LIKE A RIVER NOT A STONE:
A DESCRIPTIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE CHINESE STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF GETTING AN EDUCATION AT NYU SHANGHAI IN RELATION TO THE LIBERAL ARTS APPROACH

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by
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Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my gratitude to all those who have joined me on this battlefield—family, friend, and foe alike. As Nietzsche wrote in *Twilight of the Idols*, '*From the military school of life*—What does not kill me makes me stronger' (Penguin Classics Edition, p. 23).

Abstract

This study investigated the Chinese student experience of getting an education at NYU Shanghai. Four half-hour interviews were carried out with each of three student participants, who were asked to describe their experience of getting an education over their four undergraduate years at the university. On the basis of rich descriptions of the particular experiences provided by the three students, the research discovered one holistic phenomenological structure of the overall experience with eight component parts, called constituents. This structure and its component parts was then used to bring to light a variety of aspects of the experience within the particular cultural context of the university. The experience and its constituents were further considered in relation to enacting the espoused liberal arts values and mission of the university. The liberal arts as a cultural construct representing a specific set of educational values is explored in the literature review alongside the more general student experience and experience of Chinese students. Variations between the empirical experiences of the three students were described, surfacing insights about the experiences as they related to relevant scholarly literature on the student experience of the liberal arts, including liberal arts learning outcomes. The overall experience consisted of the following eight constituents 1) a pursuit of knowledge, skills, and the development of character through modes of exploration and investigation, 2) an awakening to changes within oneself and one's lifeworld, 3) a growing consciousness of development, mastery, and limitations of knowledge and skill pertaining to the domain specific area of S's major, 4) a growing consciousness of the transferability of knowledge, skills, and attributes to other domains, 5) social interactions, 6) comparison to things Chinese, 7) feelings of satisfaction and confidence, and 8) perceiving the exceptionalism and special features of NYU Shanghai. On the basis of these constituents and the reviewed literature of the liberal arts it was concluded that the experience was moderately, but not robustly, commensurable with a liberal arts approach to education. These findings contribute to understanding the way the liberal arts as a form of American educational culture is experienced, especially as it is exported and adopted in new global contexts, in this case the developing higher education landscape in China.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Desire to understand the phenomenon of 'getting an education' is an ancient one. In the Western tradition, it goes back at least to the Greeks of antiquity, occupying a place in works of philosophy as central as Plato's *Republic* (Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018). In the Chinese tradition, it features prominently in the Confucian classics, and Confucius himself is considered to be one of history's great educators (Tan, 2017). Although the notion of *getting an education* cannot be reduced simply to *learning*, the two phenomena are closely intertwined. For one to get an education, learning necessarily had to occur. But it is just as commonsensical to notice that one can learn many things before being deemed an educated member of society. It follows from this example that there is a sense in which the concept getting an education is about becoming a certain kind of person. Learning, on the other hand, need not have effects at this broader level of the person. Another difference between these two associated phenomena is that the term 'learning' more easily permits senses that are unrelated to schooling, and thus is semantically much wider in scope than 'education.' *Getting an education* need not take place in schools, although in its most salient English sense, it is indeed almost synonymous with schooling.

While 'learning' most often refers to finer-grained micro-level phenomena such as 'learning how to read,' 'learning how to add,' 'learning how to drive a car,' etc., it does not refer to this micro-level exclusively. The beginning of the exact search string 'learn how to' in Google search bar on this particular day predicts the following ten verbs: learn, type, code, draw, dj, speak English, sing, ski, play piano, play chess. All of these are micro-level phenomena. Adding the verb 'to become,' as in 'learn how to become,' specifies phenomena that are less microscopic in that these include as component parts other phenomena like those just mentioned. So, for example, 'learning how to become a doctor,' would also consist of 'learning how to give physical examinations,' 'learning how to speak to patients,' and many other such processes. 'Learn how to become a doctor' does appear on the first page of a search for 'learn how to,' but this is interestingly the name of a career counseling website *LearnHowToBecome.Org*. The first actual use of the phrase 'learn how' to refer to a meso-level phenomenon does not occur until the ninth page of the search in the phrase 'learn how to be a loving and effective parent,' after which the next occurrence is 'learn how to be a real-life mermaid,' which turns out to refer to a 60-minute training session on learning how to swim with a special mermaid tail (Douglas, 2019), not how to actually 'become' a mermaid, so ultimately a micro-level phenomenon once again.

In the entry, 'Philosophy of Education,' in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, the authors state that analysis of the concept of education itself has been a crucial concern to analytic philosophers developing this line of philosophical inquiry. They describe the conclusion of these philosophers in the 1970s that 'a person who has been educated (rather than instructed or indoctrinated) has been (i) changed for the better; (ii) this change has involved the acquisition of knowledge and intellectual skills and the development of understanding; and (iii) the person has come to care for, or be committed to, the domains of knowledge and skill into which he or she has been initiated' (Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018, Section 2, para. 4). Although this conclusion does not robustly include a notion of becoming a certain kind of person, it does hint at this in its specification of 'being changed for the better' and 'caring for, or being committed to,' as well as 'being initiated into domains of knowledge and skill.'

In the same entry, the authors describe a turning point in the history of the development of the philosophy of education when the analytic philosophical approach was criticized as being based on too narrow a conception of education, one not cognizant of the fact that 'different people, and different groups within society, have different concepts of education' (Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018, Section 2, para. 8). It may be easier to imagine the finer-grained experience of 'learning' as having a similar form across different socio-cultural groups than it is with 'getting an education,' especially if the latter includes becoming a certain kind of person. It is probable that the different conceptualizations of education across societies and cultures at least partially account for the differences in these groups to begin with. In the present study, cultural differences in getting an education are at the forefront, as the focus is on Chinese students from the mainland of the People's Republic of China pursuing their education at a new university in China that offers a New York University bachelor's degree and has a close relationship with New York University in New York as a member of the university's Global Network. This particular context is rare in the P.R.C and in the world, and thereby gives rise to interesting questions of the correspondence between the meaning and value of the type of education it provides with the experiences of its students, especially in light of the cultural diversity of its many stakeholders.

As one of the necessary conditions for learning is the ability to discern the object of the learning (Marton & Pang, 2006; Marton, 2015), so too does the larger experience of getting an education appear to have objects at which it is necessarily directed in the mind of the student who has set out on the educational journey. As hinted at in the preceding paragraphs, such objects can vary from learning how to do something at the micro-level to learning how to become a better citizen or get a

job or get a degree. The way that a given university or degree-program talks about and values the purpose of getting an education—through its mission, for example—will have effects on how the variety of stakeholders involved respond and interact in the system that the organization creates through its curriculum, co-curricular activities, and associated programs (Barnett, 2004a; 2004b; Barnett, Parry, & Coate, 2001; Biesta, 2009; 2010; Brown, 2001; Delucchi, 2000; 2009; Kegan, 1994; Kezar & Kinzie, 2006; Meyer, 1977; Taylor & Morphew, 2010; Tierney, 2008; Weick, 1976). How students, faculty, and the leadership, in particular, conceptualize and understand their experiences is a direct function of the values the university upholds. Looked at from another angle, the value of the curricular and co-curricular experiences of the students are ultimately what constitute the actual value of the degree that symbolizes their achievements in the end. What the degree represents is also crucial for the society in which a given system of higher education is situated (Bleiklie, 2005; Brown, 2001; Labaree, 1997; Meyer, 1977). This is why branding of the degree and a host of other factors, such as university rankings, matter so much to students and their parents in making their choice of a particular university. Identification of what values matter to a given institution of higher education, alignment of these values with the curriculum and co-curricular experiences that are offered, and finally incorporation into the branding and marketing, are essential processes if there is to be agreement between what the university hopes to achieve and what the students recognize as the objects of their learning and, more broadly, their education. If, for example, one of the goals of educational policy at a particular university should be to produce citizens who can serve the needs of an ever-changing set of socio-economic states-of-affairs—as professor of higher education at University College London's Institute of Education, Ron Barnett, has written about (Barnett, 2004a; 2004b; 2007), and which was the conclusion of both the historical 'Yale Report' in 1828 which defended the traditional liberal arts conceptualization in the U.S. (Pascarella et al., 2005, p. 7) and the much more recent AAC&U report, 'College Learning for the New Global Century' (AAC&U, 2007, p. 2)—then the curriculum and the student experience of the university should be designed accordingly with that goal in mind. When students make sense of their experience of getting an education, the values of the institution which is fostering that experience should be accented in the data, if not consciously to the students themselves, at least to an informed third-person observer of their experiences.

The Problem Investigated. Nussbaum (1987; 1997; 2012), sees liberal arts education in its non-elitist guise as the best form of education, as well as a form of education that is under threat by the forces of neoliberal educational policies. Levine (2009) claims that it is one of America's greatest

contributions to higher education (p. 25). Delbanco (2012) points out that there has long been a controversy surrounding liberal education in the U.S., as does Ferrall (2011). These scholars are all concerned with the possibility of the liberal arts being replaced by a more vocationally-oriented form of education. The wider research project documented here is very much about culturally-shaped values that inhere within the liberal arts as a philosophy of education and a form of curricular and co-curricular experience. It seeks to explore the meanings derived from the Chinese students' direct experiences of getting an education over their four undergraduate years at NYU Shanghai, especially as they intersect with the liberal arts approach that the university espouses. There is a long history in the West that continues to the present, especially in the U.S., of philosophical thinking that links the function of education with the production of an involved and informed citizenry necessary to preserve and promote democracy (Nussbaum, 2012, Chapter 1, para. 6). Proponents of this view often support a liberal arts curriculum because, rather than narrowly focusing on professional training, it locates learning within a wider social context. Although Chinese society is not organized in the same way as in the U.S., there are increasing pressures to transform both the quantity and quality of education offered in order to meet social needs that go beyond the realm of the market economy (Altbach, 2016; Godwin, 2013; Hayhoe & Zha, 2006; Jacques, 2012; Jiang, 2013; Kirby, 2014; Mohrman, Shi, and Li, 2012; Xin, 2004). There are signs that educational reform efforts in China are beginning to experiment with alternative curricular models such as the liberal arts that has been valued for generations in the U.S. (Altbach, 2016; Banchoff & Paul, 2013; Godwin, 2013; Godwin and Pickus, 2017; Hennock, 2011; Jiang, 2013; Kirby, 2014; Mohrman, Shi, and Li, 2012; Nussbaum, 2011; Xin, 2004), NYU Shanghai representing one of these models. Whether or not these experiments succeed on the terms in which they began will depend in part on the clarity with which the non-traditional models are understood by the students who choose them, along with their parents who pay for them, and the local government bodies that provide funding for them. At the same time, it is crucial for the universities themselves to understand that if there is a mismatch between student expectations and the new models, it is by no means guaranteed that students will reach success at the highest levels. This is why it is of paramount importance that the students understand the approach to education that is being offered. Thus, my study is also concerned with what the university is doing to enact the values associated with the liberal arts.

> '…[I]nstitutional contexts,' claims William Tierney, Professor of Education at the University of Southern California's Rossier School of Education, 'more powerfully influence the way we define knowledge than we have previously thought…knowledge is discourse constantly reconstructed over

> time and place. The production of knowledge cannot be separated from the contingencies and continuous reconstruction of culture [nor] arbitrarily divorced from organizational ideologies.' (Tierney, 2008, p. 49)

The values, cultural or otherwise, that a university is committed to are one of the determining factors of this relation between institutional context and knowledge production. These are ultimately reflected in the 'artifacts' of organizational culture in which cultural meanings become symbolically embedded over time regardless of whether or not conscious attention is paid to such processes by stakeholders (Hatch, 2011, pp. 72-77). Given the prominence of NYU Shanghai, along with NYU New York and NYU Abu Dhabi, as one of the three degree-granting campuses out of fourteen total sites in NYU's Global Network, the organizational culture that develops locally will undeniably have impacts across the network.

The following diagram shows the 'Organizational Identity Dynamics Model' of Hatch and Schultz (2002).

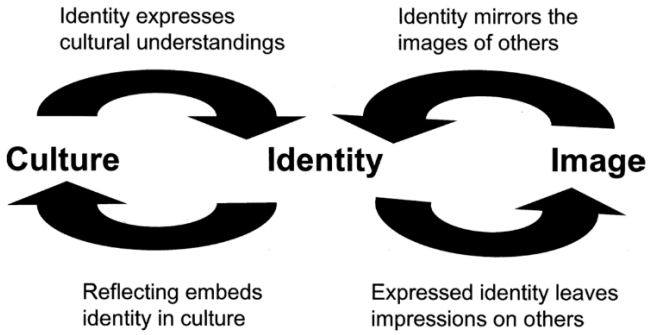

Figure 1 The Organizational Identity Dynamics Model

(Hatch & Schultz, 2002, p. 991)

Although this diagram is meant to show how 'organizational identity' is constructed, Hatch and Schultz (2002, pp. 992-993) have generalized this process from Mead's theory of the way that individuals form identities in social interactions with others. The circle on the left side shows how an individual member of the organization constructs an aspect of their organizational identity by 'embedding' it in the organizational culture that they are simultaneously taking part in; while on the right side, the circle shows how the 'images' that emanate from the university's external stakeholders—analogous to an individual member's significant others—enter into the identity formation process. The difficulty is that this process creates 'ambiguities' (Hatch, 1999) that, at one and the same time, both enable creative responses within the organization and, if not resolved, can

lead to a less than effectively running organization for all stakeholders, especially the students and faculty. Inquiring into the way that the various stakeholders understand what getting an education consists of in a given organizational context, will help the organization steer through these ambiguities and better chart its future course. Although the initial images in this model of organizational dynamics would most likely be generated by the university leadership or pre-existing institutional relations, such as parent institutions, the developing student identities are obviously key to the meanings and values that are sustained. If enough student identities are significantly at odds with other images of organizational culture, this will result in less coherence and difficulties aligning institutional processes.

An example of this at NYU Shanghai of particular interest in the present study are images of the liberal arts as embedded in the organizational mission and curriculum. For these meanings to be sustained, students will seemingly need to understand not only that they are at a liberal arts institution, but also to some extent what that means culturally. One example of such a cultural meaning may be the notion of 'global engagement' that helps to account for the very existence of the university in China, which was offered in testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives in 2015 by Vice-Chancellor Jeffery Lehman, when the students that are the subjects of this study were in between their first and second years of study:

> People who care about higher education are very interested in NYU Shanghai. We are pioneering a new approach to twenty-first century higher education, and we believe that our graduates will be prepared to contribute in entirely new ways to the development of a world where people from different cultures can cooperate to address challenges and opportunities, and can forestall conflict and misunderstanding. (Is Academic Freedom Threatened, 2015, p. 5)

Lehman goes on to counter various positions against American universities operating in China, labelling such positions as those that 'ignore the benefits of engagement' (p. 5). This testimony provides strong evidence for the espousal of liberal arts values in the context of globalization.

Another image of the liberal arts might be the expectations on the student to speak out and express their opinion in seminar discussions. The former of these appears to be a much broader notion than the latter, but aspects of each can be located in the other. There is a sense in which engagement depends on expressing opinion in a certain manner and so it would follow that a curricular prescription might be to begin to form that ability to express with ample chances to practice doing so in the classroom, with an eye to ultimately contribute one's knowledge of the subject at hand in a way that engages with societal issues. If these are important values in the organizational culture, there is a danger in coupling them too loosely with the brand of the

institution (Beerkens, 2008; Delucchi, 2000; 2009; Weick, 1976). This is true even if the flexibility that such a strategy provides helps the organization retain legitimacy while steering through difficulties (Delucchi, 2000; 2009). If the coupling of the organization's cultural values and branding images are too loose, this may prevent the alignment of micro-level educational practices of the classroom with organizational identities, to present just one example. The identities that do form among the students and other internal stakeholders such as the faculty will reflect unresolved 'ambiguities.' To take another example, if the images that are most salient in the process of forming organizational identities are those that emanate from NYU in New York, where the liberal arts is but one type competing with many other more professionally-oriented ways of getting an education, combined with the image of New York as a more established global idea capital than Shanghai, this formulation of images may lead to simply taking 'global engagement' for granted, making it doubtful that students will reflect on this as a salient image of the liberal arts in their developing organizational identities. In such a scenario, it is not simply a correspondence between the brand and student identities that are at stake, but the very form of knowledge that is created as the students develop their identities (Barnett, 2000; Tierney, 2008).

This does not imply that the Chinese students at NYU Shanghai could not positively influence the direction the liberal arts approach might take in new ways, but only that without understanding how they are experiencing their journey to get an education, the university cannot make maximally informed adjustments to the course it has set for itself together with its stakeholders in the US the PRC and elsewhere. This begs the question of just how the liberal arts as a form of culture and a form of knowledge production is already being experienced, if at all, in the new locality, a consideration which leads to the crux of the issue: If the liberal arts is a set of cultural forms that when combined with other inputs of a particular institutional context produce certain forms of knowledge, it would follow that the knowledge that is produced is strongly inflected with liberal arts values. The way that these forms then become part of the experience of the students, and ultimately part of their identities, while pursuing their education from inside the liberal arts institutional and curricular context become key to any further evaluation of the approach to education that the university is taking. Looking closely at the form of the experience itself would then hint at the origin of the cultural values that are reflected therein. This study does not attempt to discover the origin of the experience, but only to get at the problem empirically by offering a description of the experience of getting an education at this particular time and place for a particular group of students. One of the core underlying assumptions here is that for the whole

operation to work and for the desired forms of knowledge to come out the other side, some degree of alignment must happen between the identity of the key stakeholders and the organizational culture. The ultimate aim here will be to describe the way a particular cultural group, as represented in the sample of Chinese students who are the research subjects, experiences a phenomenon that unfolds in a context shaped by cultural meanings that are new to them.

Research Question. The primary research question in this study is, 'What is the lived experience of the Chinese students in getting an education at NYU Shanghai?' In posing this question, I am seeking to discover one possible structure for the experience, realizing that this is limited to a specific time and place. The goal is to elucidate and clarify the 'psychological meanings' of the research participants in order to gain insights into the lived-experience of getting an education in this unique and new institutional context (Giorgi and Giorgi, 2003, p. 249), rather than to discover universal a priori facts about the phenomenon.

Secondary Research Questions. Here are some of the additional questions that I aim to explore in this study: Do the meanings the Chinese students apply to their experience of getting an education overlap with descriptions of the liberal arts in the higher education literature? To what degree are the students aware of the liberal arts as one of the conceptual inputs of the curriculum and educational approach at NYU Shanghai? Are there other links between the nascent yet ever-developing organizational culture of the university and the Chinese students' experience of getting an education there? If the structure of the experience as described by the Chinese students does not reflect images of the liberal arts educational philosophy, then what other cultural images and values are reflected? Given that values may appear to be constantly shifting, it will be crucial to attempt to track the direction the university's mission is taking, including whether or not a link is visible between the university's direction and the meanings of the Chinese students' experience. The research does not seek a definitive answer, but rather aims to offer one description of the phenomenon of getting an undergraduate education at NYU Shanghai out of an unknown set of other possible experiential structures. If meanings congruent with liberal arts values do not surface as students describe their experiences of getting an education in this context, having insights into the shape of alternatives to this set of values in the student experience remains of crucial importance in understanding emerging conceptualizations of the university—NYUSH being only one instance—as traditional forms of higher education are exported and adapt to new settings in the globalized higher education marketplace (Altbach, 2004; 2016; Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009).

Context of NYU Shanghai. NYUSH is unique in the world in that the university was, at the time of enrollment for the students participating in this research, the only high-profile American university in China offering a liberal arts style undergraduate education and granting its own degree. The NYU Shanghai website specifically mentions the liberal arts as a guiding curricular philosophy (NYU Shanghai, n.d.a; n.d.b), and the university is broadly recognized by other similar higher education organizations in the region for delivering a liberal arts form of education. Currently in its seventh year of existence, it remains only one of less than a handful of such institutions. Another unique characteristic of the university compared to other Chinese universities is in the composition of the student population, an approximately fifty-fifty balance of Chinese and international students, as opposed to the large majority being Chinese students. In spring 2018, when the interviews for this research were conducted, enrollment at the university was approximately 1300 students overall, with the size of the cohort of 4th-year students being approximately 300, to yield about 151 Chinese students and 149 international students. According to the NYU Shanghai website, there are currently students from more than 70 countries, including the U.S. and China (NYU Shanghai, n.d.a). An important design element of the NYUSH experience effecting both the intercultural and cross-cultural dimensions of the experience is that the housing arrangement requires pairings of international and Chinese students in their first year. In their third year, all students are also required to spend two semesters in study abroad, which in most cases occurs in one of the 13 other sites in the NYU Global Network. The university is not officially a branch campus of New York University, but rather is conceptualized as a new university in its own right that is an integral part of NYU's global network. This global aspect of the university is an important ingredient in the values that are emerging as the university develops, carrying implications for the nature of the student experience of both the curriculum and co-curriculum. A simple importation of NYU's values into such a context is highly unlikely, even if this were the desired outcome, especially given that the university is a partnership between New York University, the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission, the Pudong New Area, and East China Normal University (NYU Shanghai, 2011).

China itself is undergoing a transformation process that includes drastically shifting values between socialism, capitalism, and neo-Confucianism (Xin, 2004). Against such a wider socio-cultural background, it is easy to imagine complexity in the student experience as the students strive to orient to the values of a new organization with origins at least partly from elsewhere. Although these are students who have excelled in their Chinese high schools, they are still acquiring academic English. Crucially, however, it is not merely language acquisition that is one of the process-long

characteristics of their experience within this context, but also a form of culture acquisition as they adapt to a new system of education. This of course links back to their formative experiences within the Chinese primary and secondary school system. It is an open question whether or not other groups of students within the overall demographic at NYU-Shanghai are experiencing situations analogous to these. The results of the latter question would have important consequences, yet such concerns are beyond the present inquiry. Developing a more clarified understanding of Chinese students' experience of getting an education at the university will provide insight into their perceptions of and depth of commitment to the espoused values of the organization, as well as, more distally, the values of other key organizational stakeholders, will inform an assessment of my positioning within the context of the university, and analogically the positioning of other practitioners with whom I interact. This assessment could be one of the inputs into program-level decisions or even university-wide decisions. By extension, the study could assist the university leadership or other key offices in their communication of institutional values and mission to students and the other stakeholders by increasing their awareness of meanings impacting student understanding and, in turn, making them more empathetic to concerns related to the students' lived-experience. It is assumed that the shared cultural backgrounds of the Chinese students will contrast in interesting ways with both the values of the university and the values represented in the wider literature on the liberal arts. Historical knowledge of the trajectory of general education reforms in China including the fact that there have been earlier precedents for liberal education (Hayhoe & Zha, 2006; Jiang, 2013; Kirby, 2014; Xin, 2004) is helpful in understanding how the Chinese students may be conceptualizing their own contact with a U.S. liberal arts curriculum.

Organizational Mission. From the time of conceptualizing this study to now, a time that spans from December, 2015 until January, 2020, the way the university represents its mission and values on its website has changed considerably. Originally, the site included a section on the 'vision,' 'mission,' and 'values' of the university, spelling out the vision and mission, and listing the values (New York University Shanghai, n.d.c). Currently, there is no section of the website with these labels, although there is a 'who we are' section (New York University Shanghai, n.d.d), which includes many phrases that overlap with much of the original language. The original values were 'curiosity, rigor, integrity, respect, harmony, responsibility, and deep engagement with all humanity' (New York University Shanghai, n.d.c). In the new version of the web page, the sentence, 'All undergraduate students pursue a course of study that will equip them with the broad knowledge base and tools to become creative thinkers and active learners throughout their lives,' echoes the original values of 'curiosity'

and to a lesser extent ‘deep engagement.’ The three areas of ‘teaching,’ ‘research,’ and ‘public service’ are present in both versions, but ‘research’ is more prominent in that in the new version NYU Shanghai is described as ‘China’s first Sino-US research university,’ whereas in the original version this phrase is absent. Interestingly, in the new version the phase ‘liberal arts’ is missing, whereas in the original it was foregrounded in the sentence, ‘Undergraduate students will pursue a liberal arts and sciences education in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and mathematics, while immersing themselves in English, the language of international communication.’ Although English is still mentioned in the new version ‘as the language of instruction,’ it is not highlighted as ‘the language of international communication.’ At the same time, in the new version, the specific requirement of international students to ‘achieve proficiency’ in Mandarin Chinese is prominent, whereas before it was absent. Another noticeable change is a more modest approach to the cross-cultural elements of the mission. The sentence in the original, ‘They will master cross-cultural skills in a community where half of the student body hail from China and half represent countries from around the world’ is changed in the new version to, ‘The university regularly fosters opportunities for cross-cultural communication and cooperation in the classroom and through diverse extra-curricular activities.’ The only time the word ‘mission’ is used in the new version is in the short paragraph that refers to the university’s encouragement of students to study abroad at one of the other NYU study away sites, where it states that this is ‘an integral part of the University’s mission to foster truly global citizens.’

While the web page describing the university mission as described above does not mention the ‘liberal arts’ directly, the page titled ‘curriculum’ still does. While much of this page has remained the same, one of the noticeable changes here is the addition of the Confucian ideal of education alongside the mention of Cicero and his phrase ‘artes liberales.’ Since this section provides one of the crucial images of the NYU Shanghai organizational culture that may impact the experience of getting an education that is the focus of this study, it is included here in full:

> For centuries, there has been a consensus between east and west that a truly well-educated person is someone whose studies encompass a broad range of disciplines. In the 4th century B.C., the Chinese philosopher Confucius, encouraged his students to acquire the 'six arts': etiquette, music, literacy and calligraphy, arithmetic, riding, and archery. While Cicero, the Roman Statesman, used the phrase artes liberales or the liberal arts to capture the wide range of subjects and skills citizens would need in order to contribute to civic life.
>
> While the subjects encompassed by the term “liberal arts and sciences” have changed and modernized with the times, the demand for graduates equipped with a broad and well-rounded education is greater than ever. NYU Shanghai seeks to provide students with a strong, globally-oriented foundation in the liberal arts and sciences. Our undergraduate curriculum helps students

> develop the ability to read critically, think analytically, and write effectively. It is designed to cultivate creativity in solving problems, tolerance for ambiguity, and respect for diversity of opinion and the exchange of ideas.
>
> China's role in the global community is incorporated throughout the curriculum so that our graduates leave the university cross culturally fluent and equipped with a firm understanding of Chinese culture and society. Finally, through our core curriculum, the majors, and international experiences in the NYU global network, students will learn to recognize themselves as part of a global community, and thereby engage as citizens in a global context.

Another layer of the university context and mission that should be elaborated on here is NYU Shanghai's inclusion in the NYU Global Network. This was touched upon above, but more background is useful, especially as all of the student participants in this research spent at least two semesters studying abroad at a variety of the thirteen other sites in the network. John Sexton, the founder of NYU's Global Network University, explains the changes in a good education that are driven by global forces and which for him were prime motivators for establishing NYU as the first U.S. university to have such a network:

> What has changed most,' says Sexton, 'is the expectations the students will encounter when they leave the university to pursue a career—will they be prepared to be citizens in a multi-polar world? Will they be able to lead in situations where the problems are complex and transnational? Will they have skills to be able to deal with diversity on a daily basis, given the miniaturization of the world in which we live? (Loveland, 2011, p. 4)

What is certain is that it is not safe to assume that once a form of education is exported from one place to the next the same meanings will remain affixed. And without these same meanings, then the values underlying them begin to shift. Clearly, the American ideal of the liberal arts has been about engagement since early times. And this goes back to ancient Greek forms of civic engagement. There was always an association here between educating the whole person and education for citizenship (Nussbaum,1987; 1997; 2011; 2012). The implication being that all of one's talents had to be drawn upon in order to face the challenges of participating in public life and maximize one's contributions.

The NYU Shanghai mission statement in its original form, and other representations of that mission on the website currently, are images of laudable aspirations, many of which should rightly be associated with liberal arts in global contexts, including the Asian context. Commitment to global engagement is what sets liberal arts in global contexts apart from more traditional liberal arts programs. The research here seeks to explore how the student experience, as described by Chinese students, reflects those images set forth in the mission, including the image of global engagement. Another central image of higher education is the generation of 'knowledge,' one of the most

fundamental elements of the cultures of all universities, and certainly part of our intuitions about what constitutes the phenomenon of getting an education. John Sexton recognized this when he referred to 'the diversity of points of generation of knowledge, and its increasingly fluid nature' and claimed that the Global Network's 'very structure accommodates these ways of discovering, disseminating, and utilizing knowledge in an increasingly multipolar and integrated world.' He went on to emphasize the 'architecture,' of the Global Network University, calling it 'genuinely global…a planned physical presence (manifest in both facilities and the human capital of faculty, students, and staff) on six continents and the ability to accommodate seamlessly a flow of personnel and programs among those campuses' (Sexton, 2010). There appears to be a very conscious notion here that the mission and even, by analogy, the physical structure of the Global Network University will be reflected in its graduates.

Martha Nussbaum, who regards the liberal arts as the 'best system of education,' is likewise concerned with the purposes for which an education can be put to use. She contrasts her personal view of the liberal arts with interpretations in two new Asian contexts:

> 'Even Singapore and China, which certainly don't want to create robust democratic citizenship, …are introducing much more of the liberal arts and critical thinking because they think it's just important for the business culture—you can't get innovation without cultivating the imagination' (Wise Channel, 2012).

Although she is not concentrating here on the relationship between knowledge production and organizational structures as Sexton is, she is clearly drawing attention to the role that certain forms of knowledge play in the development of societal structures and the goals set by governments. She is at least entertaining the idea that some institutions and governments believe that the liberal arts can be divorced from its connection to democratic citizenship, but only by degrees, as is shown by the phrase 'much more of.' Her comment would call somewhat into question the 'consensus between east and west' of the NYU Shanghai web page, not on the grounds that the best form of education exposes the student to a 'broad range of disciplines,' but on the socio-cultural foundation underlying the different aims to which it can be put. This all should matter much to the way that the students experience their pursuit of an education — as taking a stance on such questions by university leaders and practitioners throughout the organization will have effects on the way limited resources are utilized within the system that forms around the organizational culture. Of course, the students themselves will have a large impact, as will their parents, on the direction of the culture as it emerges, but the initial state and the values reflected therein should be at least equally influential. This is where one of Hatch's (1999) 'ambiguities' enters the picture. If

the purpose of a liberal arts education is 'global engagement' for civic participation, this begs the question of whether it be democratic or some other form of citizenship, potentially conflicting images. At the same time, it should be recognized that the purpose may ultimately be simply about cultivating creativity for innovation in the new culture of 'global business.' Nigel Tubbs, Professor of Philosophical and Educational Thought at the University of Winchester, sees the liberal arts as strongly committed to democratic values, charting the location of many of the aforementioned value conflicts and ambiguities to the shift in Enlightenment thinking away from classical conceptions of a mastery fit for the ruling class to a new ideal of 'equality…that all should be masters' (Tubbs, 2014, p. 70):

> How could a curriculum designed for leadership serve all citizens equally? In addition, how could a curriculum designed to foster virtue be relevant to the new scientific world which demanded a plethora of specialist skills and trades across many sciences? Finally, how could the exclusively theoretical curriculum contribute to the practical business of creating a modern industrial economy? Economic success requires the free use of reason for scientific and technical innovation. (Tubbs, 2014, p. 70).

According to Tubbs (2014), these values took shape in the Humboldtian notion of *bildung* strongly influencing the American form of the liberal arts and, interestingly, bringing with it the associated lexical alternation 'liberal education' (p. 71). Tubbs' (2014) constructs a whole philosophy of higher education based on the ambiguities inherent in the historical development of the liberal arts in Western thought, ultimately using these to defend the liberal arts as an 'education of difficulty,' by which he means a philosophy of education that embraces an understanding that 'the nature of education is concerned to disrupt, to unsettle, to move the stationary mind and to make things harder, not more peaceful' (p. 156).

The idea of preparing students first and foremost for the 'business culture,' as Nussbaum suggests China would like to do with the liberal arts model, supports an overly instrumental set of educational values, yet, as Tubbs argues, such a practical focus has its root in thinking that goes back to much earlier conceptions and is not radically inconsistent with American thinking. In other work, Nussbaum (2012) contrasts the educational cultures of South Korea and England, the former developing a system of higher education that values the humanities as a reaction to the system created under Japanese occupation that 'wanted Koreans to be a technically trained set of peons to execute the will of the masters' (Afterword, para. 15), the latter system one 'that has devalued the humanities more aggressively than any other educational culture, demanding that they contribute to narrowly commercial goals' (Afterword, para. 16). The obvious question here is how these values

are to be decided and enacted? If education is increasingly commercialized and made to serve instrumental ends, the role of the larger socio-cultural community decreases as the role of the individual organization—increasingly business-like in its value system—grows more important in determining what values are to be modelled and inculcated. Whichever of these understandings, or others, is ultimately expressed more predominately, and then in turn becomes the prevailing identity in the organization, will to a great extent determine the shape of the liberal arts culture in any given context. I will attempt to discover whether or not there is a sense of commitment to the liberal arts or to some other vision for higher education or whether students see themselves 'in terms of the instrumental value they have for capitalist economies' (Sanderson, 2004, p. 5) that is associated with a 'neo-liberal agenda' of globalization (Marginson, 1999/2000, as cited in Sanderson, 2004, p. 5).

Another example of one image of the organizational identity of NYU Shanghai is expressed in the slogan 'make the world your major' which appears in brochures about the university, on umbrellas and mugs, and is closely related to the encouraged norm for students to study abroad for two semesters in their junior year, and the requirement of students to do so for at least a semester. The ambiguity in the slogan as well as in the actuality of the situation is whether or not by studying abroad in another locality students are really choosing global engagement while remaining within the system of the twelve other official sites that make up the NYU Global Network. There is a sense here in which the students are indeed studying abroad, yet another sense in which they are not, since they are not temporarily joining another organizational culture as is the case in most study abroad where students enroll in a program at another university. Crucial questions arising here are whether or not students are robustly engaging with the cultures that they come into contact with and whether or not they are even, in a much weaker sense, making use of the opportunities for cross-cultural communication and cooperation that the university mentions in the 'who we are' section of its website. In her work *Cultivating Humanity,* Nussbaum (1997) describes many curricular experiments that did indeed engage with the elitist and traditionalist form of the liberal arts by altering the canon of texts to bring in voices from different cultures and minority groups. This reflected a need for diversity, and a change in the way that students experienced getting a liberal arts education, but it was still liberal arts on U.S. soil, and so this was a diversity generated by partially different parameters than those that are operative as U.S. institutions of higher education bring the liberal arts to China and elsewhere. In global versions of the liberal arts, a more effective form of engagement may be to expand the scope of the curriculum even more to include

a diversity of texts, in the broad sense going beyond simply printed texts, both canonical and non-canonical. That is, move away from a 'high culture' version of the liberal arts, and engage more directly with culture in its more everyday 'low culture' sense, culture as a way of life. This would then help students to see that it is their very lives and experiences that are the subject of the liberal arts, thus contributing to the goals NYUSH has set to provide students with opportunities for cross-cultural engagement. They would see their own identities at the center of this form of education. Michael Byram, in the School of Education at Durham University, describes this difference with respect to liberal education and the teaching of a foreign language:

> 'The 'obvious' value of teaching a 'useful' subject like a foreign language in an internationalized and globalized world tends to push aside the value of liberal education…The advantage of intercultural competence over literary competence is that not only does it refer to documents other than the literary, but it also has an instrumental application in a self-evident way (2008/2013, p. 227).'

Byram's larger project here is to engage with language teaching to make it a central part of liberal education, as well as to preserve liberal education by infusing it with an expansive view that includes intercultural competence. This, again, is just an example of a particular curricular innovation that could have significant impact on the way students experience their pursuit of an education. The way that language vis-à-vis literature is valued and conceptualized will have impacts on how students in turn identify themselves as 'global citizens,' for example, the phrase most closely linked with the university's 'mission' on the webpage (New York University Shanghai, n.d.d). The liberal arts as a cultural form, as an educational form, as an organizational form, is there to provide coherence if universities would like to improvise on it and allow its students and faculty to personalize it and make it new in new global contexts. If there is a solid commitment to a liberal arts identity, even in new global contexts, then engagement—and indeed *global* engagement—will be featured. When researching the student experience of getting an education in such contexts, as the present study does, these ambiguities have proven to be useful in listening for key insights.

Positioning of the Researcher. The first point to note here is that I am a faculty member at NYU Shanghai. This is likely to have positively affected my ability to gain access to the university for research purposes. At the same time, it means that I am an interested observer, both in the sense that I have a stake in the outcome of the research, but also in the sense that what happens at the university more generally matters to me and could impact my professional life. I began working at NYU Shanghai as a member of the Writing Program faculty in the inaugural year, 2013-14. The duties of Writing Program faculty were to run writing workshops attached to the Global Perspectives on Society plenary course, which was the centerpiece of the liberal arts curriculum.

Coming from the more professionally-oriented British-style curriculum at another joint-venture university in China, where I had been working just prior to joining NYU Shanghai, the chance to work on an American-style liberal arts curriculum was exciting for me. That was when the university first opened its doors as a degree-granting member within the wider NYU Global Network and a new joint-venture university in China. In the middle of this first year, I was involved in discussions around forming a new English for Academic Purposes Program within the university that would exist side-by-side with the Writing Program. I then became the chief architect in the design and conceptualization of the new program and eventually its Associate Director. My title is currently Area Head of the English for Academic Purposes Program, a role akin to director or department head, and I oversee a group of eight other faculty members.

My excitement to join a university with a liberal arts mission had to do with my own identity as a 'liberal arts person,' a phrase I coined to mean a person who has incorporated a liberal-arts ethos into their self-concept. Even in high school my classmates and I were made aware of the ethos of the liberal arts by many of our teachers, especially in literature and history classes. During my undergraduate years at a large state research university in the U.S., I always felt that I was pursuing a liberal arts education. Even though liberal arts colleges were common destinations for many of my high school classmates, in no way did I see the mode and style of my own educational pursuits limited by organizational type. By the time I became a higher education practitioner many years later, I was long aware of the liberal arts as a philosophical approach to education, and had experienced it myself. Indeed, it had contributed to my general outlook on life and resulted in my self-orientation as a life-long learner. As a liberal arts person, I am still engrossed in the experience of getting an education and hope that continues throughout my life. The depth of my liberal arts experience and conscious knowledge of the phenomenon of getting a liberal arts education are likely different in significant ways from those of the Chinese students who are the research subjects. My knowledge includes not only the particulars of my own experience of the phenomenon, but also a familiarity with the abstract categories used to discuss the field of higher education and the great amount of conceptual literature that already exists on the liberal arts as a form of curriculum and guiding educational philosophy.

In my professional life to date, I have experienced situations where a noticeable shift in values have occurred in the organization, such as when a new management team was put in place. This made me aware of how the organizational culture and mission had become interwoven with my own professional identity. The new management replaced collegial organizational structures with more

hierarchical ones, began to centralize processes that had before been more distributed, and decreased teacher autonomy. This made me fully realize in a felt way that, as Sluss and Ashforth (2008, as cited in Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008) describe, identifying with an organization 'is more than just considering oneself a member of an organization, it is the extent to which one includes the organization in his/her self-concept' (p. 332). For me, this meant realizing that there was a deep conflict between my own values and those of the organization as manifested by the new management team. For other colleagues, this was not felt as deeply; even though it was experienced intensively at the beginning of the change, they were able to adapt to the new values over time. Just as there is a close relationship between social structure and the role identities that one takes in society at large (Burke, 2004, p. 6), there is an analogously close relationship between organizational structure, value, and identity, as the previous example illustrates. Luckily, for me, I was able to counter the threat to my identity, and, thus, preserve some of the values, such as collegial decision-making, that I hold, by taking on a new role with another organization. This was just at the time that I was changing jobs to work at NYU Shanghai. If, on the other hand, I had not been so fortunate, and had to remain in my previous position, most likely, as Burke (2006, p. 94) concludes, some aspect of my identity would have had to change. Although this is an example at the faculty level, similar identity dynamics are available at the student level of higher education institutions. Given that the students are still in a much more malleable stage of forming their identities, these concepts are even more relevant in analyzing their experiences.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Attempting a comprehensive review of the key topics grounding this research would perhaps be appropriate for a series of encyclopedias, rather than a single study. The literature on these topics is vast. This, of course, is related to the fact that I am doing an exploratory study, rather than testing a specific hypothesis or doing a quantitative study. In these cases, the literature could be used to delimit the study at the outset. Another reason is that the present study is descriptive. In many other approaches, the literature is used to establish the description of reality upon which a given research question might be answered. However, in descriptive phenomenology, such a description is the result, rather than the basis for the research. Keeping with the suggestions of Creswell (2009, p. 26) for the placement of a qualitative literature review, I will present a review of the literature at the beginning, and significantly, a discussion with the literature interwoven into the discussion in Chapter 5 at the end of this study. Although Creswell (2009, p. 27) refers to this as an inductive approach, this is technically not the case in descriptive phenomenology using the method developed by Giorgi (Giorgi, 2009, p. 77). Such a hybrid approach includes presenting the literature on a 'culture concept,' using the literature to provide a 'backdrop' for the study, drawing upon the literature to inform 'theory discussion' that will help to drive the study, as well as integrating the literature to 'compare and contrast with the results to emerge from the study' (Creswell, 2009, pp. 26-27). During this first stage, I will explore the discourse surrounding the value of a liberal arts approach to getting an education in an attempt to arrive at a minimal characterization of the liberal arts and the associated values. In contrast to the primary 'emic' level of the Chinese students, this more general level of the study as conceptualized in this literature review represents the 'etic' categories upon which a wider conceptualization of the values inherent in a liberal arts education depend. The goal of this review of the literature on the liberal arts will be to document how the central cultural concepts of 'the student experience,' the 'Chinese student,' and 'liberal arts education' are described.

My study draws on this research and other related work to establish what makes the liberal arts different from other forms of education, especially in its value orientation. This provides a backdrop for discussion of the meanings that emerged from the interviews. After a review of the literature on the liberal arts concept, I will move on to a review of the student experience construct in higher education research. The extant literature on the student experience is still largely descriptive and centered on the traditional U.S. context rather than emerging higher education landscapes like China. While inventories do exist in the literature of the difficulties Chinese students might be

having in relation to what in China are considered non-traditional curricula such as the liberal arts, research attempting to address student self-perceptions in relation to these curricula is minimal. This is important to note, as any answers to the research questions for this study should optimally take these self-perceptions into account. Despite the vast literature on the topics that intersect with my research, I also have discovered through this review that the existing literature does not satisfactorily address most of the questions I am asking.

Although I did not know which aspects of the student experience would emerge from the interviews that I conducted with the Chinese students for this study, the goal of the initial literature review was to highlight some of the major themes currently in the literature. I chose to focus the search on the ERIC database of education resources that is provided by the U.S. government. The reason for choosing this database was that it was readily available and focused on education, from an American perspective, although not exclusively so. A keyword search of 'student experience' in higher education journals in the database, which reaches back to 1979, yielded 1, 370 articles on various related subtopics. From these, I categorized articles from a subset of the past twenty years into several different categories: 1) literature reviews, for a total of 8, 2) editorials, narratives, or essays, for a total of 14, 3) those that related directly to liberal arts education, liberal education, or general education, for a total of 9, 4) those descriptive of an assessment or evaluation tool, for a total of 7, 5) those with a relevant organizational focus, for a total of 7, 6) those with an insightful conceptual or theoretical perspective, for a total of 23, 7) those with relevance for describing the student experience in general, for a total of 56, and 8) those that represented actual empirical studies of the student experience and included either a sample of Chinese students or related samples such as Asian students, international students, or minority students, for a total of 70. An additional ninth category was for articles that I was unsure about, but that may have had some import for the research at hand, for a total of 44. Altogether, these nine categories added up to 238 articles. Finally, I reviewed select literature on organizational culture and symbolic interaction as this related to my study. The purpose here was to set up a theoretical discussion that would be central to my intention to connect the descriptions provided by my primary sample with the meanings embedded in the symbols of organizational culture, such as the mission statement of New York University Shanghai. Some of this literature was already drawn upon in the introductory chapter. This was the most selective of the three components of the literature review chapter, as it was based on my own theoretical bias of symbolic interactionism as a way to establish the

aforementioned goal of connecting the level of student meaning with the level of organizational meaning in my study.

Long Tradition of Writing on Liberal Arts in the American Context. As mentioned above, the literature on the liberal arts in the American context is quite substantial in quantity. This meant being selective about where to begin historically as well as how many books within any given decade to choose. The goal here was not to be comprehensive, but to choose books that had impact and were in conversation with one another, as well as those that have powerfully influenced the debate around the value of the liberal arts as an American form of education in the years overlapping with the four years the students under study in this research pursued their undergraduate education at NYU Shanghai. One of the most widely-read recent classic books on the topic is Alan Bloom's (1987), *The Closing of the American Mind*. This work can be seen as one of the first to directly shape the contemporary discussion around the liberal arts curriculum and the associated student experience of pursuing a liberal arts education. Bloom laments the loss of the traditional form of liberal arts educational culture in the U.S., which many other social critics at the time regarded as elitist. Regardless of whether or not Bloom's pessimistic point-of-view has been borne out since the book was written, it stimulated a continuing discussion on the nature and purpose of education in American life, with particular reference to liberal arts education. I reviewed nine important books on the liberal arts tradition in America in addition to Bloom's: Nussbaum (1997) *Cultivating humanity: A classical defense of reform in liberal education* and continuing with Levine (2008) *Powers of the mind: The reinvention of liberal learning in America,* Roche (2010) *Why choose the liberal arts?,* Ferrall (2011) *Liberal arts at the brink,* Delbanco (2012) *College: What it was, is, and should be,* Deresiewicz (2014) *Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American elite*, Nussbaum (2012) *Not for Profit: Why democracy needs the humanities,* Roth (2014) *Beyond the university: Why liberal education matters,* and finally, Zakaria (2015) *In defense of a liberal education.* The first two of these (Nussbaum, 1997) and Levine (2008) were, at least marginally, direct responses to Bloom. Levine was also responding to Nussbaum, who was one of the original critics of Bloom's position (Nussbaum, 1987), which was viewed from the beginning period of the 'culture wars' in the U.S. as both conservative and elitist (Levine, 2008, xiii). Eight of these nine books—the exception being Delbanco (2012)— make reference back to Bloom (1987) with direct citation. This, combined with Bloom's book being perceived as the opening exchange in the discussion on the American higher education curriculum in the 'culture wars,' make it a principled starting point to delimit the review historically. Each of these books is also high impact in terms of

the number of times they are cited in other work on the liberal arts experience. Both Deresiewicz and Zakaria are New York Times bestselling authors, so their books received not only academic attention, but much popular attention. Finally, each of these books focuses on the threat to the liberal arts as the predominant form of four-year higher education in the United States, and thereby throw much light on the way this form of education is currently understood to be experienced.

For Bloom (1987), a liberal education is an education pursued through the 'good old Great Books' (p. 344), by which he means the classic canonical texts of a given tradition. Nussbaum (1987, 1997; 2012) argues for reform in relation to an established Western canon—not to do away with the great books—but to bring in texts evocative of different multicultural voices and other minority points-of-view in an effort to overcome what she asserts as the 'normative chauvinism' of Bloom's approach, which leads the student 'to think that nothing can ever be learned from the foreigner, and that one's own culture has the best answers to all human questions' (p. 132). Donald Levine, who was Dean of the College at the University of Chicago during the 80's when *Closing of the American Mind* was published, wrote a response to both Bloom and Nussbaum in his book, *Powers of the Mind: The Reinvention of Liberal Learning in America*. Levine is critical of what he sees as oversimplification on the part of Bloom and dismissiveness of the value of the canon of great books approach on the part of Nussbaum, as well as the shallowness of the discussion that ensued (Levine, 2008, xiii).

Much like Nussbaum, Levine is in favor of reform of liberal education, but disagrees with the nature of the reforms. For him, the reforms should not be centered on adding elective options aimed at more inclusivity, but rather on 'the question of what it means to be liberally educated,' which he felt had been neglected in the debate sparked by Bloom's book (Levine, 2008, p. xiii). The primary innovations he introduces in his project to 'reinvent' liberal education are, first, that getting an education should include a central place for 'the mind as itself embodied' (Levine, 2008, p. xiii) and, second, that it highlight 'dialogue' as an essential theme (Levine, 2008, p. xiv). The first of these is influenced by his study of aikido and other traditions that integrate body and mind, building on earlier ideas from a paper, 'The liberal arts and the martial arts' (Levine, 1984). Much of this perspective comes from his understanding of Eastern traditions, which he believes retained the value of the body in their forms of liberal education, while being largely lost to educators in the West until the beginning of the 20th century, with philosophers like Dewey, but which continue to be marginalized aspects of education, and are thus an 'exciting frontier' for liberal arts education

(pp. 194-197). To be fair, both Bloom and Nussbaum also have a concern for Levine's second point of emphasis, the relation of dialogue to liberal education, even if in Bloom it is only indirect in his constant references to Plato's dialogues. Whereas much of the earlier concern of Bloom and Nussbaum was directed at the particular content of the readings and intellectual skills that would make up the curricular diet of the liberal arts, Levine is putting particular stress on going beyond education that aims itself only at the intellect. He sees the bodily metaphor of 'inhaling' and 'exhaling,' which is a key element of the bodymind traditions that inspire his approach, as perfect for describing the sort of engagement through dialogue that he believes should be at the center of the advanced stages of liberal education (Levine, 2008, p. xiv, 218-219). Although in her earlier writing that engages with Bloom, Nussbaum does not stress the possibilities for the kinesthetic dimension of getting an education, this becomes an important consideration when discussing the advantages of a liberal arts education in her book, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (2012). Here, like Levine, she also draws on the Eastern perspective, in this case the pedagogy employed by Rabindranath Tagore at the schools he founded in India, which promoted 'full participation of their bodies' in imaginative role-play, dance, and singing (Nussbaum, 2012, Chapter 6, para. 18).

In Nussbaum, as in Levine, there is much stress put on the role of dialogue in education and in the world beyond. This is especially pertinent to matters of cross-cultural understanding, an issue for which Nussbaum dedicates several pages. Although Levine does not use the term 'cross-cultural,' as both Nussbaum and the NYU Shanghai website do, his notion of dialogue does encompass the notion more broadly. Nussbaum sees the goal of cross-cultural understanding as one of the prime justifications for a liberal education that would foster the world citizen, or 'kosmou polites' an idea that originated with the Stoic philosophers of antiquity:

> For attaining membership in the world community entails a willingness to doubt the goodness of one's own way and to enter into the give-and-take of critical argument about ethical and political choices. By an increasingly refined exchange of both experience and argument, participants in such arguments should gradually take on the ability to distinguish, within their own traditions, what is parochial from what may be commended as a norm for others, what is arbitrary and unjustified from that which may be justified by reasoned argument. (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 62)

Dialogue, cross-cultural communication, and world citizenship are recurrent ideas throughout the books on the liberal arts mentioned above, even if these terms are not always used consistently or at all. Zakaria (2015), for example, tells the story of how he and his family discovered liberal arts education as an American form of education from their distance in India, he and his brother

eventually succeeding in enrolling at Ivy League colleges, Yale and Harvard respectively. For Zakaria and his family, the very notion of the liberal arts was bound up with the best of what the U.S. had to offer. And in much the same way as students at NYU Shanghai, he and his brother were experiencing getting an education as a form of cross-cultural communication—Easterners carrying out their bachelor's years in the West. The major difference with NYU Shanghai is that the movement is multidirectional in terms of its cultural flow, both Westerners pursuing their education in the East, and Easterners enrolled in a university bearing the name of a major Western university, but one still located in the East. Roche (2010), specifically mentions the needs of developing countries like India and China in relation to this choice of which form of higher education is most valuable, claiming that although there is often a tendency in developing parts of the world to 'elevate the practical' in such fields as 'business and technology' what is really necessary for the prosperity of these countries is a form of education which equips their citizens with 'broad and versatile problem-solving skills, cultural awareness, values, and leadership,' stressing the role that cultural awareness in particular can play (p. 87). He believes these are skills that focus on a long-term view of societal issues, so their importance is often lost in the considerations of where to attend college by students in developing countries and likewise first-generation students in the U.S. who are aiming for what appear in the short-term to be the more lucrative pathways through their educational trajectory (Roche, 2010, p. 87). For Roth (2014), a form of cross-cultural communication—referred to here as 'engaged diversity'—connects in much the same spirit as Levine and Nussbaum to the liberal arts values of life-long learning and democratic participation. He does so by examining the history of this form of learning, drawing on the views of William James, WEB DuBois, and Jane Addams, central figures in the development of liberal arts education in the U.S.:

> James emphasized that looking for the 'whole inward significance' of another's situation is a crucial dimension of any inquiry that takes us beyond the comfortable borders of our own insular groups. Teaching is neither preaching to the choir nor energizing a base of believers. In crossing borders, we don't only confront strangers when we teach; we also find people who desire acknowledgment and mutual recognition. In so doing, we can teach our students to become teachers of themselves and others well beyond the university years. This path of lifelong learning is a cornerstone of American liberal education. Learning to become citizens eager to understand those around us as we understand ourselves is also a cornerstone of American democracy. Although this is not the only kind of understanding that can be produced in the classroom, it is a crucial one in a culture that recognizes the value of engaged diversity—that recognizes that we all get a vote in the evolving constitution of our universe. (Roth, 2014, pp. 93-94)

Review of the Literature on Liberal Arts in New Contexts. It appears that the greatest amount of literature on liberal arts focuses on such curricula as it is delivered in the U.S. context. Articles that

connected liberal arts curricula to China or even Chinese students in the U.S. were scarce. Research on the American form of liberal arts education internationally is only beginning to get underway as it has only recently become an international phenomenon (Peterson, 2012; Godwin, 2013). This is especially true in 'analysis of the variables that influence curriculum development in different national and cultural settings' and 'related issues' such as 'the relationship between the expansion of higher education and students' personal and intellectual development' (Peterson, 2012, p. 2). Since the possibility of U.S. liberal arts curricula being offered in mainland China is limited to the past few years, it was not at all surprising that research on this area was difficult to find. A couple of notable exceptions are a recent PhD dissertation (Jiang, 2013) and a case study by Mohrman, Shi, and Li (2012), both of which outline the general education reforms that China has started. Jiang's (2013) interesting study is predominately policy-oriented and historical in approach, exploring many strands of influence into China's current education system at both K-12 and higher educational levels. In addition to charting the American influence into China's current thinking on liberal arts education, the study is important for outlining the many historical antecedents of liberal education in China itself. None of these two sources offers much of an analysis of the student experience, which is the goal of the present study.

Empirical Research on Liberal Arts Learning Outcomes and Experiences. Although there is a gap in the literature in higher education studies looking at liberal arts education in new global contexts, there is an extensive body of research on the liberal arts in the U.S. Much of this work is consistent with the intent of the present study to highlight the experience of pursuing a liberal arts education. This is true despite the fact that none of this research employs a descriptive phenomenology to capture these experiences, but instead relies on student direct reports from interviews without formalized phenomenological underpinnings. Much of this research is part of the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (WSNSLAE), one of the largest studies to specifically investigate the liberal arts at the level of learning outcomes and experiences (Blaich, et al., 2004; Blaich & Wise, 2007; Blaich, et al., 2011; Center of Inquiry, n.d.a; Center of Inquiry, n.d.b; Gonyea et al., n.d.; Goodman et al., 2011; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; King et al., 2007; 2009; 2012; Martin et al., 2014; Pascarella et al., 2005; Pascarella & Blaich, 2013; Seifert et al., 2008; Seifert et al., 2014).

Much of this work attempts to document the learning outcomes associated with the liberal arts approach in an effort to buttress the approach from criticism, as other approaches to higher education that are more professionally-oriented gain traction. It also echoes much of what is in the book-length treatments cited earlier. The goal of the Seifert et al. (2008) paper was to empirically

examine the learning outcomes of the liberal arts against the long tradition of 'elaborate rhetoric and anecdotal support' and to focus specifically on how the 'institutional ethos…manifests in the lived experiences of students' (p. 108), an aim that overlaps significantly with the present study. Based on their literature review, they identified the following six liberal arts learning outcomes: moral reasoning, effective reasoning and problem solving, intercultural effectiveness, inclination to inquire and lifelong learning, well-being, and leadership (p. 112). They also based their operationalization of the liberal arts on the earlier work of Pascarella et al. (2005). Pascarella et al. (2005), in turn based their study on Chickering and Gamson's (1987, 1991, 1999) 'good practices' in education, and was another large study that aimed to get beyond the comparison of 'institutional type' that has been characteristic of much higher education research to focus instead on an institution's 'liberal arts emphasis' and how this impacted student development (p. 2). The Seifert et al. (2008) paper considered Pascarella et al.'s (2005) indicators of salient liberal arts experiences, but went beyond these based on student direct reports taken from the WNSLAE interviews. They produced the following eighteen aspects of the liberal arts experience: 'positive and influential student–faculty contact; faculty interest in teaching and student development; instructional clarity, organization, and preparation; academic effort and challenge; degree to which the institution is supportive; positive influence of interactions and relationships with peers; integration of ideas through class activities and assignments; challenging classroom environment characterized by high expectations; instructor feedback to students; emphasis on higher-order examinations and assignments; frequency of engaging in cooperative learning activities; frequency of faculty contact; frequency of student affairs contact; overall diversity experiences and interactions; academically meaningful out-of-class experiences; involvement with active learning; diversity courses; and out-of-class research with faculty member' (p. 112).

King et al. (2007) identify seven outcomes they associate strongly with liberal arts learning: 'integration of learning, inclination to inquire and lifelong learning, effective reasoning and problem solving, moral character, intercultural effectiveness, leadership, and well-being' (p. 5). They analyze these against the background of the more general set of outcomes from research carried out by the AAC&U (2005; 2007): 'knowledge of science, social sciences, mathematics, humanities, and arts; intellectual and practical skills of written and oral communication, inquiry, creative, and critical thinking, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork, and integration of learning; individual and social responsibility comprised of civic responsibility and engagement, ethical reasoning, intercultural knowledge and actions, and a propensity for lifelong learning' (AAC&U,

2005, p. 2). They explain that their list of seven outcomes, which they generated from an iterated literature review, was meant to 'embody the central principles of a liberal arts education' and 'that connected the qualities of mind commonly associated with developing wisdom with the responsibilities of citizenship, meaning the educated person's commitment to community' (p. 3). Furthermore, their list transcended the prior list of the AAC&U in that it was designed to have the following two characteristics: 1) that their outcomes are not meant to be thought of separately, but instead are 'integrated' and 'holistic,' and 2) that they are 'multidimensional' and 'the achievement of each outcome requires integrating abilities across domains of development' (King et al., 2007, pp. 4-5).

Another important strand to emerge from the WNSLAE, based on the work of Kegan (1994) and Baxter-Magolda (2001), examined the concept of 'self-authorship' (King et al., 2009), 'the capacity to internally define one's beliefs, identities, and social relations by using one's own voice to critically choose from multiple possibilities' (p. 109). These researchers view this to be one of the most central outcomes associated with the liberal arts (p. 108), as many of the other outcomes in fact depend on the prior development of the 'internal orientation' that is captured by this concept (p. 109). This overlaps significantly with the present study in that there was a focus on the qualitative aspects of the students' experiences. The researchers see the students' experiences as key to gaining insights due to 'their developmental impact,' experiences leading to self-authorship deemed 'developmentally effective' (p. 109). Four categories of the effects of developmentally effective experiences were identified: 'increasing awareness, understanding, and openness to diversity;' 'exploring and establishing a basis for beliefs, choices, action;' 'developing a sense of identity to guide choices;' and 'increasing awareness of and openness to responsibility for own learning' (King et al., 2009, p. 112).

Conceptualizing the Student Experience

One way of conceptualizing the student experience that emerged from the literature review and that was at the same time consistent with the framing of the present study was through the operationalization of the concepts of 'identity' and 'culture' (Chapman & Pyvis, 2006a; Chapman & Pyvis, 2006b; Kayongo-Male & Lee, 2004; Kawaguchi, 2003; Leese, 2010; Liversage, Naudé, & Botha, 2018; Nasir & Al-Amin, 2006; Ramburuth & Tani, 2009; Schweisfurth & Gu, 2009; Spronken-Smith, Bond, Buissink-Smith, & Grigg, 2009; Tate & Linn, 2005; Tobbell, O'Donnell, & Zammit, 2010; Walker, 2005). Of the 70 empirical studies that I reviewed, 10 of them used identity and 3 used

culture as conceptual lenses to view the student experience. Additionally, some of these and many of the other articles used these concepts tacitly by focusing on particular groups categorized by class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, or gender. Groups that were the focus of articles were African-American/Black students (Davis, Dias-Bowie, Greenberg, Klukken, Pollio, Thomas, & Thompson, 2004; Flowers, 2004; Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002; Littleton, 2003; Liversage, Naudé, & Botha, 2018), Asian Pacific American students (Kawaguchi, 2003), Chinese international students (Dai, Lingard, & Reyes, 2018; Tian & Lowe, 2009; Valdez, 2015), Latino-Americans (Gardella, Candales, & Ricardo-Rivera, 2005; Hernandez, 2002), Muslim students (Nasir & Al-Amin, 2006) , Native Americans (Brown, 2003; Cole & Denzine, 2002; Huffman, 2001); women (Gracia, 2009; Harrop, Tattersall, & Goody, 2007; Sax, 2008; Tate & Linn, 2005), working-class students (Finnegan & Merrill, 2017; Soria & Bultmann, 2014), first-generation students (Geall, 2000), mature-age students (Leder & Forgasz, 2004), and queer/gay students (Toynton, 2007).

Underlying the use of the identity and culture concepts in these studies is the assumption that the student experience is affected in significant ways depending on the groups to which one belongs or with which one identifies. Furthermore, the different groups to which one belongs will impact the development of an academic identity as students enter and progress through their higher education journey. The effects can be both negative and positive, but much of the research cited above often demonstrates difficulties that arise in part from minority identities in areas such as learning outcomes (Kayongo-Male & Lee, 2004), academic persistence (Tate & Linn, 2005), relationships with supervisors (Chapman & Pyvis, 2006b), the perceived need to be an independent learner (Leese, 2010), self-confidence and skillful participation in class discussions (Ramburuth & Tani, 2009), and educational challenges in general. Some of these articles also focused on the varying perceptions that students have due to their identities or the cultural groups to which they belong. This is especially relevant to phenomenology and, hence, the present study, which focuses on what is present to the psyche rather than on hard realities. Two especially salient examples of differing perceptions attributed to students in the research literature were perceptions of the purpose of getting an education or degree (Spronken-Smith, Bond, Buissink-Smith, & Grigg, 2009) and career aspirations (Kawaguchi, 2003). Interestingly, Spronken-Smith et al. (2009), found four different orientations among millennium graduates: '(A) gaining a qualification for a specific job; (B) preparation for a job; (C) developing life skills and learning how to think; and (D) education for its own sake: growing as an individual.' Such orientations relate closely to the present study in that one of my assumptions is that the student's own perception of the student experience depends on

how they see the purpose of getting an education. Astin (1999), for example, claims that despite an overall increase in a materialistic attitude to college on the part of U.S. tertiary education students in general, getting an education at an independent liberal arts college had the effect of lessening this attitude (p. 86). Much of the controversy around the liberal arts approach to education has centered around a perceived dichotomy between, on one side, orientations (A) and (B), and, on the other side, (C) and especially (D), the first two broadly seen to contradict the liberal arts, despite claims from adherents of liberal arts education that it is a better form of education even when one's goals are strongly career oriented (AAC&U, 2002; 2005; 2007; 2018; Humphreys & Kelly, 2014; Pascarella et al., 2005).

Another theme that emerges from the studies that focus on identity and culture is how the process of identity formation itself and the related dynamics 'construct' the student experience (Tobbell, O'Donnell, & Zammit, 2010), are used to resist assimilation into the mainstream culture (Huffman, 2001), and paradoxically can promote exclusion of minority identities even when the predominant institutional identity purports to do the opposite (Walker, 2005). These studies should have much in them that intersects with the student experience at NYU Shanghai, despite that in this context it is not obvious which groups are the minorities in light of the approximately even split between mainland Chinese students ($\geq$51%) and international students ($\leq$49%). These articles should also have convergences with aspects of the developing institutional culture at NYUSH, much of which almost certainly has its source in NYU New York, but with effects correlated to displacing elements from that source in the new location and organizational context of Shanghai.

The Chinese student experience in particular. Journal articles featuring empirical studies dealing specifically with the student experience of mainland Chinese students were limited in the ERIC database to the three papers cited above and only two additional articles (Evans & Morrison, 2011; Li, 2012). The first of these (Evans & Morrison, 2011) is limited in scope to the experiences of students in Hong Kong where the official curricular language is English, but where there is an increasing trend to use Cantonese in the classroom, an issue that has some relevance for the NYU Shanghai context, except that the competing language would be Mandarin, rather than Cantonese. The second of these additional papers (Li, 2012) highlights the Chinese student experience in P.R.C. Chinese higher education during its current trend of moving from a system serving the elite to increased massification. Although the study examined six factors that were of potential relevance to the present study, these were operationalized within a statistical framework that limited their commensurability with my study's goals to describe the experience within the particular context of

NYU Shanghai. Of the six factors of the students' experiences—'feelings about and attitudes towards the expansion, unequal access to higher education, unequal success on campus, curriculum and instruction, institutional internationalization'—the only finding that seems to have potential impact for the present research was that in the context of the massification of Mainland Chinese higher education 'there was strong concurrence in terms of students' negative experience in selecting courses or programmes, in accessing professors for advice and in classroom learning, irrespective of their background characteristics' (Li, 2012, p. 469). The main finding concerning internationalization was simply that 'the internationalization process has had a significant impact on Chinese university campuses, but it differed in many dimensions' (Li, 2012, p. 472). This is perhaps all that can be hoped for from a statistically oriented study of this sort, one of the main reasons for pursuing a rich description of the experience through the present study.

The three articles cited above (Dai, Lingard, & Reyes, 2018; Tian & Lowe, 2009; Valdez, 2015) that inquire into the Chinese student experience abroad are perhaps more pertinent to the NYU Shanghai context with its high level of internationalization. Dai, Lingard, & Reyes (2018), through a qualitative analysis, found evidence that Chinese students in Australia 'had critical views towards the teaching in their intercultural learning programs, indicating that they did not simply believe the foreign teaching was better than the Chinese style' (p. 48). These students were able to gain a nuanced understanding of the experience of learning in an international setting that was in turn characterized by 'negotiated views towards different teaching styles, facilitating an in-between space in their minds. They were living and learning in a liminal space' (p. 49). This description of the situation that Chinese students experience abroad as in-betweeness or liminality was conceptualized in stronger terms in a paper from the ERIC search by Valdez (2015) using the concept of 'double-consciousness' that comes originally from the work of W.E.B. DuBois. Some of these students, who were studying in the U.S., exhibited double-consciousness as 'a state of 'identifying with Chinese international students, but also by making an effort to disassociate themselves from characteristics shared by Chinese students, which might be perceived as negative' (p. 197). That is, there is a consciousness of negativity through the eyes of the local students and faculty in the U.S. which results in an attempt on the part of the Chinese students to avoid practices or behaviors that they would otherwise see as normal or not even notice due to being fully integrated into their identities. In Tian and Lowe (2009), one Chinese student is reported to have had positive experiences in a British university, but at the 'price' of being excluded by Chinese peers (p. 671). This student criticizes Chinese counterparts for relying on the excuse that others in the

local context are not congenial to them because they are Chinese, making instead a much more individualistic claim that it must be their own fault. This student could be taken to have somehow avoided the problem of double-consciousness raised in the Valdez (2015) paper, but perhaps by not recognizing its existence in other Chinese students. Indeed, this student is a counterexample, albeit a minimal one, to the larger number of cases of Chinese students in the data set, and in the literature more broadly, that experienced difficulties in internationalization in British universities (Tian & Lowe, 2009, p. 672). Sources and symptoms of difficulties experienced by Chinese students in this context were lack of background knowledge and confidence in group discussions (p. 668), social exclusion (p. 668), staying with others in their in-group rather than interacting with more diverse groups (p. 668), insufficient English competency (p. 669), and shallow knowledge of the host culture (p. 669). Such concerns are common throughout the literature on the minority student experience of internationalization.

Much of the argument made by Tian and Lowe (2009), based on the original framework of 'existentialist internationalization' of Gavin Sanderson (2004), supports the intent of the current study in posing a research question that seeks to describe the students' experience in the special context of NYU Shanghai. Specifically, citing the notions of 'symbolically international' and 'transformative international' of Turner and Robson (2008), they argue that the micro-level student experience is neglected against the background of a neo-liberal, 'globalist,' form of internationalization, which, instead of making a strong commitment to the value of the diverse culturally-inflected forms of knowledge and skill each individual student may contribute, the real commitment is to the economic drivers of globalization:

> A symbolically international university may in fact enrol many overseas students but the institutional attitude to them… has no need to change what it does. The alternative, as captured by the notion of transformative internationalisation, is that the 'international richness' these students represent does, and should, affect the nature of the educational experiences of all in the university. (Tian & Lowe, 2009, p. 662)

The Chinese student. Since the literature search in the ERIC database did not return a large number of articles dealing specifically with the Chinese student experience, it was necessary to turn to the wider body of literature on the Chinese student. One of the most productive research teams to examine the Chinese student experience and related areas is Lixia Jin and Martin Cortazzi, who have been active from the 1990s until the present, through a variety of papers and three co-edited volumes (Cortazzi & Jin, 2013a; Jin & Cortazzi, 2011a; 2013), the latter which include introductions and post-scripts that sum up and expand much of the work introduced in their individual journal

articles and book chapters. The first of these edited volumes focuses on 'teaching and learning in classrooms in China' and 'the intercultural adaptation of Chinese learners in international contexts of education' (Jin & Cortazzi, 2011b, p. 1); the second volume deals specifically with researching 'cultures of learning' (Cortazzi & Jin, 2013a), a central concept that is given a fuller treatment than in the earlier book; the third edited book (Jin & Cortazzi, 2013) widens the scope to examine intercultural learning more broadly. Altogether these books add up to 46 separate papers, including the introductions and post-scripts, 30 of which directly concentrate on the Chinese learner or the international learning context in China, while many of the other articles highlight a variety of cultures of learning or intercultural learning more generally. To these should be added another crucially important edited book on the Chinese learner by Carol Chan and Nirmala Rao (2009a), although here the interest is on the primary and secondary learner largely in the context of Hong Kong, albeit with some reference to mainland China. This book establishes a foundation on which to explore what the authors call the 'paradox of the Chinese learner' (Chan & Rao, 2009b), by which they mean that despite often being classified by Western researchers as 'rote learners' who take a 'surface approach to learning,' they outperform their Western counterparts on several key measures of learning (p. 5). This should stand as some evidence that things are not always as they at first seem when it comes to descriptions of the educational experiences of the cultural other, one reason why the approach I take here is to gain an inside view of the experience itself.

Throughout the first three of the aforementioned volumes (Cortazzi & Jin, 2013a; Jin & Cortazzi, 2011a; 2013), the key concept of adaptation to the context of internationalization overlaps with the literature on the student experience from the ERIC search, most pertinently in articles describing the specific forms of adaptation that are part of the experience of minority groups, but also in the articles that generalized across the student experience to all groups of students. The notion of 'cultural synergy,' which Jin and Cortazzi have been working to develop since introducing the idea in the early 90s, also featured prominently in these volumes as a response to the emphasis on the difficulties posed by the need for adaptation and the 'gap in expectations and interpretations of behaviour' between Western teachers and Chinese students that results in a 'vicious cycle of negative views on both sides' (Jin & Cortazzi, 2011b, p. 10). Such negative views were predominant in the literature from the ERIC search. The 'cultural synergy' notion is an attempt to address this spiral of negativity (Jin & Cortazzi, 2011b, p. 10):

> the need for informed intercultural adaptation and…more 'cultural synergy' (Jin & Cortazzi, 1993) so that both teachers and learners learn about each other's expectations and approaches to education, language learning or the development of knowledge and skills. (Jin & Cortazzi, 2011b, p. 10)

This recommendation of more 'cultural synergy' places importance on the positive contribution that different cultures of learning can have on organizational cultures that are prepared to harness them, a similar conclusion of Tian and Lowe (2009) cited above. Another similarity to the articles from the ERIC search is frequent reference to both the concept of identity and the concept of culture. Other topics and issues of potential relevance to my current study are English ability, particularly the ability for oral expression, the emotional aspects of the experience of the educational journey, and specific features of Confucian cultures of learning, for example the aforementioned use of rote learning.

Much of the research on the Chinese student originates in applied linguistics where there is a central concern for understanding the relationship between language, culture, and other markers of identity. Correlations between language and academic literacy, on one hand, and difficulties with the student experience in contexts of internationalization, on the other, were also noticeable in the literature from the ERIC search. Language learning is about more than developing a simple skill to be used to communicate. It has recently been increasingly recognized that becoming proficient in a language is affected by whether or not the learner is able to create an identity in relation to the language that is being learned (Ortega, 2009, p. 241). One example is the widely cited work of Peirce (1995), who conceptualizes the experiences of learners as a function of their personal identity through 'investment' (Peirce, 1995), which extends existing categories of motivation. Mott-Smith (2011) even suggests that some of the research in Jin and Cortazzi (2011a) could benefit from adopting the post-structural analysis found in Peirce's (1995) work.

Stereotyping, reification, culture, and identity. Mott-Smith (2011) in a review of Jin and Cortazzi (2011a), concedes that while Jin and Cortazzi themselves 'seek a balance between generalizations of Chinese learners and recognition of their individuality,' that many of the other researchers with papers in the edited book do not (p. 581). Together with the charges that the culture concept can lead to 'essentialism' (Grimshaw, 2010; Dervin, 2011, p. 38; Dervin, 2016, p. 64), these are common criticisms of work on intercultural learning, intercultural communication, intercultural competence, and related areas. This is perhaps why Jin and Cortazzi dedicate effort to clarifying the cultures of learning concept (Cortazzi & Jin, 2013b, pp. 2-3) upon which their wider project, including the concept of 'cultural synergy,' relies:

> Cultures are complex, dynamic, changing, with (obviously) shared common values but (less obviously) internal diversity of recognized differences, too, so there is no expectation that every member of a particular group thinks or must behave in identical or even similar ways, despite group trends. Thus, the notion of applying a cultures of learning framework to classroom interaction with international students, say, should not involve reducing them to an oversimplified view, or one invoking stereotypes; on the contrary, the notion of cultures of learning has been developed precisely to counter stereotypes by focusing on specific aspects of real learning and getting those insider perspectives, preferably through research, which illumine the activities and thinking of real learners or teachers in authentic contexts through rich data. (Cortazzi & Jin, 2013b, pp. 2-3)

The point here is perhaps to foreground the issue of stereotyping and 'cultural reification' (Mott-Smith, 2011) that was a criticism of earlier work on the Chinese learner using the cultures of learning framework.

Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009, pp. 142-145) explain that stereotyping can have harmful effects, yet is also sometimes desired by those who the stereotypes are being directed at if, for example, 'beliefs and/or practices required it' (p. 144), and at the same time that stereotyping is not easily distinguished from other processes such as 'categorization and generalization' (p. 144). While many of the criticisms have a good measure of truth to them, qualitative research can meet them by seeking the 'insider perspectives' that Cortazzi and Jin refer to above. Such an insider perspective is indeed what the present study is seeking. At the same time, the descriptive phenomenological method I employ in the study does not seek statistical generalization across a representative sample, but rather aims to offer a possible description of the experience of getting an education at NYU Shanghai, and would only be useful as a generalization if it provided insight into the minimum conditions for being a certain type of experience. This is altogether a different form of generalization from that which is equated with stereotyping, even if some of the studies in the literature do use those other forms of generalization. The description of getting an education at NYU Shanghai that is the result of this research will likely vary in future research across other groupings of students, both inside and outside the Chinese cohort. Comparing such descriptions is one possible direction for future research.

Another criticism that is lodged at the use of the culture construct is that it is not robust enough to offer much explanatory power (Mott-Smith, 2011, p. 583) or that, as Dervin (2016) claims, the concept is too 'fuzzy' to be of much utility (p. 64). If one were to abandon culture as an explanatory concept, as Dervin recommends, it would seem to be nearly impossible to conceptualize 'interculturality'—and thus a major aspect of the current research with its focus on the mainland Chinese student experience in the context of an internationalized university where 50% of the students are not from China — without then using one of what Atkinson and Sohn (2013) explain

are the 'replacement concepts' for culture: 'notions like discourse, power, agency, habitus, ideology, small cultures, critical multiculturalism, and identity' (p. 670). Mott-Smith's (2011) recommendation that 'research needs to combine cultural analyses with structural, historical, and post-structural ones,' is a modest recommendation by comparison to Dervin's (2016) 'liquid' approach, which is critical of both the culture and identity concepts (pp. 14-15). Dervin does ultimately accept the value of the concept of 'identity,' but in a 'liquid' rather than a 'solid' form; that is, 'if one works from an open, processual, and co-constructivist approach' (p. 14). Interestingly, although phenomenological research has a central concern with essences, it is also committed to being an 'open, processual, and co-constructivist approach,' to use Dervin's phrase.

Atkinson and Sohn (2013) are sympathetic to much of what Dervin is arguing for with the 'liquid approach,' but they strike an important cautionary note by stating that by 'replacing the traditional culture concept wholly or partly in this way, appreciation of a crucial human reality risks being lost — the reality that people do live culturally (Ingold, 1994)' (Atkinson & Sohn, 2013, p. 671). They argue instead for what they call 'culture from the bottom up,' defined as 'culture as represented in the lives of its individual users, from their perspectives' (p. 671). This is consistent with work in applied linguistics that takes a 'sociocultural perspective' (Holme, 2002, p. 211) and sees a robust connection between language and culture both with and without evoking concepts such as identity. This perspective is one that lends support to the present study's foundational concern for 'liberal arts education'—a notion that in its 20th-century manifestation derives from American higher education culture and the English language, and is being, in a sense, imported into the Chinese mainland cultural context. The centrality of language to the conceptualization of meaning and values is well-supported by Wierzbicka (2005), who defends the use of culture as an analytical concept in neo-Whorfian terms when she states that 'meanings of words are social facts [that] provide insight into the ways of thinking of those who use them…For example, even those speakers of English who do not personally believe in the value of 'privacy' belong to a conceptual community...who understand this concept' (p. 280). In the same way, 'liberal arts education' is a concept that has particular saliency in the conceptual community of American higher education, but, although there are correlates (Jiang, 2013), not as saliently in contemporary Chinese culture.

Connecting the Chinese Learner, Identity, and the Values and Symbols of Organizational Culture. Atkinson and Sohn's (2013) approach to culture has much overlap with the current study, including the 'organizational identity dynamics model' of Hatch and Schulz (2002) which I drew upon in the introductory chapter. I presented this as a way to link the meanings of the student experience of

getting an education at NYU Shanghai with the other symbols of the organizational culture. This is a necessary frame for the discussion if this research will have the intended effect of providing insights into the generation of the cultural meanings upon which the university functions. The 'culture from the bottom up' concept helps to provide a justification for my concern with and interest in the Chinese students at NYU Shanghai by recognizing the importance of both 'how sociocultural influences contribute to individual identity' and 'how cultural material is actively interpreted, appropriated, and (re)created by individuals vis-a-vis their past, present, and future lives' (Atkinson & Sohn, 2013, p. 671). It is also consistent with the cultures of learning approach taken by Jin and Cortazzi, as mentioned above, and could be used as a lens with which to examine much of the previous literature. Taken together, these three approaches aid in connecting the organizational level of symbolic meanings with the experiential level of the lived meanings of getting an education at NYU Shanghai in the psychical landscape of the students.

In my study, the university as a social organization is viewed as the embodiment of a 'semiotic system' that operates 'through the exchange of meaning' (Biesta, 2010, p. 496). On such an assumption, the values guiding educational practices become paramount (Biesta, 2010, p. 500). Buchanan and Huczynski (2010, p. 103) highlight how such 'organizational values' have a strong conditioning effect on the beliefs and behavior of the social agents acting therein — in this case, the students, faculty, and leadership. This underscores the link between the values held by senior management and the values that cohere across the organization itself, as well as between other members of the organization who may be a source of the values that anyone who plays a role in the organization is expected to uphold (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2010, p. 105). This is what makes it so crucial to pay attention to the way that students are experiencing the curriculum and co-curricular context. The degree to which the meanings they perceive as operative within the university culture will have a direct effect upon what they in turn make of such meanings as they experience them and whether or not they incorporate them into their own value system. Many of the values associated with liberal arts education require a long-term incorporation into the value system of the students for them to be enacted. Take the notion of 'life-long learning,' for example. If this is indeed something that the liberal arts philosophy of education stands for symbolically, it may have to consider how such an outcome is at odds with the 'measurement culture' of the 'neo-liberal university' (Biesta, 2009), not least because such a notion would take a lifetime to measure.

This process of identity change, and the acquisition of values that occurs concomitantly, is at the heart of Lave and Wenger's (1991) 'situated learning theory' as well as the organizational learning

that Wenger (1998) conceptualizes in his communities of practice theory, which is based on the notion that learning takes place in a 'community of practice' (CoP) where those on the margins increasingly identify with the core practitioners. For Wenger (1998, Chap. 10, 'Facilities of alignment, para. 2), value is one of the components of negotiated meaning that enters into a learning process he terms 'alignment.' Being able to align one's values with those of the organization leads to increased learning within the organization. Such a situated learning theory (Lave and Wenger, 1991) places high importance on context. This supports the current study's interest in the organizational context by theorizing such context as a constraint on identity development and, therefore, learning itself. Although the theory uses the term 'learning,' it bridges the micro-level of learning, which for Lave and Wenger would be the level of practices, and the meso-level of becoming a member of the community, which is defined by its adherence to that specific set of micro-level practices. The stress here is on the sociocultural aspects of acculturating into an organizational community. In this model, the student is an apprentice who is learning the ways of participating as an expert member of the community.

NYUSH could be viewed as such a community with a set of practices originating in U.S. higher education that have some degree of connection to 'liberal arts education.' Learning on this account is synonymous with developing an identity as a member of the community that has these practices at its core. The Chinese students who come to this setting with their own set of practices, learned in the CoP of Chinese secondary education, may be positioned on the margins of the community, and perhaps further on the margins than their international counterparts. Examples of such practices in the university are the various conventions of learning in higher education that students need to understand, such as participating in class discussions, taking exams, having office hours with professors, writing papers, and giving presentations, each implying the acquisition of a high-level of academic literacy on the part of the student. Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory has been successfully applied to these aspects of language learning (Norton, 2001, p. 160). Central to their theory is the concept of 'legitimate peripheral participation'. The key word here is 'legitimate', because it is not just any participation that will do. Learners are often kept from feeling like they are authentic members of the community which engage in the practices to which they are being exposed. This feeling of a lack of legitimacy is one of the obstacles in the way of alignment between one's own values and those of the organization.

The value of preparing oneself as a student to do well 'in the job market' versus the value of 'the student experience of getting an education' is another salient example of a value conflict in the

literature on the liberal arts (AAC&U, 2002; Altbach, 2016; Astin, 1999; Delbanco, 2012; Deresiewicz, 2014; Ferrall, 2011; Humphreys & Kelly, 2014; Nussbaum, 2012; Pascarella et al., 2005). These values may enter into one's identity formation in differential ways. There will be an obvious impact on what Stets (2010, p. 390) would call 'role identities,' in this case with a particular focus on the role identity of being a student. The concern here is whether the perception students have of their experience of getting an education specifies a different role identity. If so, identifying as a 'liberal arts person' would have potential impacts on the way of pursuing one's education with obvious implications for the alignment with the values of the organization. Is there, for example, a point at which these competing values manifest as a conflict between the liberal arts experience and the formation of a professional identity? Much of the literature on the liberal arts describes the position that liberal arts education is also the best preparation for a career (AAC&U, 2002; 2007; Delbanco, 2012; Deresiewicz, 2014; Ferrall, 2011; Humphreys & Kelly, 2014; Nussbaum, 2012; Pascarella et al., 2005; Roche, 2010; Roth, 2014), although another common position is that students should be able to pursue their education unfettered by the pressures of the marketplace (Bloom, 1987). Part of the motivation of the former derives from a concern to defend the liberal arts against attacks that it is impractical. One issue here is just how these 'multiple identities' can cohere within a single person (Stets, 2010), for example, identities such as 'liberal arts person' and 'engineer' or 'entrepreneur.' Would the students describe these as integrated into a liberal arts identity, separate but both contributing to success, or as at odds with each other? Stets (2010) sees multiple identities as arranged in a 'hierarchical perceptual control system' (p. 403). In this approach roles are associated with an assortment of values, some of them likely to reinforce one another, yet many also likely to conflict. Hitlin (2011) claims that it is in just such a situation of 'role ambiguity' when there is a need to fall back on an identity that is connected with personal moral values (Personal Identity and the Self, para. 7). That is, unless one of these roles is considered more valuable than the other, neither can override the values associated with the other, so an additional moral level is needed. This is where Stets's (2010) aforementioned 'hierarchical perceptual control system' comes into the picture. It hypothesizes a 'more general and abstract' moral identity that regulates other identities, such as the example role identities, in order to avoid conflict between them (p. 404). Using these concepts, is it possible to imagine the identity of 'liberal arts person,' as just such a higher order moral identity?

Phenomenological Research on the Experience of Getting an Education. Little work on educational phenomena has been carried out using the particular descriptive phenomenological tradition in

psychology started by Giorgi (2009), despite the fact that Giorgi himself has written about the closely related phenomenon of learning (Aanstoos, 1996; Giorgi, 1971; 1985; 1989; 1999; 2018). I discovered two PhD dissertations on higher education experiences employing Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological method, one that was supervised directly by Giorgi himself (Olive, 2009) and the other which included one of Giorgi's former students on the dissertation committee (Schell, 2017). The first of these looked at the 'desire for higher education in first-generation Hispanic college students enrolled in the McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program.' This was relevant to my own present research in that it dealt with minority students in a specific organizational context. Many other such studies abstract away from the context itself, but in this particular study, the actual context of the 'McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program' was considered an inseparable part of the phenomenon, just as in my own study the context of NYU Shanghai is an essential part of the experience being investigated. The second study above was relevant for attempting to describe what are called 'pivotal moments' within a broader experience of pursuing a doctoral degree. Although in my own approach to the phenomenon of getting an education, I did not focus directly on 'pivotal moments' themselves, it is quite reasonable that some of the moments of the experiences that the students described were pivotal for them in their undergraduate journey as the moments in Schell's (2017) study were for the doctoral student participants. Moreover, the 'pivotal moment' concept in Schell's (2017) study was based on the work of Barbro Giorgi (2011), Amedeo Giorgi's late wife, which was published posthumously. This work looked at the concept within the work of clinical psychology, another applied field like education. It has influenced the present study in that the pivotal moments were described against the background of the overall experience of therapy, a broader experience which may resemble getting an education in its duration and its goal-directedness, as well as in other aspects. Although this method has not often been used to study education, in addition to the two exceptions mentioned above (Olive, 2009; Schell, 2017), DeRobertis (2017) is a book-length treatment of the related set of phenomena, 'learning and becoming.' Like the other two previous studies, it involves a meso- or macro-level focus that spans the development of research subjects ('learners') over a considerable time-span. In addition to its application to research psychology, the descriptive phenomenological method developed by Giorgi has been applied to a few other realms akin to studying higher education contexts: nursing (da Cruz de Castro et al., 2017), hospitality management (Jackson et al., 2018), management (McClure & Brown, 2008), organizational studies

(Gill, 2014); organizational leadership and religion (Akerlund, 2017), law enforcement (Broomé, 2011; 2013), and as, mentioned above, clinical psychology (Giorgi, B., 2010; 2011).

Purpose of the Research with Respect to Gaps in the Literature. The uniqueness of the setting at NYU Shanghai in itself is evidence for a gap in the literature. As the U.S. begins to export the liberal arts to other parts of the world, it will be essential to track any changes in the meaning and values of this form of higher education. Whether meanings relating to constitutive concepts of the liberal arts such as, 'life-long learning,' 'integration of learning,' or 'self-authorship' (King et al., 2007) are present or absent in the experience of the Chinese students are important psychological facts that may have significant bearing on decisions within the university. Raising this awareness for those overseeing curriculum design in the university, for example, would be of considerable benefit. To my knowledge, nothing has been written about the way Chinese students, as a cultural group, conceptualize liberal arts education, except for commentary pieces such as Liu and Lye (2016), which makes two brief 'narrative accounts,' only one of which focuses on the student experience, without using any obvious research methodology. From the literature review presented here of the key conceptual ground surrounding the experience of getting an education of the Chinese students at NYU Shanghai, several gaps are present in addition to the primary gap that stems from the near uniqueness of the context. While there are many studies on the liberal arts, the student experience of higher education, and the intersection of the two, there are few studies that focus directly on Chinese students as a group, there are fewer still that explore and describe this experience at the micro-level. In the phenomenological literature, where one would expect to find such micro-level studies, the focus is rarely on the broader phenomenon of getting an education, but rather more specifically on learning. The texture of the liberal arts as represented by the influential and even popular books, as well as the more scholarly periodical literature, and the conversation that has ensued from one to the other has been important to establish at the outset of the study, in an effort to anticipate what might eventually emerge from the interview data.

Chapter 3: Method

In this study, the descriptive phenomenological method developed by Amedeo Giorgi (1985, 1988, 1992, 1997, 2009) from the field of humanistic psychology is employed. In keeping with Giorgi's method, the present research attempts to discover what is called an 'eidos' in the parlance of the community of researchers in humanistic psychology where the research method used in this study originated (Giorgi, 2009). This is a kind of essence of the given phenomenon under investigation (Giorgi, 2009, pp. 195-99). In this instance, that phenomenon is the experience of 'getting an education at NYU Shanghai.' As mentioned in places above, the research is not meant to be independent of context, or to generalize statistically across large numbers of students. Such an approach attempts to access the psychological experiences of the participants from inside these experiences themselves and seeks to describe the structure that grounds the experience, both as it is experienced consciously and unconsciously—in the latter case, before it has been named and conceptualized. On that basis, the method then looks at the particular, and empirically varying experiences of each of the participants in light of the structure that has been brought to light. The goal is not an interpretation, but a deep understanding that stems from grasping the structure of the experience as it is presented to me, the researcher. By dealing with the particulars of a given student's experience, the research charts the contours of the experience in a way that quantitative data does not. In so doing, it captures rich detail that ultimately enables relatability of the data to a variety of contexts. The method is meant to establish a process of making this result accessible to other members of the research community, and more distantly to practitioners who might apply the understanding to enhance their practice in a given field.

There are three levels of concern in the present study. The first is the level of the Chinese students, their conceptualization of the experience of getting an education, and more indirectly whether or not such an experience could be construed as getting a liberal arts education. The second level is that of the university, particularly the leadership of the university, but also the faculty, student advising staff, and other groups responsible for the transmission of liberal arts values to the Chinese students; in short, other stakeholders who constitute and create the organizational culture. The third level is that of the larger discourse about the value of a liberal arts education, especially as it is in competition with an increasingly vocationally oriented form of education that aims to prepare students for the 'knowledge-economy' and which sees students as consumers in a market exchange (Beerkens, 2008; Delbanco, 2009; Ferrall, 2011; Nussbaum, 2012). It is the student level which is of central importance to the study. By analogy with the 'emic' concept in ethnography

(Fetterman, 2010, p. 11; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p. 194), this is the level of the phenomenon as it is understood by the cultural insiders who are the subjects of the study, in this case the Chinese students. At this level, I am concerned with the meaning of the phenomenon as it is, first, present to my research subjects, and then as it transformatively presents itself to my own consciousness, assuming the attitude of higher education research and a researcher within that field. From a methodological point-of-view, this means attempting to understand the Chinese students on their own terms during data collection, without suggestion or interference from me as the researcher. This is especially important given that the students will not be using their first language in my interactions with them and are perhaps easily influenced by me as both researcher and faculty member. The descriptive phenomenological method as developed by Giorgi (1985, 1988, 1992, 1997, 2009; 2012; 2018) is designed to approach meaning in this way. This method provides a way to access the inner worlds of those who have experienced a given phenomenon in order to discover whether or not a common structure of meaning can be derived from their descriptions of experiencing the phenomenon. The aim of the method is to clarify the meaning of the experience in consciousness without making any claims as to the reality of the object of the experience itself (Giorgi, 2009, p. 90).

A Consideration of the Research Problem from Different Methodological Perspectives. One stage of the research that enhanced this project significantly was exploring different methodological perspectives and ruling them out in turn to arrive ultimately at descriptive phenomenology, and in particular the method that Giorgi has developed. From the outset, and given that the EdD is focused first and foremost on refining practice, it was necessary to consider methodologies that relate to a problem of practice in my own organizational context. The statement of the research problem as put forth in the introductory chapter went through several iterations before it reached its current formulation as I considered it in light of different methodologies. This way of proceeding by fist viewing the research problem through different epistemological lenses is especially suitable to my status as a doctoral candidate. It would be a weakness if I lacked the skill to do this. This is consistent with what Pallas (2001, p. 9) describes as increasing 'awareness' of different epistemologies. The methodological approach that one takes, as 'foreknowledge,' informs the very posing of the research problem and questions (Moses & Knutsen, 2007, p. 182). I have also been drawn primarily to qualitative approaches out of this same concern, as they better preserve the richness of the context, whereas quantitative epistemologies tend to reduce context to the measurement of a few variables (Moses & Knutsen, 2007).

The 'constructivist developmental' theoretical stance views the learner's construction of knowledge of self—that is, 'self authorship'—as of paramount importance in evaluating the effectiveness of a given curriculum design (Seifert, Goodman, King, and Magolda, 2010, p. 250), the liberal arts being one example. The concept was referred to in my literature review on the WNSLAE and liberal arts learning outcomes in the literature review in Chapter 2. For such research, it is the transformation of the individual's self-perceptions that is the goal of education, rather than the stockpiling of facts and information that is transmitted from the education system through the curriculum and pedagogy. Such an approach has much direct import for my research questions. Employing such an approach to study these questions, I would seek to gain insights into how the students conceptualized their choice of NYU Shanghai as an institution that purports to further a liberal arts curriculum. Under the influence of this approach, I have prioritized the student's internalized understanding of the curriculum as a way to further their goals of becoming a certain kind of person, specifically a person who has developed away from having an 'externally influenced and defined way of knowing, being, and interacting; to an internally defined way of knowing, being, and interacting' (Torres, 2011, p. 429). This approach operationalizes the notion of 'identity' in a way that is highly consistent with the liberal arts educational philosophy of becoming a lifelong learner, as described in the literature and mentioned in my literature review (AAC&U, 2005; 2007; Blaich & Wise, 2007; King et al., 2007; King et al., 2009; Levine, 2009; Nussbaum, 1997; 2012; Roche, 2010; Roth, 2014). Such a view depends on the learner developing a high-degree of self-knowledge. Concomitantly, it provides an epistemological criterion for quality learning in that a high degree of awareness of one's transformations in education would indicate high quality learning (Boes, Baxter-Magolda, & Buckley, 2010, p. 15).

Another approach that has influenced my study has been 'grounded theory' (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). This is also a broadly constructivist approach, yet it differs from constructive developmental theory in that there are no pre-existing categories into which data from the study would be sorted, a notion that is also part of the phenomenological method. Where constructivist-developmental theory starts with a specific developmental theory of learning via self-knowledge, a grounded theory approach would rather let the researcher's observations of the phenomena being studied proceed unobstructed by pre-conceived theoretical constructs, and, instead, be driven by 'the research process itself', as described by Corbin and Strauss (1990, p. 6). If I were to use a grounded theory methodology, I would not start with pre-defined notions such as 'capacity for self-reflection' (Seifert et al, 2010, p. 258) that have come from prior studies. Instead, I would attempt to develop

a theory in the very process of observation of the students having difficulties as they engaged with the curriculum. An example is Komives et al. (2005), in their grounded theory investigation of undergraduate 'leadership identity.'

As a way of expanding my knowledge beyond methodological perspectives that I was not initially drawn towards, a third approach that I considered—mainstream social psychology— differs markedly with the first two. It differs most noticeably in that it tends in the direction of reduction of the phenomenon being studied to 'dependent' and 'independent' variables (Moses & Knutsen, 2007, p. 49). By reducing the complex phenomenon of the student experience of getting an education down to a few key variables that can be strictly operationalized, this more naturalist approach builds a foundation for statistical comparisons between variables (Cokley, 2000; Marsh & Yeung, 1997). In so doing, they contradict the constructivist approaches I draw upon, mentioned above, and are not very consistent with a phenomenological approach which instead operationalizes the research interest in a more open-ended way. There are also many more studies from this mainstream methodological approach in the education literature, and thus few that have examined the student experience where the experience was related as a holisitic and irreducible experience worthy of study in itself, rather than a set of a priori variables determined by researchers instead of the research subjects.

Ethnography was another methodology that I took into close consideration for the present research. I had originally aimed to utilize a broadly ethnographic approach to enable triangulation of overlapping data from the three different levels outlined above as it emerged in the field. Such a design would have been true to one of the goals of ethnography to gain both an 'emic' perspective and an 'etic' perspective on the research topic (Fetterman, 2010, p. 11; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p. 194). Ultimately, the scope of those plans was unsustainable given the time remaining to complete the study, leaving me with no option but to scale back my design. Although my study maintains an interest in all three levels, the second level is not as fully operationalized as it would be if I had been able to make fuller use of ethnographic-style data. My study remains inspired by ethnographic thinking and my idea to combine ethnography with phenomenology was motivated by a real desire to balance naturalism and constructivism (Maso, 2001, p. 144). This would have been feasible given that much descriptive ethnography is grounded on a phenomenological epistemology (Fetterman, 2010, p. 5). Despite the modifications, it was only through exploring the possibilities of ethnography, and then separating out what was feasible given the constraints, that I arrived at my current methodological approach of descriptive phenomenology.

Phenomenology. I have chosen a descriptive phenomenological approach precisely because I seek to describe the grounding of the experience before it has been named and conceptualized. The interviews I conducted with the Chinese student participants have allowed me to develop insights into their conceptualization of the experience of getting an education without prejudicing the direction their responses might take in terms of a theory of the liberal arts. Phenomenology aims to develop an account of the way in which 'phenomena present themselves to consciousness' (Giorgi, 2012, p. 6), while avoiding to the greatest extent possible concepts and categories introduced by the researcher that would otherwise taint the resultant description. This is consistent with the ethnographic goal of gaining an emic perspective, although the method of phenomenology attempts to access the 'psyche' of the research subject, rather than remaining on the level of naturalistic 'thick' description. If I were to introduce key concepts such as 'liberal arts' to the students, then I would be leading them to impose a conceptual lens on their own reflective understanding of their education. This would be suitable perhaps for other qualitative approaches, including interpretative phenomenology, that would seek an interpretation of the liberal arts experience of the students. Descriptive phenomenology is suitable for exploring a given experience in the terms of the experiencer, or in some cases the actual words of the experiencer, thus leaving open the possibility that new variables might present themselves.

Participants and Recruitment Criteria. The research interest in this study was the experience of P.R.C. Chinese students. These students were recruited from the approximately 50% of Chinese students in their cohort. The primary reason in this study for this demographic focus is NYU Shanghai's potential to impact wider developments in Chinese higher education. It is crucial to first understand the way the Chinese students are experiencing the new forms of education in order to gauge the potential future impact of these novel developments. Eight participants from the NYU Shanghai Class of 2018 were initially selected for the study. The time commitment for data-analysis made this number unsustainable, so ultimately the number was reduced to three students. Participants were selected for age (18 years or older), country of birth (P.R.C. Chinese citizens), year at NYU Shanghai (4^{th}-year students), and they must have studied in Chinese primary and secondary schools. All majors were possible, but each of the participants was from a different major. Students who met all of these requirements, were then selected on a first-come-first-serve basis. Students who had previously been my own students were disqualified from the study and I explained to them that this was due to both ethical and methodological reasons. The majors of the three students who were ultimately included in the study were, for Student 1, a double-major in

computer science and interactive media arts, for Student 2, a double-major in business and finance, and for Student 3, a major in chemistry.

Selection process. I applied the criteria above to identify potential subjects, including it in the recruitment materials, which consisted of a flyer that I posted in many places around the university campus as well as an advertisement on the university website for volunteer opportunities. Subjects were provided with a choice to let me know whether or not they wished to participate by contacting me through email or by phone. Once students indicated interest, I gave them more information about the study by phone, and attempting to make sure they understood that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

Consent. After subjects expressed interest in participating in the study, I contacted them as described above. Once it was clear that a participant met the requirements, I sent them a consent form to review ahead of our first meeting by email. At the time we met for the initial interview, I provided the participant a chance to ask any questions about the consent form. After answering any questions, the participant and I both signed the form. I kept the original and gave the participant a copy of the form for their records. (See Appendix C)

Confidentiality. The identity of each research participant is known only to me. All identifying information was removed at the time of transcription of the tape recordings. Since the ultimate aim of this research was to arrive at a single description, an attempt was made to amalgamate the responses. Major area of study was the only identifier that remained, the reason being its potential relevance to the empirical variations as well as the role it might have played in preventing a single description from emerging in the analysis. After the identifying information was removed, a letter-number sequence (S1, S2, S3) was assigned to the descriptions. (See Appendix C)

Data Collection. The study was carried out on the campus of NYU Shanghai over a four-month period. At each interview participants were asked to start describing the phenomenon of getting an education at NYU Shanghai with the following prompt: 'Please describe your experience of getting an education over the four years at NYU Shanghai, since the time you entered the university until now.' Participants were asked to take part in a minimum of two and a maximum of four 30-minute interviews. This depended on my judgment of the saturation of the data. In fact, the participants continued to have much to say until the fourth interview, so they were each invited back for the maximum time. That is, all of them described their experience of getting an education at NYU Shanghai with limited repetition through until the end of the fourth interview. If participants began

to stray off topic or stopped describing their experience, I steered them back to the central question. If they mentioned a topic, I would offer a probe to get them to describe that aspect fully. (See Appendices D and E for sample transcripts showing the interview questions and prompts. Appendix E contains all of the interviewer language from the four hours of interviews with S1.) I felt generally that they were anticipating the two-hour total time limit in advance and that each of them covered all the aspects of the experience that they could think of at the time as being important for them in getting an education. Each of them at different times signals through discourse markers that they have a timeframe in mind for a given interview. S1 and S3 do this more systematically by having a year in mind almost each time. I carried out all the interviews for eight participants, even though only three were used in the present study. Upon completion of the final interview, each participant was thanked for participating and given the monetary incentive of 200 RMB.

Key to the method, I did not mention the phrase 'liberal arts' or indeed introduce any other associated concepts in an effort to bracket assumptions and not to lead the students to a given conclusion. This use of 'bracketing,' central to the descriptive phenomenological method, is a way to ensure that a conceptual scheme of prior knowledge does not enter into the rich descriptions of experiences that are provided by the research subjects (Giorgi, 2009, pp. 91-92). This is crucial if the interviewer is to obtain a genuine description of the experience in the terms in which it unfolded for the interviewee. Wherever meanings inherent within the liberal arts approach to education such as 'exploration' were mentioned by the students, this was because they themselves apprehended these meanings. Whether or not references to the liberal arts would occur was part of the research interest, but this was by no means a necessary condition for the research to succeed. Bracketing does not mean ignoring altogether my knowledge of the phenomenon built up from prior experience, including prior reading about the phenomenon during the initial literature review, but rather suspending that knowledge and experience, so as not to let it 'be engaged' at the moment of analyzing what the experience consists in and the manner in which it unfolded (Giorgi, 2009, p. 92).

Data Analysis. The steps of Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological method are outlined in several of his books and articles (Giorgi, 1985, 1997, 2009, 2012, 2018). The first step is to read the whole corpus of transcripts to gain a general understanding of the whole. Given the crucial role that is played by the consciousness of the researcher in the phenomenological method, it was imperative that significant time is spent 'dwelling with' the data. Dwelling with the data involves reading it and

considering the meaning of it as whole as well considering the significance of individual moments within the whole. Such dwelling with the data occurs throughout the analysis process although there is a sense in which the term 'analysis' here is perhaps not the best term for this, since dwelling with does not always involve breaking the data into parts, even though that is one aspect of the work. This takes place from the beginning of the research process, even when listening to the research subject describe the experience, but then also when transcribing and re-reading the transcripts, dividing the data corpus into meaning units, transforming the meaning units, and then finally determining the constituent structure of the experience. Since the underlying epistemological foundation posits the experience as holistic and not necessarily linear, it is crucial to have a sense of the endpoint of the description before beginning to analyze the transcript. Given the limits of memory and consciousness, it is highly unlikely that participants would be able to describe their experience in the natural time-order in which it unfolded. In the present study, I had to remind the students that it was permissible for them to describe the experience in a non-linear way, as they sometimes were noticeably impeded by imposing this unreasonable burden on themselves.

The second step was accomplished by going back to the beginning of the transcript and beginning to read again, this time staying within the 'natural attitude' (Giorigi, 2009, p. 130), but noting shifts in meaning whenever they were detected and inserting a slash at that point in the text, shifts that Giorgi calls the 'meaning units' (Giorgi 2009, p. 130). The natural attitude refers to an atheoretical or everyday attitude, one that is not grounded in a particular mode of seeing derived from a particular discipline, field, or philosophical point-of-view. One that provides an account that is void of 'critical reflection upon how the experience of the phenomenon is unfolding' (Giorgi, 2009, p. 181). It is the attitude from the perspective of the everyday lifeworld (Giorgi 2009, pp. 96-99).

The third step was then to adopt the attitude of psychology—and, in this case, the field of higher education—to transform each of the meaning units into an expression of the description that is most revealing of whatever psychological or educational import might be contained within it. This means that the natural attitude that is taken upon the initial reading of the transcript is transformed into the theoretical attitude based on the field of expertise the researcher is using to approach the data. This also means that the attitude taken now shifts from that of the participant to the researcher. It is assumed that this attitude has a close relationship with the field of psychology. These transformations are repeated as necessary. In the case of the present research, three or four transformations were needed for each meaning unit. An effort was made when doing

these transformations to avoid using technical jargon. Even though the method does not seek to capture the essence in its purest form, as philosophical phenomenology true to Husserlian intent would aim to do, there remains a desire to discover an essential structure that is unfettered by 'theory laden' lexis:

> Because no theoretical perspective is as broad as the psychological perspective as such one never really knows whether the theory-laden term is being used in an area of strength or not. However difficult, the procedure biases itself toward the perspective that demands a creative use of language to come up with careful descriptions of the invariant psychological meanings of each meaning unit. Ordinary language twisted toward psychologically heightened revelations is the recommended strategy. Mere labeling should also be avoided. (Giorgi and Giorgi, 2003, p. 253)

Discovering the essential structure by using imaginative variation and combining the final transformations into a synthesized description of the experience of 'getting an education' was the fourth step. This synthetic structure is the result of considering all of the meanings represented by the final transformations for their educational-psychological import, as they appeared to the consciousness of the researcher. Imaginative variation is a key part of the process, and is a necessary component of traditions of phenomenological research that stay true to their Husserlian roots. What this means is actively imagining different alternate possibilities of the appearance of the structure as one analyzes the data contained in the transformed meaning units; in other words, comparing and contrasting the meaning units in creative ways, even considering opposites to the way they first appear to the researcher. Applying imaginative variation was a key conceptual tool the more I dwelled with the data and became highly familiar with it, as this familiarity often prevented me from intuiting the educational-psychological meanings that I was seeking to uncover. Giorgi and Giorgi (2003, pp. 246-47), provide the example of using imaginative variation to determine the essential 'cupness' of a cup to arrive at an example of invariance: a cup is a 'container of liquids manageable by hands' (p. 247). This invariance was arrived at by imagining the different variables that might apply to cup—such as size, shape, color, and material—and considering which of these was essential to being a cup. The aim in the present research was to discover which of the constituents are essential to describing the experience of 'getting an education at NYU Shanghai,' and which, on the other hand, are merely contingent. This required considering where the transformations for each participant across the whole data set overlap and where they diverge in order to determine which of these were necessary to fully describe the experience overall. Those that are central to each of the individual participants and that also hold horizontally across the entire data set for all the participants are selected as primary constituents of the structure. (See Appendix D for a sample taken from the analysis of S2's data)

Meanings that seemed to be outlying were interrogated imaginatively to see if they could be folded into existing primary constituents. In some cases they could, in others the outlying meanings were cause to revise the formulation of the constituent until it contained both the original meaning and the outlier. Some of the outlying meanings were not considered essential to the structure of the experience, but just as variables such as color and shape in Giorgi and Giorgi's example of the aforementioned cup (2003, p. 247), were merely contingent meanings of particular experiences of particular students. These were still interesting facts about the meanings of the experiences of the students, and were part of the final step in the research, which is to go back and 'clarify and interpret the raw data' (Giorgi, 2012, p. 6). Once the essential constituents are determined, they are then written in the form of an explication of the structure of the phenomenon, usually in a single paragraph. It is this thumb-nail sketch that is taken to be the eidetic structure of the lived-experience. This is meant to be taken as one possible structure, not the final word on the phenomenon—an informed basis on which to understand the experience of getting an education in this particular context.

Risks, Safeguards, and Potential Benefits. Although the risks in this study are minimal, one form of risk associated with any interview that requires participants to describe their own experiences, as is the case in this study, is that recounting one's own experiences could cause emotional distress, for example, because this person remembers an experience that had caused such distress in the past. It should be noted, however, that such risks in this study are deemed no greater than the risks of participating in everyday life. The participants were informed about the university counselling center and the possibility of contacting high-quality external services in case they experienced emotional distress.

Possible benefits of participating in the study are described below. These were printed on the flyer that was used to advertise the study to prospective participants. Please note that these benefits are indirect and participants may or may not have actually benefitted. Participating may have helped a participant to recollect and gather their thoughts about their experiences of getting an education at NYU Shanghai, which could be potentially useful for other interviews they will have in the future. Through their experience as an interviewee they may also have gained a greater awareness of themselves as learners, which presented them with the possibility of increased understanding of their experiences of getting an education. Their participation may contribute to the understanding of others seeking knowledge and understanding of the experiences of Chinese students studying in institutions like NYU Shanghai. It may also enable me and other researchers to contribute to the

knowledge, theory, and practice of international higher education. Participants were also told that upon completion of the final interview, they would receive the 200RMB mentioned above as compensation for their time. They were told they could contact me for more information about their participation by email or phone. (See Appendix C)

Other Ethical Concerns. One of the ethical issues related to this research was gaining access to both students and the wider institution. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011), for example, spend many pages on the ethical problems associated with access and strategies for gaining access. They also present many definitions of 'sensitive research,' one of which is research that poses 'consequences for other people...and institutions' (Lee, 1993, as cited in Cohen et al., 2011, p. 165). Part of the issue here is that in phenomenological studies, the categories that ultimately develop from the data are not known in advance. This has meant that in seeking access from those in a position to grant it within the institution, I have not been able to fully discuss what the outcomes of the research might look like. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) see this stage, which they term 'overcoming objections and stressing benefits,' as essential to successful research (p. 167). One common objection is that, because the research relies on emergent interpretation and theory construction, the research cannot sufficiently be analyzed. In some sense, this is always the case, as ethical determinations themselves are always 'subjective…and not at all easy' (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992, as cited in Cohen et al., 2011, p. 75). This statement has been some consolation, and thankfully the need to be able to 'sell' my research proposal to those in a position to grant access in the institution (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 168) was not as much of an issue as it might have otherwise been.

Chapter 4: Results

Results of the Study: Discovering the 'Eidos' of 'Getting an Education at NYU Shanghai.' The eidetic description of 'getting an education at NYU Shanghai' that follows below was based on the data of three students out of the eight who participated, a corpus of approximately 55,000 words out of more than 150,000 words overall. This represents an attempt to describe phenomenologically one of a multitude of possible structures of the experience. It is highly unlikely that there would be an unbounded quantity of such structures of getting an education, but since the context of NYU Shanghai is important for the applied purposes of this study, and real-world context is ever-shifting, the number of structures that might emerge would be larger than if there was more of an attempt to abstract away from the particular context of the experience. Incidentally, this is one of the differences between the philosophical method of Husserl, which attempted to arrive at the most general essence of a given phenomenon, and the adaptation of that method by Giorgi to fit the necessity for more useful mid-level generalizations in psychology (2009, p. 196). Extending this logic to an interdisciplinary applied field like education, I reason that the eidetic structure here described is even less general. After a highly time-consuming process of data analysis, the following structural description or 'eidos' of the experience consisting of eight constituents was discovered:

For S (an NYU student), the experience of getting an education at NYU Shanghai was predominately a process of pursuing knowledge, skills, and the development of character through modes of exploration and investigation, which resulted in a variety of (self-)discoveries: 1) an awakening to changes within oneself; realizations about oneself; growth of awareness of self and lifeworld, 2) consciousness of development, mastery, and limitations of knowledge and skill pertaining to the domain specific area of S's major, especially the ability to carry out research in that area, and 3) consciousness of the transferability of some of the knowledge, skills, and attributes acquired at NYUSH to other domains of their educational world and lifeworld in general—that is, these were not purely academic discoveries. Key to the success of the process of getting an education are S's interactions with others in the ever-shifting contexts in which they move over the four years. Although these interactions occur both within and across cultural boundary lines, there is an expanding tendency to notice where and how these boundary lines are drawn, which is another form of self-discovery, as stated above. In order for this noticing to happen, it is necessary for S to make sense of their experiences by imagining how it otherwise would be in China, by comparing and contrasting experiences to situations that are familiar to them in China or interactions with other Chinese, or by highlighting how they were extending something they perceive as Chinese. The

completion of the process is also characterized by robust feelings of satisfaction with the path they have taken and confidence in themselves. All of this occurs against grounding perceptions of the exceptionalism and special features of the NYU Shanghai project, which can be both enabling and hindering of their progress, but which nevertheless forms an essential strand of the context in which the experience unfolds.

Tables 1 through 8 below summarize each of the constituents with respect to the full body of empirical data upon which the structure is built, including the variations between each of the students.

Constituent	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
1) Pursuit of knowledge, skills, and the development of character through modes of exploration and investigation	Feels strongly encouraged by NYUSH to explore based on his "inner voice" without external determination, by parents or tradition for example. This is an opening up of his existing tendencies to education's influence. Feels himself choosing his own "life path," and emphatic about the importance of this. Exploration key to his decision of what to study. Views the conditions at NYUSH where there is not so much need to focus on competition as ideal for exploration of interests. Much intercultural and cultural exploration, curricular and co-curricular exploration. Sees exploration as key both inside and outside the major. Study abroad a highlighted part of the overall exploration process. His experiences here were characterized by great enthusiasm and interest to connect to the local place and the local culture. S1 recognizes this process of learning and discovering new things, and thereby influencing his worldview and future outlook as either positive or negative, as integral to getting an education.	She sees the exploration process as one of being inspired to see the world in a new way, which involved going against her original tendencies. Highlights exposure through her liberal arts general education plenary course to new topics such as feminism, gender, and sexuality, that were forbidden in her prior schooling and by her parents, who thought they were very bad. She experienced being pushed and challenged by professors and others as key to the process of exploration, one example being encouraged to have many internship experiences. Much sharing of ideas and comparison with others, including the professor. Necessary to the exploration process was the ability to balance different domains of exploration, such as academic study, internship schedules, and trips to museums for art history class. Experienced the exploration process as sometimes taking risks to go beyond her own perceived limits, failing to match her professor's or other's expectations, incurring and overcoming negative reactions. Emphasizes confusion from the many things one particular professor was often telling her, including suggestions to be a better person.	Like S1, sees exploration as a process enabling him to discover new things about the skills he will need for future research, new things about his own abilities, as well as about learning new things in general, not necessarily domain specific to his major of chemistry, but becoming consciously restricted to his scientific pursuits by the middle of the second year in order to concentrate on his strengths in comparison to other students. Decision to study science largely already made before entering the university. At first, experiences the requirement to explore new domains of knowledge in his liberal arts general education courses negatively, although has appreciation for them in hindsight. Highlights the difficulty of these requirements for him, contrasting them strongly with his science courses, feeling that they are an obstacle to achievement in an already demanding major. Has high motivation when it comes to exploring within science, which he sees as learning by doing, as well as discovering new knowledge in the world, not just new for him. Feels not talented enough in other subjects, which he sees as a less dynamic learning process, involving much repetition of knowledge as opposed to real discovery. He views the first year and a half as a time of great exploration both curricular and co-curricular. Although study abroad had a key effect on his exploration

			process, it was noticeably limited, especially in comparison to the other two students. Social exploration stimulated by being told prior to arriving at NYUSH that he needed to develop his social network, not fully intrinsically motivated.

Table 1: Empirical variations of constituent 1

Constituent	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
2) Awakening to changes within oneself and lifeworld	Intercultural, interpersonal, and professional transformation. Begins to see himself as an interactive media artist, not simply a computer scientist.	Intercultural, interpersonal, and professional transformation. Exposure to new topics as mentioned above had transformative effects on her thoughts and character over the four years in relation to original tendencies, including her attitude to personal and societal expectations related to moral norms. Discovered an interest in aesthetics and found herself starting to 'talk art,' stimulated by exploring the museums on her study abroad in New York. Due to such a great variety of internship experiences, S2 began to appreciate all forms of work as meaningful. Part of her transformation is in seeing that she is not alone in many of her difficulties. Develops more solidarity and empathy with others. She also now sees the importance of leaving her comfort zone through wider participation.	Some intercultural, but primarily interpersonal awareness and a high degree of professional growth. He doesn't experience these changes as transformation as much as do the other two students, but more of a revelation of his true self. During study abroad, which is not a generally emphasized aspect of his experience, he has an awakening to the value of the work of non-scientists, which he attributes to the exploration he did in his liberal arts required courses.

Table 2: Empirical variations of constituent 2

Constituent	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
3) Growing consciousness of development, mastery, and limitations of knowledge and skill pertaining to the domain specific area of S's major	Related to growth in creativity and combining an artistic sense of self with technical mastery, both essential for the interdisciplinary area of his double-major in interactive media arts and computer science. The exploration process allows him to discover horizons of possibility in relation to the forms of technology available that he would not have been able to imagine before. This provides him with a sense of how to proceed, drawing him to certain forms of technology that influence his future choices and possibilities.	Minimally focused on domain specificity of her business and finance major of her experience, but overall growth of confidence pervades her professional aspirations. Emphasizes her gains in adaptability, as well as a growth of skill in successfully gaining internships, through practical knowledge of writing resumes and cover letters.	Highly focused on the domain specificity of his experience, even sees the liberal arts elements of the experience in terms of his developing scientific self. As mentioned above, he experiences this as a process of self-revelation, peeling off outer layers to see where he truly excels, consciously examining and exploring his interests and priorities to see where he is truly talented, seeking perfection if possible.

Table 3: Empirical variations of constituent 3

Constituent	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
4) Growing consciousness of the transferability of knowledge, skills, and attributes to other domains	Learning by doing pervades his descriptions of pursuing his major and broader education. There is a strong sense that he has made himself busy with different forms of curricular and co-curricular experiences throughout the four years. As with the other two students a central part of this is learning to take the initiative. He specifically mentions this as a way of furthering a valuable experience for the benefit of self and others without being required or influenced by others. Since he was a member of the second cohort of students, and the first cohort were away in their study abroad year, there were no upperclassman telling them they had to do things. For him, taking the initiative is tightly coupled with determination and a sense of responsibility, as well as a concern to work together with and benefit the wider likeminded group. He makes clear that despite all of his travel experiences, which were central to his exploration, he seized every opportunity in the summers to do something valuable	S2 states that she is continually learning things from her curricular and co-curricular experiences, despite frequent emotional stress and frustration. She emphasizes experiences that developed her communicative skills---listening, writing, and speaking---her critical thinking abilities, and her emotional and interpersonal skills and dispositions. These latter are emphasized for S2 far more than the other two students. In fact, she recognizes emotional confusion and disorientation as crucial elements in her own transformation during the four-year experience. Like the other two students, hands-on experiences were critical for learning broadly applicable skills in addition to more narrow skills for their major. For S2, many of these experiences were part of internships, involving many interactions with people, and leading to development of her ability to take the initiative, leave her comfort zone, and anticipate potential problems before they arise. S2 also experiences the strong influence from another student mentor and close friend in developing, through observation of him, her character and	Emphasis on a growing awareness of his learning that comes from learning by doing, that was not conscious to him while he was doing it. One of the most obvious empirical differences between S3 and the other two students was his strong emphasis on his major area of chemistry as key to exploration and discovery of transference to other realms, perhaps more so than his liberal arts general education courses. S3 goes into great detail about his experience of acquiring the ability to learn how to learn something new on his own through carrying out research projects assigned to him by one particular science professor who acted as a mentor to him. For him this involves getting a holistic overview of the object of the learning, so that he will know what kind of information to look for, as well as see where he has gaps in his knowledge. Then playing with the new information to get to the essence of what was necessary for the thing being learned (e.g., coding). This does not mean the non-major requirements were not a significant part of his experience; indeed, he highlights how all of his experiences at NYUSH increased his ability to be a better student in general, leading to gains in his time-management of new kinds of tasks, such as research assignments, involving substantial writing. In his past education, he experienced little writing except short paragraphs on

	for himself, which included importantly his last summer in Brooklyn, where he worked closely with a professor there as a research assistant, which ultimately will lead to publishing an article together.	psychological dispositions.	single topics. In addition to his writing ability, he greatly improved his speaking ability, which he feels is much better than Chinese students from other universities, citing his perceived advantage during graduate school entry interviews. S3 has also come to recognize there are different modes of being a student, associating different skills with different fields of inquiry. Flowing from these beliefs, it then becomes his responsibility to do well in his own field and admire others for applying the skills and talents he lacks. He has also discovered the necessity of learning to become a better human being in general.

Table 4: Empirical variations of constituent 4

Constituent	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
5) Social interactions	Has a broad array of experiences that contribute to his educational success, including co-curricular and curricular experiences, but with an emphasis on the former, which included many significant intercultural interactions; professor becomes a mentor during study abroad summer research program, helping him to publish a paper; sees people as important resources for his educational experiences.	Intense experience of interpersonal and group dynamics, both through curricular and co-curricular experiences, much of which is negative or very difficult, but which she ultimately succeeds in learning from; seeks out mentors or models to emulate for her development; many significant intercultural interactions; much of her description of the experience overall takes place at the level of fine-grained psychological interactions.	Initially broadly social, but quickly restricts these to interactions within the major field of study; professor becomes a mentor; only minimally intercultural, despite these being highly important for his overall success.

Table 5: Empirical variations of constituent 5

Constituent	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
6) Comparison to things Chinese/ Noticing boundary lines	Comparisons predominated in relation to what was for him a redistribution of the boundary lines around culture away from rigid binaries to more of what he felt to be more 'liquid;' feelings of being part of an elect prototype for the future, in terms of the diversity of the groups he experienced; comparisons to different functional domains of experience as setting boundary lines around cultural interactions; sees much of his experience in comparison to what the "traditional" Chinese student would do.	Frequent awakenings of consciousness based on comparisons to different learning styles, and different ways of being, which were often related to emotions, morality, and character; many negative comparisons to other Chinese students, who she feels are very competitive; a desire to become more 'Western' in direct contrast to what she took to be a Chinese starting point, often extending this to Asians in general; some recourse to comparisons to Chinese exemplars that enabled her transformation away from other things being perceived as Chinese. Much in the experience was not only about intercultural boundary lines, but also interpersonal ones (e.g., between her and peers or between her and authority figures such as parents and professors).	Comparisons are largely related to the way science is done in the student's major, but there are some comparisons made to other aspects of learning more generally, such as differences in the way that the student experiences the expectation to speak in class and what he sees as the more silent classroom of his previous experience in high school, which he describes as being something Chinese. Much in the experience was not only about intercultural boundary lines, but also interpersonal ones, especially related to his talents (e.g., between himself and peers). Many of the interpersonal boundary lines were those he drew consciously around himself in order to focus on developing himself as a scientist.

Table 6: Empirical variations of constituent 6

Constituent	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
7) Feeling satisfaction and confidence	Looking back over his educational journey, S1 describes feelings of satisfaction in his achievements and confidence in himself that emanates from his positioning as an NYUSH student, where he has experienced a harmony between his own development and larger worldwide trends. Successes in the first couple years in co-curricular events related to his academic interests in technology and interactive media arts really went against his expectations, providing an even stronger boost to his confidence, both in knowledge and the ability to apply the knowledge. Additional key areas where he experienced confidence and satisfaction are in building relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds, knowing how these relationships are limited, and the expectations governing these relationships, as well as confidence in himself as an individual free to make his own choices, rather than blindly following past precedent emanating from traditional mores.	For S2, the many experiences she has had over the four years have provided her with a form of confidence in herself that she links with a tenacity to discover what the world is really like and remain optimistic, despite knowing that the problems are severe. This is synonymous with an ability to remain calm in the face of difficulties without getting desperate or disappointed in one's abilities. She feels that this new attitude is the result of a highly valuable transformation over her educational journey that emerged from having chances to observe in others the qualities she would like to possess, as well as the related skill of reading people and understanding and appreciating the way they do things. For her, this confidence and satisfaction are closely related to overcoming many of the difficulties she had in interacting with fellow students and professors during the four years of her time at NYUSH. It relates closely in her experience to listening confidently without being defensive and being able to accept one's imperfections, both of which she was able to practice on her path of getting an education. There is also an overall growth of confidence pervading her	For S3, like the other two students, there is a large growth in confidence and satisfaction. For him, however, this is primarily a realization that he had the competences and attributes to become a scientist. It was the result of experiencing the vetting process of going through the demanding science program at NYUSH. He gained boosts to his confidence each time he satisfactorily completed one of the assigned projects. Overall, the educational journey was a process of building confidence in his core strengths, which he saw as being something akin to his true self. It involved a process of deliberation and analyzing the costs and benefits of spending time and effort in different areas of the educational world. Despite awareness that many areas outside his major concentration had benefits, he ultimately felt that the benefits were not worth the investment. The process also involved rejecting peer pressure to return to the activities, including compliments from peers that he was good at these activities. Ultimately, his decision to withdraw made him feel happy because he could spend more time doing what he enjoyed, and he came to an understanding that the co-curricular activities were not commensurable with the kind of person he imagined himself to be. In addition, he derived great satisfaction from the experience of developing scientific projects

		professional aspirations, as mentioned above.	that proved to benefit his professor and other students (e.g., developing a specialized computer interface for use in his professor's class).

Table 7: Empirical variations of constituent 7

Constituent	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
8) Perceiving the exceptionalism and special features of NYU Shanghai	S1 began to experience the special features and exceptionalism of NYUSH early on during the Candidate Weekend process where the leadership spoke directly to the students and were a visible presence, encouraging them to set the direction of their own academic journey. He continued to experience this exceptionalism as a feature of the university over the four years, highlighting the many resources NYUSH students had access to, including the Global Network sites and ability to study abroad. For him, this enabled the pursuit of education free from too much need to worry about financial necessities. He felt that many of the technology events and special treatment that were important for his education would not be permitted elsewhere in China. He also experienced the special demographic mix of NYUSH and Global Network sites as special features highly important for his education.	S2's sense of the special nature of the NYUSH project has to do both with the openness with which controversial topics were presented at NYUSH, which she sees as positive for her learning, and also with what she experiences as a need to 'stand out,' which she links to the Candidate Weekend process where you must compete with a select cohort of students vying for admission. She sees this need to stand out as one of the defining characteristics of her Chinese peers, who she has experienced as overly competitive and aggressive.	S3 feels that the knowledge system, course system, curriculum system at NYUSH is exactly the same as in the U.S. This compatibility of his undergraduate education with his grad school education, he feels, will give him a sizable advantage for continuing his education at grad school in the U.S.

Table 8: Empirical variations of constituent 8

In the following section, the analyzed data will be presented in more detail to explain the language chosen for the eight constituents and its relation to the variations between the students. Instances of raw empirical data will be supplied to support the analysis.

Pursuing Knowledge, Skills, and the Development of Character through Exploration and Investigation. Each of the students made clear through their descriptions that getting an education was for them a process of pursuing knowledge, skills, and the development of character. At least the first two of these are easily expected and highly salient elements of education, so it was readily apparent that this is what they were directing their consciousness towards in the descriptions. The phrase 'development of character' was chosen to encompass other elements that did not conveniently fit within the other two more obvious categories and that signified directedness at becoming a better person.

> *S1: [Interviewer: So what you're telling me, all this, the experiencing all these different people, what was this ... how was this part of your education, for you?] S1: I think that's quite important, because when you study away it's not only about the classes you take, it's more about the cultural knowledge. If you don't study away, you can never met those people. You can never know what other country is like.*
>
> *S2: I was thinking what [the professor] wanted, and what she told me in my sophomore year, and that what she called a mature person would be. But she was telling me, "It's not good. You're just not innocent as before."*
>
> *S3: So I need to learn a lot of things in my field, and also learn some things on how to be a better individual, a better human, in general.*

In these examples from the raw data, S2 and S3 more directly refer to becoming a better person. For S1, it required more of my own use of imaginative variation to determine what he was saying. Despite using the phrase 'cultural knowledge,' one of the points he is emphasizing here about his experience is taking the initiative to meet people and discover things about them and their lives, which he contrasts with taking classes. This is one reflection of 'development of character' in the data. The other key part of this constituent is the language 'through exploration and investigation.' These are by no means the only modes with which an education can be achieved, rote memorization being another example. All three of the students emphasized these former modes over others.

> *S1: That's also one thing that I think [one of the senior leaders] said in very beginning of when we came to NYU Shanghai, she said, "look, don't listen to others. Listen to your inner voice," like that. [Interviewer: Yeah.] S1: That's actually pretty important… if I don't come to NYU Shanghai, I probably will never study interactive media arts. Probably I will still study computer science, but in a more traditional way, not in an artistic way…*

S2: And because of GPS [the required liberal arts plenary course], me and my friends, we always went out, we walk on the street at 1AM until 3PM, talking about something about marriage, about relationships [which were both topics in the course]. We kind of think the things through and find that our thoughts have been changed.

S3: Learning in general is a very important skill to know. So during that place, I developed my learning skill, my skill of learn new stuff [not necessarily related to chemistry, but in general]. And I found it's really easy for me to learn new stuff now, because I--I'm knowing how I should get the essence of the new knowledge.

Each of these excerpts from the data point to the students' discovery of new things learned through exploration, or discovery through the experience of seeing in a new way, and thus applying a new meaning to what they have been presented with initially by faculty members or university leaders. Although the experiences described empirically vary in the actual objects toward which the students directed their attention, each of them retains emphasis on the process of exploring and investigating. Considering both the presence and absence of these nuances in meaning, language for the constituent was chosen to name the particular mode in which the students experienced much of the process of getting an education at NYUSH.

Awakening to Changes of Self and Lifeworld. Whereas the first constituent places a focus on the mode or the manner in which the experience of getting an education was pursued, the second constituent of the structure refers to one of the central outcomes of the pursuit: the awareness of changes, both to self and the lifeworld in which the self is situated and from which it cannot be separated. All three students describe these changes with a positive attitude, but for S3 some changes are negative in the sense of a turning away from activities that he no longer perceived himself as exhibiting a talent for. This is also related to the manner in which he experiences the changes compared with the other students. For S3, it is more of a revelation of his true self than it is a transformation into a new self, as it is for S1 in seeing himself as becoming an artist, even though he says 'you cannot try to be an artist,' and for S2 in a realization that she has overcome her earlier interpersonal fears and anxieties and is becoming someone who others can trust and open themselves up to.

S1: *... I'm not trying to be an artist, because you cannot try to be an artist. But I'm keeping creating stuff. I'm not creating like traditional arts, or painting. But I'm using some computer science skills to generate some new form of art... But if I were to choose my career path, I'm still looking forward to do something, or related to the internet. Like to the cutting edge technology. But to discover that, I still need to return back to Interaction Lab. That's when I saw the wifi transmitter and all those tech. 3D printer. Laser cutter….*

S2: *After the study away period, because I met a lot of people who actually know. I feel they are super, super great, but they're so humble. They know who they are, and they know*

exactly what are the shortcomings, and what are the weak part of themselves. And because of those kind of influence by those people and because I was getting so close to those friends of mine, like [mentions the name of her close friend who was a year ahead of her and sort of a mentor or model for her], and a lot of people like that, I'm kind of recognize the weak part of myself of course. But also I'm recognize how strong those parts I have.

S3: *And it's just ... As a human, as an individual, you grow and you just realize more things about yourself. There's still something you don't know about yourself even in your 80s and 90s, so you can always find a new property or new character inside your mind or in yourself. So it's just a continuing self-revealing. You just learn more and more about yourself. [Interviewer: Do you think there was something about NYU Shanghai that helped you do that?] S3: Yeah, exactly, because all the experience I have here, it has nothing but just help you to know more about yourself.*

Although all three students awaken to changes related closely to their intercultural experiences while at NYU Shanghai, this is more limited for S3:

S1: *Before I go abroad, I thought you need to be either Chinese guy. Or become, adapt to a Western culture. So culture should, if you have culture it should be either that culture, or another culture. Either you do as a Chinese guy do, or you do as your roommate do. However, after I studied away, I found there should be a common sense, there is a shared thing. That's what I just told you. That you can make your own choice, and just communicate now with each other. And they will understand. You don't necessarily need to keep doing as a traditional custom told you to do. Or the other cultural tradition…So then I found it could be changed. It could be decided by the group…I think that's very important thing I leaned in my four year. Like, culture is not like stone, it's not like a rock, it's like a river. It's flowing.*

S2: …*So that was really sad. But I feel like the problem is not people saying the thing that everyone know. Because I feel like in [NYUSH], because a lot of people are judging, so they don't have interaction with the people who speak...But when I was in [names study away site in the NYU Global Network], in that class, in that classroom, I feel it's just super safe to say anything…Not actually judging, but they are giving you the different points and different things to make you ... like, to make me listen. So during that time, learning, of course, we have different thoughts and I don't accept what you have said, you don't accept I have said, but I listen to you. Sometimes I change my thoughts, sometimes I don't, but I actually learned the ability of listening. It's like really listening to people's idea instead of just judging it first.*

S3: …And second thing is, it told me you can never look down others' work, *because before I come here, before I come to this university, it feels like, well, what could a philosopher do. You just give some words that probably useless. And he can just get a name of philosopher. So, why can he just do that? But then while I come here, after learned all the things I have in the first year, like general, all the liberal things I've learned, I feel like, oh there are still an importance of social science of what world we have, there are still one of the most important bricks to build the society now…Even though they're not work I would like to devote myself to, but I started learn how to appreciate other works…And then I was in the States ... I saw various people are doing different things. They're street artists, which I, which in my mind, like three, four years ago, was meaningless…I was starting to appreciate their work, all their work makes me happy, and I feel like, well, this university changed me deeply in my mind…because before that I just feel like what's important is what the scientists and*

mathematicians are doing…But after I come here, I just feel like, well everything we have, every occupation, every position we have in this world, it's, are equally important.

S1 (interactive media arts/computer science double-major) appears to make considerable strides in his intercultural learning in seeing himself moving from a more rigid position to one characterized by more comfort, flexibility, and creativity in his orientation to interculturality. There is a strong sense that he has integrated this form of learning into his own view-of-self. Much of S2's (business major) experience is also characterized by explicit reference to intercultural learning as a locus of self-discovery. In addition to a deep change of attitude from negatively judging those who speak out in class discussions to strongly believing that such judgement is obstructive of learning, is a transformation in her ability to question authority, especially that of her professors. By her own account of the experience, she is moving away from what she describes as a Chinese academic context where both voicing one's opinions in class discussion and the open questioning of the teacher's authority is considered taboo.

For S3 (chemistry major), his study-away experience in New York is the culmination of a gradual realization—stimulated by his required 'liberal arts' courses (one of the few times the word is directly mentioned by any of the students)—that he had undergone a deep change of mind in his 'appreciation for the work of non-scientists in society.' Before study-abroad, he didn't have negative feelings about these requirements but felt they were only minimally inspiring, but in the U.S., when he saw 'the great variety of art forms that were visible even on the street,' as well as politicians giving campaign speeches and people lining up at the polls to vote, he began to awaken to the value of his educational experience in areas that before were undervalued by him. Another self-discovery was that all his experiences in the first year related to co-curricular activities made him realize that he 'is not a person with a lot of social skills and interests, and he doesn't want to participate in complex social networks and environments. Such environments make him feel awkward, and he feels he is not able to talk to others he doesn't know.' This is not a realization that he has an anti-social personality, as he emphasizes in other places that he actually likes to meet new people and make new friends, but rather it is about the specific fine-grain quality of his attitude toward being social.

Consciousness of Development, Mastery, and Limitations of Knowledge and Skill Pertaining to the Domain Specific Area of S's Major. This constituent of the experience is similar to the previous one in that both of these represent the students directing their consciousness to discoveries that come out of their pursuit of knowledge, skills, and character development. For this constituent more

specifically, the discoveries are all tied to the special area of knowledge and skill of their major concentration. This was most directly emphasized by S3, followed by S1, then S2. For S3, the experience of getting an education is predominately about becoming a chemist, which requires a high quantity of specialized knowledge that is not easy to attain. Although he wanted to be a scientist before enrolling at NYU Shanghai, he still discovers that it is indeed science and more specifically chemistry where he is most talented. The fact that he consciously restricts much of his experience of getting an education to the pursuit of his development within the major largely accounts for the stress he places on this constituent; that is, it follows that he would spend much of his interview time describing aspects of his experience inside that self-imposed limitation. Even when he is experiencing the content of the other constituents, these are colored by constant reference to their place in relation to his educational pursuits within chemistry.

For S2, by comparison, the references to her developing consciousness of mastery and limitations within business and finance is much more restricted. It is still there, particularly as a result of her internship experiences. For S1, much of his description of his experiences in this area relates to the overlap of the combination of two domain specific areas that might otherwise clash with each other, art and computer science, despite stating in the interview that the two areas are 'pretty separate.'

> S1: *We were about to give up…Then we decided to ... no, we should do it and we want to do something new, do something not so traditional. We choosed the art and design track…I did part which was about virtual reality. It's also a educational tool that helps the user to explore the structures of the bacteria…Bacteria was e-coli and, before that, I knew really little about virtual reality, because it was something new. That was three years ago…It was really, really good, a good way to learn. I decided to major in computer science afterwards, because I found ... That's when I found, if you don't know computer science, you can hardly bring your idea to reality.*
>
> S2: *…I really like the internship I'm doing now. Because the environment, the culture, the company's culture is really good. The interns, we have four of us…So we need to do a lot of industry research and a lot of brand research like that. So if my supervisor need me to do something really urgent, then I ask three of them and they will like to share what they have done before, maybe related to what I'm doing right now. So they will like to share their resources and their result, their output, with me. I feel it's really good. And of course, if they need anything, I'm also willing to share my things with them. But it's really different from what I have underwent before. So before I have also done internship in an insurance company. But that company was ... I did that one with NYU Shanghai students...They want them self, their figure, to be very competitive and very like, kind of, um, doing things with high quality, very fast, or very at high speed and this kind of thing. So, um, they protect and they don't share. Um, that's the part I underwent before, so that's why I really like the environment right now. People are teaching each other.*

S3: *So the DNA program [a research project that he completed] is essentially one of the most important ones I've done here. And since our last time, it just prepared me for what research is, what scientific research is, what I would like to do. It tells me what I would like to do in the future when I am going to be a PhD student, and it also trained me for properly using a computational tool for more physical research. So more physical or more ... I mean, what can I say...it just trained me for using conceptual tools or theoretical tools to predict or to make the study easier for me. Right? So for example, if we were trying to design the material that has some certain properties, by training I've done with doing the DNA project, I can probably narrow down some choices for material for initial synthesis of the material.*

Consciousness of the Transferability of Some of the Knowledge, Skills, and Attributes Acquired at NYUSH to other Domains of their Educational World and Lifeworld in General. This constituent, like the second and third constituents above, relates to a growing consciousness or discovery that comes out of the larger pursuit. The language chosen for this constituent points to the aspects of the wider experience that map onto consciousness of the transferability of some of the objects of what is being pursued to other domains, both academic domains and lifeworld domains that overflow the walls of the university. As might be expected, especially given the constraints of the method, such as the length of time for each of the interviews, this constituent in some ways is a mirror image of the third constituent, which focuses on the domain specificity of the pursuit. In other words, there may be a trade-off in the amount of time experiencing the pursuit of a major and the pursuit of broadly transferable knowledge, skills, and character development. Interestingly, S3 found that much of what he was exploring and investigating in his chemistry major also was transferable to other domains. So, whereas S3's experience was more emphatically directed at the domain specific area of his major, as mentioned above, S1 and S2 both tended to emphasize knowledge and skills and character attributes that were applicable to other domains of experience. Each of the students described their experience of fulfilling other liberal arts requirements or participating in co-curricular activities in which they gained transferable knowledge, skills, or character attributes. Here are some examples of evidence for this constituent of the description from the raw empirical data:

S1: *We also hold [mentions a technology event he organized]…I was in charge of the...It was called operations…That's probably one thing I can put on my resume because you have joined the organizer team of a really big event. I've heard in your working, yeah, work life, you still need to do those trivial stuff instead of research or ... It's different so that's probably educational, in terms of working experience, probably. Yeah, I didn't get too much academic things, all of that but it's really helpful for me to know that if you want to do something, if you want to successfully do something, you need to take care of all those trivial stuff even though you may ignore probably others have done that for you. But if you are organizer, you need to do that for yourself.*

S2: *And as we have more internship experiences we have more experience to cope with different problems. For example, when I was in the [names internship experience], so normally you won't be busy all the time. And of course, you will not be free all the time. So it's like sometimes you are busy and sometimes you just don't have anything to do. So this kind of working mode, I can perfectly adjust it…during that time I wrote a paper about the education system in Singapore and…So I published that paper…So from a lot of experience like that, I think I know perfectly how to leverage my time….*

S3: *So the field isn't the most important thing to know. The most important thing is how to learn new things. Because before undergrad, before the higher education, we don't really have a chance to know how to learn new stuff by ourselves. We're just receiving all the knowledge the teachers are giving us…So now here, basically every single professor is trying to guide you, go through the questions of how to learn things by yourself. I think it's like that, because they're always giving you a general question and then you're going to find the small details that you don't know and then… That's because in the fall semester it's just gone, my senior fall semester. I found without the ability to do research or do new things by yourself, I couldn't even finish my research project, and that's the time when I noticed why learning new things by yourself is the most important thing you can get from the university.*

All three students experienced the importance of hands-on learning, taking the initiative, and taking responsibility for their development. S2 more than the other two students, emphasized the place of developing interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence in her experience. All three students highlighted communication skills, including speaking, writing for two of them, and listening for two of them. All three of them also mentioned their developing ability to do research, which was central to the experience of S3.

Interactions with Others. This constituent is one that pervaded the whole experience for each of the students, involving intercultural interactions as well as important social interactions with their Chinese in-groups. Even when social interactions were difficult, or in the case of S3, were being consciously limited, they were being highlighted in the descriptions for the essential contribution they were making to the success of getting an education.

S1: *Also, another thing I learned is, even though it's teamwork, you must have something that's you are in charge of. You cannot say there're other people doing it because there were ...[Interviewer: Describe that for me.] S1: ...different parts. Yeah, because, we have around 10 people. If we're all doing V.R., if we are all doing the musical part, then the project was really, really slow. We decided to like Adam Smith, like Adam Smith, we need to focus on our own work and I chose V.R. There were people doing the adrenal stuff, which was the camera that scans the bacteria. There were people culturing the bacteria and there were people doing the musical expression part. People would have their own focus. This was important because, in the beginning, we were not making so many progress..*

S2: *…But [the professor] was telling me, "It's not good. You're just not innocent as before." I'm getting confused, I'm really getting confused. What kind of person does she want me to be?... because I'm her teaching assistant, we're really close…She was saying, "You should try*

to be aggressive, you cannot just always be very normal. Try to be aggressive. It's just a course, it can be your experiment, and you can just try." I was telling her I can't be aggressive. It's too hard for me to be aggressive and try to attack people or something like that…And people hate me…During the debate, I was so stressed and attacked all the people, and they hated me, they just hated me. I can feel they hate me… That's why I'm thinking about the authority and the professor and the student. That's the critical thinking, that's the real critical thinking. You don't follow every instruction from the professor. You don't listen to every word, every sentence of her. You should think from your own perspective.

S3: …*all the experience I had with some spare time activity with student government, with clubs, with athletic teams, all made me realize that. I'm just not interested in them. I'm just not such a person with a lot of social skills. I'm not just a person with a lot of social interests. I don't want to participate in anything, like complex social networks and environments. One thing is they just make me feel awkward. Another thing is, well, I just can't talk to someone I know nothing. And there will always be some dispute between people, and people will sometimes have arguments, and I just realized that I like to talk about things based on facts and evidence. So that's why I'm really interested ... At the time, I just find myself really interested in scientific stuff and reading books. Yeah.*

For S1, the housing requirement to have an international roommate was conducive to much intercultural communication and listening even in his first month at the university. He felt lucky to be in a triple. This requirement certainly did not occupy the same degree of salience in the empirically differing experiences of the three students, S3 not even mentioning his roommate, and S2 only mentioning hers briefly a couple times. For S1, though, it allowed him to begin to make impressions early on about cultural differences, as each of his roommates was from a different western country (one of these being the U.S.). It was for him a seminal element in the way NYUSH prepared him to talk to people from non-Chinese backgrounds, and not be afraid to do so. S1 also enthusiastically highlights communicating with people in different languages and having a chance to do so during his study-abroad experience in the third year. He states that he was also interested to meet Chinese immigrants to learn about their history and use Chinese language to better communicate with them. During this time, he also began to feel comfortable communicating with people of diverse backgrounds in English or Spanish and met people from Spain and India (and later in his third semester abroad, with people of many more nationalities), which was a very interesting experience for him.

S2 also had significant experiences interacting with both people from different nationalities during her study-abroad year, and with one Chinese student a year ahead of her, who became a very close friend and a sort of mentor. This close friend was in her eyes very Westernized and she admired him in part because of this. He helped guide her through her experience from the time he met her until the end of her four years (about two years altogether), and helped her to become more

'Western.' While there appears to be an interesting parallel between her and S1 in that they both found it crucial to have Chinese friends who were a sort of intermediary between their starting point, which they saw in Chinese terms, and their imagined target which was a transformed version of themselves, in the case of S2 there seems to have been much more emotional intimacy involved in the friendship with her Chinese mentor, helping her to eventually become much more self-reliant. Many of the other social interactions that S2 had with other Chinese students, especially in her first two years at NYU Shanghai, were psychologically very difficult for her. In her mind, this had much to do with the social dynamics of NYUSH, for example, highly competitive students who do not have high trust for each other, as well as the difficulty she had in her relationship with one particular professor who was a mentor for her early in her undergraduate life and continued to be until she went to study abroad, an experience described in more detail below.

Although, other than what he observed while studying abroad in New York, S3's experience of getting an education is clearly less impacted by a broad variety of peer-to-peer interactions; however, his priority for study within his major in chemistry leads him to experiment with local Chinese research endeavors. These experiences almost cause him to abandon his long-standing dream of going to graduate school, but his close working relationship with one particular professor late in his undergraduate career rekindled his passion for research and changed his mind. This American professor positively impacted both the way he conceptualized research and the way he felt about it that strongly contrasted with what he saw at the Chinese universities. He wants to find a mentor in graduate school like this professor, and have experiences like those he had at NYUSH that are exhibited by mutually caring relationships among the group members, and a professor who takes responsibility for his students, monitors them carefully, offers good counsel, and is standing-by to help. It is important to note here that these are the particular descriptions and emphases of the student in describing his own experience.

Noticing Boundary Lines, Drawn both within and across Cultures. This is not a separate constituent, but rather an important part of the constituent of the experience that refers to the social interactions that were central to the experience. I considered this as a separate constituent, but after applying imaginative variation, decided that it was not sufficiently different from the interactions themselves to be a separate constituent. Part of my reasoning here, relates to Giorgi's (2009) advice that when doing imaginative variation one should consider whether or not the whole structure collapses if a given constituent was taken away. I did not ultimately feel that there was enough evidence to justify this at the constituent level. Nevertheless, it is an important element of

the constituent referring to social interactions more generally. Noticing boundary lines in this way is part of certain forms of interaction where students begin to develop an awareness of limitations within the interaction. In this way, it is perhaps another form of discovery, like those mentioned above. This noticing can be both hindering and enabling. It can be hindering because it demonstrates a gap between a given student and others, but enabling because by showing where the boundaries are drawn, the student is able to see more clearly a pathway for interactions. It partakes of the second constituent above that refers to changes within self and lifeworld, but these are not so much changes as much as they are bringing into consciousness relations between self and other that were as yet unnoticed.

When S1 describes his changed attitude to culture that before study-abroad was that 'you had to be Chinese or adapt to Western culture,' and after study-abroad was that cultures flow in and out of each other in a more liquid way, he is describing an experience of a change to self, yet in his further elaborations of this he highlights noticing how boundary lines are created as a function of the purpose of the interaction. When he studied away, he realized that a meaningful intercultural relationship is not only one based on a sustained friendship, but rather could be one that emerges from a lesser degree of trust that simply allows for cooperation to achieve specific goals. This latter ability to work together and cooperate is of paramount importance. Part of the experience, for him, is being mindful of the future where increasingly people will be working together across cultural boundary lines, involving a great degree of teamwork. He sees the group of students with which he interacted at one of the NYU global network sites in particular as a sort of prototype for such a diverse future. Before he studied away he was very idealistic, because he thought cultural fusion meant doing everything smoothly with people from different cultural backgrounds, like playing and living together, but now he realizes that what is of the highest importance is not becoming friends, but working together and cooperating.

Despite the relative openness he feels at NYUSH, S1 finds that there is a very big gap between Chinese students and international students at NYUSH. Although they can communicate and work together, this does not mean they don't have conflict. These experiences are about seeing that there are boundary lines around different functional domains of interaction, which is especially true during intercultural interaction, and developing a nuanced understanding of the similarities and differences. Another such domain where he begins to notice boundary lines is in the political realm. This is something that he especially notices on his Hong Kong trip, which he takes during the Thanksgiving break of his second year to visit his friend at one of the universities in Hong Kong.

During the trip, he notices that there was a really intensive political atmosphere in Hong Kong, which he thought was different from both the Mainland and the US. This in some ways echoes the experience S3 has with awakening to the value of politicians and elections in the US, but for S1 it is described less as an awakening to a change within himself and more of realization that helps him make sense of the world in which he is situated. Ultimately, I decided that this experience of noticing for S1 fit better with the constituent referring to things Chinese, as described below.

For S2, a writing assignment in one of her fourth-year courses, a history elective, becomes a medium of this sort of noticing. Here, the boundary line around proper ways of expression in English, stimulated by the professor's judgment that what she handed-in for the assignment was not "an American paper," is the particular core of the experience. Of the three students, hers is also the only experience to overtly focus on the power differential that is enacted through the teacher-student relationship, which also depends on boundary lines of authority to determine what is proper in the realm of language. The boundary line that S2 perceived had been drawn around her own expression in writing after four years of study in which she had hoped to achieve mastery.

In the case of S3, the noticing of boundary lines still has something to do with cultural boundary lines, but here there is a culture within a culture, the science community within the local Chinese culture. He describes what he perceives as boundaries within the local scientific community that are around values he comes to perceive as different from those held by his professor at NYU Shanghai. For him, such a noticing has the quality of a very sudden realization with large significance, causing him to regain an interest in science that had been flagging.

Sense-Making by Relating Experiences to Things Chinese. This constituent describes the need that each of the students had to make sense of their experience by making reference, comparison, and to hypothetically imagine how the situation was or might otherwise have been if it were for them entirely Chinese. This is crucial for them in their efforts to make sense of all aspects of the overall experience. Here are some examples from the raw empirical data:

> S1: *…it was Thanksgiving. I went to [names a university in Hong Kong] and that was for travel…I was trying actually to compare different universities, not just NYU Shanghai and Hong Kong universities but also other Chinese universities…However, there was a really intensive political atmosphere. It's different from even in the U.S. People care about the politics in the school and politics in Hong Kong. They can put up posters like say this school committee was a really bad or stupid people. That was really interesting. They were just called names out there, right ... In the [names a university in Hong Kong] they were putting up newspapers, like bad stories of their Chancellor. It was interesting. We don't actually do*

that in mainland China and I don't see much in New York either. Though, there are sometimes stories about like John Sexton, but we don't directly put up those posters.

S2: *I did three of my courses in Stern [the NYU business school]. And I met a lot of people there, really great. Suddenly I feel the cultural difference again. For us, the international students, they have a very high IQ and they know a lot. They won't be stressed. They're pretty tough. They won't be stressed out that easy. But my friends, the Chinese students, I guess maybe different parts if we got a low grade from a course we just stress out and just feel like oh, it's like, the end of my life or something like that. I feel like they're [the international students], they don't really care about this part. And they're really willing to accept your idea. Not exactly accept, but listen to you and to listen and try to think. And they decide to accept or not accept. I feel this kind of thinking mode and the way they're listening and they're accepting or they're actually praising or embracing what you have set up, what you have done. It's really great.*

S3: *So in the classes, I'm not such an active guy because I always like to talk about things that I'm certain of. So I need to have a strong supporting evidence for whatever I'm saying. So I'm just not ... It's not like someone just in the class, I have a question or I do want to know, I have an opinion on that, and then just saying a lot of things like nothing, which doesn't mean ... There are people in the class who are saying, well, I have an opinion on that, but what they are saying is essentially nothing…That's what I realized after I came here, actually, because before that, all the classmates or all the fellow students that I had do exactly the same thing as me.*

S1, like many of the students at NYUSH, is sensitive to the way that Chinese and international students interact. In his descriptions, he constantly makes comparisons between the different schools he traveled to over the four years in relation to the perceived distance in their intercultural interactions, both in quantity and quality, between different groups based on nationality, finding that this was worst in mainland China generally, then in Hong Kong, then NYU New York, and last NYU Shanghai and NYU Abu Dhabi. He began to notice this on his trip to one of the universities in Hong Kong mentioned in relation to the finding above concerning the noticing of boundary lines, which could also perhaps be taken as a form of sense-making. On his Hong Kong trip, he begins to see that at NYUSH, as opposed to the university he visits in Hong Kong, there is no assumption that you are from China. He associates the need to mark others out as from the Mainland or not with the political atmosphere in Hong Kong as mentioned above. It is crucial to note here that he seeks out these experiences allowing for comparison with other universities on the mainland and in Hong Kong; they are not provided by the university, which predominately allows only for circulation within the NYU global network.

For S2, the comparison to things Chinese is extensive throughout the interview, and is rooted in what she perceives are differences in educational style. She compares the experience of middle school and high school in China, where it was necessary to listen strictly and carefully to the

teachers, since they were always right. But, she says, college is a different form of education, where things are less fixed and the learning is broader. In her experience at NYUSH, she is able to think differently from the professor and the instructions that are given, whereas before learning was just calculation and 'literature stuff' that involved memorizing and writing things that were fixed. S2 began to feel these differences in ways of thinking and doing and then to desire to become more like people from 'non-Asian places,' here extending the comparison beyond Chinese and non-Chinese, and lumping other Asians together. Another comparison she makes to things Chinese is when she is struggling with the professor's judgment on her history paper, mentioned above. Here she evokes aesthetic comparisons to famous Chinese writers who studied in Japan, and so had writing styles that were unconventional by Chinese standards of the time, as well as a comparison to a contemporary Chinese sci-fi writer known for his unconventional style. In both cases, the comparison is directed at making-sense of her own disorientation brought on by the professor's less-than-positive evaluation. In the cases of these writers, she thinks it was not their expression but their content that mattered and made them good writers. She says that she is struggling with whether something can be valuable if it's not beautifully expressed. These comparisons and the way she turns this into an aesthetic question on analogy with a discussion purported to be taking place in the context of Chinese society, show her process of relating her experience to things Chinese in order to make sense of it.

Much of the comparison to things Chinese for S3 is about the way that science should properly be conducted, as well as enhancing the way he thought about choosing which schools to attend and narrowing down the particular field he would pursue. His comparison both to the experience working in local Chinese science labs and his imagining being at other Chinese universities for his undergraduate years, makes him feel that his choices would have been shaped in very different ways. Although he is grateful that he has made this discovery, he hesitates when expressing his preference for the American way of learning to do research, which he learned at NYUSH, over the Chinese way. He also expresses disappointment at learning that the Chinese way was the way it is, while repeating that the way he learned to do scientific research at NYUSH aroused enthusiasm in him. Rather than having a clear target for the research, and then pursuing that, the process he observed at the local science labs is more of an arbitrary one of following a procedure to get intermediate results. He experienced this as less about concentrating on doing systematic scientific research, and more about desiring the material rewards (e.g., money, publishing papers, power over students). Like S2, however, S3 spends some time comparing his experience with the learning

style that is expected at NYU Shanghai with what he experienced in his Chinese primary and secondary schooling. Unlike S2, however, he embraces the Chinese style, accounting for his dissatisfaction with discussion-based courses at NYU Shanghai. Again, his comparison to things Chinese demonstrates that this is an essential way of making sense of an uncomfortable state-of-affairs.

Satisfaction with the Path They have Taken and Confidence in Themselves. Given that this research focuses on the experience of getting an education, it requires that students have attained the object of their pursuit in the terms in which they understand 'education.' This implies that they are at least to some minimal degree successful from within their own perspective. Concomitantly, it is likely that they are also successful at least to some minimal threshold in that they all will soon after the time of the interviews graduate from the university. Therefore, it is to be expected that one of the constituents of the experience would refer to an emerging sense of satisfaction in themselves and newfound confidence in what they see as their educational achievements. One of the interesting variations between the three students here is in the timing of their descriptions in relation to their feelings of confidence. For S1 and S2, there is much more reference to feelings of satisfaction and growing confidence upon their return from study abroad, which was at the beginning of their final year. For S2, one of the major early benchmarks in this regard was after completing the science foundational courses in his second year, which he sees as a major vetting process.

> S1: *[Interviewer: So what was it like coming back in the end? So after you ...] S1: Coming back. [Interviewer: Yeah. So you were abroad [crosstalk 00:28:08]]…S1: Yeah, so I just came back this semester. For this semester, I found two of my classes are capstone. So I can use my knowledge that I learned before to do something, do some projects. It feels good. [Interviewer: You mean the knowledge you gained when you were abroad, or the knowledge ... Is that what you mean, or? S1: Yeah. That's what I mean, yeah. What I learned in the past three years. And it feels like the last semester will be really quick compared with the first semester. I found it so long.*
>
> S2: *…how the education made us confident. Because last time I told you, I met a company who withdraw the offer, and because of some reason, I call them last Friday…And the HR, they started talking with me…I feel like in the beginning, maybe freshman year, I maybe mess it up because I would be very angry and stressed out, because they broke my plan…That's where the confidence from. It's like the problem that happens all the time, happen again, and again, and again. But it finally will be solved and it will be solved very rapidly. It won't be really long as you get desperate or something. It will be solved before you get disappointed by yourself, or get desperate to the world or something. I feel that's maybe part of the reason why people get confident in [NYU Shanghai].*

S3: *So, as for now, in this university, the most impressive thing, after we experienced these…actually for the Science curriculum, is actually the Foundations of Science series of courses. That series of courses, they are tough. They're really hard to get over with. Like we started with something like 70 students, and most of them just dropped out of the science courses, and then we have something like less than 30, actually. Getting over the...hard courses makes me feel more confident in the...it's actually great boost to my confidence in continuing to do science research. And that makes me know...that series of courses, makes me know that I would actually devote myself to science, because I learned them so that I can come over all the difficulties with the series, with serious things.*

Perceptions of the Exceptionalism and Special Features of the NYU Shanghai Project. This constituent refers to feeling throughout the interviews that the students were describing an experience that was special and exceptional not only for them personally, as one might expect of students successfully completing their bachelor's degree, but that they were part of something that was exceptional in a larger sense. The way this manifested in the evidence was that NYUSH had qualities that were special in China, thus giving them an advantage over students at other Chinese universities. In the case of S2, some of these special features hindered her or caused difficulties for her early on, but still ultimately gave her an edge in the final analysis. S1 emphasized the exceptionalism of NYUSH the most, followed by S2. Although S3 does not emphasize this throughout his description, he does highlight the special advantage he has over other mainland students for whom he is competing to get into U.S. graduate schools.

S1: *[[Interviewer: Yeah?] S1: Yeah. The events here in Shanghai, is quite different from other schools. Like in other schools there is a really clear hierarchy…Because I think the resources at NYU Shanghai is really abundant. So that's really precious, because you don't deserve that if you see the world equally.*

S2: *… and the people here are really different, because from the Candidate Weekend, I think people who can stand out are people who are kind of aggressive and very self-centered. So it's not as comfortable as to stay with them as my high school friends.*

S3: *The thing is, compared to other Chinese students, the education here really gives me an advantage over them…The knowledge system or the course system, curriculum system in this university is exactly the same as in the US. So this just gets me advantage for continuing my education at graduate school in the US.*

Up to now, the overall structure has been described, as well as the key empirical variations in the data, examples of raw empirical data have been supplied in order to illustrate the structural findings, and each of the eight constituents was described separately in more detail. In the next section, the interrelated dynamics of the constituents are described. Note here that the dynamics are not necessarily cause-and-effect relations, but rather generally correlative. Where cause-and-

effect language is used, this is because there was evidence in the data implying that for the students there was a perception of causality.

Dynamics of the Constituents. As has already been pointed out, the notion of 'getting an education,' much like the similar and related concept of 'learning,' requires that there be an object or objects toward which the experiential process is directed (Marton & Pang, 2006; Marton, 2015). In the case of the structure that was discovered in this research, those objects were plural, but can be grouped into three overarching categories: knowledge, skills, and character attributes. These three categories stake out the ultimate end-points at which the students were directing their pursuit. The temporal process with these end-points is the ground upon which more discrete experiential moments unfold. Gradually, the students experience an awakening of consciousness that either they have changed or the way they see the world around them has changed, that they have gained knowledge and skill in their major area, and that they have gained knowledge and skill that transcends their major area and is applicable to other realms of their lifeworld (i.e., getting a job, understanding people from other cultures, etc.). This quality of being gradual is represented by the many moments of experience that the students describe over their four-year undergraduate journey. These moments against the background of the broader educational pursuit, as descriptions meant to provide me with illustrations of this broader terrain during the interview, often show these three different types of discovery that they have made about themselves, their knowledge, and their skills. These moments of experience occur either because of the design of the educational program at NYU Shanghai, or because the student has sought out the experience, or because the experience was stimulated through social interaction. The first of these does not appear as a separate constituent, but is more of a fundamental assumption that blends into the background of the broader experience. The second appears in many of the descriptions, but is not prominent enough to form a separate constituent; in some cases, this is akin to 'taking the initiative,' which is described as an example of the third form of discovery, a kind of transferable skill. The third cause of significant moments of the larger experience is social interaction. This stood out prominently against the background of the overall experience to feature as a structural constituent. All of the students experienced this, and they all emphasized it. Additionally, although social interaction sometimes was a source of confusion or disorientation, it was always described as leading to a successful outcome contributing to the overall attainment of an education at NYU Shanghai.

Most of these moments of experience were related through narrative description seemingly without reservation or concern that I, as the interviewer, would understand the emphasis that was

being placed on the various possible senses that were emerging. However, at times, there was a need on the part of the student to show that they themselves were struggling or had struggled to understand the experience they had undergone, even though it was being related to me for its significant place within the whole. At these moments, it was very interesting to see the students making sense of what they had experienced by comparing it to something Chinese. This was a presence across the data and so ultimately became a constituent. The final two constituents seemed to have a close relationship with one another. The first of these, a sense of confidence and satisfaction is perhaps a character attribute, and in places it was described as something important that was gained through specific moments of experience, but more generally it is presented as a feeling that students have looking back over the whole broader experience, characterizing the state they are in now that they are nearing graduation. It also appears to be interwoven with the second of these last two constituents, a sense of the exceptionalism of NYU Shanghai. Students demonstrate through their descriptions that in their minds they are part of something special, part of a unique project with important implications. In part, the confidence they describe is a function of the satisfaction they feel with completing their degrees at the particular institution that is NYU Shanghai, given the special status that it has in China. Another interesting dynamic of these constituents of the structure is that they are all tightly interwoven and intertwined. During the analysis, it was often difficult to separate one out from the other, but ultimately the findings that were reached make sense of all the data in the most elegant way that I was able to arrive at.

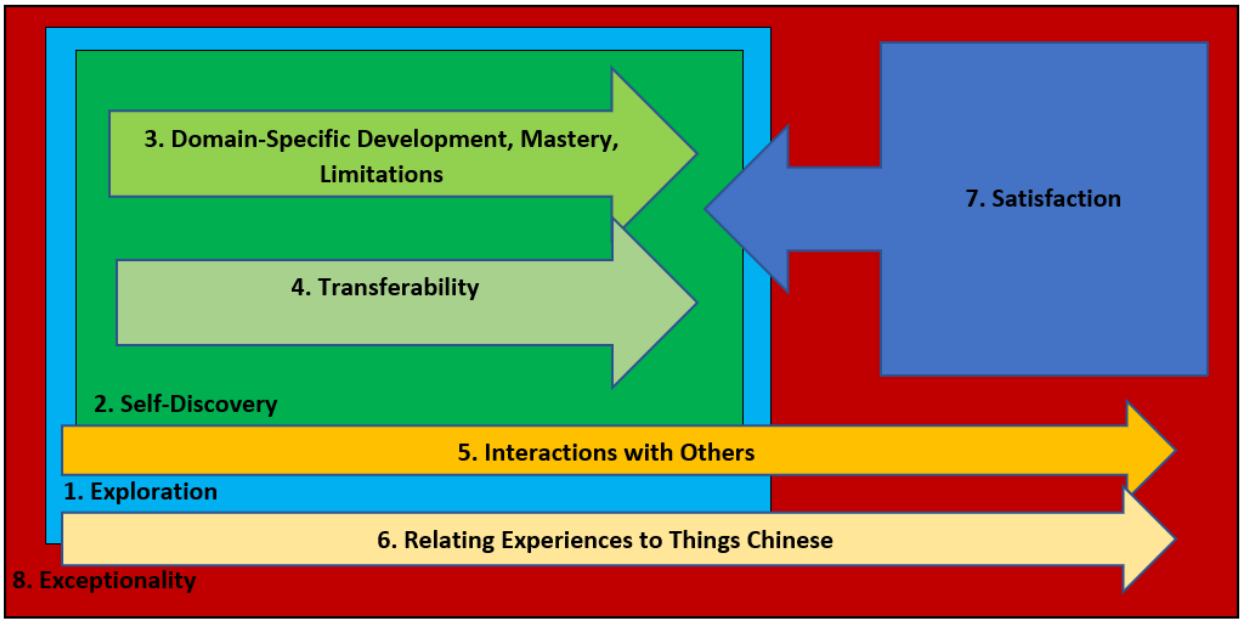

Figure 2: Dynamics of the 8 Constituents

Chapter 5: Discussion

Although many aspects of the student experience of getting an education were revealed in the literature review presented in Chapter 2, it was impossible to know in advance what would emerge from the student descriptions, including the manner in which the constituents were experienced, since the constituents themselves were unknown before the analysis. In this section I will further elaborate on each of these by connecting them back to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Since one of my concerns in conducting this research has been whether or not intersections with the liberal arts philosophy and approach to education would surface, I will draw centrally on the literature discussing liberal arts education. This discussion is understood to be the last step in the descriptive phenomenological method (Giorgi, 2012, p. 6), the place where interpretation enters the picture. Now that the 'central tendency' has been established in the form of the eidetic structure of the experience, it is possible to use it as a key to the interpretation of the raw data:

> After the structure has been obtained, it is then applied to the empirical data in order to highlight the findings and draw out the implications. The structure cannot present all of the data any more than a mean can present all of the numbers upon which it is based. It would no longer be an essential description. Rather, the structure is pregnant with implications that have to be spoken to just as a fact is surrounded by a horizon of possibilities, and in phenomenology both implications and possibilities contribute to the clarification of meaning (Giorgi, 2009, p. 202).

Pursuing Knowledge, Skills, and the Development of Character through Exploration and Investigation. The difference between knowledge and skill is similar to the distinction in philosophy between propositional knowledge and knowledge-how (Ichikawa & Steup, 2018). The first of these is static, such as the knowledge of the particular logical rules of computer coding; the second of these, 'skill,' is related to the way knowledge is applied to the world, such as when creating a computer program for a specific use, and may not be as easily called to consciousness. In fact, it is often characterized by a lack of consciousness when one is performing it (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2005). In the student descriptions, this category usually involves much more narrative description than simple knowledge. The former, unlike the latter, can often be more easily described with a noun phrase. The third category is more affective or conative than the former two, involving a desire to be a certain kind of person or possess certain qualities that go beyond knowledge and skill. In the Introduction, I refer to a prominent description of an educated person produced by analytic philosophers in the 1970's that includes the notion of 'being changed for the better'(Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018, Section 2, para. 4). Although there is no claim in my research that the student participants have actually been changed for the better, a crucial part of their experience is

a*wakening to changes of self and lifeworld,* which is the second constituent of the structure. This, combined with the later constituent, *satisfaction with the path they have taken and confidence in themselves*, would lend support to the claim of these analytic philosophers at least in that the students see themselves as having been changed for the better. One of the central ways they see themselves as having done so is through this first constituent that has been revealed in my research, *pursuing knowledge, skills, and the development of character through exploration and investigation.* This overlaps with the second part of the three-pronged description of these analytic philosophers that the 'change has involved the acquisition of knowledge and intellectual skills and the development of understanding,' the difference being that I am also able to discern the modes through which the acquisition takes place in the student experience at NYU Shanghai. The modes of exploration and investigation are salient aspects of the student experience in my study and these are also highlighted in the literature on the liberal arts. Here is Deresiewicz (2014) describing this aspect of the liberal arts:

> In the liberal arts, you pursue the trail of inquiry wherever it leads. Truth, not use or reward, is the only criterion…This is why you don't just learn a body of material when you study the liberal arts; you learn how knowledge is created…You do the hard, slow, painstaking work—four years is scarcely adequate to make a decent start—of learning to analyze the arguments of others and to make your own in turn: to marshal evidence, evaluate existing authorities, anticipate objections, synthesize your findings within a logically coherent structure, and communicate the results with clarity and force. (Deresiewicz, 2014, p. 150)

There is much in this quote that relates to the mode of *exploration* and *investigation* which is at the center of my formulation. Deresiewicz's (2014) phrase, 'pursue the trail of inquiry wherever it leads,' could be a good alternate way of formulating this element of the constituent. One of the places that the trail of inquiry did lead for the students was a better-informed choice of which major they preferred, although this was not as explicitly foregrounded for S2. Even S3, who is bent on becoming a scientist, describes the path he took early on in the university as one of exploring to gain knowledge of himself, his interests, and ultimately to discover his talents; that is, he seems to have been open enough to perhaps give up his ambitions to be a scientist—carried with him from high school—if what he had found on the journey had been sufficiently powerful to change his mind. For S1, the exploration led him to combine interactive media arts with computer science, a possibility of which he had not been aware earlier. Although S2's exploration and investigation, or inquiry, did not lead her to her major, the internships that were a featured part of the pursuit for her, were the site of much exploration that would likely serve her well in her business major.

Roche (2010) mentions exploration 59 times in 172 pages, stressing the central place of this mode of learning to the liberal arts ideal, but also noting that it is not enough to fully distinguish the liberal arts from other forms of getting an education:

> The university as an institution must transcend the more widely accepted purpose of a college education: academic exploration, critical thinking, and career preparation. It must also nurture a sense of vocation and participatory citizenship, and it must do so across our individual disciplines. Students endeavor not simply to learn a discipline, but to cultivate the mind and the heart. (p. 171)

This quote overlaps with both the part of the constituent referring to *development of character*, which, in turn, is considered by all of the literature on the liberal arts that I have reviewed to be a central component of the liberal arts philosophy, even when there are disagreements about what that might consist in, as evidenced, for example, by the differing visions of the liberal arts put forward by Bloom (1987) and Nussbaum (1987; 1997; 2012). In Nussbaum's early response to Bloom, she conceives of a 'higher education' that originates with Stoic philosopher Musonius that views it as 'a search, through active critical argument, for the best human life' (Nussbaum, 1987, Section 1, para. 5) through the core study of 'moral and social conceptions,' (Nussbaum, 1987, Section 1, para. 2). This description of both the mode of pursuing education as 'a search,' and the objects of such an education being the 'moral' and 'social' enhancement of 'human life' sounds very close to this constituent of the structure of the experience for the students in my study, with the exception that they were not so much focusing on the 'moral' aspects of their worlds, with the exception of S2, who feels transformed in both her thoughts and character over the four years in relation to original tendencies, including her attitude to personal and societal expectations related to moral norms. Although I used the term 'exploration and investigation' to describe the modes, the term 'search' is a near synonym. There was a sense that a search was underway, and the *awakening* that I saw in the description could perhaps be described as an awakening on the part of the students to seeing themselves on a search.

Awakening to Changes of Self and Lifeworld. The Stoic conception that Nussbaum (1987) describes, just as the form of liberal arts education Roche (2010) outlines, clearly has a robust place for the development of character. In fact, Roche was Dean at the University of Notre Dame, which is one of the universities that Nussbaum (1997) uses as a case study in her later book *Cultivating Humanity*, where she more fully develops the ideas from her early response to Bloom. And, although the description of the analytic philosophers in the 1970s does not include a notion of becoming a certain kind of person other than simply an educated one, it does hint at this in its

specification of 'being changed for the better' and 'caring for, or being committed to,' as well as 'being initiated into domains of knowledge and skill' (Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018, Section 2, para. 4). These latter were indeed some of the changes that students saw in themselves and that I intuited as I became conscious of their experiences.

One of the most obvious areas where the educational experience at NYU Shanghai links with conceptions of the liberal arts approach to education is in the domain of intercultural experience. As mentioned in Chapter 1 of the present study, this was something that the analytic tradition of the philosophy of education was criticized as neglecting in its early attempts to define an education in the sense that it was seen to be based on too narrow a conception that did not account for a diversity of cultural voices (Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018, Section 2, para. 8). This lack of diversity, in this case both gender diversity and cultural diversity, was also at the root of one of the main critiques that Nussbaum (1987; 1997) lodged against Bloom's version of the liberal arts:

> …in Bloom's book the Socratic conception is in conflict with another very different idea of philosophy: the idea of a study that is open only to a chosen few specially suited by nature (and to some extent also by wealth and social position) for its pursuit; the idea of a philosophy that is concerned more with revealing fixed eternal truths than with active critical argument; of a philosophy that not only does not aim at justice and practical wisdom, individual and/or communal, but actually despises the search for social justice and beckons chosen souls away from social pursuits to a contemplative theoretical life. (Nussbaum, 1987, Section 1, para. 5)

The intercultural experiences that were enabled by their study at NYU Shanghai were major stimuli for the students' sense of awakening in both themselves and the world around them. S1 experienced this as a major transformation to an understanding of interculturality that, in places, has much overlap with the 'liquid' (Dervin, 2011) understanding of intercultural interactions mentioned in the literature review in Chapter 2, although, unlike Dervin, still retaining the culture concept in his description. Despite not using Dervin's (2011) terms 'liquid' and 'solid'—and there is no reason to believe that S1 is even aware of these terms from the scholarly literature—he paints a picture in strikingly similar terms with his realization 'that culture is not like a stone, but more like a river,' by which he means that a 'new culture' can begin to be invented or reinvented on the spot as soon as a certain diverse group of people begin to interact. Interestingly, S1 is still using the culture concept here, but defining it as something that is not fixed or crystalized, which as he explains is different to the way he understood culture in the past before entering the university. The various forms of social interactions that he had, both from the time of entering the university (i.e., initially interacting with his two foreign roommates as stimulated by the university housing policy) through

the time of study-abroad, which he extended for three semesters, are all for him what enabled his ability to notice cultural boundary lines as well as at least begin to imagine a way for transforming them. From his experience he came to the conclusion that, 'you don't need to adapt to some rule unless you believe it's correct. So, the first thing is to communicate with [members of other cultural groups] to see if you all believe something works, [and] then do it or not.' In this way, S1 thinks that 'the point-of-view will be more individual, instead of a big cultural view.' He now believes that 'when you are in a community there could be some new culture, new views, instead of [the necessity to follow] one culture or the other culture.' These descriptions of the experience tie in with the literature on intercultural communication, especially in referencing this notion of adapting or reinventing the either/or of what are initially taken to be strongly contrasting positions, which vividly resembles Bennett's (2017) notion of 'integration:'

> The resolution of authentic identity allows for the sustainable integration of cultural difference into communication. In this integrated condition, communication can shift from in-context to between context states, allowing for the meta-coordination of meaning and action that defines intercultural communication. On a personal level, Integration is experienced as a kind of developmental liminality, where one's experience of self is expanded to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews. Cultural liminality can be used to construct cultural bridges and to conduct sophisticated cross-cultural mediation. Organizations at Integration encourage the construction of third-culture positions based on mutual adaptation in multicultural work groups, with the anticipation that third culture solutions generate added value (Bennett, 2017, n.p.)

It is interesting to contrast the notion of the 'cultural liminality' with the concepts of 'liminality' (Dai, Lingard, & Reyes, 2018) and 'double-consciousness' (Valdez, 2015) mentioned in the literature in Chapter 2. But whereas this is seen as a positive developmental benchmark by Bennett, being the highest level of intercultural sensitivity, this was considered a problematic state in the other two studies, which viewed the liminal states of the Chinese students in their studies as a form of unequal positioning by the majority group. One very direct connection to the literature of the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education drawn upon in Chapter 2 is through the concepts of 'intercultural maturity,' 'intercultural effectiveness,' and 'self-authorship,' viewed as key outcomes of the liberal arts (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; King et al., 2007; King et al., 2009). This research also is grounded in a constructivist developmental epistemology which influenced the conceptualization of the research questions for the present study, as mentioned in Chapter 3. In S1's comments about not relying on 'rules' and rigid formulations of culture, as well as his understanding that 'the point-of-view will be more individual,' he appears to be adopting the sort of 'internal orientation' that defines self-authorship (King et al., 2009, p. 109). While S1's

description relates to all three of the developmental domains—'cognitive,' 'intrapersonal,' and 'interpersonal' (King et al., 2009, p. 110)—it seems especially relevant to the 'intrapersonal domain.' Here, a 'mature level of development' is characterized by an 'ability to create an internal self that openly engages in challenges to own views and beliefs; beliefs and values are internally grounded; integrates different aspects of self into a coherent identity' (King et al., 2009, p. 109). As he describes, when he entered the university, he thought you had to 'either be Chinese…or adapt to Western culture.' This shows an initial dependence on external cultural rules as well as a lack of the notion that it might be possible to integrate different aspects of oneself from a variety of cultural sources, something he clearly sees himself as overcoming as he looks back over the experience.

For S2, this constituent of awakening to changes in self and lifeworld comes prominently into view in her increasing awareness of her desire to question authority. In her fourth year, as mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, she and some of her classmates show doubt for the judgment of one of their professors on a history paper they have been assigned to write as a group. After their professor tells them they need to improve their expression in the paper, and that what they have written is not 'an American paper,' they began to think that 'maybe their professor was a racist.' This is striking not only because of the use of the notion 'racist' to conceptualize her experience, but that she thinks of this experiential moment as a question of the value of different aspects of language. At the time of the interview, she is beginning to question whether it is racism or whether it really is something she and her classmates need to develop. There is wavering back and forth between different sides of this issue, characterized by a strong desire to find out the right way to think about this in the face of different authorities with different views. Based on the evidence from S2's description, this is a much more difficult experience to categorize in relation to self-authorship. In some sense, the questioning of authority shows movement along the 'cognitive domain' of development, and is perhaps most similar to a characterization at an 'intermediate level,' where there is an 'evolving awareness and acceptance of uncertainty and multiple perspectives; shifts from accepting authority's knowledge claims to personal processes for adopting knowledge claims' (King et al., 2009, p. 109). In keeping with the bracketing concept central to the descriptive phenomenological method, I did not follow up with probes that would allow for further clarification as to the notion of self-authorship, but I do not believe the description provided shows that S2 has reached a 'mature level' of development here. It is perhaps somewhere between the intermediate and mature levels. The mature level requires that S2 'shifts perspectives and behaviors consciously;

uses this as a basis for understanding alternative worldviews; uses multiple frames of reference, grounded in appropriate evidence' (King et al., 2009, p. 109). There is some evidence for each of these elements in her description, but the rather strong use of the term 'racist,' without any further evidence other than citing the professor's claim that this may not be 'an American paper,' even though only presented as a hypothetical possibility, shows a tendency toward some of the characteristics of the 'initial level' of self-authorship, which 'assumes knowledge is certain; categorizes knowledge claims as right or wrong; resists challenges to own beliefs; views other perspectives as wrong' (King et al., 2009, p. 109).

S3's awakening to changes in himself and his lifeworld is more about his recognition in himself of a particular style towards the social Other. He reveals that through a sort of experimentation process in the first two years, that he has made a conscious decision to prioritize his work in his major area of study, rather than to have broad social experiences throughout the university, for example, through club experiences. Although this is clearly an awakening to changes in himself, it reveals something of a value conflict of the sort mentioned in Chapter 2 between different aspects of his role identity as a student. Rather than resolving this conflict by merging it into a higher order identity resembling my concept of 'liberal arts person,' he instead does so by developing a stronger professional identity within his chosen disciplinary major. Such a decision may be a problem for developing an orientation to interculturality and even simply having opportunities for intercultural communication, which is one of the values of the university. Indeed, in terms of self-authorship, much of this awakening experience for S3 seems characterized by only the initial level of development within the 'interpersonal domain,' which is typified by a 'reliance on dependent relations with similar others as a primary source of identity and social affirmation' (King et al., 2009, p. 109). This would appear to have obvious implications for intercultural interactions and diversity experiences, especially if the given major in question is not as diverse as it could be. At NYU Shanghai, there has been a larger proportion of Chinese students in the demanding physical and natural science majors that are offered, which would mean that by consciously deciding to focus on his major studies at the expense of other forms of experience, S3 may also be excluding himself from diversity experiences, since he will only be encountering other Chinese students with similar backgrounds to his own. Furthermore, as he may comfortably confine himself within the major, in this case chemistry, where he excels, he may be leaving perhaps much to be desired in other realms, thus failing to achieve the liberal arts goal of whole-person education (Roche, 2010, p. 135, 164; Roth, 2014, p. 4, 94-95).

Consciousness of Development, Mastery, and Limitations of Knowledge and Skill Pertaining to the Domain Specific Area of S's Major. This constituent closely overlaps with the early description of education from analytic philosophers in the 1970s that I have been evoking, particularly in relation to their third component, 'the person has come to care for, or be committed to, the domains of knowledge and skill into which he or she has been initiated' (Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018, Section 2, para. 4), in its mention of 'domains of knowledge and skill' into which an 'initiation' takes place. This depends on their second component which is that the change the student undergoes involves 'the acquisition of knowledge and intellectual skills and the development of understanding' (Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018, Section 2, para. 4), but there is an open question whether or not this part is robust enough to capture what takes place in liberal arts education with its concern for transferability across domains of knowledge and skill and its concern for developing capable citizens, a crucial difference between the liberal arts and more professionally-oriented forms of higher education. It is clear from the student data that a crucial component of the experience was to develop depth within their chosen domain, although this was less a salient aspect of the experience for S2. This constituent was emphasized the most by S3, the chemistry major, whose description was predominately focused on his experiences developing his talents in chemistry, while this was much less for S1, a computer science and interactive media arts double major, and the least for S2, a business and finance double major. Given the concerns noted earlier about shifting attitudes in higher education towards vocationally or professionally-oriented mindsets, it was interesting that this was not the most salient feature of all three descriptions. This is certainly evidence for a more general approach to education that is emphasized by the liberal arts. At the same time, all three students highlighted making real-world connections to their major domains of study, for example with research projects, co-curricular events, or internships. There was much in the data showing S1 and S3 identifying with their major areas of study, S1 referring to his future self as 'an interactive media artist,' and S3 doing the same in reference to himself as a 'scientist.' The only one of the three students who experienced some tension between the university's liberal arts requirements and his major was S3.

Consciousness of the Transferability of Some of the Knowledge, Skills, and Attributes Acquired at NYUSH to other Domains of their Educational World and Lifeworld in General. The student descriptions are clearly pointing to both domain-specific knowledge and this more general form of knowledge. For all three students, there is evidence of transference from the university's liberal arts requirements into the major area of study or to their general lifeworlds and conversely from

within the major domain to other areas of their educational world or lifeworld in general. This is reassuring in that without such an understanding on the part of the students, it would be difficult to defend NYUSH as a liberal arts context. The notion that liberal arts education is about transferability from one domain to another runs throughout the literature on the liberal arts approach to education (AAC&U, 2007; Bloom, 1987; Deresiewicz, 2014; Levine, 2008; Nussbaum, 1987; 1997; 2012; Roche, 2011; Roth, 2014; Zakaria, 2015). Transference from one realm of knowledge and skill set to another is a key characteristic of the liberal arts ideal. Part of the justification for this from a liberal arts point-of-view is the ephemeral nature of knowledge in a specialized vocational area. As Wulf (2002) notes, 'half of what we are teaching our students in some fields [e.g. engineering or computer science]…is obsolete by the time they [students] graduate' (Wulf, 2002, p. 6, as cited in Walker & Kelemen, 2010, p. 7). Here is Deresiewicz's description of this aspect of the liberal arts:

> …Implicit in the notion of such an education as it is practiced in the United States is the concept of breadth. You concentrate in one field, but you get exposure to a range of others. You don't just learn to think; you learn that there are different ways to think…And most important of all, you learn to educate yourself. (Deresiewicz, 2014, pp. 150-151)

And here is Ferrell (2011) citing the same Roth above, but in an earlier paper:

> …educate individuals broadly so that they are capable of moving from one problem to another with confidence, capable of moving from one opportunity to another with courage . . . [and] understand the value of freedom and the virtue of compassion, . . . we will have plenty of defenders of the liberal arts… (Roth, 2010, as cited in Ferrell, 2011, p. 154).

Transference is also what is at the heart of the claims made by those who defend the liberal arts on economic grounds, such as former Harvard University president Drew Faust, who stresses the value of the liberal arts for giving graduates the skills to advance in their careers, rather than just land their first job (as cited in Zakaria, 2015). Similarly, one of the findings of the most recent AAC&U (2018) reports connecting liberal arts learning outcomes and employment in the global economy finds that employers think that recent college graduates have the skills to land their first job, but are deficient in the skills for 'advancement' afterwards (p. 3), precisely the transferable knowledge and skills named in this constituent. Many of these were the skills that the students highlighted in their descriptions that served as the data for the formulation of the present constituent. The present study does not make strong claims about the students actually possessing these skills, but the importance of such experiences drawing on these transferable skills to the students to the degree to which they would include them in their descriptions together with descriptions of their

consciousness of developing these skills is highly consistent with representations of the value of the liberal arts philosophy and approach.

Interactions with Others. Social interactions are an obvious component of pursuing an education, and the descriptions of the experience analyzed in the present study are no exception. Social interactions pervade teaching and learning and are a major source of learning outcomes in both the literature on higher education in general and on the liberal arts. In the AAC&U's (2005) classification of learning outcomes, for example, both 'practical skills and social responsibility skills' included many outcomes that are explicitly social: 'written and oral communication, teamwork, civic engagement, and intercultural actions' (p. 2). Many of these are the highly transferable skills that were referred to in the previous section. The other outcomes on AAC&U's (2005) list, especially those in the knowledge domain, while seemingly more static, still depend on many social interactions for their mastery, an easy example being the interaction that takes place when students visit their professors after a lecture during office hours to seek out clarification of concepts that they recorded in their notes during the lecture. Social interactions are also at the root of much of the texture of the student experience, including crucially when there is a lack of certain desirable social interactions, a commonly mentioned phenomenon in the literature on the student experience in internationalized settings. Given these facts, it is understandable both why this particular constituent emerged from the descriptions in the first place and why there are so many intersections with this constituent of the experience and the other seven.

Narrowing the range to the experience of the liberal arts in particular, it is interesting to consider what aspects or qualities of social interactions best highlight what is special about the liberal arts approach and whether this is reflected in the social interactions of this type of experience at NYU Shanghai. As already mentioned in the literature in Chapter 2, intercultural dialogue is one form of social interaction recognized as a key aspect of most conceptualizations of the liberal arts, including Levine's (2008), Nussbaum's (1987; 1997; 2012), Roche's (2010), and Roth's (2014). Along the same lines, King et al. (2007) claim that 'intercultural effectiveness' and 'leadership' (p. 5) are two of the seven learning outcomes that were both social interactions and especially relevant for the liberal arts. These both depend on the underlying concepts of 'intercultural maturity' and 'self-authorship' (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; King et al., 2007; King et al., 2009), as already mentioned in this chapter above. Intersections in the student descriptions that related to leadership were present in some places, but not robust enough to form a constituent of the experience. The way King et al. (2007) operationalize leadership is through Astin et al.'s (1996), 'Social Change Model for

Leadership.' Interestingly, there is a significant overlap between this model of leadership and the concepts of intercultural maturity, intercultural effectiveness, and self-authorship. As made evident in the discussion above, both S1 and S2 showed that their experience of getting an education was marked by development in intercultural maturity and effectiveness, more so than for S3. It is no wonder then that a similar pattern would emerge for these overlapping leadership skills and values, even if the leadership experiences overall seem to be of lesser intensity than the more general intercultural experiences. S1 and S2, for example, both mention their work with diverse teams, which is an obvious place to have intercultural experiences and to have some chance at developing skills effectively interacting and even leading within these teams. They both describe their enhanced ability to communicate with others, S2 especially putting the focus on empathetic listening, essential leadership skills of the sort necessary for upholding the values that Astin et al. (1996) claim are necessary for leadership, such as 'congruence,' 'commitment,' 'collaboration,' and 'controversy with civility' (pp. 22-23).

S2 emphatically highlights the ability she gained to better communicate with people, to 'read people' and 'understand people in another kind of style,' which is based, she says, on learning about herself. Here, there is a strong echo with Astin et al.'s (1996) 'consciousness of self' (p. 22) and the foundation this makes for effective interaction with others. In this part of S2's description, she sounds like she has reached a higher degree of developmental maturity when compared with the section in the data where she is describing her reaction to her professor's feedback on the aforementioned history paper. Much of her language is consistent with the descriptors in King et al. (2009), for example, when she explains her newfound ability to 'appreciate how people do things, because they can actually do better, and in some parts, because they just can do well.' She specifically mentions learning not to judge others, not being defensive any longer, whereas before she was too 'aggressive,' wanting to 'attack other people.' This overlaps with King et al.'s (2009) 'intermediate level of development' of the 'interpersonal domain' where one is 'willing to interact with others and to suspend judgment' (p. 110). When S2 describes getting 'to know how amazing those people are,' this clearly shows a willingness to interact. She goes on to state how this helps her to 'actually see the world, and you see how amazing those people are,' which then brings her to a self-realization that 'you generally accept the self that is imperfect, but has something good and something bad…and you know the real self,' this corresponds to King et al.'s (2009) 'mature level of development' descriptors for the 'intrapersonal domain,' which are focused on the 'ability to create an internal self that openly engages in challenges to own views and beliefs' as well as the 'mature

level of development' for the 'interpersonal domain,' with emphasis on 'appreciation for human differences' (p. 110). In S3's description, there is also reference to gaining 'consciousness of self,' but this rarely seems aimed at connecting this to engagement with others in the community that Astin et al. (1996) emphasize. Interestingly, however, S3 often does conceptualize his role as one of developing his talent as a scientist as the best contribution he can make to society. This may pose a challenge to both Astin et al. (1996) and King et al. (2009) in that S3 seems to believe that in order to develop himself as a scientist he must in some ways close himself off from too much social interaction, which can be distracting for his efforts to develop his scientific talents.

Although descriptions of aspects of the experience related to leadership as a liberal arts learning outcome were not common or stated very explicitly, those that related to King et al.'s (2007) other more socially-oriented liberal arts learning outcome, 'intercultural effectiveness,' were, on the other hand, quite common to the point that I gave this aspect of *social interactions* considerable attention as a possible additional constituent of the experience. Ultimately, however, I could not find the right formulation that fit the data. Aspects of intercultural effectiveness did appear in the *awakenings* constituent as discussed above, as well as to some minimal extent, the formulation of the sixth constituent, *sense-making by relating experiences to things Chinese*, which I will discuss more fully below. One attempt that was almost successful was my formulation '*noticing boundary lines, drawn both within and across cultures'* described in Chapter 4. Both S2's disagreement with her professor about her English expression in her history paper as well as S3's noticing of different ways of doing science can be viewed as forms of intercultural experience because in each case they were interacting with professors who were of different national and ethnic backgrounds. Furthermore, the notion of noticing boundary lines was considered as a constituent because the issues being raised in both cases related to differences in accepted standards that appeared in the students' perceptions to vary across cultural boundary lines. In the end, however, I was unable to perceive this *noticing of boundary lines* as fully as I would have liked across the data of S1, S2, and S3 to justify a separate constituent distinct from the other eight that did emerge. In the end, I decided that the data fit better as a sub-part of both the *social interactions* constituent and the *sense-making by relating experiences to things Chinese* constituent.

Other intersections between social interactions and intercultural effectiveness were mentioned above with regard to the *awakenings* that each participant had in relation to their orientations to the intercultural other and their intercultural selves. In Chapter 1, I noted the change in the university's mission away from 'mastery of cross-cultural skills' to the less robust description that it

'regularly fosters opportunities for cross-cultural communication and cooperation in the classroom and through diverse extra-curricular activities.' Unfortunately, even this attenuated version did not show up vividly in the description of the experience that emerged from my analysis across all the data, despite each of the students claiming in their descriptions that intercultural interactions were the source of significant changes in themselves. While such opportunities were part of the descriptions of S1 and S2, they were not as easily discernible with S3, who restricted himself to social interactions within his chemistry major in the middle of his second year. There was something of a presence of intercultural or cross-cultural interaction, however, for S3 in his close relationship with his American professor, who became a mentor for him. The way of doing science he learned from this professor was often described as a comparison to the local Chinese way of doing science, so in this way there was a form of intercultural interaction taking place, even though it was not often described as such and few aspects of the experience can be recognized from the description as having dimensions of intercultural interaction.

One other relevant link between this *social interaction* constituent and the literature review is with Levine's idea of 'the mind as itself embodied' (Levine, 2008, p. xiii) as a way to renew the development of the liberal arts curriculum. The students showed a proclivity for learning by doing, which while not necessarily an intensely physical form of embodiment, nevertheless was very much about getting outside the classroom and participating in projects that required much embodied interaction rather than just abstract thinking.

Sense-Making by Relating Experiences to Things Chinese. It is easy to imagine from the account S3 provides that if he had not been able to experiment with the local science labs, he would not have been able to rule out staying in China to study for his PhD. This could, in turn, have had damaging long-term repercussions to his career in that he likely would have discovered too late that he did not actually have an interest in doing science the way he observed it being conducted in the local labs. There is an interesting sense here in which the nature of the experience lies in getting to better understand the local culture, which is the starting point for both students, by contrasting it with an initial set of experiences with the other culture (i.e., lab interactions and project work with his NYU Shanghai professor and other science students in the NYUSH context). This experience of first needing to gain an understanding of the local before more robustly embracing the diverse other resembles the need S1 and S2 have for a Chinese intermediary discussed in Chapter 4. The empirical difference is that for S1 and S2 the intermediary was a person or persons, here it is a particular moment of experience (i.e., working in the local Chinese science labs) that S3 sought out.

Obviously this particular experience involved other Chinese who worked in the science labs, but this was not the focal point for S3 in his description of the overall experience. Moran (2001) explains that such comparisons are necessary for culture learning (p. 123):

> The culture process runs back and forth between the learner's culture and the culture under study. There is an ongoing series of encounters with differences in cultural products, practices, perspectives, communities, and persons. There are similarities as well, but it is the differences that evoke the learner's culture or worldview. To learn the new culture, learners need to purposefully construct an understanding of the other worldview, a separate reality so to speak. They need to consciously navigate back and forth between the emic and the etic perspectives and ultimately come to a point where they can see the world from the other's perspective. Eventually, as learners attain an insider's understanding, there may be less need for explicit comparison. (Moran, 2001, p. 123)

Moran's description of the 'culture process' here is similar to the 'developmentally effective' conceptualizations mentioned earlier (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; King et al., 2007; King et al., 2009). Both conceptualizations are in turn based on much common scholarship, including the work of Milton Bennett (1993). The need 'to consciously navigate back and forth between the emic and the etic perspectives' is evident throughout the data for each of the students, especially S1 and S2. The descriptions that relate most directly to learning described as a 'culture process' come from S2, who sees this most explicitly in the international teams of students she is required to work with at NYU Stern during study abroad in New York, but also in many of the internship experiences she has over her four years. In making these comparisons S2 lumps all Asians into one category, a stereotype that purportedly emerges from her contacts with people from various Asian groups, where in other places, however, she describes how much she admires her Indian roommate while on study-abroad in the U.S. She appears to want to become more like people from educational cultures that allow for critical thought and intellectual individualism. Part of her motivation here is that, in her experience, the mode of thinking and doing of the 'non-Asians' is more psychologically stable. S2 also found that in her experience, Chinese students were focused on results while non-Chinese students focused more on the process of learning and getting an education. Further to this, she perceives the Chinese students as seeking a perfection that is extrinsically motivated to outperform their peers in the eyes of their professors. In making these comparisons, it is unclear whether or not she is just substituting one set of stereotypes for another. In her experience, there appears to be a desire to be more like these non-Asian others, but she describes this as more of mutually exclusive choice of one or the other rather than an 'integration of different aspects of self into a coherent identity,' characteristic of King et al.'s (2009) 'mature level' in the 'intrapersonal domain' (p. 110). This is very different from S1's earlier description of his understanding of culture

as more 'like a river than a stone,' something that can be reinvented within a group depending on the individuals in the group. However, although S1 claims to have experienced this within the diverse groups he worked with over his four years, and especially in Abu Dhabi, he does not offer many micro-level descriptions of the process, other than to state his strong convictions in this regard. In a slightly different way, S1's comparison of the link between the distance in intercultural interactions between students and the political context of universities is interesting here. Given the perceived closeness of Hong Kong to the Mainland—indeed, given the sensitive nature of that perception, as well as the differences in perceptions from Mainlanders and Hong Kongers—it is interesting to note that S1 uses this experience as an index for his NYUSH experience throughout the interview, allowing him to make these comparisons between the experiences of students in Hong Kong with his experiences at NYUSH, and ultimately to make meaning out of this that is educationally valuable to him. He needs to make comparisons between NYUSH and other schools, including other universities on the mainland for this sense-making to occur. This helps him to see how he is situated in his particular learning environment. For S3 there are also a few places in the data where such comparisons to 'things Chinese' are made more generally in the intercultural domain, although these are noticeably more limited than when he is describing differences in ways of doing science, perhaps indicating that for him the experience of getting an education at NYU Shanghai is less about 'culture learning' in Moran's sense, and more about acquiring the ability to do science. If so, this appears to be a less successful attainment of a liberal arts education, as opposed to one that is more professionally-oriented.

Satisfaction with the Path they have Taken and Confidence in Themselves. This constituent of the experience clearly has an overlapping sense with the part of the description of education provided by analytic philosophers in the 1970s where they claim that being educated involves 'being changed for the better' (Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018, Section 2, para. 4). While there is no claim in the present study that the students were, in fact, changed for the better, their satisfaction and confidence in themselves carries some implication that they were. It is not surprising that the students should have these feelings in the months leading up to their graduation, especially since they were all anticipating getting their degree. S1 and S3 were both headed to graduate school, S1 already accepted by his top choice, a prestigious American university. At the time of the interviews, despite not knowing know which graduate school he would enter, it was clear to S3 that he felt well-positioned and confident that he would get into one of his top choices. Similarly, S3 was not sure which of the positions she had applied for would extend her an offer, but she felt confident

that she would receive one that was satisfactory. Although nothing resembling this constituent exists in the AAC&U's (2005) report on liberal education outcomes, it does significantly relate to the 'subjective, psychological, and social' dimensions of 'well-being' on the list conceptualized by King et al. (2007, p. 5), which is particularly helpful in unpacking the data corresponding to this constituent. It should be noted that a fourth dimension of King et al.'s concept of well-being, the 'physical,' was not a substantial part of the descriptions provided by the three students, although participation in sports co-curricular activities was briefly mentioned by S1 and S3. The most obvious form of satisfaction and confidence to appear in the data of each of the students derives from knowing they are about to complete their undergraduate journeys and successfully transition into the next phase of their lives. This is most closely associated with 'subjective well-being,' which specifies 'happiness, life satisfaction, and life quality' (King et al., 2007, p. 4). At the same time, since this is a transition period for the students from satisfactory completion of one set of achievements to a new set of aspirations intricately linked with these achievements in the educational realm, this provides the students with much 'psychological well-being,' which for King et al. (2007) 'is the pursuit of meaningful goals and a sense of purpose in life' (p. 4). Finally, there is also a general feeling of 'social well-being,' especially for S1 and S2, which 'refers to positive social health based on one's functioning in society' (p. 4). This is less the case for S3 given the social restrictions previously mentioned, but his emphatic statements about liking people and being able to start new friendships easily when he is ready, indicate at least an orientation toward social well-being, if not a demonstrable manifestation of this dimension. Since S3 describes his self-imposed social restrictions as a sort of sacrifice in order to develop what he perceives through a trial-and-error experimentation process, there is much in this that implies well-being. Without further probing it is unclear to what extent S3 has really achieved this form of social well-being. It is clear, however, that he together with S1 and S2 all have a high-level of confidence in themselves, something that pervades the whole data set. Even when the students are describing difficulties, for the most part there is a strong sense that they are looking back over these with the confidence that is the result of overcoming them. S1 and S2 also clearly demonstrate a strong sense of openness in the psychological and social dimensions, which is something they describe as gaining from their educational pursuit at NYU Shanghai. This is a crucial intersection with well-being for King et al. (2007), who point out that such openness to new ideas can greatly affect, for example, 'one's willingness to learn about or to change lifestyle habits that affect one's health' (p. 4).

Perceptions of the Exceptionalism and Special Features of the NYU Shanghai Project. Given that NYU Shanghai is a special project in China and the world, and has many unique characteristics, it is interesting to see this specialness showing up in the student descriptions. Perhaps the single most influential factor in making the university special is its 'experimental' nature in the overall ecosystem of higher education in China, which is the way the project was described by NYU Shanghai Vice-Chancellor Jeffery Lehman in testimony before the United States House of Representatives (Is Academic Freedom Threatened, 2015): '[NYU Shanghai is] part of the effort inside China to carry out small experiments with approaches to higher education that are different from the approaches generally used at Chinese universities' (p. 2). Data corresponding to this *exceptionalism and special features* constituent comprised a much larger portion of the raw data for S1 and S2 than it did for S3, for whom it becomes obvious when he describes his prospects of getting into graduate school, which he believes were greatly enhanced because of his feeling of the isomorphism of NYU Shanghai's curriculum and pedagogy with that of other American universities, including the fact that the pursuit of his degree took place in English. This makes sense for S3, paralleling much of the practical approach visible throughout his description, and again, as with all of the other constituents, is closely intertwined with his intense desire to become a scientist. For S1, the predominant meaning is that he feels privileged with resources such as the technology important for his major in computer science and interactive media arts and free from constraints such as the need to earn a living and rules that would normally apply at other Chinese universities, such as those limiting access to the Internet. He seems acutely aware of being part of an elite group within China and the world, a group similar to those for which Bloom (1987) thinks a liberal arts education is best suited:

> It consists of thousands of students of comparatively high intelligence, materially and spiritually free to do pretty much what they want with the few years of college they are privileged to have. (Bloom, 1987, p. 122)

S1, unlike Bloom, expresses some reservation about having such privileged access, but he also seems to feel from details in his description that having these privileges is necessary to get the special form of education he has pursued at NYU Shanghai. This contrasts sharply with Nussbaum's (1987; 1997; 2012) vision, which she believes should be accessible to all who desire it. She criticizes Bloom for equating the 'materially well off and academically successful' with those who are the best suited for a liberal education:

> It would seem that the disadvantaged, as Bloom imagines them, also have comparatively smaller talents, simpler natures, and fewer needs. But Bloom never argues that they do. He

> simply has no interest in the students whom he does not regard as the elite—an elite defined, he makes plain, by wealth and good fortune as much as by qualities of mind that have deeper human value. (Nussbaum, 1987, p. 6)

S1's positive feelings with the access to resources provided by NYU Shanghai make sense against the background of the broader dissatisfaction experienced by many Chinese students in China's universities due to lack of access to certain resources, such as advice from professors, as China moves towards massification in higher education and away from a system only serving the elite (Li, 2012). That is, NYU Shanghai is a place where this larger trend can be avoided. In the U.S., however, the liberal arts approach is not reserved exclusively for the elite, argues Nussbaum (2012), 'From early on, leading U.S. educators connected the liberal arts to the preparation of informed, independent, and sympathetic democratic citizens,' and eventually massified the liberal arts ethos: 'In the United States…at least since World War II and the GI Bill, there has been a very successful effort to reimagine the humanities in a non-elitist way, as part of a general education for all citizens' (Afterward, para. 16).

S2, while also satisfied ultimately with her path, is not as positive in her recognition of the fact that NYU Shanghai is serving an elite group. At the same time, she is impressed by the fact that she and her classmates can discuss controversial topics freely at the university, something she was not able to do in her past educational experiences in China and even in her family life. She mentions coming from a small village and, after her parents had established themselves in Shanghai, struggling to succeed in her secondary schooling as an outsider to Shanghai. She feels different from many of her Chinese peers at NYU Shanghai, who she perceives as being generally aggressive, attributing much of this to the intense Candidate Weekend process that is part of admissions for Chinese students. She dates her early feelings going through this highly competitive process as the moment that she began to feel a need to 'stand out,' a feeling that persisted well into her undergraduate experience, and perhaps never fully subsiding. For her, this perceived need to stand out in this way is the source of an identity conflict with her Chinese peers, which she tries to overcome by attempting to become more aggressive herself, which ultimately leads to more difficulty. Much of her experience here echoes criticisms of the liberal arts put forward by Deresiewicz (2014) that are aligned with the criticisms of Nussbaum (1987; 1997; 2012), cited earlier. S2's focus on the link between the admissions process and the resulting character of the students is highly pertinent given that Deresiewicz (2015) cites the same concern, calling it the 'resume arms race' (Deresiewicz, 2014, 39).

Lack of Intersections with the Literature Review. It is interesting to note that the most useful connections to the literature review were the several articles associated with the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (WNSLE). A few of the other empirical studies from the ERIC search also yielded significant overlap, but on the whole there were few intersections with the issues and concerns of articles focused on the student experience in the ERIC search. Interestingly, the 70 empirical articles from that search were largely focused on difficulties or negative perceptions of either the minority group that was in focus to the wider, usually internationalizing context, or the majority group towards the minority group in focus. In the present study, while some difficulties were highlighted by the students, the descriptions of getting an education at NYU Shanghai were largely positive. Issues of transition, integration, acculturation, or socialization of the minority group into the majority group were largely absent from the data for the present study, with the exception of S1's comparison of integration at the different universities he visited or studied abroad at, including the 'gap between the Chinese and international students' at NYU Shanghai, while this was a theme in 49 of the 70 empirical studies from the ERIC search. This is quite a significant fact, perhaps demonstrating that the larger context of being in China and the balanced population of approximately 51% Chinese students at NYUSH mitigated against what could be imagined from the literature as the potential difficulties of integration into the English academic discourse community, curriculum, and other academic and co-curricular practices that have their original source in NYU New York. Given my insider knowledge as a faculty member at NYUSH, I was expecting that issues of transition, integration, acculturation, and socialization were going to feature much more prominently in the eidetic description that emerged and in the data more generally, especially after seeing how dominant they were in the literature.

Another indication of a lack of congruence with the literature came from within some of the same sources for which there was also significant overlap; so, for example, in the literature related to the WNSLAE there were learning outcomes associated with the liberal arts that were not very salient in the data for this study. When these discrepancies appeared in other sources, such as the book-length descriptions of the liberal arts, this was taken as a potential misalignment between the student experience and the organizational representation of NYUSH as offering a liberal arts education. One of these was what King et al. (2007) refer to as 'moral character,' which they associate with 'the capacity to make and act on moral or ethical judgments' (p. 5). This did arise in some places, most notably in S2's transformation in 'her attitude to personal and societal expectations related to moral norms' and in her experience trying to decide how to respond to the

judgment of her professor on the history paper, but generally the students did not describe situations which correlated with moral decision-making, despite the central place that education for the development of morality has in the liberal arts philosophy of education (Deresiewicz, 2014; King et al., 2007; Levine, 2009; Nussbaum, 1987; 1997; 2012; Roche, 2010; Roth, 2014; Seifert et al., 2008). Images of citizenship, much less democratic citizenship, also did not appear to be part of the experience for the three students in the present study, despite being a featured image of the liberal arts in most of the reviewed literature and often linking to the development of moral character. There are vague hints of references to social responsibility in some of the data, as in an internship experience S2 had to teach and bring Chinese culture to the children in another Asian country, and S3's depiction of learning to appreciate the roles that non-scientists play in society, but overall, other than their developing intercultural sensitivity, as mentioned above, such references to citizenship as part of their educational experience are weak. This is disappointing given the university's espoused ambitions to 'foster truly global citizens,' as mentioned in Chapter 1. It is worth pointing out here, once again, that this is only the way the students are describing their pursuit of an education; it is not to say that because the students are not highlighting this in their descriptions, it is not present in a more objective form. However, the lack of reference to global citizenship should be a concern of the university, if this is as deeply valued as its presence on the website would warrant. The absence of both images of citizenship and morality in the students' experience should be of concern to the university stakeholders. since it is precisely a higher order moral identity that can regulate the ambiguities stemming from the need to take on multiple and often conflicting roles (Hitlin, 2011; Stets, 2010) as an involved and informed citizen. This deeper moral sense, in turn, comes from understanding one's role as a citizen (Roche, 2010, p. 107), and both are strongly associated with liberal arts education (Delbanco, 2009; Deresiewicz, 2014; Ferrall, 2011; King et al., 2007; Levine, 2008; Nussbaum, 1987; 1997; 2012; Roche, 2010; Roth, 2014). Developing an identity as a 'liberal arts person' means incorporating the symbols of the liberal arts philosophy into one's self concept. If such symbols, as citizenship and moral character are absent, the liberal arts person identity will at best be weak.

As much as these absences of liberal arts learning outcomes are disappointing, some of them should be expected: Humphreys & Davenport (2005) found that outcomes that related to developing a 'sense of values, principles, and ethics,' and one's 'role as a citizen and an orientation toward public service' were rated as 'least-valued outcomes' by the students in their study. At the same time, it is reassuring that two of the other outcomes on their least-valued list were present in

the experiences and to some degree valued by the students in the current study, 'tolerance and respect for people of other backgrounds, races, ethnicities, and lifestyles,' 'expanded cultural and global awareness and sensitivity' (p. 40), although in reference to the last outcome, there was not something 'global' present over and above the 'cultural.'

Connecting the Level of Student Meaning with the Level of Organizational Meaning. Drawing upon my notion of 'liberal arts person,' and symbolic interactionism, the latter accessed mostly through the work of Hatch (1993; 1999; 2011) and the 'Organizational Identity Dynamics Model,' of Hatch and Schultz (2002), but also the communities of practice (CoP) theory of Wenger (1998; 2000), as well as others as mentioned throughout the previous chapters, I believe that there is a moderate connection between the phenomenological level of meaning derived from the student experience of getting an education at NYUSH and the organizational level of meaning of NYUSH as offering a liberal arts education. That is, the students are only moderately conceptualizing themselves as 'liberal arts people.' Such an identity could be weaker, but it could also be more salient. It is the *social interaction* constituent that most evidences the central place of socio-cultural interactions as a form of learning, and provides the strongest connection between the meanings inherent within the student experience and the symbols of the liberal arts, the latter representing the espoused values of the organizational culture of NYU Shanghai. Hatch and Schultz (2002) draw on Mead's theory of the 'I' and the 'Me' precisely because it analogically bridges these two levels (Hatch & Schultz, 2002, citing Jensen, 1996) of the organization and the individual, and the way that it does so is through various forms of social interactions and reflections on those interactions. For Wenger (2000), learning at the organizational level is necessarily social, the result of an 'interplay' between the 'experience' and 'competence' of the members of a community of practice as determined by their engagement in the set of practices that binds them together (Wenger, 2000, pp. 226-227). One engages in a community of practice because there is a sense that it is a 'joint enterprise' (Wenger, 2000, p. 229); that is, it is not constructed from the top down, but rather through a creative ethos where each participant increasingly identifies with what is being built. An example of the process of connecting the meanings of the student experience with the level of symbols in the organizational culture, derives from S2's account, mentioned above and in Chapter 4, of being told that her history paper was not at the requisite level of quality due to what was perceived by the professor to be subpar expression in English. The example relates to both practices of teaching and learning (e.g., a professor giving feedback on a paper) and to larger organizational practices (e.g., the use of English in the organization as the language of instruction),

which S2 views as central to her identity as a soon to be graduate of NYU Shanghai. At the time of receiving the professor's feedback, S2's degree of satisfaction and confidence characterizing the seventh constituent of the experience in general is already very high, indicating confidence and satisfaction in these practices. S2 has returned from a year of study abroad in the U.S., which gave her additional feelings of control and maybe even a sense of mastery over many of the academic practices that were introduced in her first two years at NYU Shanghai. It is evident from other details in the description that her confidence in relation to these practices was not initially high upon entering the university, so this is something she has struggled with over the duration of the experience. To use the terms of CoP theory (Wenger, 1998; 2000), she understands herself as being closer to the inner 'core' of this particular literacy practice of writing papers than when she started out, a time when she was on the 'periphery.' The response she describes is from the position of Mead's 'I' because it clashes with the 'image' she has of herself objectively understood from the point of view of others—Mead's 'me' (Hatch & Schultz, 2002, p. 995). In other words, the professor gives off a different image from the one that S2 had previously perceived from significant others in the university over the four years of her getting an education. There is evidence here of what Wenger (2000) describes as the 'pull' between personal experience and social structure as defined through the competence of the community (pp. 225-226) of which the professor is also obviously a member. S2 sought advice from others within the university, including peers and junior instructors who were native English speakers, who each thought the paper was acceptable because the meanings were intelligible, despite the professor's insistence that it was not written with the right expression or style perceived as 'American,' even though the same professor told her the content was acceptable. For the professor, it appears that the predominant cultural code in the university is 'American,' which may be in conflict with S2's perception, especially given that she is considering whether or not the professor may be a 'racist' because of this judgment. The goal here for S2 in consulting with a wide-range of others is to see how widely her judgments have currency in the absence of any ultimate authority. It shows a need to bring these conflicting images, so important for her identity, into alignment. The social interactions she engages in are characterized by much doubt about whether the paper is valuable or not. While clearly not evidence for a mature level of self-authorship (King et al., 2009, p. 109), the social interactions that help form the response of S2 to her professor do show in S2 a capacity for the sort of 'engagement' that Wenger (2000) claims is essential to a well-functioning CoP, 'establishing norms and relationships of mutuality that reflect these interactions' and, thus, at one and the same time, developing her own competence and

serving as evidence that some degree of competence is already in her possession (Wenger, 2000, p. 229). This form of engagement is precisely the way that individual identities are formed through symbolic interaction in Mead's account:

> The 'I' is the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others; the 'me' is the organized set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes. The attitudes of the others constitute the organized 'me', and then one reacts toward that as an 'I'. (Mead, 1934, as cited in Hatch and Schultz, 2002, p. 992)

Transposing this to the example of S2, her engagement with the professor and others around her in the university was her reaction as an 'I' to the attitude of her professor which was different from the existing 'set of attitudes of others' that formed the 'me' for her at that time. Her continued engagement was an attempt to bring the 'me' back into alignment by taking into consideration her professor's attitude. The fact that S2 was a business and finance major and the paper in question was in one of the traditional liberal arts disciplines, history, may be critically important in questions of whether or not S2 was developing a liberal arts identity, but here the details from the data are not rich enough to draw a firm conclusion. One detail that does have some bearing here is that, as mentioned in the previous section on the constituent referring to *consciousness of knowledge, skill, and character in the domain of the student's major*, S2 appears through her description to be the least of the other students to identify strongly with her major. If there were an organizational identity at NYU Shanghai such that students who were near to graduation thought of themselves as 'liberal arts people,' then perhaps S2 experienced the judgment of her professor as an identity threat; that is, in that it was so near to graduation when she had feelings of being closer to mastery of the core of the set of practices defining the liberal arts community.

Another salient example of an identity threat that shows this link between the student level of meaning and the organizational level occurs in S2's perceptions of a misalignment between her own personality and what she perceived as the 'aggressiveness' of her Chinese peers and in the wider organizational culture—although interestingly not in the international students —which is symbolized early during the admissions process, becoming one of the 'images' of organizational identity, to use the terminology of Hatch and Schultz (2002). That S2 did not experience this aggressiveness or competitiveness in the international students together with her desire to be more like those students may be clues that she did not ultimately accept the aggressiveness as a legitimate aspect of the organizational identity of NYU Shanghai. Again, the presence of the *satisfaction and confidence* constituent described above implies that she has resolved these contradictions by the time of the interviews in her fourth year just as graduation was approaching.

This does not mean that she thinks the high-level of competition is no longer there in her fourth year, but only that she has ruled it out as a key part of the organizational identity. If she had not done so, then she would not likely feel comfortable embodying such an identity, and this would run counter to the implication that satisfaction with the path she has taken in getting an education at NYU Shanghai is also satisfaction with the organizational culture. That is, there is an assumption that actors within the organization align their personal identities with the organizational identity when images of the latter are 'attractive' (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994, p. 256). This was evident early in her experience, as well, when she tried to change herself to fit the image of significant others, in this case her Chinese peers, by being more aggressive during the class debate mentioned above. It makes sense here that she was acting according to the *exploring* constituent to gain self-knowledge, including knowledge of the organizational culture of which she was now a significant part. Her attempt to be more aggressive was helped by the suggestion of her professor before the debate, enabling her to overcome the dissonance between the way she understood her identity at the time, and what she was perceiving in the organizational culture. In the end, she was scorned by the other Chinese students for her performance during the debate. Following the view of Hatch and Schultz (2002), I propose that it was S2's construal of the 'organizational culture' that enabled her to 'sustain this sense of [herself] as different from the images' reflected in the 'mirror' or her peers (p. 1001). That is, it is likely that at the time of receiving her degree, S2 viewed what she has perceived as the aggressive behavior of her peers as something not essential to the organizational culture of NYU Shanghai. Such a result takes place through a process of reflection: 'when organizational members reflect on their identity, they do so with reference to their organization's culture and this embeds their reflections in tacit cultural understandings' (Hatch & Shultz, 2002, p. 1000). Reflection on the organizational culture would have mitigated the dissonance that she initially experienced between her personal identity and the organizational identity.

Contribution of this Study. The most valuable contribution this study makes is to document the lived experiences of Chinese students in a new university context, one that brings American educational approaches, including the liberal arts educational philosophy, to the People's Republic of China. The findings of the study indicate that the Chinese student experience only partially overlaps with images of the liberal arts in the literature (AAC&U, 2002; 2005; 2007; 2018; Blaich, et al., 2004; Blaich & Wise, 2007; Blaich, et al., 2011; Bloom, 1987; Center of Inquiry, n.d.a; Center of Inquiry, n.d.b; Delbanco, 2012; Deresiewicz, 2014; Ferrall, 2011; Gonyea et al., n.d.; Goodman et al.,

2011; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; King et al., 2007; 2009; 2012; Levine, 1984; 2008; Martin et al., 2014; Nussbaum, 1987; 1997; 2011; 2012; Pascarella et al., 2005; Pascarella & Blaich, 2014; Roche, 2010; Roth, 2014; Seifert et al., 2008; Zakaria, 2015), which may indicate that the university has employed a strategy of loose-coupling (Beerkens, 2008; Delucchi, 2000; 2009; Weick, 1976) such images with other symbols of the organizational culture, such as its organizational mission. The study also demonstrated how the student lived experiences could illustrate the dynamics of organizational identity (Hatch, 1993; 1999; 2011; Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Wenger, 1998; 2000), thus connecting the lived meanings of the student experience with the level of the meanings in the symbols of organizational culture (Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008; Dutton, & Dukerich, 1991; Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994; Hatch, 1993, 1999, 2011; Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Meyer, 1977; 2008; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Wenger, 1998, 2000). Given the paucity of formal research on both American tertiary educational organizations operating in China and the Chinese experience of liberal arts education, this study makes an original contribution to knowledge and practice. In its unique application of the descriptive phenomenological psychological method of Giorgi (1985, 1997, 2009; 2012, 2018), especially to meso-level phenomena like getting an education, the study makes a valuable exploratory contribution to the literature of phenomenological research.

Finally, by providing a generalized description of education from the first-person point-of-view, the study also informs the attempt in the philosophy of education to define the concept of education and provide warrant for various research methods to study education (Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018). Although the method developed by Giorgi employed in the present study is meant to offer a mid-level description at the psychological level, this is consistent with the philosophical method of Husserl, which would begin with descriptions such as those provided in this study in an attempt to reach the philosophical eidos of 'getting an education.' Just as Husserlian phenomenology aims at a critique of a more naturalistic scientific research method, Giorgi's development of Husserl offers a critique of mainstream research methods in psychology (Giorgi, 1986), and, thus, by extension of the same reasoning, the present study, by successfully employing Giorgi's method, contributes to the debate over research methods in the philosophy of education, which is very much a form of applied philosophy that is concerned with the way that knowledge is developed through educational research. Whereas analytic philosophy of science might abstract away from first-person accounts, this is very much the starting point of phenomenology. The account provided here of 'getting an education' demonstrates that there is a high-degree of overlap with analytic ordinary-language attempts to define education (Siegel, Phillips, and Callan, 2018), yet challenges these by

starting with empirical descriptions from the first-person point-of-view that may not be fully commensurable with those accounts, or those that derive from mainstream methods of educational research.

Implications for Practice at NYUSH and More Generally. This study has enabled a micro-level understanding of the way that Chinese students have experienced their pursuit of an education at NYUSH. Such an understanding is rich with implications for practice in the university and more widely. First, the way such an important group of stakeholders in the organization goes about getting their education provides insights into the way they are thinking about and ultimately conceptualizing their education. This ability to conceptualize one's education is a crucial skill both for explaining the value of one's education to potential employers (AAC&U, 2018), as well as understanding what is taking place during the actual pursuit of education itself (Humphreys, & Davenport, 2005). This in turn has implications for one's life-long learning and career advancement. Thus, understanding how students describe their educational journey can be a valuable source of information for university administration, as its own success depends on whether the students can align their own goals with the values of the institution (AAC&U, 2002). If, for example, students do not understand the concept of liberal arts education adequately, they may demand changes to the curriculum, thus challenging the current liberal arts mission of the university. If this is the case, it may imply that the university is not succeeding in fostering such values. A mismatch between the outcomes the students perceive and those the university aims for the students to achieve may signal that the university mission is not as clearly communicated to students and faculty as it could be (AAC&U, 2002; 2005; 2007; Blaich et al., 2004; Humphreys, & Davenport, 2005; King et al., 2007). One of the ways this could be done would be to communicate with students early in the process of recruitment and orientation, and then continue through academic advising, career centers, and other events. There is a need to communicate both with faculty and students so that consistent expectations are established. These implications match up with suggestions that are already present in the literature on liberal arts learning outcomes (AAC&U, 2002; 2005; 2007; Blaich et al., 2004; Humphreys, & Davenport, 2005; King et al., 2007). For example, in addition to the aforementioned need for clarity in communicating the university's message, Blaich et al. (2004), point out that the likelihood of students achieving these outcomes can be increased by 'creating an ethos that (a) values the intellectual arts rather than professional or vocational skills; (b) integrates curricular and environmental structures coherently; and (c) cultivates a culture that values student–student and student–faculty interactions both in and out of the classroom' (p. 12). The present

study provides evidence that (c) is occurring to a high degree at NYUSH, that (a) is occurring to a moderate degree, and that (b) may only be occurring weakly. Several of the outcomes that were only weakly present in the student experience, such as the development of moral character or global citizenship, for example, require thorough integration between curricular and environmental structures, as well as the ability on the part of the student to reflect and integrate their experiences with their newly acquired knowledge and skills (AAC&U, 2002; Humphreys, & Davenport, 2005; King et al., 2007; King et al., 2009).

More generally, this study has implications for forms of American education as they are increasingly exported to other parts of the world that may not share the cultural contexts in which these forms developed. In some sense, this is the case with NYUSH in relation to the robust connection in the literature on the liberal arts as a form of education for democratic citizenship or global citizenship. The lack of this feature in the student experience may imply either that the university was not doing enough to ignite student interest in this area or that the students themselves were blind to the possibilities that the university was offering them due to different cultural values between the students and the organizational culture. This study also has implications for phenomenological research in that it is one of the few studies in the descriptive phenomenological tradition to look at the experience of getting an education, a complex meso-level phenomenon that is composed of many micro-level experiential moments.

Limitations. As NYU Shanghai was only in its fifth year of existence when the interviews for this research were conducted, making the student participants only the second cohort to graduate from the university, it is acknowledged from the outset that the values of the organization, even more so than the average organization, are in flux, a limiting factor especially when it comes to applying the research. The very significance of the research which stems from the new context is, at one and the same time, one of the limitations, since this means that the students are being asked to reflect on a phenomenon that has few analogs in the world; this adds purity to their descriptions, because it means that they will not be as easily tainted by comparisons, but the availability of comparisons are also helpful in making sense of one's experience, a fact that interestingly showed up in the research itself in relation to the *comparison to things Chinese* constituent. Given the descriptive nature of the research, any conclusions about the ultimate reality of these experiences, or cause-and-effect inferences that may be drawn based on them must be thought of as tentative. The study was also limited by its reliance on the ability of the students to recall all the relevant aspects of their experience, as well as to communicate those experiences accurately. The latter was also

perhaps affected by the fact that they were describing the experience in English, whish was not their first language, even though it is the language of instruction at NYUSH in all but language classrooms. The study was limited, as well, by sample size, but using a small sample is a necessity given the time it takes to analyze all the data. Three participants is common using Giorgi's (1985, 1997, 2009; 2012; 2018) method. I attempted to compensate for the small sample by having an extended interview time of two hours for each participant, a 'trade-off' suggested by Giorgi (2009, p. 198).

Recommendations for Future Research. Given that I interviewed a total of eight students, but could only use three in the end, due to the limitations of time, it will be interesting in future research to examine the data for the remaining five participants, each from a different major. Ascertaining whether or not the data for these other participants fits with this data will be a useful exercise, perhaps shedding light on what Giorgi and Giorgi (2003) refer to as the 'scientific criteria' of the method; that is, 'when the knowledge obtained is systematic, methodical, critical, and general (p. 258), although given the holistic nature of the analysis, if the other data suggests changes to the structure of the experience, that is to be expected. Another future study should attempt to discover a structure of the experience of other demographic groups at NYUSH, as well as at other similar institutions that are thought to have an American liberal arts organizational culture in new global contexts. Comparisons of the experiential structures with different demographics and at different institutions will provide further insights into the ways that organizational identities and cultures are formed, and may assist understanding of where discrepancies in the experiences lead to differential outcomes, or whether different groups find it easier to develop organizational identities consistent with the overarching organizational culture, and what these facts may mean for learning and teaching.

Personal Learning Gained from Conducting the Study. In the Introduction, I wrote about my own identity as a liberal arts person. Part of being a liberal arts person is developing an orientation as a lifelong learner. Although the literature on the liberal arts confirms that this is the case, as a liberal arts person, I was aware of my own identity as a lifelong learner long before conducting this study. Yet, now that I have reached the study's end, it is clear how much my own motivation was driven by such a self-concept which highly values learning through life. In this way, the study was a journey of self-knowledge. There were many sacrifices to other values I hold in order to make my way through to the doctoral journey's end. The formulation of the research questions for this study emerged from my own values as I grappled with issues in higher education over the duration of the

journey. This often took the form of debates with my colleagues on the program, where I found myself passionately defending these values. Many of them were often on the side of what I have referred to as the 'neoliberal institution' in this study, while I found myself on the side of a form of education for its own sake, with the qualification that such an education is also the best preparation for life and career. Without that experience of informed contrasts throughout the discussions with colleagues that took place over the duration of these several years of doctoral study, the degree to which I cared about the liberal arts as an approach to education would not have been thrown into the light. I knew I cared, but not as much as I did in sticking with this project to the end. I began to notice a reverberation of a desire to align my values with my own learning trajectory and the very way I lived my life, as I stood back and reflected on what was taking shape through this project. One instance of this was in the very notion of 'alignment' itself, which became an essential strand in the argument I have made here. Alignment of the individual with the organization with the society with the world through education. But also a respect for transcendence in this process that should be respected in the very form that education takes. And then, of course, the need to inquire into this, not to simply take these values for granted. The project was very much for me a search for a method of inquiry. I discovered this in the phenomenological method that I learned by necessity of finding an appropriate research method for the project. I have derived the most satisfaction in learning both the epistemology that grounds the method and the techniques of the method itself. There is much transferability here that I can apply to future research as well as a philosophical method for life. Just as the students who were the research participants gained confidence in themselves as they neared the end of their undergraduate journey, I have gained a newfound confidence in my own professional abilities as I near the end of this graduate journey. In fact, much of what I have learned mirrors the constituents of learning that I discovered for these students. This is further proof that the results of the study are a valid phenomenological description of the experience of pursuing an education! At the same time, while this general structure of the experience revealed itself to me as my own experience, I also learned that for me the particular meaning of the experience came in reaching a level of expertise over a realm of knowledge, that is, in the field of higher education, rather than simply a degree of control. Driven by the need to frame and contextualize this study properly in the field of higher education research, I have demonstrated my gains in expertise in this area.

Summary. This study has demonstrated that the use of Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological psychological method (Giorgi, 1985, 1997, 2009, 2012; 2018) could be used to profitably describe the experience of getting an education at NYU Shanghai for Chinese student participants, and, furthermore, that on the basis of the resulting eidetic generalization, a useful exploration of the commensurability of those experiences with the university's espoused liberal arts approach could be undertaken. The logic of this was that if the generalized description soundly established one type of experience of getting an education at NYUSH, and if the liberal arts philosophy pervades the organizational culture of the university, there should be interesting intersections between the former general description and liberal arts values. This proved to be the case in that there was both evidence for the presence and absence of such values in the student experience. Liberal arts values were present in the modes of exploration and investigation that were predominant in the students' pursuit of an education, in their many self-discoveries, and in the satisfaction and confidence they developed over their undergraduate years. Noticeable absences occurred in experiences of the development of moral character, leadership, and citizenship education. These absences are significant in light of the university's claim to offer a liberal arts education, especially one with a central place for the development of global citizenship. In the epistemology of the descriptive phenomenological method, this does not mean that beyond the experience of the student participants a more objective reality is being posited, but rather that their lived experience, as they experienced it, had the given contours and thus was psychologically real for them. It is quite possible that the university in fact has increased their abilities even in the areas that are absent from the description, such as global citizenship, but just that this is not a salient aspect of their experience when they are describing it. On the basis of the eight constituents of the description, the liberal arts approach to education is moderately, but not robustly, present in the Chinese student experience of getting an education at NYU Shanghai.

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Appendix A: Ethical Approval Forms, University of Liverpool

Dear Brandon Conlon	
I am pleased to inform you that the EdD. Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC) has approved your application for ethical approval for your study. Details and conditions of the approval can be found below.	
Sub-Committee:	EdD. Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC)
Review type:	Expedited
PI:	Brandon Conlon (supervised by Marco Ferreira)
School:	Lifelong Learning
Title:	An Ethnographically-Informed Descriptive Phenomenological Analysis of Chinese Students' Experiences Getting a (Liberal Arts) Education at New York University Shanghai
First Reviewer:	Kathleen Kelm
Second Reviewer:	Dimitrios Vlachopoulos
Other members of the Committee	Kalman Winston, Greg Hickman, Marco Ferreira, Morag Gray, Lucilla Crosta, Martin Gough
Date of Approval:	December 8 2017
The application was APPROVED subject to the following conditions:	
Conditions	
1 Mandatory	M: All serious adverse events must be reported to the VPREC within 24 hours of their occurrence, via the EdD Thesis Primary Supervisor.

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This approval applies for the duration of the research. If it is proposed to extend the duration of the study as specified in the application form, the Sub-Committee should be notified. If it is proposed to make an amendment to the research, you should notify the Sub-Committee by following the Notice of Amendment procedure outlined at http://www.liv.ac.uk/media/livacuk/researchethics/notice%20of%20amendment.doc.

Where your research includes elements that are not conducted in the UK, approval to proceed is further conditional upon a thorough risk assessment of the site and local permission to carry out the research, including, where such a body exists, local research ethics committee approval. No documentation of local permission is required (a) if the researcher will simply be asking organizations to distribute research invitations on the researcher's behalf, or (b) if the researcher is using only public means to identify/contact participants. When medical, educational, or business records are analysed or used to identify potential research participants, the site needs to explicitly approve access to data for research purposes (even if the researcher normally has access to that data to perform his or her job).

Please note that the approval to proceed depends also on research proposal approval.

Kind regards,

Kalman Winston

Vice-Chair, EdD. VPREC

Appendix B: NYU Shanghai IRB Approvals

Shanghai New York University
RESEARCH COMPLIANCE OFFICE

DATE: November 2, 2017
TO: Xuan Li, PhD
FROM: Lisandra V. Gonzalez, MPH, CIP, CCRP

SUBMISSION TYPE:	Initial Submission
PROTOCOL NUMBER:	021-2017 – An Ethnographically-Informed Descriptive Phenomenological Analysis of Chinese Students' Experiences Getting a (Liberal Arts) Education at New York University Shanghai
IRB ACTION:	**APPROVED**
APPROVAL DATE:	10/30/2017
EXPIRATION DATE:	10/29/2018
REVIEW TYPE:	Expedited

Thank you for your submission of **Initial Submission Application** for the above-referenced study. The NYU Shanghai IRB, FWA#00022531, has APPROVED your submission by **Expedited Review, category 7**.

Please Note:

- Effective today, you must use the consent document marked with the most current IRB stamp when obtaining informed consent.
- Under this approval it is acceptable to email "Area Leaders" who can then disseminate information to their faculty. However, no general emails to faculty are allowed in an effort to recruit for this study.
- IRB approval from Liver Pool University (https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/research-intergrity/research-ethics/) must be obtained before the study procedures commence at NYUSH.
- In the flyer, please fix the header's formatting and run the flyer by Xi Wang before posting at NYUSH.

All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission. Any changes to the approved study must be reviewed and approved by the NYU Shanghai IRB **prior** to implementation, except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the subject.

You are reminded that you must apply for, and undergo review, and be granted continued IRB approval for this study before ***10/29/2018*** in order to be able to conduct your study in an uninterrupted manner. Please submit your continuation request at least **30 days** prior to the expiration date in order for the IRB to process and review the continuation prior to the expiration date. If you do not receive approval before this date, you must cease and desist all research involving human subjects, their tissue, and their data until approval is granted. However, changes can be implemented if they are in the best interest of the subject due to safety evaluations or eliminating/reducing risks to them. The determination of "best interest to subject" must be made by the IRB. Alternatively if your study has concluded please complete the "Study Closure Form" and forward to the NYU Shanghai IRB.

Where obtaining informed consent is required as a condition of approval, be sure to continue to monitor the subject's willingness to be in the study throughout his/her duration of participation. Only use the current IRB-approved and stamped forms in the consent process. Each subject must receive a copy of his/her signed consent/permission/assent document. Consent forms signed by subjects in this study must be kept by the investigator in accordance with NYU Shanghai IRB policies.

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Unanticipated problems must be reported to this office in accordance with NYU Shanghai IRB policies.

Any complaints or issues of non-compliance must be immediately reported to this office. If you have any questions or comments about this correspondence, please contact the IRB Office at RCOinfo@nyu.edu.

The following documents have been acknowledged:

- Memo in response to Initial IRB Submission Mods Req Letter
- LI & CONLON Appendix-Flyer-Advertisement
- Li & CONLON BConlonProposalFinal
- LI & CONLON IRB Informed Consent Form letter headed-CleanVersion REVISED 10-25-2017
- LI & CONLON IRB Informed Consent Form letter headed-TrackedChanges REVISED 10-25-2017
- Li & CONLON NYU Shanghai-Initial Application Form-CleanVersion
- Li & CONLON NYU Shanghai-Initial Application Form-TrackedChanges
- Li & CONLON IRB Appendix A
- LI & CONLON IRB Proposed Interview Question
- CITI - Li, Xuan (exp 11-14-2019)
- CITI - Conlon, Brandon (SB) (exp 06-04-2020)

Shanghai New York University
RESEARCH COMPLIANCE OFFICE

DATE: December 6, 2017
TO: Xuan Li, PhD
FROM: Lisandra Gonzalez, MPH, CIP, CCRP

SUBMISSION TYPE:	Amendment/Modification
PROTOCOL TITLE:	021-2017 – An Ethnographically-Informed Descriptive Phenomenological Analysis of Chinese Students' Experiences Getting a (Liberal Arts) Education at New York University Shanghai
IRB ACTION:	**APPROVED**
APPROVAL DATE:	12/06/2017
EXPIRATION DATE:	10/29/2018
REVIEW TYPE:	Expedited

Thank you for your **Amendment/Modification** submission for the above-referenced study. The **NYU Shanghai IRB**, **FWA#00022531**, has **APPROVED** your submission. This approval grants the following changes and or additions to the originally approved study:

Change the time records are retained from 3 year to 5 year after study closure.

Please Note:

- Effective today, you must use the consent document marked with the most current IRB stamp when obtaining informed consent.

All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission. Any changes to the research must be reviewed and approved by the NYU Shanghai IRB prior to implementation, except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the subject.

This modification approval does not change your expiration date. You are reminded that you must apply for, and undergo review, and be granted continued IRB approval for this study before **08/26/2018** in order to be able to conduct your study in an uninterrupted manner. Please submit your continuation request at least **30 days** prior to the expiration date in order for the IRB to process and review the continuation prior to the expiration date. If you do not receive approval before this date, you must cease and desist all research involving human subjects, their tissue, and their data until approval is granted. However, changes can be implemented if they are in the best interest of the subject due to safety evaluations or eliminating/reducing risks to them. The determination of "best interest of the subject" must be made by the IRB. Alternatively if your study has concluded please complete the "Study Closure Form" and forward to the NYU Shanghai IRB.

Where obtaining informed consent is required as a condition of approval, be sure to continue to monitor the subject's willingness to be in the study throughout his/her duration of participation. Only use the current IRB-approved and stamped forms in the consent process. Each subject must receive a copy of his/her signed consent document. Consent forms signed by subjects in this study must be kept by the investigator in accordance with NYU Shanghai IRB policies.

Unanticipated problems must be reported to this office in accordance with NYU Shanghai IRB policies.

Any complaints or issues of non-compliance must be immediately reported to this office. If you have any questions or comments about this correspondence, please contact the IRB Office at RCOinfo@nyu.edu.

The following documents have been acknowledged with this submission:

- 021-2017 IRB Informed Consent Form Version 1, 10-25-2017 (unstamped)CleanVersion
- 021-2017 IRB Informed Consent Form Version 1, 10-25-2017 (unstamped)TrackedChanges
- 021-2017 Li - NYU Shanghai-Application for Amendment signed
- 021-2017 Li & CONLON NYU Shanghai-Initial Application Form-CleanVersion
- 021-2017 Li & CONLON NYU Shanghai-Initial Application Form-TrackedChanges

Appendix C: Informed Consent Form, NYU Shanghai IRB Approved

上 海 纽 约 大 学

SHANGHAI NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

上海市浦东新区世纪大道 1555 号, 200122 Tel: 8621 20595000 Fax: 8621 20595019

Shanghai New York University, 1555 Century Avenue, Pudong New Area, Shanghai, China (200122)

http://shanghai.nyu.edu

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Purpose:

The purpose of this research is to provide a description of the experience of Chinese students' getting an education at NYU Shanghai. The study is being carried out by Brandon Conlon, who is a graduate student at The University of Liverpool, as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctorate of Education (EdD).

Procedures:

(1) Participants will be asked to take part in a minimum of two and a maximum of four 30-minute audiorecorded interview interviews from the time the study begins until all the interviews have been completed. This is anticipated to be no more than a four month period, but it could possibly extend longer.

(2) Each interview will last approximately 30 minutes. The minimum total time for participation will be approximately 1 hour. The maximum total time will be approximately 2 hours. Time between each interview will be at least a week.

(3) These will be open ended interviews that will begin with the very general question "Please describe your experiences of getting an education at NYU Shanghai since you entered the university until now." Additional probes will be based on what you say during the interview, but will be aimed to keep you on the topic. At these follow-up interviews the same broad question will be the focus. All interviews will be audiorecorded, transcribed, and analyzed by the primary investigator.

(4) Upon completion of the final interview, you will receive 200RMB as compensation for your time.

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Possible Risks and Safeguards:

This study is designed to minimize as much as possible any potential physical, psychological, and social risks to you. Although very unlikely, there are always risks in research, which you are entitled to know in advance of giving your consent, as well as the safeguards to be taken by those who conduct the project to minimize the risks. One form of risk in this particular study is that recounting your own experiences could cause you emotional distress, for example, because you remember an experience that had caused such distress in the past. It should be noted, however, that such risks in this study are deemed no greater than the risks of participating in everyday life.

In cases of emotional distress, the participants will be encouraged to seek help in the University Counselling Center or from high-quality external services such as the Shanghai Lifeline http://www.lifeline-shanghai.com/ (021) 6279 8990.

Possible Benefits:

Possible benefits of participating in this study are listed below. Please note that these benefits are indirect and participants may or may not actually benefit from this study.

(1) Participating in this study may help you to recollect and gather your thoughts about your experiences of getting an education at NYU Shanghai, which could be potentially useful for other interviews you will have in the future.

(2) Through your experience as an interviewee you may also gain a greater awareness of yourself as a learner, which could lead to increased understanding of your experiences of getting an education.

(3) Your participation may contribute to the understanding of others when they seek knowledge and understanding of the experiences of Chinese students studying in institutions like NYU Shanghai.

(4) Your participation may enable the researcher and other researchers to contribute to the knowledge, theory, and practice of international higher education.

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NYUSH IRB Expiration Date: 10/29/2018

上 海 纽 约 大 学
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Shanghai New York University, 1555 Century Avenue, Pudong New Area, Shanghai, China (200122)
http://shanghai.nyu.edu

Confidentiality:

The following measures will be taken to maintain confidentiality.

(1) Although your identity shall be known to the Principal Investigator, all identifying information shall be removed at the time of transcription of the tape recordings.

(2) Since the ultimate aim of this research is to arrive at a single description, an attempt will be made to amalgamate the responses of all interviewees. The only identifier that will remain will be your major area of study. When the identifying information is removed, a letter-number sequence, such as S1, S2, S3, will be applied.

(3) The interviews in this study will be audiorecorded. You will have the right to review all or any portion of the recording and request that it be destroyed.

(3) This informed consent form will be kept separate from the interview responses, transcriptions, and coded data in a secure and locked filing cabinet known only to the co-investigator, Brandon Conlon. After five years it will be destroyed. Interview responses, transcriptions, and coded data will be kept anonymous in a secure and locked filing cabinet in the case of physical documents, and on a password protected computer in a locked room, in the case of digital documents, known only to the co-investigator, Brandon Conlon. After five years the aforementioned documents will be destroyed. Transcribed data in the form of digital files containing anonymous data from the interviews will be kept indefinitely for future research.

(4) Only the Principal Investigator will have access to the data prior to reporting in dissertation drafts and the final dissertation. Anonymized data included in drafts will be available to my primary and secondary doctoral supervisors. All the data that is reported will be kept confidential to the extent required by law. Data will not be analyzed in relation to the individual, but rather in terms of the experience of getting an education in general terms. It will be reported anonymously.

(5) You may request a copy of a summary report of findings for the study in general.

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(6) Quotes of responses from your interview may be used in the dissertation in an anonymous form, possibly with a fictitious name applied.

(7) The Principal Researcher will provide you with a copy of this consent form for your records.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

(1) Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to withdraw your participation at any time, including during interviews, without penalty or loss of benefits, to which you are otherwise entitled.

(2) Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and the subject may discontinue participation at any time.

(3) Your refusal to participate or choosing to withdraw your participation at any time, including during interviews, in no way will have an effect on your grades, enrollment status at NYUSH, or access to resources at the university, or any other benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Summary Report:

Upon conclusion of this study, a summary report of the general findings will become available. If you would like a copy of the report, please indicate this by leaving your email address:

Contact information of Principal Investigator, Research Supervisor, and the Research Compliance Office:

If you have any questions about the research study or if you experience a research-related problem, please contact me, Brandon Conlon, the co-investigator in this study, through email (bmc6@nyu.edu) or phone (18918799765). You may also contact the principal investigator

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of this study, Dr. Xuan Li at **xl24@nyu.edu** . If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the Research Compliance Office at RCOinfo@nyu.edu.

Consent: Please read the following sentences and sign your name below. Signing your name below indicates that:

- you have read the above information
- you voluntarily agree to participate
- you are at least 18 years of age

Your Signature _____ Date_____

Printed name of person giving consent: _____ Date _____

Signature of person obtaining consent _____Date _____

Printed name of person obtaining consent: Brandon Conlon Date _____

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

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Appendix D: Sample Analysis of S2's Data from Raw Transcript to Final Transformation

	Meaning units (raw data)	Transformation of meaning units	Further transformation
2	S2 think the education during her freshman year, that's more about GPS and that impressed her the most, is about the GPS, because S2 cannot really understand the articles or what [inaudible 00:00:34] has talked about in the class. So that was really hard, but S2 feel it's really lucky of her to have a professor of the GPS workshop. So professor, S2 feel like they're kind of soulmates, because for her, S2 was born in a really rural village in China./	S2 states that during her first year she really could not understand the articles in her GPS course or what the lecturer talked about, but she did feel lucky to have a professor for the workshop that was attached to that class who she felt was like a "soulmate" to her	2, 5-6: Although S2 could not understand the texts or lectures in the GPS plenary course, she felt fortunate to have an instructor who she could closely identify with for the writing workshop portion of that course, who offered her much help and guided her through the transition from high school to university education, including English writing. S2 describes how she felt that her GPS workshop professor was like her in many ways, they had similarities in their backgrounds, and had many problems and difficulties like hers, so she felt close to the professor. S2 describes how her workshop professor helped her with the new demands of the university to write a lot of things, when she didn't often know what to write or how to make her thoughts clear. The professor was able to understand her, and had the patience to meet with her often and find out what she meant. S2 was able to take two semesters of writing workshop with her.
3	It's really rural, that no train can reach there. You need to take the train and take the bus and then you got something like motorbike to reach that place. It's really far. And her parents studied very hard and they get to college, and then they became teachers and they become very professional and kind of famous in the small town. And then the policy of Shanghai was, over ten years ago they had	S2 describes how her family was not originally from Shanghai, but were able to move here because of a government policy seeking talented people to move to the city. She was from a rural village, but her parents studied hard and went to university and became very professional teachers who were famous in her small village. They	

	policy to get the talent people in Shanghai, so her parents was moved to Shanghai many years ago. /	moved here many years ago.	
4	And then at the beginning, they sent her to her auntie's house. So S2 lived with her aunt for three years, and then after that, S2 was by the fourth grade in primary school, and S2 have never learned English by that time. So in Shanghai, the children get their English education for kindergarten, but S2 know nothing about English-Until her fourth grade. Yeah. But by her fourth grade, her parents planned to take her to Shanghai, so S2 just moved from that rural village to Shanghai. So S2 met a lot of [inaudible 00:02:28] discrimination. /	S2 continues to describe her background, how she lived with her aunt in the village for three years when her parents first came to Shanghai, so when she did arrive in fourth grade her English was behind the other Shanghai students who begin in kindergarten. Because she was from the rural village she met a lot of discrimination at that time. In addition to her poor English at that time she didn't initially wear a uniform because in her rural village that wasn't required, but it was in Shanghai.	
5	In the village school, they don't require you to wear uniform and they don't require you to wear the [inaudible 00:02:43] stuff, but it is required to wear all of them in the Shanghai urban schools. /	S2 describes how she felt that her GPS workshop professor was like her in many ways because she was an immigrant to the US when she was very young and had many problems and difficulties like hers, so she felt like her "soulmate," [as mentioned above].	
6	So S2 was [inaudible 00:02:53] by her classmates, and especially when S2 don't know anything about English and her grades are really poor, S2 got seven points out of a 100 in her first test of the English tests. At her first grade. So that's really hard. But also-Yeah, 'cause S2 know nothing, S2 just randomly choose a, b, c or d. [crosstalk 00:03:31] Yeah, because her GPS professor, she's originally from Korea,	S2 describes how her workshop professor helped her with the new demands of the university to write a lot of things, when she didn't often know what to write or how to make her thoughts clear. The professor was able to understand her, and she met her many times, and the professor was always asking her, "Do you mean x?" and S2 was always saying, yes, that was exactly what she meant.	

	and then also she moved to New York when she was really young. And she was the only one in her family who can speak English. So she has also met a lot of problems and difficulties, but she finally overcome them. So S2 feel like they're soulmate, although-/	This professor gave her much help and kind of lead her into the world of the university education and English writing. S2 did two semesters of writing workshop with her.	
7	[In writing workshop] S2 need to write a lot of things. But sometimes S2 don't know what S2'm writing about, because S2 don't know how to make her thoughts clear. S2 think they're really [inaudible 00:04:30] but the professor can understand. S2 met her a lot of times, and always she was asking her, "Do you mean, blah blah blah?", and S2 was like, yeah that's exactly what S2 mean./	S2 states that they learned many new things that they had never touched before in her prior schooling because they were forbidden. Things like feminism and gender and sexuality.	7-8: S2 states that through her GPS course she was exposed to new topics, such as feminism, gender, and sexuality, that were forbidden in her prior schooling and by her parents, who thought they were very bad. She was amazed to see these topics presented in a professional academic format, in essays and journal articles, with supporting data to be used for professional purposes, because in the past her and her classmates could only learn about these subjects in novels or texts that her parents did not want her to read.
8	S2 think the first semester from that time, [the aforementioned professor] gave her a lot of help and kind of lead her to enter the world of this college education and the English writing. And S2 followed her next semesters, so S2 did two semesters of her writing workshop. /	She was amazed because these topics were considered bad before, but now she was seeing it in a scholarly format in an essay and journal articles. Before she and her highschool classmates could only get in touch with gender and sexuality through novels or from things that her parents didn't want her to read, things her parents thought were really bad. But now she felt that it was really great that this was for professional purposes with data and written in a professional format.	
9	S2 guess we have learned a lot of things that we have never touched before, like gender and sexuality. That was kind of forbidden before. And about	S2 recalls that her and her friends used to go out and walk the streets for many hours talking about marriage and relationships and other topics from their	9-10: S2 recalls that her and her friends had been stimulated by the topics in the GPS course and would discuss them at length outside of class, connecting

	feminism, and a lot of things like that, because we have never been in touch with those things. /	first-year GPS course, thinking things through [in relation to their real lives].	them to important issues in their real lives, both at the present time and in the future. S2 states that their thoughts changed over the four years in relation to these early considerations, both in terms of what they expected for themselves and on issues related to societal expectations related to moral norms such as having sex before marriage.
10	And especially, S2 feel like S2 was amazed because the things are [inaudible 00:06:25] as something bad before, but now it is written in an essay format, in journal format. So that was very fresh at first. For us, her and her high school friends, we have get in touch with gender and sexuality, all the knowledge we have known from that are from the novels and from something that her parents don't want her to read. They think they're really bad. But now, it's for a professional purpose, and they have data and it's written in this so-called [professional] journal format [crosstalk 00:07:19]. So S2 feel that's really great./	S2 states that their thoughts changed over the four years in relation to these early considerations. She gives the example of one of her friends who told her in the first year that he doesn't want a relationship or marriage, because he's a science major so he just wants to study more about neuroscience and focus on his interests, but now he's super happy with his girlfriend and he's thinking about marriage and a lot of things like that. She has also changed: In her freshman year, S2 was like, relationship and marriage is really important in life. And now, it's not really important. As long as you're happy, it's not necessary to have a relationship or a marriage. She also used to think you cannot have sex before marriage, but now she feels like that's "bullshit," and that it's okay.	

Appendix E: Interviewer Speech, Including all Questions and Prompts, during Interview of S1

[Interviewer: ... start again, Okay? So this is S1. And so, S1, please describe your experiences of getting an education at NYU Shanghai, since you entered the university, until now. And of course, that's a lot of experience, right? So you can jump around. It doesn't have to be in any kind of order, okay? So please begin.]
[[Interviewer:You were in a triple?] [[Interviewer: Why is that?]
[[Interviewer: Are you? Yeah.] /
[[Interviewer: Did you, you realized it, but how did it, when you were realizing it, what was it like to realize that?]
[[Interviewer: Yeah.]
[[Interviewer: And so did you, that's something you began to experience after you came here, right? You didn't know this before, this was something you began to see through your experiences, yeah? Yeah, keep going. That's interesting.] [[Interviewer: But it was obviously important, because you chose to tell me about that, so you're looking back, and that was important, yeah?]
[[Interviewer: So you played a lot of sports with them?]
[[Interviewer: Yeah?]
[[Interviewer: Oh, so you meant the clubs.]
[[Interviewer: So how does that relate to your experiences? Of getting an education. Let's take it back to your experiences, right? So yeah, this abundance and this other stuff, you know, how does that relate to your, when you look back three and a half years or more of education at NYU Shanghai, right. Keep going with that descriptions. Yeah.] [[Interviewer: So you were involved in clubs, you were interacting a lot with your international classmates, these are things you've been talking about, but you can keep going with that, or you can move on to something else.]
[[Interviewer: So how did you experience that?] [[Interviewer: Is that major? Remind me what's your major.] [Interviewer: Okay. Yeah.]
[Interviewer: Yeah.]
[Interviewer: Yeah, that's interesting. So tell me about that experience for yourself. How did you find yourself on that path?]
[Interviewer: What is it?] [Interviewer: Oh, yeah.]
[Interviewer: Algorithm.] [Interviewer: Interesting.] [Interviewer: What is it?] [Interviewer: ELE. Yeah, I've seen that, yeah.] [Interviewer: What is it? Ele?] [Interviewer: Oh yeah, Ele.me.]
[Interviewer: Oh, the delivery companies.] [Interviewer: Oh, right, yes.] [Interviewer: Yeah.]
[Interviewer: So how did that, let's get back to your experience. So right, I see the importance of the location now, let's get back to the experience of you becoming an IMA major, right, and all of that, yeah. So let's get back to that.]
[Interviewer: So what was it, was it just seeing it, or was it, just seeing it there, seeing the possibility, or was it more than that? In that class.]
[Interviewer: What is that?] [Interviewer: Sensor? What is it called, Lip Motion?] [Interviewer: L-I-P?]
[Interviewer:You were the best?] [Interviewer: Oh, okay.]
[Interviewer: Okay, this is S1, our second interview. Thank you and please go ahead and continue.]
[Interviewer: Oh, yeah?] [Interviewer: Right there, yeah.]
[Interviewer: Why did you switch again?] [Interviewer: Give up the competition?] [Interviewer: There are different tracks in this competition?] [Interviewer: I see.] [Interviewer: Yeah, that's okay [crosstalk 00:03:12].
[Interviewer: Was this in ... Again, it's IM? It's [Names the name of a competition]? For [Names the name of a competition], yeah?] [Interviewer: Yeah, really? In [Names a university location]?] [Interviewer: You mean you ...] [Interviewer: Because you studied there?] [Interviewer: Yeah, I see.] [Interviewer: Interesting.]
[Interviewer: What where those experiences like of participating in the [Names the name of a club] and doing that project over the summer and then going to the [Names a place]? What are some of the aspects of the experience that you ...] [Interviewer: Querkey? How do you spell that?]
[Interviewer: Where was that? Where was the maker's carnival?]
[Interviewer: [Foreign language 00:10:16] yeah. Uh-uh (affirmative) yeah.] [Interviewer: Yeah.]
[Interviewer: In [Names a city]?] [Interviewer: What are you ... This experience, what were some of the ... What are some of the things that you were getting out of it?]
[Interviewer: Describe that for me.]
[Interviewer: Yeah? Try to go into detail about some of the experiences. I don't know if you feel like you've ...]
[Interviewer: Prizes, yeah?] [Interviewer: Describe that experience of-]
[Interviewer: A lot of organizing.]
[Interviewer: How do you feel like ... In what ways was that an educational experience?] S1: It's ...[Interviewer: What'd you get out of it?]

[Interviewer: What was that like, meeting them? What was the experience like, meeting those people?]
[Interviewer: They came from China from ...] [Interviewer: Do you keep in touch with them anymore?] [Interviewer: What kind of service is that?] [Interviewer: No, no.]
[Interviewer: How did that feel to be the organizer and doing all this?] [Interviewer: What does that mean?]
[Interviewer: The only big event?] [Interviewer: This is when? This is your sophomore year?] [Interviewer: That's a lot of responsibility for ....] [Interviewer: Then so was that ... Obviously you're describing that to me. Was that a big part of your second year then right?]
[Interviewer: You did?] [Interviewer: That was during your travels you went there? No?] [Interviewer: What was that experience like then? You being ...]
[Interviewer: [Names a university], yeah.] [Interviewer: Why did you do that, yeah?]
[Interviewer: What was it that made you go there and be interested in exploring the ... What was that experience about? You're telling me about that experience. It must be interesting for you right?]
[Interviewer: What was it like being there? You were an NYU Shanghai student right? Being it was at this new university.] [Interviewer: Oh, you didn't [crosstalk 00:30:32]?] [Interviewer: What did you learn from that? Why are you telling me about that as part of your education?]
[Interviewer: How did you feel though? Being who you were, how did you feel being there and looking at that and thinking about your own experiences?]
[Interviewer: As an NYU Shanghai student, what did you feel like? When you were thinking, "Okay, these are [Names a university] students. I'm an NYU Shanghai student."] [Interviewer: Yeah, but you knew you were right?] [Interviewer: When you were thinking about yourself, how did you feel, compared to what you were observing there?]
[Interviewer: The separation.][Interviewer: You feel like it's not separated here, right?]
[Interviewer: Okay, S1, this is our third interview. Please begin.]
[Interviewer: Wow. That's it?]
[Interviewer: What is that? What do you mean? Cultural what?] [Interviewer: Visiting? Yeah.]
[Interviewer: Really? I can go and live there if I want to?] [Interviewer: Really? Huh.]
[Interviewer: So what you're telling me, all this, the experiencing all these different people, what was this ... how was this part of your education, for you?]
[Interviewer: Oh, yeah?] [Interviewer: Yeah, great.][Interviewer: From Taiwan you said, right? Yeah.] [Interviewer: Oh, Thailand? Yeah.] [Interviewer: So you're going to Thailand, or?] [Interviewer: Uh-huh. Where is that?] [Interviewer: [Names a university]?] [Interviewer: Are you going to [Names a university] for grad school?] [Interviewer: Great. Congratulations.] [Interviewer: That's exciting, huh?]
[Interviewer: Wow.]
[Interviewer: You did meet a few people who ... from different places. But it sounds like you also met a lot of Chinese. Chinese immigrants and so on, right?] [Interviewer: What was that experience like, and was ... did you find that your ... that just being an NYU student helped to prepare you for that? Sort of [crosstalk 00:13:30]]
[Interviewer: [Names a friend of the interviewee]?] [Interviewer: Yeah. I just met him.]
[Interviewer: In [Names a place where the interviewee studied abroad].]
[Interviewer: Yeah, a little bit. Not a lot.]
[Interviewer: How did it feel? I mean, you know.]
[Interviewer: How so?]
[Interviewer: Do you mean when you say facilities, you mean at the university, or where you were living, or in the city, or ...]
[Interviewer: So all these descriptions, these are good. What does this mean to you in terms of your educational experience? I mean, some of the things you've told me already, about becoming open minded and ... But what are some other ... what does mean in terms of your ...]
[Interviewer: When you embarked on your third year abroad, was the stuff you were experiencing ... was it surprising to you, or was it sort of ... I mean, is that what you expected, or ...] [Interviewer: Yeah. It'd be really what?] [Interviewer: Yeah. But it was even more exciting for you?]
[Interviewer: Were you kind of an adventurous person before you went?] [Interviewer: You know, like someone open to experiences before, yeah.]
[Interviewer: As part of your education, what has this ...] [Interviewer: [crosstalk 00:26:01] [Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative). IMA.]
[Interviewer: Was it hard to get?] [Interviewer: So is that part of NYU?] [Interviewer: Oh, I see.]
[Interviewer: So what was it like coming back in the end? So after you ...] [Interviewer: Yeah. So you were abroad [crosstalk 00:28:08]]
[Interviewer: Yeah, you did.]
[Interviewer: You mean the knowledge you gained when you were abroad, or the knowledge ... Is that what you mean, or?]
[Interviewer: So what are you doing now?] [Interviewer: What is it? Oh, slime mold. Yeah.] [Interviewer: Oh, interesting. Yeah.] [Interviewer: Yeah.] [Interviewer: Oh, Reddit. Yeah.] [Interviewer: It's based on what? Bro-] [Interviewer: Brother? Is that a com- I'm not very-] [Interviewer: Browser. Oh, yeah. Right. It's browser based. I

see.] [Interviewer: I see. Interesting. How do those two things relate to each other? Are they separate, or ...] [Interviewer: They're just pretty separate. So when you do computer science ... you're sort of double majoring, right? Is that right?] [Interviewer: Okay, so it's not integrated. It's sort of double.]
[Interviewer: Okay, S1, great to see you. Let's begin. This is our last interview.] [Interviewer: I remember you telling me about that, yeah.]
[Interviewer: What do you mean?][Interviewer: You mean the population at the university, yeah.]
[Interviewer: Sort of humble, yeah.]
[Interviewer: So how did that feel to you then? How was that part of your experience, when you noticed that?]
[Interviewer: So how did that contribute to your experience of getting an eduction, do you think?]
[Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative).]
[Interviewer: So when you studied abroad in your two semesters, you also were telling me that you met a lot of people and experienced a lot of cultural understanding. Was [Names a university location] just an extension of that, or ...?][Interviewer: But you did in [Names a place of study abroad]?]
[Interviewer: What do you mean by "futuristic?" That's sort of an interesting way to describe it. What does that ...?]
[Interviewer: Did you think about that a lot when you were there?] [Interviewer: Yeah.] [Interviewer: Oh right, that one, yeah.]
[Interviewer: Yeah.] [Interviewer: What is this idea of world-view? That's, when did you become aware of developing a world-view.]
[Interviewer: Do you remember being here at NYU Shanghai before you studied away, and thinking about that?]
[Interviewer: So before though, you studied abroad, you weren't' so sure about this. And now you're sure about it? Is that what you're telling me?]
[Interviewer: That's very interesting. How did you become aware of that? I mean, you're talking about it now, but do you have any more, can you help me get more of a sense of how you experienced that? It's very interesting.]
[Interviewer: So that's something you really experienced, this sort of insight is something you've really experienced on a personal ...] [Interviewer: That's very interesting. Becoming aware of that, or becoming aware of that idea. And you think that was something that was different from when you came in.]
[Interviewer: And how does that make you feel, I mean, how do you feel?] [Interviewer: Can you give me an example of that, did you experience that ...? When you don't want to do something, you can say you're done. So, before you felt like there was an obligation to try to continue to try to ... and now you realize that you can say ... can you give me an example of some of those things? Like, what was it like before, do you remember any examples? Of experiences?] [Interviewer: And what was that like for you, how did you experience that? Was that, yeah.] [Interviewer: But that doesn't sound like it's about culture, though. I mean, the other thing you were telling me was more about culture.]
[Interviewer: But the other thing you were telling me had a lot to do with culture, though, right?] [Interviewer: But the other thing you were telling me, that's what you were telling me, right? You were telling me that, that's the way I understood it, what you were telling me, was that it was about, sort of, you were really, sort of, they had this idea of cooperating, right, and cooperation, and that meant that you didn't have to be friends at all times, and knowing where the limitations were, and so on. And that was the kind of realization that you had. Right? That's very interesting. So I'm just trying to get some sense of ... the last example that you just gave me seems more like it's to do with your own ... tell me if I'm wrong, but it seems like it's to do with your own personal confidence, right, developing your personal confidence, right? The one about working with these guys in [Names a study abroad site], and then telling them that you wanted to do your own project, because that was a personal project, you had a good idea, right? But the other things you were talking about seemed to do more with culture, did I misunderstand that, or is that ...?] [Interviewer: I see what you mean, yeah.]
[Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative). I see. So does that mean that you feel that you're more individual, that you're more individualistic?]
[Interviewer: So this is something you feel on an individual, but when we were talking before, because you were talking about Huntington, and you were talking about [Names a study abroad site], and it seemed like you were talking about at the national level.] [Interviewer: So that's something that you've really, that's part of your worldview, that you've experienced.]
[Interviewer: So when you, before you went abroad, because this is something you experienced, you realized after you went abroad ... so before you went abroad, in terms of, you know, your cultural development, which is what I thought, because that's what I thought you were referring to before. Was that, how was that different? So like, you gave me the example of, when I asked you to give me a specific example, right, you gave me an example of when you were abroad, right? Because you were talking about hanging out together, right, and you said afterwards, you can ...] [Interviewer: I see, I see.] [Interviewer: I see now, okay, that's interesting. That's very interesting. We still have a minute and a little bit left.] [Interviewer: Yeah. And so when you came in, you had this sense, you felt ...] [Interviewer: So how did you feel that? I mean, how did you feel that development? I mean, how did it, was it a struggle, was it difficult? Was it easy?] [Interviewer: Yeah, so it's, you can experience now tapping into diff points of view. Is that what you're saying? Drawing from different ...] [Interviewer: Solid, yeah. I understand, yeah, rigid. Yeah.]