an outsider professional's opinion was obtained on the data analysis. During my data collection process, I was introduced by one teacher to three humanity fellows who were

at the time conducting their fellowship as part of City Center University Humanities Alliance, a project at the City Center University Graduate Center (GC). At a meeting arranged by the teachers for me with the three fellows, it was discussed that all three fellows would offer their time and insight as part of the process of the interpretation, categorization, and analysis of the data in this research. They also agreed to provide feedback to the researcher about the conclusions drawn from the data. Although eventually only one of the three fellows provided feedback, which positively affirmed the organization of the result of data analysis, it was a benchmark that ensured the process of the data analysis was held accountable, especially pertaining to the researcher's logic and sense-making of the collected data.

Role of Researcher

My professional and academic background is one that mixes arts, culture, and higher education. With over 15 years of experience in various aspects of artmaking and art management in multi-cultural environments, I have witnessed an abundance of narratives that connected the benefits of arts to personal or public goods with or without empirical evidence. As a faculty member in the fields of cultural, ethnic, and race studies, I have also seen the potential positive effects arts may have on individuals' cultural competence. As such, I conducted an empirical study by purposefully recruiting teachers and students on whom I did not impose positional power or control to avoid risking the validity and trustworthiness of the research.

The choices throughout the process of conducting this study was made with the intention to ask questions without me being clouded by my own experience, background, or passions. In other words, the process of formulating my research questions and

subsequent questions during the focus groups and interviews enabled me to frame the questions and find the answers without projecting my own biases or enforcing my preferences along the way. In fact, following Corbin and Strauss's (2014) advice on conducting my research with the grounded theory method, I relied on the input of exiting literature and my research participants to revise, refine, and improve my research questions and theoretical framework.

As mentioned earlier, my training and experience as a performing art professional and educator have yielded a tendency of constituting biases on subjects pertaining to arts integration and cultural competence. In trying to explore and interpret individuals' perception on arts integration and cultural competence with integrity, I identified myself in this study as an external-outsider, a positionality that Banks (1998) eloquently articulated, and be mindful of how not to interject my perceptions, assumptions, and personal experiences into the study. Within the four categories summarized by Banks, I began this study thinking I might be an indigenous-insider because of my educational background and professional experience in performing arts. Soon I realized it would serve a better purpose for this study for me to take a stand as an external-outsider because it helped refrain myself from projecting my own opinions and assumptions while conducting the focus group sessions and individual interviews. In addition, I constantly intended to detach myself from the subject even further because I am a curious person by nature and passionate about the subject at hand. Since conducting a qualitative study requires a lot of interactive activities and practices including focus group sessions and interviews, my knowledge of the topics and my passion for the subject might have interfered with my understanding and explaining the answers and feedback of the

participants. As such, it was crucial that I tried to maintain a sense of neutrality throughout the research.

To tackle these potential research pitfalls as a researcher, I utilized three tactics suggested by Miles et al. (2014) and minimized the effects of these potential shortcomings. The three tactics include: 1) check for researcher effects: given my "personal bias", this is a tactic that I consciously and constantly employed to ensure my view did not jeopardize the validity of this study, be it during an interview or while analyzing the data; 2) triangulation: as mentioned earlier, triangulation was used as a strategy in data collection to minimize my biases by including multiple data sources; and 3) look for negative evidence: during this study, I kept my eyes and ears wide open for narratives or examples that illustrated, explicitly or inexplicitly, the "negative" perception of arts integration and/or cultural competence. Knowing that "the absence of negative evidence can never be decisive as a confirmatory tactic" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 304), this was a tactic that played a crucial part in tackling/preventing the holistic fallacy that this research may encounter.

Limitations

Some limitations occurred as a result of the unique setting and participants recruitment procedures. Since the study was designed by following theoretical sampling which "enables analysts to follow the lead of the research and direct data collection to those areas that will best serve the developing theory" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 134), the participants were faculty and students who taught or took culturally related courses that allowed the researcher to focus on the development of the theoretical framework by analyzing and interpreting the connection between arts integration and cultural

competence. As a result, the findings and results of the study may not be applicable to faculty teaching in different disciplines. In addition, since the majority of the participants showed a favorable tendency toward cultural competence, participant biases (Miles et al., 2014) was an issue that the researcher carefully monitored during the study. furthermore, at the time of data collection, the school was still undergoing the everchanging policies and adjustments surrounding the COVD-19 pandemic. Therefore, the teaching and learning experience discussed in this study may not necessarily be applicable to the teaching and learning that are done in a "normal" environment.

CHAPTER 4

Introduction

This grounded theory study explored teachers and students' perceptions on arts integration and cultural competence in a two-year community college. The twenty-one participants in this study were either teachers or students of the courses offered at the Department of Race and Ethnic Studies in the research site during fall 2021. Each of the courses that the participants taught or took was designed to provide, enhance, and challenge the understanding of the history and culture of a particular group of people such as African Americans, Latino Americans, or Asian Americans. The following sources of data informed the findings: individual interviews, focus group sessions, and course-related documents. Three core categories emerged from the data. The term core category is employed here because it is "a concept that is abstract and broad enough to representative of all participants in the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 188)." In addition, these categories yielded "the greatest explanatory power and ability to link other categories to it and each other (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 188)." More importantly, since the researcher aimed to create a theoretical framework for all stakeholders in higher education based on the results of this study, a framework conceptualized with such core categories "can be used in future studies that perhaps are not substantively identical and are similar at a conceptual level" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 188). The three core categories are organized below with subthemes, supported by the excerpts from the data. A discussion of these findings and conclusions according to the three research questions in this study will be presented in Chapter Five.

Core Category 1: Variety

Based on the data collected in the study, it was discovered that the courses covered a wide-ranging goals, concepts, and practices. Rachel, who was a trained anthropologist and had over 15 years of teaching experience at the college level, shared that her courses covered a lot of different topics in one semester. She said,

These are obviously introductory kind of survey course, right? So, we're really covering a lot of different topics in one course and one semester, a lot of…several hundreds of years, many centuries in one…Because we all do in one semester as well, so it has to be very much a survey course.

While the scope of the courses is wide, teachers found ways to weave various specific topics into the curriculum. Rachel continued to explain in more details:

It's very in that sense generalized but also very specific, because it's Black women in the America. So, we have a specific location with a very specific group of individuals, we've identified them by gender, by race, by the location. So, it has an interesting balance of having some things that are general but also really specific in that course.

Xavier, who had three years of teaching experience at the college level, provided extensive information about how his courses aimed to provide students with knowledge about the cultures of Asian American populations. First, he talked about the goal of his Asian American History course:

I teach Asian American history. And the goal of that course is to get students to be familiar with the history of Asian immigration from 1848 to present day. And through the process of learning that history they're also supposed to gain a better

understanding of social constructs and sociological concepts. And the other class I started out teaching was Chinese Culture and Heritage. And the purpose of that course is to introduce students, to expose students to the primary cultural and historical concepts around Chinese history. And I even taught Asian American Literature for a semester. And the purpose of it is to again get students to understand the history of Asian migration into the Americas but through literature, through the writings of Asian Americans.

He also shared how one of his courses, Chinese Culture and Heritage, was structured around different concepts:

The Chinese Culture and Heritage course…They start with a lot of materials with the book that that that we use in the course. That is a lot of history. And I think the cultural understanding starts to come in when we try to teach concepts. So, each module I tried to teach you know a few major concepts. When we talk about the school of the hundred schools of philosophy, we have a discussion a little bit about what usually is a philosophy and what are some different features of philosophy. When we talk about the Tang dynasty, we talk about the concept of cosmopolitanism and what does that mean. And are these stories in Chinese history…do they maybe change our ideas of whether culture is transferable or essential.

When Xavier talked about Asian American Literature, he explained how he and his students got to explore culture understanding visually:

The Asian American literature course…the cultural understanding came about because I think I asked both my students and myself to read these pieces of Asian

American literature and have an understanding of where they're coming from, why they're saying what they're saying, and how does it contrast with some of the students and my own existing ideas about what Asian Americans should be writing about or talking about. And we actually shifted to graphic novels halfway through because I was having a hard time a little bit with the understanding, and we found that a variety of the students were interested in popular culture. And I'm have a background in media so for me it was an important tool for thinking about how to… A lot of people do engage in cultural understanding now which is a lot of times visually.

Amy, who had taught kindergarten, 3rd grade, 8th grade, and special programs prior to teaching in higher education, has had experience teaching in college for some 15 years. She started teaching at the research site since 2018. She shared how her courses involved culture:

I teach the Latino experience in the US, and I teach the history of the Dominican Republic. In the course the Latino experience in the U.S., the goal is to introduce students to a broader image of what is the Latino experience in the U.S. beyond what is out there in the media. The goal is to have the students relate to not only chronological events but to current events that happen in our society, and to make sure that they understand the historical legacy that is intertwined with U.S. history and Latino history in the U.S., which goes way beyond 1846, the Mexican American war, or the Spanish American war in 1898, you know, with Cuba and the U.S. in Spain. So, it goes as far as the 1500s when the Spaniards came. And even though Spaniards are not Latinos they are Hispanics and they fit in that

cultural legacy that Latinos have had as an experience in the U.S. And then of course to understand the culture it goes beyond saying Hola, you know, and como estas. To understand the similarities that Latino experience has with other immigrants in the U.S., not only in a historical perspective but in a current and ongoing perspective.

And for the History of the Dominican Republic…um, wow, you know how I mentioned before that we will have a cultural base despite my belief that culture is fluid, yet we all have a base, right? Well, I am from the Dominican Republic and my specialty is colonial history of the Dominican Republic with the concentration on slavery, gender, and resistance. And one of the goals for that class is to have students understand the significance geographically what the Dominican Republic has for the world and also historically… But Santo Domingo was the first port of entry for the transatlantic slave trade and many people ignore that, unfortunately. That has to do, in my opinion, an academic complacency that many historians of transatlantic slavery do not emphasize that. So, one of the goals for that class is to understand how we produce knowledge, how we intake knowledge, and how we can use that knowledge in a positive way to acknowledge those people in general, that can accept or can learn about the different cultures of the Dominican Republic, including the importance of the transatlantic slave trade.

The course syllabi provided by two teachers—Amy and Xavier—also confirmed the extensive spectrum and detailed organization of the courses offered in the Department of Race and Ethnic Studies. These courses cast a wide spectrum of coverage both vertically (in terms of the history/histories) and horizontally (in terms of the various

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topics). In Amy's case, the concepts or ideologies covered in her class titled The Latino Experience in the U.S. included race/racism, ethnicity, neoliberalism, geographical influences, politics/policy, education, communities, nutrition, homosexuality, immigration, gender roles, transnationalism. In Xavier's case, his curriculum of Asian American History covered oral history, quantitative research, immigration, orientalism, racism and stereotypes, human rights, legal/prison system in the U.S., and the viral pandemic versus the social pandemic.

Despite the wide-ranging timeline and topics, each instructor was able to pinpoint specific goals of the courses and found various ways to integrated artworks into the curriculum to achieve those goals. These artworks, sometimes referred by the teachers as creative works, ranged from reading/writing poetry, playing drum, dancing, visiting exhibitions, viewing films, paintings, to images like posters, cartoon, and photography.

Given the wide-ranging topics and tools used in the courses, it was not surprising that among the students who participated in the focus groups sessions provided a wide-ranging recollection in terms of how they perceived, understood, or evaluated the arts-related activities in the courses. The following three sub-themes detail how the core category—variety—was manifested in students and teachers' responses in the study.

Sub-theme 1-1: Definitions of Culture and Arts

How can culture be defined? First and foremost, it was observed early on in the data collection and data analysis that there existed a variety of ways in which teachers and students defined the two major concepts in this study, i.e., culture and arts. Not only were they all able to share their concepts freely, but the answers covered a wide spectrum of how culture and arts can be understood or defined.

Teachers tended to explain culture in length. For example, Amy said:

I think people use culture interchangeably with diversity and mainly referring to traditions, customs, and of course race. And many times, and that is a correct definition, but in boxing that definition and using culture synonymously with diversity we seldom –and I'm not saying everyone, but sometimes we leave out other specifics of culture. And in other people now that has become more popular and that can include obviously you know gender, that can include skills, that can include learning styles, and you know. So, for me culture is a myriad of things. Culture is not fixed. I think is like identity. Culture is fluid because it grows. You have your own from where you come from. But many times, when you enter a new arena, a new environment, a new space, you may take the same way as you may leave, right? So, I think that culture is fluid. Nonetheless, I do have to say that in general we all have a culture base. You have your culture base from your nationality, from your country, from your region. I have my culture base. But that culture base may have expanded through the years according to different experiences that I may have been introduced to. And that's what I try to do in the classroom.

Compared to Amy's explanation on culture, Xavier, who is a son of Chinese immigrant parents, did not specify his cultural heritage as he talked about culture. Instead, he said:

Um, I think that culture is the way that human beings continue to understand their world through the practices of humans that they come into contact with. So, the culture is really like a continuing story for people. I think in our modern world of

course it's so confusing to get the story straight. And sometimes I think we mistake, or we have a placeholder for what culture is and that doesn't allow us to look further at what culture is.

Rachel, who taught Black Woman in the Americas and the Caribbean, provided her anthropological version to explain what culture is. She said:

I am a cultural anthropologist, so we really usually avoid these questions (laugh). We literally changed the definition every single time somebody asked. That's enough for strategy. The way that I, for my purposes of teaching, the way that I define culture is I think of it as a set of like ideas, practices, and beliefs that are shared amongst a group of people, a very simple sort of understanding that I explained to students which I think it's really important.

When it comes to students' understanding of the concept of culture, most of them tended to use nouns or short phrases in their responses to describe tangible items such as clothes, food, language, etc. when they tried to define culture. A few of them also explained culture in a rather conceptual way, for which they provided more in-depth arguments. For example, Monique, who is an African American female student majored in history and identified herself as of a mature age, shared:

I could find culture as what I know what I'm used to, what my parents and my grandparents instilled in me.

Another student, Robert, an elderly African American student taking the course of Asian American History, shared his concept of culture as a person's life journey:

Personally, I look at culture as how you were brought up. What you learn from the crib. And that's what I think they eat, how to speak. You learn to walk, dress,

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what to say, in a big atmosphere with other people, about not human…learn

mannerism. All of that to me that is culture.

Rosa, who identified her age as older, shared another rather lengthy yet somehow

disjointed definition of culture:

I define culture as a ritual. And Nina said it has to do with your clothing, you

religion, and you culture your language. I'm a little bit of… here if you ask me

why I say that because now this generation and my time there's a lot of cultures

that are mixed together. So, I wouldn't precisely say one culture if that makes

sense. Like right now we're two ethnicities and we also have two different

religions in our home. You got Pentecostal and then you have Catholic. Now

being Hispanic Puerto Rican then also being Catholic, but I was not Catholic. I

was raised Pentecostal. So totally different way to the other side and not to

mention that we didn't hold on to too many traditions due to the fact that my

mother being orphaned. So, I adapted more with my husband's family. They are

other nationality including myself, so I have a lot of mix, so for example Italian

with African American, Asian with German, Puerto Rican with the Dominican.

So, in my raising there was a lot of cultures mixed together so each of us together

mix make from the culture of each other if that makes sense.

Based on these narratives from teachers and students who explained in longer

sentences, we can already see the variety of ways in which culture were understood by

them. Furthermore, many one-word answers were provided during the focus groups

sessions, which added to the wealth of vocabulary that the students in the research site

processed collectively to describe culture. These words included shorter and tangible

items, such as food and clothes, as well as intangible concepts such as personality, tradition, or religion.

In addition, it was observed that while some students, like Gary and Patricia, sounded unease when they strived to form clear and articulate sentences, other students were able to present their ideas more eloquently and effortlessly. Gary, a male student in his early 20s, shared that his definition of culture was "just the way in which like a group or group of people live based off of like pre-existing situations." Such a wide-casting net of a definition was mirrored by Patricia, an even younger student of Asian descent and in her late teens, who thought: "I think culture is something like you know it defines our roots and origin and like the way we dress everything. Maybe it is like part of our personality as well."

On the contrary, Monique, a black female student who self-identified as "more of a mature age," expressed her ideas about culture with smoothness, confidence, firmness, and clarity:

> I could define culture as what I know, what I'm used to, what my parents and my grandparents instilled in me. Their values, their ethics, their morals, even their beliefs systems that I still hold near and dear to my heart. I believe dance is a part of our culture, you know. The music we listen to. The foods we eat. Hm. How we prepare those even down to maybe the way we dress and things like that yet all of that imbues my culture.

The confidence seen in Monique's articulation and demeanor was also observed in Nina, a younger Black American student in her early 20s, who defined culture broadly. She said:

I define culture is like just having like similarities within a group. So whatever one can like relate to in a large sense because you know I just I feel like there are different ways of being a part of a culture so I would just say that (coughed) sorry they're like interest or whatever rituals or beliefs or you know just different attitudes and like she said clothing that everyone can relate to. I think that it could be a part of culture within that group.

Sam, a student of Arab descent in his early 20s, concurred Monique and Nina's answers about culture and added:

Everyone pretty much like got the gist of it, you know. So, I kind of shared the same beliefs. I mean if I were to use a word to like label culture, it'd be like a way of living or it's like a behavior. 'Cause culture like it's like your personality, right? It defines who you are and your behaviors and actions and stuff like that.

This variation in perspectives manifested among different students were further displayed during the discussions on arts. The researcher wished to note this distinction because, in addition to the various definitions of culture, the various manners of how students reflected and responded to the questions about culture and art is another sign of the "variety" phenomenon in which all students were able to express their ideas freely and spontaneously.

How can arts be defined? When asked about their experience of arts, all three teachers were able to share clear memories about art in their lives. Rachel said:

I was originally… I start off as a fine arts major when I was in college. When I was young, I was always drawing. I love to draw and quite sometimes design clothes, you know, I draw designs for fashion. I was always clipping magazine.

So, I was getting inspiration from everything. I would draw nature. I would go to the library, always find something new and interesting. And I loved things that were super like photo realistic. So, I always had an interest in art that I was usually like the best artist within that small group in my in my school where I grew up.

Along with such a disclosure about her personal connection with arts, Rachel made a distinction about being an artist and being artistic:

It's very clear that I'm a creative, artistic person but not necessarily sitting down and I'm going to paint now that sort of thing. But whenever I have the opportunity to what I do or create things it's very clear that I'm very artistic.

What's even more interesting is that during my interview with Rachel, she brought up Amy, another teacher with whom I had arranged an interview, and referred to her as a true artist who "makes her own lamps, dances, and all these…yeah, she's like…redid her bathtub and I'm like you are hardcore." However, what Amy told me later showed a different perspective from what Rachel thought she was. Despite describing herself being around literature and music a lot and had some interest in musical instrument, Amy proclaimed: "I don't have the talent. I don't and I didn't develop the talent." However, Amy did admit, "I took for a very short period of time on drumming lessons. And I bring that into the classroom and luckily, it's part of the history of the courses that I teach."

Similar to Amy, Xavier, who taught Asian American History, did not claim to be an artist even though growing up he's always had a penchant for arts. "I studied film," he said, "majored in film and media studies in college and then got a master's in arts and

education." Xavier further explained: "But it was really a way to learn to study education and to study the main major issues in education, because at that point when I was taking a masters, I was looking for pursuing education."

On the other hand, students from the three focus groups provided an abundance of ideas about what they thought was or was not an artistic experience in classes. The result of the initial coding process of students' feedback revealed a list of items and activities that the students identified as arts. Many of them used single words such as dance, film, music, theatre, museum, and painting to describe what they thought was an artistic item or experience in the courses. A few students also pointed out the cartoons, graffiti, and Chinese calligraphy they saw in the course materials as arts. The section labeled "How to define culture?" in Appendix G is a list that contains the words the students and teachers used to described arts. Below are a few examples of students' answers when asked what arts they experienced in class.

> Silvia: So, I was…I keep thinking back to my in the class when we were talking about like early media stuff with like when we were talking about the dragon lady the phenomenon and stuff within movies of that time period.
>
> Robert: Just to build off of what Silvia said. We were talking about Anna Mei Wong and her on contribution to film. And also, in class we heard a musical tape from…I can't remember the Asian group that did it, I'm sorry to say that.
>
> Gary: I remember there were about a few times we would talk about kind of today's media in regard to like films, that have come out recently. And just overall like Asian representation in regard to just a lot of like, I don't know, day-to-day media that our generation is supposed to.

As an outlier, one particular student, Debbie, a black female student in her early 20s, expressed that the poster designs—the visual artifices from a certain period in the American history that the teacher presented alongside the lecture PowerPoint slides to illustrate various topics of Asian American history—to be "not artistic." Such an outliner response caught the researcher's attention because 1) the teacher, Xavier, had told me that he intentionally included the poster design to facilitate the artistic experience as part of his "visual thinking strategies" approach, and 2) several other students in the focus group session who took the same course as Debbie expressed that those poster images were artistic. This observation added to the depth and width of this core category because no matter how far reaching the spectrum of definitions of arts can be, it should be kept in mind that one object may strike to one person as artistic but to another as non-artistic.

Similar to how various narratives and adjectives were used to describe culture, a few unexpected items were brought to the researcher's attention as the students shared their artistic experience during the semester. For example, Rose mentioned "philosophy" as part of the art whereas Nina believed both "podcast" and "standup comedy" are arts. In addition, all the students who talked about the experience of taking a walking tour in Chinatown referred to that experience as artistic. On the note of the walking tour, more than one student who participated in the Chinatown walking tour arranged by Xavier sounded excited as they reflected on the details of the tour. What was more interesting about their reflections was that the list of items that they thought were artistic went on and on until one point Mary, a female student of south Asian descent in her early 20s, pointed out that the tour itself was an artistic experience to her:

I would consider that art because I said the inside those like the statue of Sun Yat-Sen have like meaning behind the Chinatown and historical. So, I will say…consider this is art.

Summary. With their different life stories, the three teachers found ways to incorporate arts and creative processes into their teaching. Such a variety showed that, without being an artist or claiming to be an artist, there is still plenty of approaches to seeing, understanding, and using arts as teaching tools. It was also noted that different students had different views about what can be identified as an artistic experience or artistic materials in the courses.

Overall, the transcripts of all individual interviews and focus group sessions recorded 27 different ways for culture to be defined and at least 19 for arts. These included both students and teachers' answers when asked how they would define culture and arts. The terms included attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, dance, dress, food, gender, identities, interest, language, locations, morals, music, norms, personality, race and ethnicity, religions, ritual, roots and origins, tradition, values, among others. In an attempt to showcase the wide range of vocabularies that were used during the interviews and group sessions, I organized the initiate list of codes that provided a glimpse of the width of the vocabulary. Appendix G is the results of initial coding process of this research, which include the comprehensive lists of words that were used by the teachers and students to describe culture and arts.

Sub-theme 1-2: Everyone Has a Kaleidoscope

During the data collection process, it was noticed that different participants had different ways to approach their memories. To use a metaphor, we can imagine the

process of sorting through one's memories as an experience for a person to discover and peek into a kaleidoscope—despite looking through the same hole into a pile that contains the same pieces of materials, every person will see different images at different times. While an artistic activity could seem or be described the same on the outlook for all participants, each of the participants had different understanding, experience, and views even when they were talking about the same activity.

The walking tour in Chinatown, for example, was an experience worth further mentioning. According to the course syllabus and the students' recounts, the walking tour in Chinatown had just happened a week prior to the focus group session and should reasonably be remembered. However, to some students the tour sounded more refreshing and more eye-opening as an artistic experience while other students barely remembered or mentioned it. Such was a big contrast found in students' reactions to the tour in Chinatown. The event was brought up during in the beginning of the focus group discussion by Mary, who shared her observation on several details of what she saw during the tour, including this:

> Yeah, actually since we visited Chinatown I kind of experienced something unique about Chinatown. It's like as I said I studied it. So, I love how the writing on the statue represents…I don't know what the writing means, but it represents something unique. And what interests me is the statue. I think is the father of someone of the Chinatown. And I don't know much about it but like most people admire him I would say. From my experience most pretty admire him, and he looks after people.

However, it was not until toward the end of the session that Jacob, a student who, despite multiple encouragement, hadn't participated in any of the previous conversations, typed in a private message to the researcher towards the end of the focus group session: "To be honest I don't know since I live in Chinatown, so it is normal for me, so I don't know how to explain it."

To apply the metaphor of a kaleidoscope, the significance of realizing the different processes of reflection can be understood as how different people view or experience the same activity differently. Take Debbie as another example. She described the experience with a sense of excitement and adventure:

The whole place was pretty artistic with the number of paintings and murals that you would see on the walls. And they had like these like…I think they were like lanterns just like hung up in the streets, connecting to like into the buildings there was some flags. That was really cool.

However, Jacob, who lived in Chinatown, was not able to find words to describe that same experience. What should be noted here is not just the assumption that Jacob might be so used to his daily environments that he did not know how to describe the experience. It was a clear example of opposite reactions to and reflections on the same activity. Xavier, on his part as a teacher, designed the walking tour to enhance everyone's understanding of Chinese culture in New York City, which is part of Asian American history. Jacob, a Chinese student who lived in Chinatown, could not find words to describe the experience that several of his collogues found interesting. While Xavier's intention to employ arts integration in cultural understanding was effective for many students, there was a disconnection between Xavier's intend and Jacob's perceptions.

Such a disconnection reflected the difficulty of culturally responsive teaching despite a teacher's intend, which is an issue that will be further discussed in Chapter Five.

In addition, such an observation can only be made during a focus group conversation because, had the researcher only conducted individual interviews with the students separately, the diverse process of reflections by different people on the same experience would not have been documented. For example, had I interviewed Jacob individually first, he would not even mention a word about the tour and therefore his reflection on such an activity would have been lost. Nonetheless, the experience did exist—Jacob had and looked into the same kaleidoscope as other students did, and the group discussion prompted him to reflect and locate the kaleidoscope and take another look into it.

The disconnection between students and arts integration had been known to Amy, who used poem-writing as a teaching/learning tool for her students. Amy shared with enthusiasm how she improved the implementation of such an arts integration experience:

> In the beginning the students don't like it because they are afraid just because of
> the title of the assignment. They are intimidated. And it is to write a poem. And
> immediately when I have it this described as a collective writing assignment
> through Google Docs, and when I explain to them that we're going to write a
> poem together using Google Docs, they go, oh and how much is that from the
> percentage for the grade? And then I go, actually that is the easiest 10% that you
> can earn in class, because to write the poem you don't have to be a writer and you
> don't have to write a whole poem. If you contribute a word, you get the 10%. And
> they go, oh what do you mean? Then the culturally responsiveness kicked in.

Then next time I try it like the following year when I taught the

assignment…because I now do it every year…I allow them to write the word in

their native language. So now I get a whole bunch of stuff. So, the purpose of the

assignment is to integrate all immigrant students, in the class of the Latino

experience in the U.S.

Another example to describe the various natures of the reflections on artistic

activities is how differently a teacher's view might differ from that of their students.

Xavier, who is a college teacher with prior experience as an educator in the museums and

galleries, spent a portion of the interview talking about the inspirations, concepts, tools,

strategies, and cases surrounding his use of images as an artistic approach to enhance

student's learning experience. "I have a background in media so for me it was an

important tool," said Xavier as he reflected on how his artistic background turned out to

be an asset to design and conduct the courses. He believed that "a lot of people do engage

in cultural understanding now which is a lot of times visually." Contrary to Xavier's

expectation of how his students would relate to the many images he incorporated into the

lecture slides, some of his students appeared to resonate more with experiences involving

music, films, and, as mentioned above, a walking tour in Chinatown. For example, as

Debbie recalled, what was a rather impressionable art experience could come about quite

abruptly and unexpectedly:

I honestly didn't know I was going to [watch the film] because it was kind of like

abrupt and sudden. 'Cause I was just expecting the class to end, but there was

only like a few of us in the class. He was just like let's just like watch the short

film.

Emma also recalled how the use of a music video helped her gain cultural understanding in class:

I can't remember the exact words, but the lyrics are detailed on their culture and what they were going through, and I thought it was really nice and entertaining nice. John Lennon introduced an Asian musical group right yeah he even showed us the music sheet of the lyrics as we were watching the video, the music sheet sorry the lyrics at the same time.

One should note that this observation is not a discernment on whether or not Xavier's plan on using images such as posters was impactful. As established above, the experience was there, but the students were not aware of one particular component (a poster) in their kaleidoscope or a particular moment (when the poster was shown in the ppt) when they look into the kaleidoscope. Rather, many students recalled more vividly on the short film that they watched but not finished at the end of one class meeting.

The walking tour in Chinatown, without Xavier's mentioning or intending it to be an artistic experience, helped Gary gain better understanding of Asian Americans. A white male student in his early 20s, Gary recalled:

I remember there was this mural that had to do with like the working-class people of Chinatown. And I don't know, I go to Chinatown quite often and it just kind of matched like the imagery and which I remember when I kind of like see when I go there in the morning… I don't know I think it goes like in a good conjunction with like a lot of the more concrete things that he would put that world, like laws and events that caused change and then you kind of see how that ripples into in the media.

Gary further explained how an arts experience helped making other teaching materials useful:

I mean like more concrete in regard to like you know a certain law or act that happened in a date in regard to like art and media that kind of changes over time. Well, I meant concrete as like an adjective.

Debbie's reflection on how an unexpected film-watching experience was rewarding to her was similar to how Nina described her teacher's incorporation of one particular activity into the class. Nina, a female African American student in her late teens, recalled:

In regard to how it came up, it wasn't a part of the syllabus at first. So, she put this in the…he changed the syllabus and added this because it was a current news, and it was so controversial amongst many different cultures. So, with that being said I think that it was wonderful, and it was perfectly put into it. And just to show that you know when you read the room or you're talking to you so the people in your class as a professor, you know you see how well this is what…I feel like that's what he was getting at, that you can have more things to talk about when it's more current or fresher.

To interpret Nina's reflection on this one unexpected activity, which involved all of the students watching Dave Chapelle's standup comedy entitled "The Closer," one would need to consider the timeliness, accessibility, and relatability of the work. In another word, Nina's reflection of such experiences during the focus group discussion was to a large degree due to the non-artistic elements (timeliness, accessibility, and relatability) about the work as opposed to how artistic the work was or may be.

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Nonetheless, it offered an opportunity for Nina, who regarded watching the show as an artistic experience, to engage with her classmates in complicated conversations related to the course topics that other students also resonated with. While the comedy show was not part of the syllabus like other literary works or documentaries, the experience of watching and discussing the show was what Nina talked about the most during the focus group session. Being a rather active participant during the session, it was based on Nina's reflection that the researcher was able gauge the significance of the comedy show in her learning experience compared to other artistic activities/works that did happen, or might have happened, during the semester.

Another example of kaleidoscope is Mary's reflection on the walking tour. The young female student of South Asian descent in her early 20s recalled:

Basically, what I saw in Chinatown…it reflected on my culture…is based on the way I view it. Like I don't know if I should say this but in India Kali Ma. Basically, it's Kali Ma Corporation that is also in New York.

Mary was so excited about the experience that, during the focus group sessions, she went online to find examples of Kali Ma and showed them to everyone in the focus group. Such an enthusiasm was palpable as if she was viewing a kaleidoscope for the first time in her life. Her remarks also showed how the experience connected her with other culture:

I want to show because… so you know what I'm talking about. Like so I'm really proud to learn new things in Chinatown. How we connect.

Summary. Given the limited amount of time and opportunity to conduct this study, what the data analysis established was the students' first and immediate reflection

of their learning experiences vis-à-vis their teacher's reflection of how and why such experiences were arranged. Each student and teacher had a different approach to reflecting on arts integration and how it affected their cultural competence based on their own lived experiences or cultural lens. With teachers' much effort to enhance their culturally responsive teaching using arts integration, most students were able to gain more knowledge or understanding of their or others' cultural backgrounds and identities. In some cases, students acknowledged their awareness, knowledge, or enhancement of cultural competence even when teachers included the artistic materials in the courses randomly or unexpectedly. In the case of Jacob, however, the walking tour in Chinatown did not help him gain cultural competence as it did for other students. More about Jacob's experience and Xavier's culturally responsive teaching will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Sub-theme 1-3: Making Connections

In this sub-theme, the researcher highlights several examples that illustrate the various points of connection with which each person connected with others or with themselves. To begin with, the connection was made possible due to teachers' facilitation. For example, Rachel explained how she employ the museums visits to proactively prompt students to make the connections:

> We would, of course before the pandemic, I always did an offsite class at a
> museum space. So, I would take [my students] to the NMAI, the National
> Museum of the American Indians. And we have a very nice hands-on sort of visit.
> And whatever exhibits were there we incorporated into the lesson we'd listen to.
> We always tried to get a guide who or one speaker…they usually had someone
> who was indigenous who spoke about their experiences as well and would take us

through some of the exhibits etc., looking at things. What do we see? How do we feel? When I send them in, I send them the worksheet and I ask them to contemplate the space as well. These are also beautiful faces that are used for various very different things. You know the NMAI building that was like the customs house, right? So, you could have had enslaved people coming into the nation there, thinking about the time period and, wow, what do you see? How is it represented? What does this fresco that you see painted on here? What were they trying to tell us? Why is this structure built in this way? What is this? What is it modeled after or maybe imitating within European structures? And why were they built in that way? What is that supposed to be for?

There are also examples of how students made sense of arts integration by connecting the experience to their own lived experience. For example, a connection was made between Nina and her classmates who were from a foreign country. As she contemplated on how the experience of watching Dave Chappell's "The Closer" was facilitated, Nina mentioned:

It was helpful because as this was coming out like after we watched the video, which we had to do on our own, we wrote about it, our opinions on what could be better and what could be whatever. During the conversation when we went back to class it sparked conversation amongst different people and one girl she was from another country and she was talking about her discomfort and how she can't believe that Americans are even laugh…even part of Americans are laughing, but she said that this is part of the American culture, right?

As a result of watching the standup show, Nina also saw how the same materials evoked different and sometimes controversial responses from different groups of people within the same country, i.e., the United States. Combining her foreign classmate's perspective and her own observation, Nina was able to realize that certain people can related better to each other despite of their locality or nationality whereas certain people within the same country could not understanding the minds of their fellow countrymen who were supposedly of the same culture. Nina was able to come to such realization because of her experience of watching and talking about an artwork. She accounted further:

> Within American you know there are certain groups like transgender people or women that were offended by it. So, then they see it and their group was…I can't believe that society can make fun of transgender people or women's culture. They'll look at this and talk about how oh I can't believe that that people can find, you know, Dave Chappelle bashing women funny. So, it's like when you have such a broad thing in the center you have more conversation, and you have more insight on how somebody else views there are or the way that they present you know the information in the art that is chosen.

Based on her sharing, we can infer that Nina's way of understanding transgender people as a cultural group was echoed by allies who were from another country yet sharing the same sentiment or perspective despite the geographical distance. For Nina, the standup show functioned as an artistic and expressive vehicle that brought about conversations. In other words, it was because of the conversations surrounding a shared experience—watching the same comedy show—that Nina saw the similarities among

people from different countries and the differences among people in the same culture depending on their views on sex or sexualities.

Such an experience, i.e., observing the similarities and differences among various cultural groups while engaging in an artistic activity was also seen in Amy's class on Latino Experience in the United States. If we substitute the concept of geographical distance (observed by Nina in her conversations with her classmates) with the generational gap, an arts integration can allow people to better connect with members in their family who supposedly are of the same culture, same origin, same tradition, or same race. Amy's use of drumming and dancing in her classes provided exactly the opportunities for her students to fill the generational gaps that existed in their family. Amy shared about the drumming and dancing in her class:

> So anyhow whenever I ask, at least three or four or five of them would say, oh yeah, you know like my mom or my uncle has one of those in my house, but I never really tried it to play. And I'm like, OK well, here's your chance. Sometimes I bring a drum and I know the basics for the that bass drumming formatting. So, when I show them the beat they're like, Oh my God, like I'm gonna show my parents or I'm gonna show my friends, this is so cool.

Amy's classes showed that an artistic experience can be a way for students to connect or reconnect with their cultural identities. The depth of such a connection with one's own culture was articulated with more details by Mary, the student who recalled her experience in the Chinatown tour vividly:

> Basically, what I saw in Chinatown…it reflected on my culture…is based on the way I view it. Like I don't know if I should say this but in India Kali Ma.

Basically, it's Kali Ma Corporation that is also in New York. It's located in Canal Street. And it's like a reflection to me because a lot of people go there, and they pray to God. And she is the basically the protector. She is the God who you know destroys everyone else evil. And basically, she saves you from everyone. And basically, what I saw in Chinatown Sun Yet-Sen. I think that's what he does too. I'm not sure if he does that but it also connects to my own culture. And I also believe in God so that's kind of like nice thing that it reflected on my culture and basically, we make…we pray to God and then whatever we wish [s]he gives it to us. She basically listens to us pray and she makes them like available to us.

Despite somewhat incongruent in Mary's articulation as a college student whose mother tongue was not English, what came across in her recollection was poignant. She was able to make the connection of two sets of rituals, behaviors, religions, myths, and esthetics based on her observation of a statue and the people nearby. Even though what she described about the statue might not be factual and deserved further research, the experience itself opened the door through which she could feel related to an environment and a whole group of people that might otherwise be defined as simply "others."

As Sharon shared about her thoughts on watching a music video in Xavier's class, "other people's lives" can be observed through such experiences. She said:

My community is not as diverse, so like to be in his class and witness like you know they have challenging things and they overcame them you know they are relatable, and you know a lot of the perceptions people have on them is not true. So, it made me actually be more interested overall.

Whether or not Sharon really could clearly articulate or understand the essences of the stereotypes that she refereed to that Asian Americans were faced with, the music video and the lyrics that came with it not only caught her attention but also encouraged her to keep an open mind.

Summary. Given the limited amount of time and opportunity to conduct this study, what the data analysis established was the students' first and immediate reflection of their learning experiences vis-à-vis their teacher's reflection of how and why such experiences were arranged. The various artistic activities in class offered a wide array of opportunities where students and teachers learn more about themselves and others. Such learning was done by individuals connecting the artistic experience with information or knowledge they had prior to the class. For the students, a comedy show or a photo allowed them to connect better with people from other countries or relate deeper with people in their own culture/family. For the teachers, the processes of preparing and facilitating art experience in class allowed them to see how the materials and methods helped their students connect themselves with the intended knowledge or with their/other cultures. Such process for teachers can be said to be the embodiment of culturally responsive teaching, through which they made the classroom activities more effective and relatable for the students to learn. While implementing or experimenting arts integration in classes, teachers found themselves understand their students better.

Core Category 2: Mystery

The second core category illustrates the complexity of how arts integration and cultural competence were actually put into practice during the classroom activities. While

the "how" factors were not discussed, teachers and students' reflections offered concrete examples of the benefits of arts integration in college.

Amy's experience of using poem-writing in her class was a good entry point on the complexity of the process, effects, and feedback of how students from various backgrounds experienced arts integration while she continued to modify her culturally responsive teaching. She said:

The cultural pedagogical part, the cultural responsiveness has been the most exciting part because students are given from the beginning of the semester to December to write. Whether you are an immigrant or descendant of an immigrant, or you know or you have learned anything about immigrants. If one day you think of a word that you believe represents immigrants, you just go into Google Docs and you put it there and you put your initials. If you want to put it in your own language you can do it. You put it in your own language. When you write it you also write it in parentheses phonetically so the people who are reading it can read it. And then in the bottom you do the footnote in English to translate it. So, we are doing the opposite. Instead of putting it in English within the poem and then put it in the native language in the footnote, we're reversing that. And then when we read it together because at the end, we all read it as a class, everybody is like, oh my God, you know. And then there's sometimes quiet moments, sometimes crying, sometimes clapping. Last year one student wrote in Fulani because that's her African language. Students wrote in Spanish. And this year we just had the first day of class and two of my Middle Eastern students they wrote in Arabic, you know, so we already started the assignment.

Below are two sub-themes that capture the complex and sometimes unexplainable process of how arts integration and cultural competence took place in the classes.

Sub-theme 2-1: When Arts and Culture Join Forces, They Work Wonders

The concept of culture, while seemed open to numerous definitions for the participants in the study, carried the quality of obscurity and fluidity. It became more complexed when the mentioning of culture is intertwined with the mentioning of arts. Silvia, a female white student in her mid-to-late twenties, said:

> It really depends on who you ask. It's all in the eye of the beholder because like from my perspective it might be one thing and from somebody else's perspective it might be a totally different thing. It really depends on who you ask.

Sam, a male student of Arab descent in his early twenties, also talked about the "difficult to define" nature of arts and culture. He pointed out:

> I don't really…I can't really pinpoint like what kind of art that is or what it is or like what the culture is, but you know that's how I really do it, seeing all these people and you know their beliefs and what they believe in and how they, you know, build their building and stuff like that.

The combination of culture and arts also revealed itself as an amalgam that appeared to contain a magical power allowing the participants to freely wield arts into their conversations about culture, and vice versa. Rachel, an experienced teacher as well as trained anthropologist put it plain and simple: "Art is part of culture." Robert, the older black American student, was an ally of Rachel's direct statement. He recalled a recent experience that shed light on how arts helped with his cultural appreciation:

This Sunday I went to Reuben Museum in downtown and it's also some Asian art and Tibetan art. I mean from everywhere and I found that kind of inspiring in a way 'cause I was able to read and learn about without these people work they had paper because I got to think about…I love art and when we go to like…we go to a lot of museums but that was in particular…I particularly like because it was just it just fascinated me about the culture worships is the best way to put it.

Similar to Rachel and Robert, Xavier, who utilized visual representations in his classes, merged the art of storytelling into his understanding of culture:

So, the culture is really like a continuing story for people. I think in our modern world of course it's so confusing to get the story straight. And sometimes I think we mistake, or we have a placeholder for what culture is and that doesn't allow us to look further at what culture is.

While arts and culture are concepts that deserve and carry abundant discussions and definitions, the fluidity and interchangeability of both add to the mysterious process of how and why they worked hand in hand. Silvia, one of the students who regarded the walking tour in Chinatown as an artistic experience that involved culture appreciation, elaborated further with a reflection on another trip:

I've gone overseas to certain places, like, I've been to a concentration camp in Germany. And it's every…but every group has had horrible things happen to them and every group can commiserate with each other because of horrible things, yeah…and whether it's a horrible thing or a good thing we've all had a little bit of each throughout our life.

Also enjoying the artistic experiences in the course, Sharon talked about how she benefited from art-related activities:

I know we will have times where he'll have times where he asks us like what do we see in this image, right? And you can instantly relate to like some of like the design or like the colors or the patterns to like Asian cultures. And I'm a big fan of like art-increasing activity so like over the weekend…'cause I have a TikTok, so I had gone to like a pottery class. And then like I gave information on how art stimulates the mind, and how it allows things flowing, how it put you at ease when you are doing activity. So, I think it's important that he incorporated different ways of learning, 'cause I know in my other classes they kinda stick to like this one routine.

Robert concurred:

Yes, I agree with the Sharon about how art puts you in mind about different things because I was looking to…the professor was presenting to us with the posters different posters of the time during the railroad project and I can't help but relate to my ancestors in a way, because it seems like we all went on the same trail as far as things was done in history between U.S .and white establishment at that time.

Not only did Xavier's curricular design in teaching Asian American history allowed for his students to enjoy artistic experiences that evoked or enhanced their cultural awareness or understanding, the combination of arts and culture appeared to have a long-term effect. Robert said:

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I didn't about Asian history at the beginning of this course. But since I've been with the professor, I've learned quite a bit about it. The things I thought I knew I didn't really know, and it enlightened me and made me wanna learn more which I intend to do even after this class is over.

Rose, who shared her experience in learning Chinese culture through various artistic components, sounded excited just by remembering the process:

When I read and I saw the poem about Lady Young and the emperor. First of all, painting, from painting on silk, and the colors and the stroke. I don't know specific the words, but it was interesting and breathtaking. Even if I don't understand the language I could still feel and understand where the art of the picture gives me an idea. Second is the poetry also is another part that I found it amazingly beautiful, developed writing for music from the left to the right, and how long it takes to write that down, and with the words that you're saying it was so much in the story of Lady Yang, and in the end focus… You have military, love, and disaster I can even start…it covered everything. That was the art for me that just open my mind.

Summary. The complexity of the two concepts—arts and culture—did not limit or discourage teachers or students to use, experience, or reflect on how arts integration could invite, instigate, or prolong cultural understanding. Even though the experiences and perceptions vary depending on each person, the combination of arts and culture appeared to create opportunities that allowed participants to enjoy learning in and outside of class.

Sub-theme 2-2: Arts and Culture Will Find Their Way

This sub-theme needs to be explained in two segments. The first segment has to do with students' immediate reactions to the interview questions or how they recounted the experience that they had in class. In all the three focus group sessions with the students, a common thread was the phrases: "I don't know but…," "I'm not sure if…," "I don't really know but...," or "I don't really remember…." While it may have well been a speech habit that multiple students had during any given conversation, the rather high frequency of such a pattern of speech bears several interpretations. The first interpretation is that these students don't feel confident enough to articulate or frame their own thoughts about the concepts or definitions of arts and culture. The second interpretation is that these students had not be required to or chose not to remember the details of what was taught or shown in class and, consequently, the "I don't know" expression would be truthful representation of the experience. The third interpretation is that it should be treated as collective redundancy in verbal communication, meaning these "I don't knows" may be treated the same as a gap-filler in conversation like "well" or "you know." Since the third interpretation will not enhance the progress of this study, I will only provide examples to illustrate the first two interpretations of the occurrences of such expressions during the conversations.

Gary, as an example for the first integration, is one of the students who were able to formulize longer, rather articulate descriptions about his concepts and experiences. However, at the beginning of his talks, he sounded as if he needed to seek approval to validate what he thought about what he had experienced:

I don't know…I think it goes like in a good conjunction with like a lot of the

more concrete things that he would put that world, like laws and events that

caused change and then you kind of see how that ripple into in the media.

What the excerpt above could not deliver was the tone in which Gary articulated.

A very attentive listener and participant during the focus group session, Gary's tone

doesn't quite reflect the nature of someone who does not know what they are talking

about. Instead, arts and culture found their way into Gary's iteration with a certain level

of confidence that flowed through the words and expressions he used despite he started

with "I don't know…" As passionate and clear as Nina was about her experience, she

also questioned her own thought at the end or during the course of her reflection:

So those were like the other, the other ways that we've looked at and I think it

was more interesting, more fun to talk about it because we all relate to it or it was

like easier to see like connections in whatever we were studying without it being

so like, I don't know, you know.

To describe the second interpretation of such utterances, a few examples are

presented below. Despite that these students were able to recall certain details from the

artistic activities that they experienced during the class meetings; some details were not

retained:

Patricia: We learn about whitewashing you know in media like movies are in TV

shows, like they hire white people instead of Asian. And the professor gave a lot

of examples, and I don't remember the name, but it was in Doctor Strange or

other movies.

Emma: "I can't remember the exact words, but the lyrics are detailed on their culture and what they were going through, and I thought it was really nice and entertaining nice."

Robert: "We were talking about Anna Mei Wong and her on contribution to film. And also, in class we heard a musical tape from…I can't remember the Asian group that did it, I'm sorry to say that. He played for us and which I thought was kind of catchy for the time period. That it was all it was introduced by John Lennon and his wife Yoko Ono but I just can't remember the name of the group I'm sorry to say."

While Patricia and Emma were able to describe the experience in detail even though some details were missing, some students were either non-participatory or oblivious of the details of the class activates. Silvia, for instance, responded to one of her classmates' sharing about watching a video in class with a candid yet embarrassed tone:

I remember seeing a picture of john Lennon and Yoko Ono but other than that I can't remember a single thing about that class.

Whether it was a sign of students' lack of confidence in articulating their experience of arts and their understanding of culture, or it was a sign of the students' honest oblivion during the artistic experience in class, the multiple occurrences of "I don't know" implied that arts integration and cultural competence found their way into the mind of the students who managed to account for their experience, reflection, and opinions regardless of their prior backgrounds in arts integration or level of cultural competence.

The second segment of this subtheme—teachers' preparation for and facilitation of the classroom activities as they incorporated artistic components into them—completes the subtheme of how arts and culture find their way to help student learn regardless of whether or how the results were intended. According to Xavier, who admitted, "it's a little bit almost experimental on my part as a teacher." For example, as Xavier looked back on what he referred to as an experiment on his part as a teacher, he said:

> My evaluation process I think it was the…just the process of just observing what I did in class and how the students received it and the kind of quality of the student work in reception to it. It seemed like they were fishing for the answer, fishing for what the professor wanted and as a result had sounded like yeah maybe I need to just establish better how we frame it.

This unplanned method for assessment may be a result of Xavier's approach of using arts in the classroom experimentally: "I have done it as a just a tool, not intentionally. That arts integration is just there because it's a big chunk of our lives and it's how I view the world." Nonetheless, Xavier's students who perceived the materials as artistic components were able to make connection between arts and culture in ways that transcended generations. For example, Robert, an elderly black male student taking Xavier's class of Asian American History, recalled how the posters helped him connecting the materials with the American culture in a rather larger scale:

> The professor was presenting to us with the posters, different posters of the time during the railroad project and I can't help but relate to my ancestors in a way, because it seems like we all went on the same trail as far as things was done in history between U.S. and white establishment at that time.

Similar to Robert, Patricia shared how the artistic components played a role in helping her "feel" other people while she prepared to be one of the weekly designated student facilitators in one of the class meetings:

So, I was reading the article that professor posted on the blackboard. So, there was this one article about the garment industry, right. So, they would like couple of photos of the women, like Chinese women who protested. So, like I read about their… about them and I saw the photo and I think I could you know like experience like how they really felt, and you know by seeing the photo.

There was another obviously spur-of-the-moment artistic activity resonated with Xavier's students in a deep way that could not be articulated. Debbie, who seemed to have regretted not being able to enjoy this activity fully, remembered:

Okay, so with the short film, sadly since it was near the end of class, we weren't able to like see a lot. But I feel like other than showing the Chinese culture, it kind of showed how they adjusted. I think it was New York I believe. They have…they adjusted to New York. Even though they were from a different culture in a way. I'm not sure how to explain that sadly.

Amy seemed to have intentionally prepared to take on the different responses or reactions from different students as she incorporated arts into her teaching methodology. During my class observation, I noted that Amy created an environment where students would be guided and encouraged to share and comment on their thoughts and experiences more freely. After I observed in Amy's two class meetings (from two different sections that followed the same syllabus), I spent some time talking to her about how she prepared for the class. Before I talked to her, I had noticed that the students in Class B were more

engaged in class discussions than students in Class A, even though in both classes the materials and instructions were exactly the same. While the level of responsiveness maintained high from the beginning through the end during Class B, where the exchanges from and among the students appeared to be livelier than in Class A, the enthusiasm only got elevated when it came to the discussion about the artistic components in the class such as movies or peom-reading. On the other hand, most of the students in Class A did not start to actively contribute to the discussions until much later during the class. However, similar to students in Class B, the enthusiasm in Class A was elevated when students were encouraged to comment on the films or poetry, which were the same artistic components Amy prepared for both of her class.

Amy shared with me that, compared to the students in Class A, the students in Class B had different personalities that made them more participatory in the discussions than students in Class A. Amy also told me that, at the first meeting of each semester, she would ask every student to write on a piece of paper something about themselves and their own personalities. It was based on the details in those slips, according to Amy, that she was able to prepare herself to handle the different levels of enthusiasm more readily as she strategized how to stimulate more participation during each class depending on the nature of each topic and each artistic component.

It should be noted that, while Amy did not specifically acknowledge personality as a cultural trait, Patricia, one of Xavier's students, mentioned as such:

So, I think culture is something like you know it defines our roots and origin and like the way we dress everything. Maybe it is like part of our personality as well.

Sam, a male student in his early 20s provided a similar definition:

So, the way I'm defining culture is basically like a behavior, right? Like a

personality.

In this case, we see how Amy brought "personality" into her culturally responsive

teaching without even realizing it. She actively sought to find out students' different

personalities as she employed arts integration in her classroom. Not only did Amy's

adjustment of her poem-writing assignment made the activity more relatable to students

whose mother languages were not English, the different characters in her students were

also part of her culturally responsive teaching. The result, which I observed in both of her

classrooms, was paragraphs of words and sentences that, when spoken out loud,

resonated with all students.

This connection between teachers' intentionality in arts integration and culturally

responsive teaching also helped Rachel with her curriculum preparation and classroom

facilitation. When Rachel talked about preparing for her teaching materials for students

whom she had known were of specific demographics and cultural heritage, she noted

"culturally responsible pedagogy includes issues related to gender, related to trauma,

related to race. That's more recent…that's the one I have to be more careful about." She

also shared an example of how she incorporated culturally responsive teaching that

involved an article about a singer who was a controversial public figure. Rachel said:

I had to step back and remember because the student wrote me in the chat. She

said you didn't say that this was going to be covered in this. I said, oh I'm sorry

let me mention that. So now I know like, OK, the week before I'm going to make

sure everybody knows like, listen, this is the topic that it's gonna be covered in

next week so if you're not comfortable about reading it or discussing it, no

problem. But just know that this is what we are talking about. And it's in the context of this class where we advocate for Black women, and we support them, and we advocate for survivors of abuse of all kinds etc., right? So, I just need to put a little bit more context on that because the article is so credibly well done.

Such input from a student made a difference for Rachel especially when the class materials contained information that might be sensitive or disturbing to the degree that certain students would feel triggered by or uncomfortable with it. Another common thread emerged from all three teachers' sharing that contributes to the significance of this subtheme—arts and culture will find their way—is that all three teachers expressed their desire and willingness to provide experiences that their students can relate to. According to Amy, it is helpful to learn directly from her students what to teach or how to teach. "We can ask the students, what do you want me to do?" Amy suggested: "Do you think this is a good idea? Are you comfortable with this? Or I was thinking that we can do this. And you know what? You'll be surprised the feedback that we get from them. They have a lot of knowledge." In Xavier's case, the experimental process also included students' feedback:

I have of course some examples of arts, important works of art that Asian Americans have done. But in a way we do look at a lot of what the students create in their discussions and in their written assignments about their lives.

All the results, intended or unintended, might be due to different considerations. In one example, Xavier was trying to make his class more fun:

I think by talking about myself but kind of introducing my background and sharing that I worked at museums and so is a way to share that I studied this

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almost informally. And it was for the public, too. So, I hope that's a welcoming way to say that we're gonna do these things…and it's almost a selling point…it's like this will be more fun to do in class. And finally, I think one of our requirements for Asian American history is like we have to teach this the distinction between quantitative and qualitative data.

When Xavier observed an article that he thought was timely but obviously did not resonate with most students, he considered removing that article from the curriculum.

So, I assigned an article about Crazy Rich Asians. The literal title is like The Bourgeois Cinema of Boba Liberalism. And I've taught that article for two semesters but then over the summer I was like oh God this is not working at all. It doesn't really…I don't even know what I'm trying to teach with this article. So, I took it out and we're gonna use more video resources. I'm sharing the message here, some short YouTube videos that have some amount of pseudo scholarship about Asian American representation in media. And so, I yeah it's led me to try to…when I see that like there wasn't really any learning going on in this module I try to change it or try to adjust, to change the learning objectives.

Whereas Xavier's intention of using arts was to make the class more fund, Rachel tried to incorporate arts so that her class could be more relatable to her students' demographics. For instance, it was important to note that "there's always a week that appeals to somebody and with class more than others," said Rachel, who also explicitly stated that, "I really very consciously make sure my course is very much focused on who is going to be taking it like what our demographic is, so they always strongly relate to the material."

Summary. In spite of the teachers' original intends or goals, what might or might not work for the students in terms of arts integration and cultural competence were not always predictable. According to the data presented above, it can be speculated that the differences in teaching experience in college was a factor affecting how readily and well-prepared the teachers can be when faced with different types of reactions from their students at any given moment. Sometimes, the unintended could happen, just like how Xavier's students recalled the short film he accidentally played at the end of one class meeting but did not finish playing. The "experiment," as Xavier called it, will reveal ways in which arts and culture found their way to help his students learn. On the other hand, Amy and Rachel, both of whom had longer experience teaching at the college level than Xavier, appeared to be more capable of handling and adapting to the circumstances as they arise in classroom and steer the arts integration towards benefiting their own and students' cultural competence more swiftly and smoothly. Regardless, according to Amy and Rachels' accounts as well as Xavier's students' sharing, arts integration managed to mysteriously work wonder and helped both teachers and students understand better about cultures regardless of teachers experience or students' backgrounds.

Core Category 3: Possibility

The third core category emphasized on how arts integration indeed helped students and teachers gain their awareness or understanding of cultural differences. The first subtheme centers on students' feedback, whereas the second subtheme presents teachers' views on how the experience of arts in class can affect their culturally responsive teaching.

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Sub-theme 3-1: Arts Helps Student Explore Issues About Cultures

Despite the variety of definitions of arts and culture and the complicity of how arts integration was prepared, implemented, and modified, many students shared that arts helped them gain cultural understanding. For example, by watching a comedy show Nina learned how in her Black American community there existed difference views on issues:

When I was listening to his stories and his comedic ways of interpreting racism in the United States, I saw that I could relate to it as in like oh OK he's talking about the black Clifford you know, I can see, oh OK yeah, I understand what that means now.

Nina was not the only student learning about culture from watching TV and films. Patricia had similar experiences. She said:

We learn about whitewashing you know in media like movies are in TV shows, like they hire white people instead of Asian. And the professor gave a lot of examples, and I don't remember the name, but it was in Doctor Strange or other movies.

Even though some details might have been lost, arts integration allowed students to get deeper understanding of a culture, which was Debbie's experience:

So, with the short film, sadly since it was near the end of class, we weren't able to like see a lot. But I feel like other than showing the Chinese culture, it kind of showed how they adjusted. I think it was New York I believe. They have…they adjusted to New York. Even though they were from a different culture in a way… Yeah it just like showed it from like their view instead of like us like reading it and then giving our viewing in a way.

In addition, learning about culture through the arts did not always just involve students' passively receiving the materials. Some students gained cultural competence through the arts by actively bringing artistic components into their assignments and sharing their views on various aspects of cultures with others. Sam's story was an example. He said:

What we learned in the course when I did my…put this on project was that art is used to like to put a representation of the face, you know, push the teachings of the past into the future. So, in all cultures, most cultures are the same as mine, the Bengali culture, we're using art to have teachings from the past and give it to the future generation, like the way of life, or the religion they believe in, or you know the history of that time, like wars and stuff like that, is all depicted through art. So that's the way I really like you know my culture do what we learned in the course.

Even though the learning of culture might not have been explicitly acknowledged, students shared how arts integration was a positive way for them to learn. Sharon, for example, was a vocal proponent of more arts integration in her courses. She said:

I think it's important that he incorporated different ways of learning, 'cause I know in my other classes they kind of stick to like this one routine. And I had to ask my professor, I was like, you know I'm really not enjoying it I had to do an essay every week you know. You can make it easier 'cause not every person learn with just writing. So, I think it's really important that…and it's really like fun that he included that 'cause I go to restaurant so I'm like…and it's like I can easily identify like that is the Asian culture. 'Cause when from you know it's Japanese

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Chinese in his Asian and a lot of people just put them in one category but it's like no it is different. So is important that he identifies that for us.

Nina also expressed how, in Xavier's class, arts integration made it easier for her to digest the teaching materials such as a reading assignment:

It was like easier to see like connections in whatever we were studying without it being so like, I don't know, you know. Sometimes when reading text, it kind of gets a little overwhelming but when you're seeing the videos and you know things that that you can relate to. It kind of feels a little bit more at ease and feel more fluent in what you're talking about.

Robert, the older Black American student, also recalled fondly how Xavier's arts integration enhanced his learning a culture that was previously unknown to him. He recalled:

Yeah, at the beginning how he introduced the materials, the way he presented it like I said I didn't know anything to begin with. So, anything he did would have been alright with me. OK so either poster it was the posters, and it was the film. And it was a chance to give us a chance to express what we were getting out of it. The whole process was as far as I'm concerned was great. He did introduce some photos. 'Cause that that's also art. Photos are also art. So, he did some photos as to… I was gonna say what the [Japanese] concentration camps but that's still what it was, of how the Japanese oriental people who were detained in a camp during World War Two. He did present photos of that if remember correctly. That was how it happened. That's about right yeah. It is. I don't like to see anybody get detained or put behind a fence for any reason. I don't…I would go crazy if

somebody trying to take my freedom away from me. I mean seriously crazy that probably you know put me down with the other people like that and turn around and fight for this country. World War Two was made up of Filipinos, Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, and they went to Europe and distinguished themselves. So, I…my hats off to them 'cause I don't know if…I'd like to think I would do that, but I can't say for sure I would have done that if you got me in the concentration camp that's what I'm saying.

Emma, as while female students in her early 20s, followed up and shared her how she could relate to other people's lived experience through the artistic materials that Xavier presented in class:

I can't remember the exact words, but the lyrics are detailed on their culture and what they were going through, and I thought it was really nice and entertaining nice… I would say they were proud of their… you know origin. I think the lyric says we're Chinese I think yeah, but to me it seems like really proud of their roots. And they were proud of the culture and who they were you know… And they were proud of their struggles and all the stuff you know every kind of the struggles.

At this point, even though I assume they were mainly talking about the Japanese American, I asked the students if they could clarify for me which group of people they learn about and how they would define the culture of that group. Robert responded immediately and assertively: "Courageous." He expanded on how he came to use "courageous" to define the culture of a group:

That's a group, right? So, they put down in paper and present what their feelings

were are their…anybody that could do that this is something courageous. So that

everybody can speak up and say this is who I am I know who you are and we're

all in this together. That's what I got from them and what they feel about their

culture.

Summary. With these examples, we see how students made sense and took

advantage of arts integration in class as a tool for cultural understanding. Whether it was

about a group of people that they had known about or about a type of situation that they

did not realize exist, artistic components that were presented to the students had positive

impact on enhancing their learning and understanding.

Sub-theme 3-2: Where Teacher Has A Will, There is A Way

That the concepts of culture and arts were hard to be unanimously defined did not

create barriers for the three teachers to use arts in the curricula to teach culturally

intensive courses. For example, Rachel believed it was possible for students to

"incorporate all of the history and cultural ideas into a game," which was a belief that

resulted in a game which her students created in a study-abroad course. Rachel shared:

So, we learned about this history in Argentina. And one group of…these two girls

decided to create a game around that. They told me their idea that was like…OK,

I'm here for creative. OK, I'm here for it. I want to see how you do this. How do

you make this into a game? 'Cause the idea is a game is going to educate

people…I was really glad that I allowed them the space to do that that. The

temptation is like this is going to be so tacky. I should probably stop it before this

disaster fully develops. But They're great students. They are interested in

education and human rights in all of this. And I knew I was like, OK, these are good students they, you know, very strong sense of ethics. They're taking this really seriously. See what they create…The most beautiful, beautiful thing, that one of the most beautiful projects that I ever seen, just so well… and visually too.

When contemplating her decision to allow her students such liberty to work on the assignment with an artistic and creative approach, Rachel remembered thinking: "what a cliché," which I interpreted as an attitude that might have limited the possibilities on arts integration. Such a limitation may also be caused by a teacher's self-criticism. For example, claiming not to be an artistic individual, Amy stated: "I don't have the talent. I don't and I didn't develop the talent because sometimes you are talented sometimes you develop the talent." However, determined to ensure the liveliness and effectiveness of her classes, Amy had continued to explore the benefits of arts integration in her class and enthusiastically shared how her students responded positively to her arts integration. Amy said:

> If there's very positive feedback from the students, and not only from students who are not from that culture, but I had a student come to me say professor I'm Mexican and then when I registered for the class and when you started talking the first day I was like, oh I know this stuff and I was thinking of dropping the class. But then I went to the second class, and you started talking and then I said oh I don't know that stuff. So, I stayed and I'm glad that I stayed because I learned things about my own culture that I didn't know. And then it would be the opposite for those students who are not from that culture who say I learn something that I

assume differently but now I know it from facts, for example, when we do worksheets.

Upon recalling what arts was about in his life and in his teaching philosophy, Xavier reminisced: "arts really a lot of times came through school or through what was thought to be able to enrich you your understanding of knowledge." In one example, Xavier put his belief into action by including poetry in his course on Asian American History.

> Yeah, just this introductory class we looked at a poem that's called…it's by a Vietnamese American name Bao Phi and his poem is called ego tripping as a self-defense mechanism for a refugee kid. And it's all about how he was embarrassed about his name as a kid growing up and then he by the poem articulated how it actually means a treasure from heaven. So, it actually has a deep meaning, and, in a way, a great irony is that even when people might have said it or had personal perceptions the original meaning of it is very deep to him. And so, I think the poem speaks to some kind of the harsh changes especially for being a refugee population over generations. Also, I just it was just good introduction, so I asked them all my students like what is the meaning of your names too and if they related to those ideas. So, we do have a poem early on in this class.

Such freedom in using arts in the college level should be encouraged, according to Rachel, who once considered to become a fine arts major in college but switched to anthropology partly because she felt frustrated by the rigid and close-mindedness of the euro-centric arts curriculum in her university. Rachel recalled, with the mixed sentiments

as if she already overcame the frustration and now a survivor who employs arts in education the way she truly believes in:

I went to a school that was very very famous for its arts program. Whether you're talking about music or drawing or graphic design, it was one of the top schools in the nation for arts. And I remember taking classes and I would be very dismayed at the… you know… [the classes were] so focus on European art. Even when I took art history classes, and I would ask about other traditions, how you get a couple pages about China, maybe get some maps from Africa…It was just pathetic for a school that was claiming to be, like, we're one of the top art schools in the entire country.

As a student studying anthropology, Rachel had an opportunity to incorporate her artistic vision in her class presentation. That experience made her realized that "there was still so much flexibility and freedom where the world of arts was extremely rigid." Now a teacher, Rachel, who stated "art is part of culture," always try to incorporate arts into her curriculum not only because of her affinity for the arts in general, but also because she saw it as a way to liberate her students, who were primarily people of color from mid-to-low-income families. She said:

Especially if you're a poor person of color, [the school systems] do an excellent job of passing any creativity in the individuality you wanted to express, anything you wanted to do that was created around the box. They spent usually all 12 years depressing… Like fall in line. Don't think outside. We gave you the instructions. Why are you trying to be something different? Like 12 years of feeding that into people. So, by the time they get to college, we told them to be creative and they

don't know how to do that. We don't know what that is like. We have that beaten out of us. We don't even know where we ought to start that.

Furthermore, the possibility of enjoying the benefits of arts seemed to result from the teachers' actively bringing arts integration into the fields they teach, and it can be done even if the teachers don't identify themselves as artists. Amy explained:

Sometimes like I said you have the talent and sometimes you develop talent. I took for a very short period of time some drumming lessons. And I bring that into the classroom and luckily, it's part of the history of the courses that I teach. But I think that we can experiment, and I think that we can turn some of the resources that we have a little bit more…explore deeply in the in the resources that we have.

In utilizing arts integration, students were not the only ones who could benefit from the process. In Rachel's case, the process of incorporation arts in class expanded her own knowledge about the subject she taught. Speaking of how she advised a student of hers to work on an assignment, Rachel said:

I had a student who was interested in doing something with music. I said, well, you're interested in music –and he was queer– I said, well, why don't you look at queer people in music? What are the genres in Afro descendent? What are their genres? Where you see Black queer people? Where don't you see them? And why…how are they made him visible? And I learned a bunch from the project. And I was like, oh I didn't know that there were certain Black queer people who are responsible for some of these mainstream hits.

Lastly, all three teachers shared the aspiration and hope that arts integration can be explored by other teachers. According to Rachel, the City Center University had

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launched a Humanity Alliance, which she hoped can be a possible vehicle through arts

integration can be further explored. She said:

> We're hoping that we can…and there's actually a few different projects I'm
>
> involved in with that. We have these three amazing fellows from the City Center
>
> University who are going to try to see how they can integrate the humanities,
>
> specifically thinking about issues related to race, class, gender, identities, all of
>
> these things and arts, and incorporating them. It's different areas with curriculum
>
> regardless of what you teach.

Xavier, on the other hand, described his hope to see more arts integration with a

certain speculation. As he recalled his observation, he said:

> I'm sure [other professors] find artful ways to do teaching because I think
>
> teaching probably…maybe that's just me looking down on the sciences in a
>
> certain way, but I think about my teachers growing up, like the chemistry or
>
> biology teachers that I had, and they would do things like have fun mnemonics for
>
> things, like my high school teacher taught us Tea for Two, which is an old movie
>
> from like the 50s to teach us about nucleic acids, to teach us T-A-G-C and DNA.
>
> So, I think that probably everyone does it.

In further reflecting on his experience of how he learned more about his students

and himself by using arts in his classes, Xavier shared:

> I think the classes that I've had have been very um willing to share their
>
> backgrounds and then I think when we go to the visual activity sometimes it's
>
> abrasive and I remember one student being like well no like right now there's a lot
>
> of really –and this is an Asian American student from New York, but he was like

oh there's a lot of rich Asians and a lot of Asians who have corporate jobs so this is not just not jibing with what I think about our country. So, I think in a way maybe there's still a lot of work to be done because there's almost a huge contrast in what I myself as a teacher is trying to communicate and what they say. So, I think yeah sometimes the cultural understanding is not what I expected. It's a different kind of cultural understanding.

When arts integration was being executed, it seemed important for teachers to be mindful of how the process or experience can be assessed or evaluated. Given the intrinsic nature of such activities, both Amy and Rachel relied on keen observations as a better way to evaluate the process and results. As for Xavier, despite having experienced arts most of his life and studied arts in the college as well as in graduate school, he still contemplated on how to best assess the results of his arts integration. He said:

I am almost wondering whether I have assessed this well enough. We have our quizzes, and we have our written assignments and they're meant to refer to and show competency at the concepts we discussed and shared. A lot of times when it especially with this visual that I described to you which is a soap ad from the late 19th century and it's what I used to do our unit about racial formation.

Rachel, who had more experience in teaching college students than Xavier, shared specifically what she thought could be an effective way to assess students experiencing arts integration:

It's really exciting and you can get a better sense 'cause you can literally observe, you know. Go around and observe each person and see what they're actually connecting to and how they're interacting, discussing things with each other and

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that sort of thing. So, it's a lot of informal way but very anthropological, you know, it's a bit observation way of engaging with students and to me that's always a better assessment than the paper, exam.

My in-class observation during Amy's two class meetings which followed the same syllabus reaffirmed the advantage of teachers' observing students' participation. The flexibility of Amy's class that welcome the feedback and participation from her students allowed Amy to take further advantage of her previous knowledge about each student's personalities as she navigated the course discussion. Without the real-time observation during students' exchanges, such modification on teacher's part would not have been possible. Amy's devotion in using arts and being creative did not just show in her attentive observation in the classrooms, but also reflected in how she suggested teachers could help one another. When asked what suggestions can be given to other professors on arts integration in college, Amy replied:

> We can also ask for help to colleagues. Sometimes I'm like, do you think this is a good idea? I asked when I did the Google Docs. I asked some of my colleagues and I was like, I want to do this with the class. Do you think that's gonna, you know, that's a good idea? When I did the space and place, I asked in my department. And I asked our secretary and she said, professora that's gonna be a lot of work. And I said, I know, but I want to do this so bad. I want them to share that picture. And then I went to CVS I printed all the pictures and I posted them on the board and everybody who walk by. And if…I hung up and that is…if you felt as a viewer if you feel connected to any of those pictures you could write with a pen and pin it with a contact. So, it became like this therapy wall. So, I guess in

some cases, I think that we can ask other colleagues. We can ask other people. We

can ask the students, what do you want me to do? Do you think this is a good

idea? Are you comfortable with this? Or I was thinking that we can do this. And

you know what? You'll be surprised the feedback that we get from them. They

have a lot of knowledge.

Summary. The experience of designing, implementing, and modifying arts

integration is a continuous progress for all three teachers. Coming from different

backgrounds with various teaching experience, all three of them were able to make use of

arts integration as a way to help students learn about cultures. In addition, in the

processing of employing arts integration, all three teachers were able to engage in a

reflective thinking that led to better understanding of their students and how to improve

their culturally responsive teaching. Furthermore, allowing students to employ a creative

or artistic freedom in the process of accomplishing schoolwork have resulted in positive

feedback on both students' learning experiences and professors' teaching experiences. In

some cases, teachers were amazed by the results and feedback from their students. The

positive experiences of understanding culture through the arts were made possible by

these teachers who believed in, took chance on, and experimented arts integration in

courses.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the three core categories emerged from the qualitative

analysis of the data triangulated by individual interviews, focus group sessions, and

course-related documents. The three core categories, along with its subthemes, depicted a

holistic picture that shows how students and teachers perceived the concepts of culture

and arts. At the same time, these categories put in perspective with a myriad of excerpts and examples demonstrating how arts integration was employed and experienced in culturally themed courses offered at a two-year community college. Both teachers and students shed light on how they experienced the artistic components in class, which allowed the researcher to cross-check the anticipation and realization from both the teachers and students.

The first research question in this study focused on how teachers and students see and understand the concepts of culture and art. The findings showed that both culture and arts carried a level of universality and ubiquity because not only were they defined freely and broadly by the participants, but also the definitions and applications of the two words appeared to be vague and sometimes interchangeable. However, such vagueness and obscurity did not impose negativity in teachers and students' use or understanding of arts integration as a tool to teaching and learning culture in depth and width.

The second research question focused on the actual experience of arts integration in class as reflected by students and teachers. A very important metaphor employed in the analytical process was the analogy of a kaleidoscope. Such a metaphor was used to help explain the various process in which every individual remembered, digested, and explained their experience of artistic activities or materials. It is also important to note that the same activity resulted in different, and sometimes opposite, responses from the students. However, one should keep in mind that such similar or opposites responses do not necessarily reflect the preconceived cultural characteristics of each student. That is, students of different gender, age, or nationality might share the same or similar perceptions about the same experience; whereas students of the same country origin or

cultural heritage might find things that are contradictory to their previous knowledge or opinions that are deemed controversial or even unacceptable within the same cultural group.

The third research question had to do with the aftermath of the artistic experience in class. While most students and teachers provided positive accounts on their experiences, the outlier cases are worthy of special attention. Such outlier account sof experience can be understood more easily if one frames the reflection with the lens of intentionality. For example, a carefully prepared and smoothly facilitated arts activity might not generate the results as intended by the teachers. Also, it behooves teachers to be mindfully aware of their students' reception of the artistic materials. Some materials might be overly provocative and intriguing, which will jeopardize the learning experience of certain students depending on their cultural traits that might be overlooked; and some activities might simply not be relatable to certain students and consequently could not enhance student engagement no matter how well-throughout the activities were.

Whether the class materials resulted in effects that were intended by the teachers or not, both students and teachers shared a sense of propensity towards the use of arts integration either as an activity to experience cultural aspects or as an approach to finish an assignment. These are all lens through which they could make connection with their own cultural identifies or the lives of people who they might not have the opportunity to get to know. Even though the source of such a penchant for arts and creativity was not identified nor explored in depth during the conversations, it did serve as a foundation from which many possibilities of positive learning experiences were observed, encouraged, or expected. While it can be argued that there may not be a causal

correlation between the artistic components and the positive learning experiences, it is factual that such positivity in cross-cultural understanding was made possible while the arts integration was part of the course curriculum. As demonstrated in the data, the awareness, knowledge, and enhancement of cultural competence were seen in both the students and teachers through their preparation, facilitation, observation, participation, and reflection of arts integration that explored the various aspects of social, racial, historical, and political topics.

In Chapter Five, the discussion will focus on how the findings, as guided by the three research questions of this study, interact with existing literature on arts, arts education, cultural competence, and CRT. In addition, implications will be discussed to explore how this study may be helpful for all stakeholders in higher education as we continue to contemplate the possibility and effectiveness of implementing arts integration as a pedagogy to build and enhance cultural competence of both students and teachers.

CHAPTER 5

Introduction

This study was an exploratory, grounded theory study at a two-year community college. This study examined students and teachers' perceptions on arts integration and culture competence in courses where artistic experiences and activates were incorporated to enhanced students and teachers' understanding on cultures. This study addressed three research questions. The first research question explored students and teachers' perceptions on culture and arts. The second research question investigated students and teachers' experience of arts integration in class. The third research question examined how the said experience affected their cultural competence.

The data analyzed in this study included transcripts of individual interviews with three teachers, transcripts of focus group sessions with eighteen students, two syllabi, two in-person class observation memos, and one student's reflection essay. Analysis of the data revealed three core themes and the respective sub-themes that emerged from the conversations and the documents. First, these was a variety of ways in which arts and culture were understood, defined, or described by students and teachers. This variety manifested in the vocabulary that each participants chose when they talked about the concepts and experience related to arts and culture. Such an abundance of vocabulary was used in ways that allowed arts and culture to be woven throughout the discussions freely and organically by all participants. A metaphor – a kaleidoscope – was used to describe the various approaches, feelings, and opinions that everyone had when they reflected on their understanding and experience of both concepts, especially when the reflections involved the different perspectives on the same activity that some remember vividly

whereas others barely recalled or did not know how to describe. In addition, as students and teachers in this study conceptualized, culture will shift while people continue to live and grow. Therefore, when individuals reflect on their experience of arts integration, their perspectives on and understanding of culture may shift just like how a kaleidoscope offers different views not only for different views but also for the same viewer at different times. Furthermore, the descriptions and reflections about arts and culture were also intertwined with how participants connected the artistic experience in class with their own cultures or other people's cultures.

Second, although the experience of arts integration left memorable effects on most students, some experiences were not how they were expected by the teachers. Even with teachers' intentions to employ culturally responsive teaching in arts integration, students might or might not benefit from the experience and consequently, for students who did not feel benefited or affected, certain arts activities were not thought of as artistic or positive. Third, given the wide-ranging nature of the artistic experience in the courses, students and teachers were able to make positive progress in becoming more culturally competent on a plethora of topics and issues. Furthermore, both students and teachers expressed that arts integration should be encouraged in other classes. This chapter will discuss the major findings of the analyzed data from this study, address each of the three research questions, and connect the findings to the existing literature that was reviewed in Chapter Two.

Interpretation of the Findings

Research Question #1

The first research question of this study explored students and teachers' overall perceptions on arts integration and cultural competence in a two-year community college. The analysis of the collected data showed that among all the students and teachers who participated in the study, there existed a wide variety of ways to define or articulate arts and culture. Such a variety was seen in the goals of the course, in the words students and teachers chose to describe the various concepts, and in their attitudes toward the experiences of designing or experiencing the artistic activities that aimed to help them better understand cultures.

All three teachers shared that their courses covered a wide range of topics about a certain cultural group or groups. Acknowledging the fluidity of culture, the teachers designed the courses in ways to address various goals surrounding a certain cultural group, which was pre-determined by a race or ethnicity such as African American, Asian American, or Latino American. All three teachers employed multiple artistic components in their curriculum that included literature, poetry, posters, museum visits, walking tour, music, dance, drumming, etc. to facilitate multiples discussions on various topics surrounding the pre-determined cultural group. Despite the different narratives the teachers provided to explain what culture was, they shared a few common views—that culture is fluid, mixed, and can be explained with various concepts and from different perspectives.

Students, similarly, explained culture with a variation of perspectives. Some described culture as how people live their lives or they learn to become part of a group,

others used physical or conceptual signifiers such as food, cloth, beliefs, behaviors, traditions, etc., to describe culture, and still others pointed out that culture could be different things for different people. Regardless of how articulate each student was, they were able to share freely their understanding of what constitutes culture and what was or was not arts. Interestingly, the students' views on culture essentially echoed the teachers' views in that culture is fluid and can be complexed depending on multiple factors such as age, gender, location, nationality, upbringing, religion, etc.

Research Question #2

The second research question investigated students and teachers' experience of arts integration in class. During the discussion about culture and how the courses were aimed to achieve students' better understanding about cultures, all three teachers naturally or unconsciously merged their experience or understanding about arts into their narratives. Such a phenomenon—that one would diverge in and out of arts when discussing culture—also happened among students' conversations about culture. When the teachers explained how they tried to design their classes so that the students can stay engaged or be encouraged to participate more, the usage of arts or creativity came into the picture organically. The arts integration taking place in the classes involved either the rather traditional concept of arts, such as visiting a museum or writing a poem, or a more open concept of creative freedom, such as a walking tour in Chinatown or creating a game to share knowledge/information. The former examples echoed what Eisner (1998) referred to as "arts-based" (p. 36) outcomes, which was made possible by works that were created and intended as pieces of arts; the latter examples represented Eisner's idea of "arts-related" (p. 36) outcomes, which were the results of works that were not

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necessarily intended to be artistic yet worthy or aesthetic perception, comprehension, or discussion (Eisner, 1998).

In addition, according to students and teachers' recollections, arts integration happened before the class (reading literature/poetry, seeing images, watching a video), during the class (writing poetry, dancing, sharing/observing arts, attending a walking tour), and after/outside class (reflecting on the experience, preparing for presentations/assignments). The forms and types of arts that were included in the courses were full of variety, and the reflections of which demonstrated how available and accessible arts integration were in the culturally related courses in a two-year community college. The accessibility and feasibility of arts integration were noted based on the fact that all of the design, facilitation, and implementation, and discussion around arts integration were accomplished by either teachers or students. Most of the arts integration did not involve guest artists or speakers. The only exception to this observation was the museum visits in Rachel's class, for which a guide or speaker may be arranged if possible.

Furthermore, the teachers' reflections on how they employed arts integrations provided a perspective of how it had been done in the past and how they intended for it to continue to help students gain a positive experience in learning cultures or learning in general. While one teacher, Xavier, referred to arts integration as an ongoing experiment for him, the other two teachers—Rachel and Amy—appeared to have accumulated plentiful experience and practices on how to design and implement arts integration in their courses. Even though there were some trials but not necessarily errors in Xavier's case, his experience of using arts integration remained largely positive based on his

students' feedback. Also, Xavier believed in arts so much so that he intended to continue to explore arts integration further, partially because it would be an approach for him to understand his students better and consequently teach better. The optimistic perception about arts integration was more discernable in the sharing from Rachel and Amy, both of whom admitted that they were not professional artists yet have always engaged in artistic or creative activities in their lives. Both Rachel and Amy provided several successful vignettes of their arts integration in class: some of them included situations where they learned how to modify and improve their culturally responsive teaching in arts integration; others were cases where students themselves initiated arts integration in their assignments or class presentations.

Overall, all three teachers were happy about the experience of having made arts integration part of their pedagogy. It also appeared that they were all excited about how arts integration allowed students to digest, discuss, and explore culturally related concepts in a livelier and more engaging way.

Students, on the other hand, although had not expected what arts integration there would be during each class, recalled several artistic activities or artistic components they experienced during the semester. The majority of the student participating in the study were students from Xavier's class. Even though they did not specifically identify which courses they took during the focus group sessions, judging from their feedback, their experience of arts integration in class was almost entirely positive. The only two outlier responses were not necessarily negative yet note-worthy: one student did not regard some of the poster images as artistic even though several other students recalled otherwise; another student was not able to describe an in-person experience despite other students

found it artistic, interesting, and helpful for the learning about cultures. These two outliers will be discussed further in Research Question 3. Many of the students shared how the experience helped them see their own culture better or understand other cultures in a more effective way, and a few even mentioned that not all students learn in the same way and that they hoped other professors would incorporate more arts integration.

Research Question #3

The third research questions examined how the experience of arts integration affected students and teachers' cultural competence. Based on all the students and teachers' experience of arts integration and its effect on their cultural competence, it can be concluded arts integration indeed helped them build and enhance their cultural competence on their own cultures or other people's cultures. There are three notable interpretations of the data. First, neither of the teachers were so-called artists, and yet they were able to employ multiple artistic elements in their courses in ways that kept students engaged and motivated. The growth of cultural competence not only was seen in students' awareness or understanding of the intended concepts or subjects about cultures, but it was also reflected in teachers' becoming more cognizant of their students' individual attributes, characteristics, or backgrounds.

Second, what the teachers thought to be effective arts integration may not necessarily be met with acceptance or enthusiasm from their students. In some cases, the same arts activity shifted from not being enticing to more relatable because the teachers found ways to modify the activity or facilitate it differently, such as Amy's idea to create a group project with poetry writing. In other cases, it was found that students responded better to certain types or contents, which were different from what the teachers had

planned and expected, such as Xavier's intended effect of using visual arts compared to most of his students' affinity toward music and films.

The third significant implication from analyzed data on students' experience of arts integration versus its effect on cultural competence resides in the case of Jacob – a student who lived in Chinatown, where his teacher organized a walking tour for the entire class to experience the culture of Asian Americans. The walking tour, according to Jacob's classmates, was well planned and full of interesting things that helped them contemplate on their existing or new understanding of Chinese or Chinese American people or culture. However, Jacob was not able to find words to describe how he felt about the experience. Such a stark contrast in experiencing the same event reflected how each student's individual circumstance played a role in their participation in arts integration. Xavier, Jacob's teacher, successfully implemented a tour that opened many students' views on a culture that they did not often or ever have access to. Still, such a well-received activity left one student reactionless. What would Xavier have done to modify the plan for the class or for Jacob personally? Such is a scenario where we can benefit from expanding the concept of "culture" in culturally responsive teaching from ethnic-related to something more subtle or unnoticeable. Gay (2002) argued that teachers should not avoid culturally responsive teaching (CRT) when it comes to ethnically diverse students simply by claiming "we can't teach what we don't know" (Gay, 2002, p. 106–107). However, in Xavier and Jacob's case, both persons are of the same ethnic descent. Therefore, it can be inferred that a student's race and ethnic background cannot be the only factor based on which teachers should concern themselves with when it comes to CRT.

Here we can turn to Rachel's example of how she responded to a student who told her that a reading material, despite relevant to the class subject, was triggering and traumatizing. Rachel made an adjustment and noted to herself how to better facilitate the experience in the future. In Rachel's case, she improved her culturally responsively teaching because her student offered feedback, to which she responded positively and proactively. In Xavier's case, it is unknown whether or when Jacob would tell his teacher his true reflection on the walking tour either during the remainder of the course or after the semester is finished. Suppose Jacob would never talk about this experience in class or after the semester, what could Xavier do to improve his culturally responsive teaching? Would it have been possible that Jacob showed his indifference during the tour, which Xavier might or might not have noticed? With this case as an example, we should contemplate, despite all the good intentions, what can teachers do to detect when arts integration did not work, even just for one individual in the class?

Relationship Between Findings and Prior Research

There are many findings in this study that are directly related to the theories and research reviewed in Chapter Two. Such examples can be found in both students and teachers' reflections on their experience in arts integration that pertains to cultural competence or culturally responsive teaching. The following sections demonstrated how findings in this study connected with theories and practices in the fields that have been discussed, documented, or studied.

Arts Education and Arts Integration in Higher Education

As a form of arts education, arts integration in college provided the learning experience where arts can yield the three positive dispositions proclaimed by Eisner

(1998). First, all three teachers were the embodiment of educators' willingness to imagine the possibilities that are not now but which might become (Eisner, 1998), because they saw the potential of what arts can do for their students, made conscious decisions to include artistic components in their curriculum, and modified the implementation as needed. Such willingness created a learning experience for the students to see and feel what they did not have access to and, in some cases, encouraged them to continue to explore in the future about the cultures they did not know well or realize exist. The teachers' willingness begets further willingness on their students to imagine possibilities that help them gain better understanding about culture because arts integration either enhanced their existing knowledge or modified/corrected their misconceptions.

Second, the process of creating, implementing, and reflecting on arts integration manifested what Eisner referred to as a desire to explore ambiguity and to be willing to forestall premature conclusions while pursuing resolutions (Eisner, 1998). Not only did all the students and teachers spoke about the fluid and complexed nature of culture and arts, but they also accepted and welcomed the unknown experience that would not exist until they collectively went through it and discussed about it. An example of this was Rachel's students, who, during a study abroad course, asked for permission to design a game that would incorporate their knowledge about the history and culture of a local group. The arts integration began with students' experiential learning on site about a rather brutal part of the local history, followed by a discussion between the teacher and students about the assignment. Though the process of creating of the game was unexplained, the results, according to Rachel, was the most beautiful thing she has ever seen.

Third, from students' reflection on their experience of various types of artistic medium, it was clear that they were made aware of and asked to contemplate on the multi-layered perspectives and resolutions that the artworks portrayed, documented, or celebrated (Eisner, 1998). Whether it was through an old cartoon/poster, a Chinese calligraphy, a poetry, a film, a music video, or a comedy show, the students were given the opportunities of getting closer to the cultures embedded in the work that was created at, for, or about a specific time and place. Robert, a student of Xavier, provided one of the most memorable comments that demonstrated how arts integration affected students' deeper, multi-layered cultural understanding that transcended history, race, and personality. Such an understanding reaffirmed how arts could make the recipients feel as though they were exposed to cultures outside of their own lived experience and yet able to make sense of it by making themselves connected with other cultures. Some students were even able to offer thoughtful reflection on how such connections enabled them to associate with the complicated relationships among different cultures through the history of the United States, including the enslavement of the African America, the Asian Americans' contribution to transcontinental railroad, and the Japanese internment camps during World War Two.

To sum up, this study revealed that not only arts integration can be incorporated in a two-year community college, where arts education was normally considered exclusively for students who major in arts disciplines, but also such experience was impactful and memorable to both teachers and students and helped them learn about cultures. These are the positive impacts that had been reported by practitioners in first and secondary institutions (Duma, 2014) or college student affairs professionals (King &

Anderson, 2004) who used arts integration. In the following section, I highlight the connection between findings about the positive impacts of arts integration in this study that pertain to cultural competence and culturally responsive teaching.

Cultural Competence and Culturally Responsive Teaching

Even though cultural competence and culturally responsive teaching were not unknown to stakeholders in higher education, the findings in this study provided concrete examples of how arts integration can play a role in building and enhancing teachers and students' cultural competence. For teachers, their experience of gaining more cultural competence through the practice of arts integration also demonstrated how they could reflect on and modify their culturally responsive teaching. Meanwhile, students and teachers' definitions of culture provided examples of how culture can be perceived. According to Chun and Evan (2016), the dimensions and attributes of culture can include, but not limited to "race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, socioeconomic status, parental education, geographic location, and military experience" (Chun & Evans, 2016, p. 22). From this study, it was found that teachers and students perceived a person's lived experiences, such as trauma, or personalities, such as bravery, as part of their culture. The definition of culture continues to expand.

The following section explains how arts integration in a two-year community college created an environment for cultural competence to take place and for CRT to grow.

To many students, arts integration was a good approach to learn about the class subjects or concepts surrounding cultures. Although not all of the students were able to

remember clearly or articulate eloquently the details of the learning experience, many were able to present vignettes that demonstrated how their understanding of cultures was improved as a result of arts integration. Such positive feedback can be said are due to the purposeful arrangement of the teachers' who were aware of the importance of CRT. And such practices of CRT can be interpreted three-fold.

First, by employing arts integration, the three teachers created a classroom atmosphere that was conducive to learning for ethnically diverse students. Not only did the environment allowed effective cross-cultural communication that included different perspectives of views regardless of students' gender, race, or country origin, it also demonstrated how the teachers practiced and modified their instructional techniques to accommodate the different learning styles of diverse students (Gay, 2002). Second, similar to Ladson-Billings' (2014) assertion based on the observation in the workshop with spoken word and hip-pop artists, data found in this study reaffirmed that cultural understanding involved more than just race and ethnicity. Through students' discussion and reflection, arts integration helped them observe and articulate the multi-layered cultural identities represented in the visual arts, literature, music, and films to the degree that they could inspected and examined the hybridity, fluidity, and complexity of cultures (Ladson-Billings, 2014). However, unlike the workshop that Ladson-Billings described, almost all of the arts integration mentioned in this study did not require an outside artists' presence or participation.

Third, what was also important to note from the major findings in this study is that all three teachers were consciously aware of their culturally responsive teaching and improved their practices with modifications based on their students' feedback during and

after class. For example, Professor Amy's changed how she facilitated the poetry writing as a group project, Prof. Xavier switched his reading materials after realizing the intended article about a certain Asian-American-themed movie did not resonate with most students, and Professor Rachel acknowledged the possible triggering effect of an article about a certain musician and adjusted how she would prepare her students for the same materials in the future. Collectively, they demonstrated their dedication, coupled with their attentive curriculum design, to ensure that students not only experienced academic success and developed cultural competence, but also became critically conscious about the social issues and challenges in the community and the society (Ladson-Billings, 1995). While the nature or form of the arts integration might vary, the complexities of the three teachers' implementations shared several common characteristics: 1) the instructions were noted in syllabus yet adaptable depending on students' abilities and personalities; 2) the activities required students not just to view or read, but also share, reflect, and discuss; and 3) all three teachers either made keen observations on students' engagement during the activities or encouraged/welcome students' feedback after the activities.

Last but not least, from students' understanding of culture and reflection on arts integration that affected how they view their and others' culture, it was clear that their collective concept of culture indeed echoed the multiplicity and ever-changeability that recent literature has attempted to address (Bustamante, 2006; Bustamante et al., 2009; Chun & Evans, 2016; Hermond et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2006; Lai, 2009; Overall, 2009). Contrasting to what the general public who may refer to culture as nationality, race, or ethnicity, the students in this study obviously possessed the understanding that

culture tackles more than the differences or boundaries that are based on race or nationality. Furthermore, based on findings in this study, such differences and boundaries can be tackled by arts integration in curriculum in the higher education.

New Theory – The Theory of L.I.F.E.

This study explored students and teachers' perceptions on arts integration. As revealed in the literature review in Chapter Two, much has been discussed, practiced, suggested, and theorized on fields related to arts, arts education, cultural competence, and culturally responsive teaching. At the same time, it has been noticed that most of the existing literature overlooked the studies and practices of arts integration pertaining to cultural competence of non-arts students in higher-education curriculum. However, given the analysis of collected data in this study, it is proven that arts integration can make an impact on the cultural competence both in students' understanding of cultures and in teachers' practice of culturally responsive teaching. What's lacking appears to be a holistic, highly accessible, and readily applicable theoretical framework that encompasses the understanding, design, organization, facilitation, and evaluation of arts integration for stakeholders in higher education.

As a result, I propose a theoretical framework grounded in both the data analysis in this study and in existing literature in hopes to encourage further practice and examination on arts integration and its effectiveness in regard to cultural competence in higher education. In addition, given my hope that the new theoretical framework shall benefit a larger constituency in the long run, it was thought out with the following three considerations: 1) the framework encompasses findings of this study as well as previous theories, constructs, or practices on the subjects; 2) the framework is meant for a wide

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population, especially those who may feel left out due to their artistic upbringing, educational background, or academic credentials; and 3) the framework, and the naming of it, is meant to entice attention and affinity, enhance useability and adaptability, and promulgate practices and discussions.

Hence, The L.I.F.E Theory, a framework that incorporates four charms derived from the film series of *Harry Potter* based on the novels by J. K. Rolling. The acronym L.I.F.E. consists of the first letter of each of the four charms. The naming and construct of the L.I.F.E. theory was inspired by the fact and understanding that arts and culture has been discussed, practiced, documented, and researched over and over, and it is consequently safe to assume that a useful theory shall be durable for not just one lifetime and many people's lifetime. The charm represented by each letter in the acronym, along with the implications of each charm as it pertains to arts integration and cultural competence, are explained below. Whether or not we want to be Harry Potter or You Know Who will not be discussed. In addition, the researcher acknowledges the existence of the transgender-related controversy surrounding the comments made by J.K. Rowling, the author of *Harry Potter* novel series (A. Gardner, 2020). However, as Bonnie Wright, one of the actors in the *Harry Potter* films, proclaimed, "if Harry Potter was a source of love and belonging for you, that love is infinite and there to take without judgment or question" (L. Gardner, 2020, para. 15). At the time when the study approached its completion, the *Harry Potter* film series celebrated its 20th anniversary and the researcher wishes for this study to embody the mysterious, fluidity, and complicated nature of the subject. As a result, the researcher incorporated four magical charms from *Harry Potter* and introduced the L.I.F.E theory as a framework for the understanding, creating,

implementing, and evaluating of the use arts integration to foster cultural competence. The four charms are Lumos, Incendio, Fianto Duri, and Expecto Patronum (Columbus, 2001, 2002; Cuarón, 2004; Newell, 2005; Yates, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011).

Lumos! Keep an open and observant mind.

In a world where no one has absolute authority to define arts and culture, yet everyone is entitled to their different opinions on what arts and culture should be, Lumos is a spell that enables us to keep a clear open mind and to see more clearly just like every wizard would when they illuminate the tip of their magic wands.[2] With proper usage, this spell can also illuminate the unseen entrances and open new doors to places and worlds unknown to us. In another word, Lumos encourages and allows us to see possibilities not just now but what might be. When it comes to arts integration and cultural competence, what it takes to start is the willingness to see the unseen and the and open-mindedness to encounter/contemplate all that may arise.

Incendio! Ignite things and people around us with positive intends.

So long as we have good intentions, Incendio is a spell that could help we wield the magical power of arts and culture and light up the world for people around us. A good intention is the operative word here since, with bad intentions, the same spell will do no good other than setting things aflame. Whether we are a teacher or learner, there is always a way for us to use arts to communicate cultural understanding with others. What is essential, based on the findings of this study and existing literature, is that we must forego the (mis)preconception that culture equals nationality or race. There are much

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[2] The mentioning and interpretation of each charm are derived from https://harrypotter.fandom.com/wiki/Main_Page

more arts can enlighten us about culture that is beyond the color of our skin or the location of citizenship.

Fianto Duri! Make our protection mechanism durable.

In an increasingly complex world where new and unexpected challenges continue to emerge, Fianto Duri could galvanize what's already in our toolbox to resolve a problem or tackle an issue. Whether we choose to incorporate an object or an experience when implementing arts integration, i.e., regardless of the arts-based or arts-related outcomes of the materials, this spell will strengthen our ability to tackle the issues, enhance the intended objectives, and prolong the effect of the practices. This is especially important when teachers are dealt with information previously unknown to them. As a result of this spell, culturally responsive teaching will be enhanced, because we the teachers need to be prepared, remain flexible, and stay open-minded for topics or issues that might be unexpected or unknow to us.

Expecto Patronum! Find the inner positive energy for everyone.

Everyone is different, ergo, no one solution could fit everyone even given the same circumstance. With a powerful spell like Expecto Patronum, we and the people we interact with can find the inner energy as we continue to explore cultural differences and tackle the challenges and conundrums that may come our way. In light of what might be unknown territories and sometimes traumatizing subjects, finding our own inner positive energy means finding our invincible self that can help us tread the lines of cultural differences by wielding the power of arts. This is crucial for not just students, but more importantly for us teachers, who do not always have answers to all questions. However we intend to handle our vulnerability as educators (Brown, 2016), this charm can help us

remain open to finding solutions as we experience, observe or tackle discomfort or failure while using arts integration to foster cultural understanding.
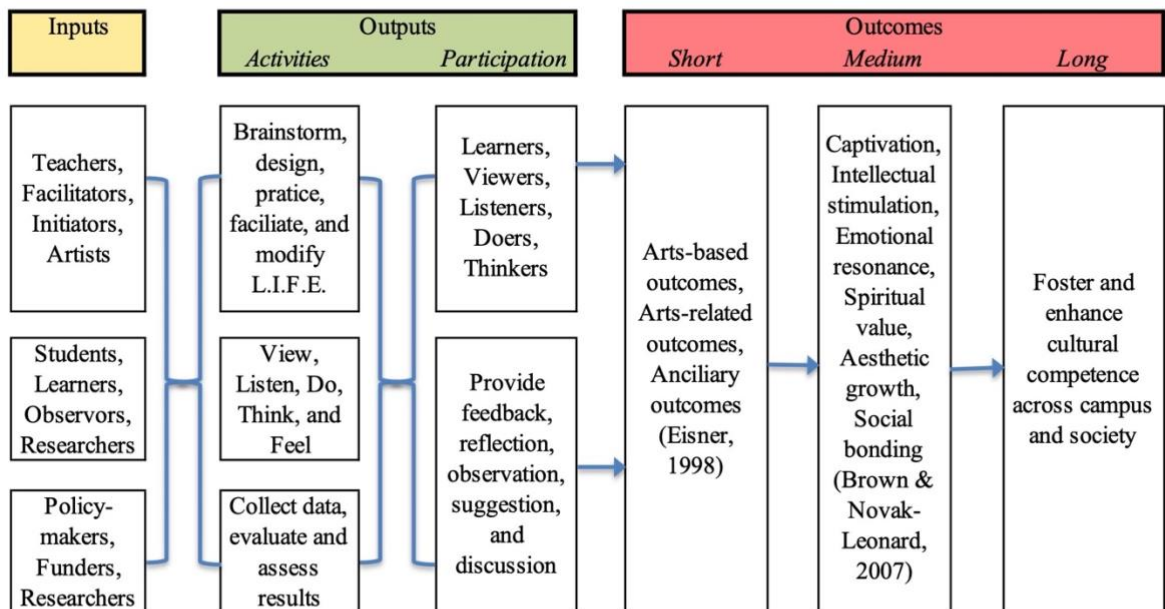
Figure 8

Logic Model: Applications of the L.I.F.E. Theory

Situation:
In a world of much disruption and division, arts integration and cultural competence can be revisited in higher education. Based on existing literature and current findings, the L.I.F.E Theory is offered as a framework that encourage us to hold dear four magical charms:
• Lumos! Keep an open and observant mind.
• Incendio! Ignite things and people around us with positive intends.
• Fianto Duri! Make our protection mechanism durable.
• Expecto Patronum! Find the inner postive energy for everyone.

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes		
	Activities	*Participation*	*Short*	*Medium*	*Long*
Teachers, Facilitators, Initiators, Artists	Brainstorm, design, pratice, faciliate, and modify L.I.F.E.	Learners, Viewers, Listeners, Doers, Thinkers	Arts-based outcomes, Arts-related outcomes, Anciliary outcomes (Eisner, 1998)	Captivation, Intellectual stimulation, Emotional resonance, Spiritual value, Aesthetic growth, Social bonding (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2007)	Foster and enhance cultural competence across campus and society
Students, Learners, Observors, Researchers	View, Listen, Do, Think, and Feel	Provide feedback, reflection, observation, suggestion, and discussion			
Policy-makers, Funders, Researchers	Collect data, evaluate and assess results				

Note. This logic model contains the following assumptions: all teachers can, or can learn to, incorporate arts in their curriculum regardless of disciplines; people in leadership positions acknowledge the significance of LIFE; all stakeholders are willing to stay open-minded and persevere through obstacles. The LIFE theory also may be affected by three external factors: professional development may be needed for certain faculty; incentives may be needed to encourage more arts integration, which may require extra effort and time; longitudinal research is needed to yield data that can be applicable and transferrable across disciplines or institutions.

Limitations of the Study

Initially, this study was meant to be conducted in summer 2021, but it was delayed due to the approval process from the research site. The data collection procedure did not begin until fall 2021. That and the ongoing pandemic resulted in some limitations

in regard to the unique setting and participants recruitment procedures. Since the study was designed with the intend of using theoretical sampling which "enables analysts to follow the lead of the research and direct data collection to those areas that will best serve the developing theory" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 134), the participants were faculty and students who taught or took culturally related courses that allow the researcher to focus on the development of the theoretical framework that analyze and interpret the connection between art experience and cultural competence. Such sampling considerations may limit the transferability of the findings in this study.

At the time of data collection, the research site was managing the learning environment in a hybrid mode. Each student might take course that were either fully online, fully face-to-face, or hybrid. Likewise, each faculty member might be assigned to teach courses that were offered if either of the three modes. While all interviews and focus groups sessions on this study were conducted online, both class observations were made in person. Therefore, the findings the study may not be applicable to students and faculty who experience learning differently.

Furthermore, participant biases (Miles et al., 2014) was an issue that the researcher carefully monitored during the study, since all of the participants had a favorable tendency toward cultural competence based on the fact all courses were designed to provide culturally related knowledge. While the researcher made efforts in identified the outlier opinions in the collected data, the results of this study may not be applicable for courses that are not designed with the goal to be imbued with or foster cultural competence.

Lastly, although all three participant teachers turned their webcam on during the individual interviews, not all students had their webcams on during the focus group sessions. While the audio quality throughout the focus group discussions were stable and uninterrupted, that fact the research was not able to observe all of the participant students' facial expression or body language may be a limitation on the interpretation and accuracy of the responses from students who did not turn their webcam on.

Implications for Future Practices

As shown in the literature review, arts integration has been mentioned, practiced, and studied since early twentieth century. What this study established is to add cultural competence into the dissuasion as non-arts students and teachers in college experience arts integration. Given that the analysis of collected data has demonstrated mostly positive feedback on the practices, there are several suggestions for future practices for college teachers, school administration, and policymakers. Table 3 outline the targeted suggestions on ways each stakeholder group could consider when it comes to arts integration and culture competence.

Table 3

Suggestions for Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Suggestions
College Teachers	Be open to the possibility of incorporating arts integration and culturally responsive teaching to foster cultural competence Be mindful of the effects or results that were not intended Look out for outlier responses or experiences Seek suggestions or opinions from colleagues and students
School Administration	Encourage faculty to consider practicing arts integration across the disciplines to enhance cultural competence across the school eco-system Create opportunities for practitioners to share experience and learning from one another on using arts integration to create or enhance cultural competence
Policymakers	Consider incentives or professional training opportunities for colleges and teachers that maybe interested but not motivated to use arts integration Design and coordinate programs of arts integration that covers a larger population across various types of higher education institutions in order to generate adequate data for future research

In order to strengthen the significance of the suggestions for further practices, it is important to offer a vision of "what might become" the outcomes of arts integration and cultural competence. Instead of reinventing the wheels, the researcher borrowed and modified the suggestions made by Chun and Evan (2016), who advocated for all stakeholders to rethink and reconstruct an environment where everyone seeks to "systematically address diversity competency in the undergraduate experience and within the campus ecosystem as a whole" (Chun & Evans, 2016, p. 131). By incorporating the framework and applications of the L.I.F.E theory into Chun and Even's suggestions, four imaginable paths lie ahead as the building blocks for a teaching and learning environment

where arts integration and cultural competence are concerned: 1) Make the L.I.F.E. theory accessible across academic and administrative departments to encourage wider participation and feedback; 2) Establish a resource center, physically or virtually, where the practices and results of L.I.F.E. can be documented and shared; 3) Offer opportunities for non-teaching employees in the institutions to participate in and contribute to L.I.F.E.; and 4) Develop adequate channels of communication through which cross-institutional and outsider (Banks, 1998) voices and can be exchanged with stakeholders on campus.

Taking the research site—a public two-year community college—as an example, many steps can be taken by following the L.I.F.E theory. For example, in an environment where the student population is primarily people of color and the majority of the faculty is white, arts integration will provide an opportunity not only for students to better understand the culturally related aspects of the course materials but also allow teachers to reflect on their own culturally responsive teaching. On top of the obvious differences, i.e., the colors of our skins, teachers will gain insight of how or why students are making progress or not by considering the more nuanced cultural traits such gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, socioeconomic status, parental education, geographic location, and military experience, etc. Another example is that, considering and understanding the differences between students who aim to transfer to a four-year institution and those whose ultimate goal is to earn an associate degree in the community college, arts integration can allow all students to enhance their learning without necessarily feeling intimated by the academic expectations. As the teachers in this study mentioned, we can always experiment and ask our colleagues and students to give us feedback.

From the perspective of school administration, people in leadership positions can consider adopting the L.I.F.E. theory as a holistic roadmap to create and implement initiatives that addresses the issues pertaining to equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice that affect all stakeholders of the school. For example, by encouraging and researching on the application of arts integration across the disciplines, school admin and teachers will gain better understanding on whether artistic elements can help students relate to the curriculum. It has also been shown in literature that arts integration can help staff, faculty, and students to relate to one another in a more meaningful way which will yield a healthier learning and teaching environment. In the meantime, it is important to note whether or how implementing more arts integration in higher education will create more workload for administrative staff. The goal of L.I.F.E. is to make learning and teaching an experience where people can build and enhance cultural understanding through the arts. It would defeat the purpose if the process of implementing it creates unnecessary obstacles that can be avoided. Knowing the benefits of arts integration should not translate into thinking additional workload for school admin are necessarily.

For policymakers, a starting point will be to make sure all who involved in policymaking understand that arts integration can indeed enhance both teachers and students' cultural competence. As shown in the existing literature, little is researched on arts integration and its effects on college students and teachers' cultural competence. With sufficient support, we can look into whether or not the resources and standards in public school system can actively encourage faculty to contemplate the possibility of experimenting arts integration. It may also be the case that some teachers across disciplines have incorporating arts integration in their teaching and the effects of such

practices are waiting to be acknowledged, discussed, and shared. It may also be the case that some institutions have seen such practices and it is only a matter of pointing it out and sharing it across the institutions in higher education. Given the increasing number of cases of issues resulting from the lack of cultural understanding, higher education—being the last opportunity where students may be exposed to arts that they have not and most likely will not expose themselves to—should proactively incorporate arts integration as a creative and innovative approach to tackle social conflicts of any kinds.

What we all should be reminded of is the benefits of arts that arts integration can bring into the classrooms that have been studied extensively in K-12. The short-term successes may be seen by those who desire to see the academic achievements of students, because arts integration will make students more engaged and relate to the curriculum more easily. The long-term successes of arts integration that involve the social, spiritual, and emotional aspects of arts will be possible when we dare to see the possibilities of using arts integration to create a healthier, more inclusive learning and teaching environment in higher education.

Implications for Future Research

In light of the gaps in existing literature on arts integration and cultural competence in higher education, future research is needed to substantiate, assess, and improve related practices. A comparable study on the same topic with modification on certain factors could help verify the credibility and transferability of this study. For example, this qualitative research can be done in another institution where the demographics of its student population are different. A case study can also be done in a higher education setting where arts integration is incorporated in the courses that are

conducted either entirely online or entirely face-to-face. Findings from such research may be helpful for institutions that seek information particularly pertinent to one mode or the other.

Another suggestion for future research would be to empirically investigate the process of college teachers' preparation of using arts integration and what differences there may be in terms of the time, resources needed for creating, organizing, implementing, and assessing it. Whereas it is possible that different types of arts integration require different efforts, such data may be used to compare the labor that is expected for college teachers and to estimate related costs. This will also be helpful information to generate metrics that may be indicative for policymakers to plan in a larger scale.

The last suggestion for future research would be for the higher-level agency, either at the district, city, or state level, to collect information on whether or not courses are offered with any form of arts integration, resulting in data against which the students' performance or satisfaction can be evaluated. While data in this study demonstrated positive results and feedback from the participant teachers and students, a study that covers a larger population may help policymakers gain the bigger picture to gauge the (in)effectiveness or (un)necessity of such practice.

Conclusion

The findings in this study revealed students and teachers' perceptions on arts integration and cultural competence in a two-year public community college in an urban area. Based on the findings that emerged from the analysis of collected data in this study, it is concluded that this study reaffirmed the existing theories, practices, and research on

fields related to arts integration and cultural competence while filling the gaps in existing literature. It is further concluded that not only can arts integration be incorporated in college curriculum that helped non-arts students to gain cultural competence, the teachers involved in the practices can also benefit by improving the culturally responsive teaching. In light of the fluid and complex nature of arts and culture, a theocratical framework— The L.I.F.E. Theory—grounded in both existing literature and findings in this study was created along with its application illustrated in a logic model (Figure 8). With the findings, discussions, and a new theoretical framework, this study connected the gaps in existing literature while learning from the key concepts created, developed, and practiced by practitioners and researchers in the fields related to arts integration and cultural competence. This study, together with the new framework and suggestions for future practices and research, wishes to encourage more awareness, feedback, critique, and discussion that bring the benefits of arts integration into post-secondary institutions, especially ones that serve marginalize students who may not have easy access to arts prior to and outside of higher education.

APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

Federal Wide Assurance: FWA00009066

Jun 15, 2021 12:12:53 PM EDT

PI: Chang-Han Liu
CO-PI: Catherine DiMartino
Ed Admin & Instruc Leadership

Re: Expedited Review - Initial - **IRB-FY2021-489** *How Arts Integration Affects College Teachers and Students' Cultural Competence: A Grounded Theory Research*

Dear Chang-Han Liu:

The St John's University Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for *How Arts Integration Affects College Teachers and Students' Cultural Competence: A Grounded Theory Research*. The approval is effective from June 14, 2021 through June 13, 2022.

Decision: Approved

PLEASE NOTE: If you have collected any data prior to this approval date, the data must be discarded.

Selected Category: 7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Sincerely,

Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Professor of Psychology

Marie Nitopi, Ed.D.
IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT (FOCUS GROUPS)

Invitation and Consent to Participate in a Research Study (Focus Groups)

Dear Participant:

You are being invited to participate in a research study to investigate college students' perception of arts integration and cultural competence. This study will help to better inform researchers, practitioners, and leaders in higher education on whether or how to create, implement and assess arts integration that affects cultural competence.

I will be conducting this study as part of my doctoral dissertation for St. John's University, Department of Administration and Instructional Leadership.

This portion of the research study will consist of a focus group session lasting from 30 – 60 minutes. The session will be conducted virtually via Zoom. Audio recordings of the session will be made so that the data can be transcribed and analyzed. You may review the audio recordings and request that all or any portion of the recordings be destroyed. All audio recordings and transcriptions of the session will be kept secured on a password-protected drive and will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. Pseudonyms will be used during transcription for all proper names in order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity.

All consent forms will be kept separate from the transcription data to ensure that the names and identities of all participants will not be known or linked to any information provided. Participation in this study is voluntary and at any point during the study you have the right to end your participation.

All responses and feedback will be confidential throughout the entire research study. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of St. John's University. If you have any questions or concerns, please email me at ████████████████ or call ████████. You may contact my Faculty advisor, Dr. Catherine DiMartino, at ████████. For questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University's Human Subjects Review Board, St. John's University, Raymond A. DiGiuseppe, Ph.D., Chair of the Institutional Review Board, ████████.

Thank you! I truly appreciate your time and participation in this study.

Respectfully,
Chang-Han Liu
Agreement to Participate

- Yes, I agree to participate in the study described above.
- Yes, I agree to have my session recorded and videotaped.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT (INTERVIEWS)

Invitation and Consent to Participate in a Research Study (Interviews)

Dear Participant:

You are being invited to participate in a research study to investigate college teachers and students' perception of arts integration and cultural competence. This study will help to better inform researchers, practitioners, and leaders in higher education on whether or how to create, implement and assess arts integration that affects cultural competence.

I will be conducting this study as part of my doctoral dissertation for St. John's University, Department of Administration and Instructional Leadership.

This portion of the research study will consist of individual phone or Zoom interviews lasting from 30 – 60 minutes. Audio recordings of the phone interviews will be made so that the data can be transcribed and analyzed. You may review the audio recordings and request that all or any portion of the recordings be destroyed. All audio recordings and transcriptions of the interviews will be kept secured on a password-protected drive and will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. Pseudonyms will be used during transcription for all proper names in order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity.

All consent forms will be kept separate from the transcription data to ensure that the names and identities of all participants will not be known or linked to any information provided. Participation in this study is voluntary and at any point during the study you have the right to end your participation.

All responses and feedback will be confidential throughout the entire research study. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of St. John's University. If you have any questions or concerns, please email me at ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ or call ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓. You may contact my Faculty advisor, Dr. Catherine DiMartino, at ▓▓▓▓▓▓. For questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University's Human Subjects Review Board, St. John's University, Raymond A. DiGiuseppe, Ph.D., Chair of the Institutional Review Board, ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓.

Thank you! I truly appreciate your time and participation in this study.

Respectfully,
Chang-Han Liu

Agreement to Participate

- Yes, I agree to participate in the study described above.
- Yes, I agree to have my session recorded and videotaped.

Participant's Signature _____   Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____   Date _____

APPENDIX D: STUDENT FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Opening:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group session concerning community college students' perception of arts integration and cultural competence. Your participation in this session supports my research study on how community college students view, experience, and respond to the effect of arts integration on cultural competence. The goal of this focus group session is to discuss how the integration of arts in the curriculum has impacted your perceptions of cultural competence. If any of you decide at any point during the focus group session that you would no longer like to participate, please let me know.

Overview:

During the focus group session, I am going to ask a few questions. After each question is asked, I will ask that each participant share their ideas in discussion with myself and the other group members. The entire focus group session will be captured in an audio recording to allow for an accurate account of what takes place. The only people who will know what is said and by who are those of us in this room during the focus group session. The discussion and transcripts from the focus group will be used completely anonymously or via pseudonyms. When the results of the focus group are shared none of your names will be included. Does anyone have any questions before we begin?

Focus Group Questions:

1. Can you quickly introduce yourself to the group?
    a. Name
    b. Age
    c. Year/Major
2. What is culture? How do you define culture?
3. What course(s) did you take?
    a. The name of the course?
    b. What were the goals of the course(s)?
    c. Did the course(s) involve cultural understanding? How?
4. Arts experience
    a. Were there any arts activities in the course(s)?
    b. What media was used? For example, an art exhibition, a movie viewing, an artist talk, a workshop, a poetry reading, etc.?
    c. Can you tell me more about the experience?
5. Arts and Culture
    a. What did the experience tell you about culture?
    b. How did that experience affect your understanding of your or another culture?
    c. Was your teacher sensitive about your culture? How did you feel your culture included/cared about, or not, during the experience?

<ol start="6">

d. To what extent did the experience make you think or act differently?

Evaluation

   a. How did the instructor introduce and facilitate the experience?

   b. Was the experience evaluated in any way? For example, an essay, a discussion, etc.?

   c. Is there anything that the instructor could have done to improve or enhance the experience?

Closing:

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts about arts integration and cultural competence. Your feedback will no doubt help support my research study as well as our ability to support secondary social studies teachers implementing mandated curriculum changes.

Interview Protocol

Opening:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview concerning community college students' and instructors' perceptions of arts integration and cultural competence. Your participation in this interview supports my research on how community college stakeholders view, experience, and respond to arts integration and its effect on cultural competence. The goal of this interview is to discuss how the integration of arts in the curriculum has impacted your perceptions of cultural competence. If you decide at any point during the interview that you would no longer like to participate, please let me know.

Overview:

During the interview, I am going to ask a few questions. The entire interview session will be captured in an audio recording to allow for an accurate account of what takes place. The discussion and transcripts from the interview will be used completely anonymously. When the results of the interview are shared your name will not be included. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Interview Questions

1. Please tell me about yourself
   a. Age
   b. Year/Major
   c. Race & Ethnicity
   d. Military status
   e. Social-economic status
   f. Country of origin
   g. Household responsibilities
2. What is culture? How do you define culture?
3. What course(s) did you take?
   a. The name of the course?
   b. What were the goals of the course(s)?
   c. Did the course(s) involve cultural understanding? How?
4. Arts experience in general
   a. How often do you participate or experience arts in your life?
   b. What are the factors that affect whether or not and when you access arts?
   c. To what extent do you think arts affect you and your life?
5. Arts experience at school
   a. Were there any arts activities in the course(s)?

b. What media was used? For example, an art exhibition, a movie viewing, an artist talk, a workshop, a poetry reading, etc.?
c. How much were you provoked or challenged by the experience?
d. To what extent did the experience cause you to reflect on your opinions of culture?
e. How did the experience affect your understanding of your or others' culture?
f. Did you see your culture/background reflected in the art?
g. How would you characterize your emotional response to the experience?
h. To what extent did you relate to or feel bonded with, the people or subject in the work?
i. To what extent was the experience therapeutic for you in an emotional sense?
j. To what extent did you feel a sense of belonging or connectedness with the people or subject in the work?
k. To what extent did the experience serve to celebrate or sustain your cultural heritage?
l. To what extent did the experience expose you to one or more cultures outside of your own life experience?
m. To what extent did the experience make you think or act differently?
6. Evaluation
a. How was the arts experience different from other parts of the course, in terms of affecting your understanding of culture?
b. How did the instructor introduce and facilitate the experience?
c. How would you reflect on the experience concerning the goals of the course?
d. Is there anything that the instructor could have done to improve or enhance the experience?

Closing:

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts about your experiences and perceptions on arts integration and cultural competence. Your feedback will no doubt help support my research study as well as our further research to examine ways in which arts can or cannot affect the cultural competence of students in colleges.

Interview Protocol

Opening:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview concerning community college teachers and students' perceptions of arts integration and cultural competence. Your participation in this interview supports my research on how community college stakeholders view, experience, and respond to arts integration and its effect on cultural competence. The goal of this interview is to discuss how the integration of arts in the curriculum has impacted your perceptions of cultural competence. If you decide at any point during the interview that you would no longer like to participate, please let me know.

Overview:

During the interview, I am going to ask a few questions. The entire interview session will be captured in an audio recording to allow for an accurate account of what takes place. The discussion and transcripts from the interview will be used completely anonymously. When the results of the interview are shared your name will not be included. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Interview Questions

1. How many years have you been a teacher and how many years have you taught at this school?
2. What is culture? How do you define culture?
3. What course(s) do you teach?
    a. What is the name of the course you teach?
    b. What are the goals of the course(s)?
    c. To what extent do the course(s) involve cultural understanding?
4. Arts experience in life?
    a. How often do you experience arts, either as a creator or participant?
    b. To what extend do arts affect you and your life?
5. Arts experience at school
    a. How often do you incorporate arts into your curriculum? How do you decide which art to incorporate? Probe for ideas from students, i.e. culturally responsive.
    b. What materials and formats have you employed in designing arts experience into the curriculum?
    c. How was the experience planned, explained, and facilitated?
6. Arts and Culture
    a. Have you incorporated any conversation or reflection on the connection between arts and culture?

       b. How does that art experience in classes affect your students' understanding of their own or others' culture?

       c. How does incorporating arts in your classes affect your understanding of your own or others' culture?

       d. To what extent did the experience make you think or act differently?

7. Evaluation and Assessment

       a. How did you evaluate you and your students' experience?

       b. How did you assess students' response?

       c. How did the experience affect your cultural understanding of your students?

       d. How would you modify or improve the experience in future courses?

       e. How do you think the planning and execution of arts integration can be improved across the disciplines?

Closing:

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts about your experiences and perceptions on arts integration and cultural competence. Your feedback will no doubt help support my research study as well as our further research to examine ways in which arts can or cannot affect the cultural competence of teachers and students in colleges.

APPENDIX G: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROTOCOL

Document Analysis Protocol

Name of Document	Where/how was it acquired	Date of acquisition	Date of document completion	Purpose of Document	Creator/Contributor of Document
Example: Course Description – Chinese Culture and Heritage	College website	July 1, 2021	Unknown	Describing the overview of the goals and content of the	Unknown

APPENDIX H: RESULTS OF OPENING CODING

94 Preliminary Codes

About the course(s)
  Design of the course(s)
  Rewriting the history of the U.S.A.
Assessment & Evaluation
  Students assessing the learning experience
    Engaging
    Timely
Cultural immersion
Culturally responsive teaching
  Learning from students
Evaluation
How to define culture?
  Art
  Attitude
  Behavior
  Beliefs
  Dance
  Dress
  Fluid
  Food
  Gender
  Identities
  Interest
  Language
  Learned
  Location specific
  Morals
  Music
  Norms
  Personality
  Race and ethnicity
  Religions
  Ritual
  Roots and origins
  Shared amongst a certain group of people
  Story
  Tradition
  Values
  Varied

Incorporating art into teaching
  Academia vs. Creativity
  Arts as part of history
  Arts integration in other disciplines
  Encourage creativity
  Experiential learning
    Offsite Visit
  Hesitation
  Introducing individuals
  Making adjustment
  Making connections
  Virtual thinking strategies
Questions
Reflection on art experience
Relationship with the arts
  Apathy toward the arts
  Awareness of talent or interest
  Propensity toward the arts
Self-identifying
Students' learning experience
  Don't remember (the details)
  Easier
  Entertaining
  Hard to explain
  Long-lasting
  More relatable/engaging
  Negative feedback
    Suggestions
  Outside of the curriculum
  Students' awareness and appreciation of other's cultural heritage
  Students' awareness and experience of own cultural heritage
Teaching experience
  Teacher's background
What is art?
  Art as creativity
  Art being a source of frustration
  Art can be...
    Architecture or environment
    Calligraphy
    Cartoons
    Creative writing
    Dance

Films
Graffiti and murals
Literature including poetry and articles
Music
Paintings and pictures
Philosophy
Photography
Podcast
Standup comedy
Statues
Theatre
Walking tour
What is teaching?

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VITA

Name	*Chang-Han Liu*
Baccalaureate Degree	*Bachelor of Arts, National Chengchi University, Department of Diplomacy College of Social Studies Science, Taipei, Taiwan, Major: Diplomacy*
Date Graduated	*June, 2001*
Master's Degree	*Master of Fine Arts, Taipei National University of the Arts, Graduate School of Theatrical Performance, College of Theatre Arts, Taipei, Taiwan, Major: Acting*
Date Graduated	*June, 2007*
Master's Degree	*Master of Arts, Department of Arts and Public Policy, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, New York City, Major: Arts Politics*
Date Graduated	*May, 2011*