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# A journey of advising: Experiences of doctoral international students and faculty advisors in the College of Education at a Midwestern university

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A JOURNEY OF ADVISING: EXPERIENCES OF DOCTORAL INTERNATIONAL

STUDENTS AND FACULTY ADVISORS IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

AT A MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY

A Dissertation

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Approved:

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August 2008

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# DEDICATION

To the memory of my father, Mihai, to my mother, Marcela, to my husband, Aaron, to my son, Mihai Paul, to my family in Romania, and to everyone else who always believed in me and supported me unconditionally throughout this personal and professional journey.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this dissertation would have never been possible without the presence in my life of people who believed in me, supported me, and guided me throughout this journey.

The insights of faculty and international students who participated in this study have not only contributed to the literature on international education, but also have enriched me as an individual and professional in the field. I would like to thank them for the time, information, courage, and emotion they shared with me throughout this study.

My thanks and appreciation to Dr. Deborah Tidwell, my advisor and co-chair, and to Dr. Christine Canning, co-chair, for guiding me, persevering with me, and challenging me intellectually throughout the time it took me to complete this research and write the dissertation. The members of my dissertation committee, Dr. Gregory Stefanich, Dr. Joyce Milambiling, and Dr. Radhi Al-Mabuk, generously gave their time and expertise to improve my work. I thank them for their contribution and their ongoing support. I feel honored to have had the privilege to work with them all.

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ABSTRACT

In the last five decades, higher education in the United States has faced a large

influx of international students (Institute of International Education, 2004). However, a

review of selected literature showed a paucity of research on faculty advising graduate

international students. The literature pointed out that not all institutions were prepared to

work with the international student population (Adrian-Taylor, Noels, & Tischler, 2007;

Khabiri, 1985; Seeger, 1993) and that further investigation was needed in the area of

faculty advising related to international students (Adrian-Taylor, et al.; Trice, 2003).

Therefore, this study focused on the following research question: How do selected

doctoral international students and faculty advisors in the College of Education in a

Midwestern university live and perceive their advising experience?

An examination of the literature about international students in the United States

higher education revealed a multitude of needs which could impact the life of

international students on campus (Fatima, 2001; Parr, Bradley & Bingi, 1992; Sandhu &

Asrabadi, 1991). Although these needs could be broadly classified as socio-cultural and

academic, they were closely intertwined. As the literature showed, language (Pedersen,

1991; Yeh, 2004), culture shock (Leong & Chou, 1996; Lin, 1998), and development of

support networks and help sources (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Ladd & Ruby, 1999) were

considered problematic aspects which might interfere with the international students'

adaptation, interaction with others, and potential learning in a new environment.

The qualitative multiple case-study methodology used in this study contributed to

engaging the participants in discussions of their advising experiences in order to elicit

themes and meanings significant to them and to enable the researcher to hear their voices through unfolding stories of their advising experiences. Shaped by their own personal values and knowledge, participant perspectives on their advising experiences revealed the following major themes: guiding/being guided, subjective experiences and expectations, growing and adapting, and unfolding of the personal. Through an in-depth investigation of particular case studies of both faculty advisors and doctoral international advisees, the results of the present study contribute to the literature on advising international students by providing insights into how advisors engage with international students and insights into student and faculty perspectives on effective advising.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Indications for Study

In recent years, higher education institutions in the United States have witnessed a

steady increase in international student enrollment. According to the Institute of

International Education (IIE) in their publication *Open Doors* (2004), although

the number of international students studying in the United States declined in 2003/2004,

it grew substantially from 1999 to 2003 (IIE, 2004). A new analysis from IIE shows that

new enrollment of international students in the United States climbed again in 2006/2007

(IIE, 2008). A recent survey which IIE conducted jointly with other national higher

education associations regarding information on Fall 2006 enrollments shows that 52% of

campuses in the United States reported increases in new enrollments for Fall 2006, and

only 20% reported declines (28% reported no change; IIE, 2006). In addition, a report

from the United States Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs indicates a strong

rise in the number of student visas issued in the year ending September 2006 (IIE).

The advantages of international students have been widely recognized in terms of their

impact on the economy in the United States (IIE, 2004). A report in 2006 by the

Association of International Educators calls for a recruitment and marketing plan to be

developed at the national level that clearly communicates the advantages of the United

States higher education in order for the country to remain a strong competitor in the

international student market (NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 2006). To

develop such a recruitment plan, an important step is to consider the experiences of

current international students studying in the United States (Trice & Yoo, 2007).

Understanding international students' experiences, goals, and academic and socio-

cultural needs can help leaders work on facilitating these students' journey through the

United States educational system. In addition, this information on international students

can also help leaders highlight the positive aspects of international students' experiences

in their recruitment materials (Trice & Yoo, 2007).

The presence of international students on a university campus offers an important

diversity of viewpoints to the student body and helps offset a declining applicant pool in

certain fields in the United States (Wan, Chapman, & Biggs, 1992). The increasing

number of international students enrolled in higher education institutions in the United

States has called attention to the need to provide special services to facilitate international

students' adjustment to the host culture and to solve various problems international

students may encounter (Boyer & Sedlacek, 1986). However, literature shows that

international students' adjustment experiences are complex and full of challenges

(Selvadurai, 1992; Trice, 2003; Yeh, 2004).The challenges come mainly from socio-

cultural and academic differences between the host country and the home country of

students (Hamouda, 1986; Lin, 1998). These differences have created adjustment

difficulties related to language proficiency, culture shock, and support networks/help

sources in the lives of international students on campuses in the United States.

While in general, international students have high educational aspirations,

positive attitudes toward their school, and strong academic backgrounds (Aslanbeigui &

Montecinos, 1998; Leong & Sedlacek, 1986; Manese, Sedlacek & Leong, 1988), they are

also confronted with a variety of academic problems in their adjustment to higher education in the United States (Boyer & Sedlacek, 1986; Carter & Sedlacek, 1986; Wan, Chapman & Biggs, 1992). These issues can include advisor-related difficulties, curriculum/program relevance, instructor-related difficulties, and university system difficulties, among others (Hamouda, 1986; Lin, 1998).

Advising, as defined in the literature, is the medium through which the college's educational goals and the student's educational goals are negotiated and the only structured service on campus in which all students have the opportunity for on-going, one-to-one contact with a concerned representative of the institution (Davis & Cooper, 2001; Habley, 1981). Advising through the interaction with faculty members can have a positive impact on many aspects of student development, including intellectual, academic, and personal growth (Alexitch, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

While research on international students and international education in general is not new and has been addressed particularly since the 1980s (Altbach, 2002; de Wit, 2002), there is a paucity of research on faculty advising graduate international students. Since the literature indicates that not all institutions are prepared to work with this student population (Adrian-Taylor, Noels, & Tischler, 2007; Khabiri, 1985; Seeger, 1993), further investigation is needed in the area of faculty advising international students (Adrian-Taylor, et al.; Trice, 2003). In order to investigate faculty advising related to international students, similar research actions were strongly recommended at NAFSA: Association of International Educators Conference 2007 (Olson, 2007) in an attempt to

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bridge "the triple knowledge gap: between what we say we do, what we do, and what the students and other clients experience" (Mestenhauser, 2007).

The limited research combined with the personal experiences of the researcher suggests that exploring faculty advising international students is an important research topic. The researcher has a personal interest in faculty advising related to international students. During her graduate years as an international student in the United States, the researcher realized that a lack of information and direction could be confusing in the advising process and the socio-cultural and academic norms a student comes with could conflict with the local institutional norms. For example, not being informed about or guided towards resources on students' rights and responsibilities in a new/foreign educational system could lead to miscommunication and misinterpretation. Her personal experiences led the researcher to believe that advising is a key element in a students' education experience – intellectual, academic, and personal.

The present study addresses faculty advising international students using qualitative multiple-case studies designed to explore the advising experience as it is lived and perceived by selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors.

<u>Statement of Research Problem</u>

Although leaders in the field of international education emphasize the importance of recruitment of international students in order for the United States to remain a strong competitor in the international student market (NAFSA, 2006) and the positive impact of these students on the United States campuses (Wan, et al., 1992), the literature points out that not all institutions are well equipped to work with international students (Adrian-

Taylor et al.; Khabiri, 1985; Seeger, 1993) and that further investigation is needed in the

area of faculty advising international students (Adrian-Taylor, et al., 2007; Trice, 2003).

This study focuses on the following research question: How do selected doctoral

international students and faculty advisors in the College of Education in a Midwestern

university live and perceive their advising experience?

<div align="center">Significance of Study</div>

An examination of the research studies concerning international student

populations reveals a multitude of needs that international students have in higher

education in the United States (Selvadurai, 1992; Trice, 2003; Yeh, 2004). Although

these needs can be broadly classified as socio-cultural and academic, they are closely

intertwined. Language proficiency, culture shock, and development of support networks

and help sources are problematic aspects in an international student's life on campuses in

the United States (Hamouda, 1986; Lin, 1998). These aspects may interfere with the

international students' adaptation, interaction with others, and potential learning in a new

environment.

Research findings on faculty advising graduate international students indicate that

faculty advisors perceive that they have special needs in terms of advising international

graduate students (Greisberger, 1984). Greisberger found that faculty having access to

meaningful information about international advisees could contribute to effective

advising. International students and faculty have different perceptions in regard to the

goals and process of advising. In addition, communication between advisor and advisee is

of crucial importance for the success or failure of the advising process (Khabiri, 1985; Seeger, 1993).

The results of the present study contribute to the literature on advising international students by providing in-depth information on advising as it is experienced by selected faculty advisors and doctoral international students. The results from this study provide insights into how advisors engage with international students and insights into student and faculty perspectives on effective advising.

<p style="text-align:center;">Purpose of the Study</p>

The studies found on faculty advising graduate international students provide evidence of the need for faculty members and international graduate students to examine the present advisory system and develop strategies to facilitate effective advising (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007; Khabiri, 1985; Seeger, 1993). Researchers in these studies have gathered data by using survey questionnaires with large populations of participants. These previous studies contributed to the literature on advising international students by providing information on their socio-cultural and academic needs. Aspects predominant to both areas are: language proficiency, culture shock, and support networks/helps sources. These needs may interfere with the international students' adaptation, interaction with others, and potential learning in a new environment. These studies also suggest that faculty advising international students is a complex area that needs further research and in-depth investigation.

This study is an in-depth investigation of the advising experience as it is lived and perceived by selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in the College

of Education in a Midwestern university known for its focus as a teaching institution. The aim of the proposed study is to engage the participants in discussions of their advising experiences in order to elicit themes and meanings significant to them and to hear their voices through unfolding stories of their advising experience.

<div align="center">Definition of Terms</div>

Definitions of the following terms are meant to help readers understand their precise meanings in the context of this study:

International student: Educational background, national/cultural orientation, national origin, global experience, and especially self-definition or perception are important factors in defining an *international student*. For example, there are students who are citizens or permanent residents of the United States outside the boundaries of a technical definition regarding status and visas, but who have grown up and been educated outside of the United States and have the same educational, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds as any visa holding nonimmigrant student. In other words, there are citizens and permanent residents who have the same needs and backgrounds as international students with the only difference being the technical detail of immigration status (R. Schupbach, personal communication, September 28, 2007). For the present study, an international student is an individual with a non-United States educational and cultural background who came to the United States for the purpose of getting an education and entered the country on a student visa.

Advising: This is the act of assisting students in the clarification of their goals and in the development of educational plans for the realization of these goals (Crockett,

1985). For the purposes of the current research, it is important to clarify the term of advising related to international students. An *international student advisor* is the person associated with a school, college, or university who is in charge of providing information and guidance to international students in such areas as United States government regulations, visas, academic regulations, social customs, language, financial or housing problems, and certain legal matters (Education USA, 2007).

An *academic advisor*, also termed as mentor (Seeger, 1993) or supervisor (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007), is usually responsible for academic advising, and helping students develop and achieve their personal, educational and career goals (Gordon, Wesley, & Associates, 2000). Although the term *academic advisor* may refer to both full-time advisors and part-time (faculty) advisors, the terms *faculty* advising and *academic* advising are used interchangeably in the literature (Davis & Cooper, 2001; Gordon et al., 2000). In this study, *advisor* will be used as a specific term for faculty advisor.

Faculty advisors: Faculty members appointed by the department or college to provide advising services to students. Faculty advisors serve as facilitators of communication, coordinators of learning experiences, and agents of referral to other campus agencies as necessary (Gordon et al., 2000).

Lived experience: An experience referring to how a person immediately experienced the world "prereflectively" or, as Husserl (1970) defines it, as "the pregiven" or the world "already there" (p. xl). In the present study, lived experiences will refer to participants recollecting, commenting on, and making sense of advising experiences that they have "already passed or lived through" (van Manen, 1990, pp. 9-10).

Summary

International students add value to higher education in a variety of ways: by adding diversity to the academy, by serving as student resources, by enhancing cultural exchange, and by promoting internationalization of higher education. In the last five decades, higher education in the United States has faced a large influx of international students (IIE, 2004). The research on international students reveals a multitude of their socio-cultural and academic needs. These needs may interfere with the international students' adaptation, interaction with others, and potential learning in a new environment. Because advising is the vehicle for the negotiation of the college's educational goals and the student's educational goals, it is important to consider advising as a key element in the international students' learning experience. As a decision-making process which guides students through communication and information exchanges, careful advising is needed to help international students achieve their personal, educational and career goals (Thornton, 1988).

A review of selected literature shows that the research on faculty who advise graduate international students is rather scarce. The purpose of the present study is to explore advising from the perspectives of doctoral international students and faculty advisors in a teaching institution. This study contributes to the literature on advising international students by providing in-depth information on advising doctoral international students. In addition, the results from this study provide insights into how advisors engage with international students and insights into student and faculty perspectives on effective advising.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter II presents the review of literature related to (a) needs and challenges of international students in United States higher education, (b) definitions and effectiveness of advising, and (c) research findings on international students' academic experience related to faculty as well as on faculty advising graduate international students. The review of the literature articulates the structure of the study.

### International Students in the United States Higher Education

During the last five decades, the United States system of higher education has witnessed a large influx of international students admitted into colleges and universities throughout the country (Gardner & Witherell, 2004). The increasing number of international students enrolled has prompted higher education institutions to explore new issues these students bring to the academic and non-academic life on United States campuses (Goodwin & Nacht, 1983; Jenkins, 2001; Trice, 2000, 2003). The main characteristics that distinguish international students from domestic students are: temporary status, educational purpose, and cultural backgrounds.

International students have a special legal status in the United States. Generally, they are students enrolled for courses in the United States who are temporary residents with student visas. They are also immigrants (permanent residents), or citizens, or refugees, or resident aliens (green card holders; IIE, 2004). International students with temporary residency status have to follow special immigration laws: they must maintain full-time student status, which means they cannot drop out of school nor can they reduce

their required course load without jeopardizing their stay in the country. In addition, the employment rules are strict for international students. Their employment is usually limited to part-time work. Under United States immigration laws, international students can stay in the United States for the primary purpose of obtaining an education. International students may enter the United States in the F-1 or M-1 visa category provided they meet the following criteria:

1. The student must be enrolled in an "academic" educational program, a language-training program, or a vocational program.

2. The school must be approved by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

3. The student must be enrolled as a full-time student at the institution.

4. The student must demonstrate proficiency in English or be enrolled in courses leading to English proficiency.

5. The student must have sufficient funds available for self-support during the entire proposed course of study.

6. The student must maintain a residence abroad which he/she has no intention of giving up (USCIS, 2008).

Discussions and challenges related to international students and international education in general are not new phenomena (Altbach, 2002; de Wit, 2002). According to de Wit (2002), while there have always been international elements in higher education dating back to the medieval roots of the university in Europe, internationalization has not been the primary goal of academe. However, starting in the late 19th century, academic

mobility became a regular event, but without a formal and institutional structure. Cold War politics influenced many of the American international initiatives in the post–World War II era—from the rise of area studies to the National Defense Education Act. In other words, the growth of international education was founded on tenets of foreign policy and national security. In the 21st century, international education has become a multifaceted phenomenon due to its strong relation to new societal trends - globalization, information and communication technology, labor market, and lifelong learning. The increasing pace and complexity of global knowledge flows, and the accelerating exchange of educational ideas, practices and policies, are important factors of globalization. Higher education is a key site for these flows and exchanges. Thus, a myriad of challenges (related to language, socio-cultural adjustment, etc.) regarding international students emerged in relation to an increasing diversity and mobility of students (de Wit, 2002).

International students are individuals with their own culturally conditioned beliefs, perceptions, expectations, and understanding which all influence their adjustment and learning (Paige, 1990; Zhai, 2002). Bulthuis' (1986) study attempts to raise awareness of international students' different sets of values and beliefs and how their perception of time, equality, pedagogy, and friendship may differ from that of North Americans. Bulthuis also warns practitioners that grouping all international students as one monolithic group of foreigners may lead to an assumption of homogeneity.

Looking at international students from a cross-cultural psychological perspective, Paige (1990) explains the uniqueness of this population by arguing that international students experience *psychological acculturation* and acculturative stress. Graves (1967)

suggested the term psychological acculturation to describe the changes an individual experiences as a result of being in contact with other cultures and as a result of experiencing acculturation. Changes may occur, at the population level, in social structure, economic base, and political organization, while at the individual level change may occur in behavior, identity, values, and attitudes. Moreover, students struggling to communicate effectively in English may require professors to spend extra time teaching them and providing them with feedback. International students' difficulties in understanding lectures, expressing ideas, and writing reports have been attributed largely to a lack of proficiency in English (Selvadurai, 1992; Trice, 2003).

Though they arrive from cultures with distinct patterns of etiquette, food habits, and religious beliefs (Selvadurai, 1992), international students may have common needs and concerns (Fatima, 2001; Parr, Bradley & Bingi, 1992; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1991). A review of major studies published on this topic since the 1980s renders two areas of need for international students during their educational sojourn in the United States: socio-cultural needs and academic needs. Although these seem to be two distinct areas in the literature (Hamouda, 1986; Lin, 1998), the socio-cultural and academic needs of international students are closely intertwined. Predominant aspects of these two areas are: language proficiency, culture shock, and support networks/help sources. These aspects are encountered within both areas of socio-cultural and academic needs. For example, although insufficient language proficiency is considered a potential problem in the international students' socio-cultural adjustment (Hamouda, 1986; Lin, 1998) it can also have a great impact on their academic adjustment (Thornton, 1988; Yeh, 2004). Because

the areas of socio-cultural and academic needs are closely related to each other through common elements, it seems important to discuss language, culture shock, and support networks/help sources as individual categories.

In order to focus on the socio-cultural and academic concerns (language, culture shock, and support networks/help sources), the issue of culture needs to be addressed as the umbrella under which the international students experience takes place. The literature on culture shows that the definition of culture is contested and ambiguous, easily misunderstood and misused. Tylor (1889) views culture as a complex sum of knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and all the abilities and habits acquired by an individual as a member of society. Others consider that culture references a human-made made part of the environment, as opposed to aspects that occur in nature (Cushner, McClelland & Safford, 2003). The definition of culture remains elusive. Or as Erickson (2005) states, attempts of formal definitions of culture have not been successful and "even experts have not been able to agree on what culture *really* is" (p. 34). Culture captures the contextual and social/relational aspects of resources vis-à-vis their meaning to and among people. As Benkler (2006) suggests, "culture is a frame of meaning from within which we must inevitably function and speak to each other, and whose terms, constraints, and affordances we always negotiate" (p. 8). Culture is the product of a dynamic process and does not "predetermine who we are, or what we can become or do, nor is it a fixed artifact" (Benkler, p.8). In other words, culture is an integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationships and expected behaviors

of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group; and the ability to transmit the above to

succeeding generations (National Center for Cultural Competence of Georgetown

University, 2006).

Language

It is apparent that language issues arise not only in the international student's

socio-cultural life but also in his/her academic life (Aubrey, 1991; Pedersen, 1991; Ying

& Liese, 1991). As the majority of international students in the United States are from

non-English speaking countries (IIE, 2004), they have to academically succeed in a

foreign language. Studies on international students identify language as a significant

barrier (Alexander & Shaw, 1991; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992; Yeh, 2004). Both faculty

and students perceive gaps in English proficiency as problematic in adjusting to the

academic environment (Selvadurai, 1992; Thornton, 1988). Difficulties in

communication have been associated with international students working with native

English speakers on group projects (Britton, et al., 2003). Most of these problems were

due to differences in accent, enunciation, slang, idioms, and use of special English words

(Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1991).

Differences in language may contribute to inconvenient and awkward situations in

daily routines and may also influence the capacity for social interaction (Ishiyama, 1989).

If international students do not have adequate language skills, they may find themselves

at a disadvantage in their academic and social life on a United States campus. Difficulties

in verbal as well as in written communication may cause international students to feel

uncomfortable in daily life and may lead to feelings of insecurity (Ishiyama, 1989). Thus,

the author concludes, not being fully competent when using English may make the international student feel inferior, confused, and less willing to communicate with others. Among those international students for whom English is a foreign language, then, language competency is a critical factor affecting self-concept and self-efficacy in work and study performance. The level of language proficiency can have a strong impact on international students' validation of their personal well-being in the host culture (Ishiyama, 1989, 1995).

Culture Shock

Far away from their home countries, international students frequently experience problems directly resulting from their encounter with a new land, a new language, and different customs. Culture shock is one of the major problems international students face on their arrival (Leong & Chou, 1996; Lin, 1998; Thomas & Althen, 1989). Culture shock has long been the topic of academic study (Adler, 1975, 1981; Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Oberg, 1960). The term *culture shock* was introduced in the literature after World War II, and refers to experiences of intense disorientation, confusion and anxiety that are experienced when people are immersed into a new and unfamiliar culture with different social conventions, values, and norms (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004; Furnham & Bochner). According to Adler (1975), culture shock is a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture, to new cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding of new and diverse experiences. Culture shock may encompass feelings of helplessness, irritability, and fears of being cheated, contaminated, injured or disregarded (Adler, 1975). New physical

environments, social contexts, and institutions, as well as community expectations, can present unfamiliar challenges for international students and can lead to inappropriate reactions to a cultural situation and thereby interfere with proper adaptation and potential learning (Winkelman, 1994).

Paige (1990) points out that international students' responses are generally referred to by the term culture shock, but this term is used interchangeably in the literature as cultural adjustment and culture learning. In order to have a successful and enjoyable experience in the United States, international students need to cope with cultural adjustment problems. Values and customs, discrimination, ethnocentrism, finances, housing, language proficiency, and social isolation are some of the socio-cultural concerns international students encounter on a United States campus (Hamouda, 1986). Cultural segregation, as well as religious and financial issues are other challenging aspects of an international student's life (Lin, 1998). International students experience a process of cultural adjustment that, at times, is stressful and difficult to handle (Bennett, 1986; Grove & Torbiorn, 1986; Weaver, 1986).The adjustment process is especially difficult for adults who are accustomed to functioning effectively in their own cultures (Grove & Torbiorn). A new climate, new people, new language, new food, and different communications and transportation facilities all seem to conspire to make life difficult for international sojourners.

Also, the new culture impacts the ability to function at the expected level of language proficiency (Paige, 1990). Language is used to communicate. Language is more than just the words; it communicates a message that can be interpreted differently

depending on the cultural lens in which it is perceived. At the same time, language is affected by the context in which it is found. Words do not have meanings that are simply lexical, but rather operate in the context of utterance (Eco, 1989). The cultural context therefore impacts the ways in which language is created by participants in a particular interaction, at a particular time, and in a particular setting. People who share the same general set of cultural practices share an understanding of the meanings that are associated with language as it is used for communication, and their language use is shaped by these shared understandings (Heath, 1986). Successful communication happens because of a shared understanding of context, regardless of how well individual participants know each other (Heath).

Support Networks/Help Sources

Social support networks play a significant role in an international student's life in United States higher education institutions (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Britton et al., 2003; Ladd & Ruby, 1999). Social interaction with the United States domestic population is crucial to successful cross-cultural adjustment (Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992; Paige, 1990; Ying & Liese, 1991). Higher degrees of interaction with hosts are associated with lower levels of cross-cultural difficulties. International students who engage in high degrees of social interaction with members of the host culture are more likely to learn the social rules and social skills pertaining to that culture and, consequently, experience less social difficulty in their cross-cultural interactions (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004). As a result, establishing relationships with faculty, administrative staff, and students, as well as developing adequate social support networks play a significant role in the life of

international students (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Lin, 1990; Trice, 2004). When experiencing adjustment problems, it has been found that most international students seek help from a friend, school/office or classmate, teacher/instructor/professor/faculty member, family/family member, or advisor (Al-Mubarak, 1999). A comparison of international students' and United States (or domestic) students' preferences for help sources revealed that international students were more likely than domestic students to prefer faculty members and counselors and less likely to prefer friends for help with all kinds of problems (Leong & Sedlacek, 1986). The importance of the faculty-student relationship is evident as self-confidence and availability of a strong support person have an impact on international students' academic achievement (Boyer & Sedlacek, 1987).

An important goal for college students is to achieve academic success. Although, in general, international students have high educational aspirations, positive attitudes toward their school, and strong academic backgrounds (Aslanbeigui & Montecinos, 1998; Manese et al., 1988), they are also confronted with a variety of academic problems in their adjustment to higher education in the United States (Carter & Sedlacek, 1986; Wan et al., 1992). For example, international students face advisor-related difficulties concerning language, curriculum/program relevance, instructor-related difficulties, and university system difficulties, among others (Hamouda, 1986; Lin, 1998).

While some international students do not always respond to faculty invitations to participate or to meet individually, they nonetheless appreciate faculty who make deliberate efforts to engage them in and out of the classroom (Britton et al., 2003). Other international students particularly appreciate the informal student/professor interaction,

the approachability of professors and the free exchange of ideas (Ladd & Ruby, 1999; Thornton, 1988). However, international students may also consider disrespectful the informal faculty-student relationship in the United States (for example, students put their feet on the desk, chew gum during class time, etc.; Nazarenko, 2006). Thus, international students find differences from their familiar norms surprising, if not stressful considering that, in some cultures, students' view the instructor as an unquestioned figure whose authority on instructional matters is final, where the student is subordinate to the teacher (Ladd & Ruby; Nazarenko). Consequently, the relationship with their professors plays an important role in the adjustment of international students to the new educational system (Nazarenko).

## Advising

Advising is guiding. It is the process of enabling a person to grow in the direction s/he chooses. The basic role of advising is to introduce students to higher education and to connect them to the culture of their particular academic program. Advising is the medium through which the college's educational goals and the student's educational goals are negotiated. Advising offers the opportunity for students to develop short-term and long-term life goals, to explore the world of work, to understand their decision making process, and to engage in academic planning (Chickering, 1994; Crookston, 1972; O'Banion, 1972). This range of advising roles is realized through the types of advisors available to students.

<u>Advisor Types</u>

Different types of institutions (such as research, four-year, two-year, public, or private) use a variety of advising delivery models. The academic advising delivery models are based on the following advisor types: faculty advisors and full-time staff advisors (Gordon et al., 2000).

The faculty role generally encompasses three areas of responsibility: teaching, scholarship, and service. The proportion of time a faculty member spends (or is expected to spend) in each area varies widely from institution to institution. The advising role can be seen as part of the faculty service responsibilities or as part of the faculty teaching responsibilities. Advising may be delivered exclusively by faculty in higher education institutions. As advisers, faculty can demonstrate concern for their students' welfare by being available and approachable outside the classroom (Reinarz, 2000). The ability to answer discipline-specific questions with a greater understanding of the course content and curriculum rationale is one of the strengths of faculty advising (Reinarz). Additionally, faculty advisors are good resources and can provide insights on professional opportunities. Also, in their mentoring relationships, faculty may develop rapport with students both inside and outside the classroom contributing to the overall satisfaction in the college experience for students (Light, 2001; Reinarz).

At issue with the successful advising experience for students is the need for faculty to balance their advising time demands with their teaching and scholarship, which may affect both their interest in advising and their availability to students (Gordon et al., 2000; Reinarz, 2000). Less than one in three (31%) campuses recognize, reward, or

compensate faculty for academic advising. The most cited reward strategy is to make advising a minor consideration in promotion and tenure. Yet, only 8% of all campuses employ this method in all departments. There was a consistent decline in all types of recognition strategies for faculty advisors from 1987 to 1992. Campus-wide recognition, reward, or compensation for faculty advisors declined between the 1992 and the 1998 surveys (Gordon et al.).

A growing diversity in student populations brings an increasing complexity in the problems students may present to faculty advisors and the increasing complexity in curriculum and in policies and procedures may be an additional concern of faculty advisors (Reinarz, 2000).

Importance and Effectiveness of Advising

Advising, as defined in the literature, is generally considered a systematic process intended to help students develop and achieve their personal, educational and career goals (Winston, Miller, Ender, Grites & Associates, 1984). The definition of advising as it is given by Crockett (1985) and used in some university Advisor Handbooks encompasses the characteristics of advising found in the literature. According to Crockett (1985), advising is a developmental process which supports students in the clarification of their life goals and in the development of educational plans for the realization of these goals. Advising is also a decision-making process which guides students in realizing their maximum potential through communication and information exchanges. Advising is ongoing, multi-faceted, and the responsibility of both student and advisor.

Advising can be seen as one of the most critical functions in higher education alongside teaching. A great overlap between teaching and advising is evident in the following studies. Much of the literature addresses advising as inevitably intertwined with teaching (Appleby, 2001; Crookston, 1972; Eble, 1988). The facilitation of learning is seen as the duty of both teachers and advisors. And both of these roles involve working with students to improve their problem-solving and decision-making skills (Crookston). Advising is also a specific teaching activity during which a student's educational choices are questioned and challenged (Kramer, 1983). Advising is often seen by faculty as an extension of their teaching role in which they can demonstrate genuine concern for their students' welfare by being available and approachable outside the classroom (Eble).

Based on this teaching-advising connection, Ryan's (1992) comprehensive search to identify the characteristics of effective teachers and advisors, and Appleby's (2001) additional characteristics from his review of teaching and advising literature indicate that the skills and characteristics of effective teachers are essentially the same as those displayed by effective advisers. Some of the main characteristics of both effective teachers and effective advisors are: know their content, be prepared, facilitate active participation for students, provide meaningful feedback, show the importance of creating an effective environment for students to learn, be enthusiastic about what they do, and encourage students' independence (for a list of the skills and characteristics of advising and teaching, see Appendix F).

Frequent faculty-student contact in and out of the classroom is the most important factor in student motivation and involvement (Chickering & Gamson, 1991). Frequent

interaction with faculty is related more strongly to satisfaction than any other type of involvement or characteristic of the student or the institution (Astin, 1985). Advising is the only structured service on campus in which all students have the opportunity for on-going, one-to-one contact with a concerned representative of the institution (Davis & Cooper, 2001; Habley, 1981). In addition, frequent interaction with faculty members can positively affect a student's intellectual, academic, and personal development (Alexitch, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). For example, personal interest in student progress or engaging the students in a faculty research project can be positive interactions with faculty (Nagda, Gregerman, Jonides, von Hippel, & Lerner, 1998). However, not all types of student-faculty contact are of equal importance (Terenzini & Pascarella, 1980). For instance, discussion of intellectual matters can have more impact on academic achievement (Terenzini & Pascarella). In their study, Pascarella, Terenzini, and Hibel (1978) found that students with frequent interactions outside the classroom tended to perform better academically than predicted by pre-enrollment characteristics, while others who had little informal faculty contact tended to perform at a lower level than predicted.

Within the literature on general advising at the higher education level, overall college satisfaction is associated with student-faculty interaction (Gaff & Gaff, 1981; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1976). Davis and Young (1982) describe projects involving students and faculty in research evaluation and teaching where the sharing of work, ideas, and personal encounters was the most satisfying for students and faculty. Furthermore, students need the support of an informed and interested representative of the institution to

identify and work toward their objectives for higher education (Frost, 1991). Faculty can

help students make a connection between their in-class learning and out-of-class

experiences (Alexitch, 2002; Davis & Cooper, 2001; King, 1993), and such connections

between the class and the outside world enables students to have greater satisfaction in

their college experience (Light, 2001).

The advisor in general advising has the opportunity to encourage students to

participate in activities outside of class that will, in turn, help the student feel more

connected to the university. Exhibiting skills of effective teachers and effective advisors

(i.e., engaging students in the process, serving as a resource, provide feedback, etc.),

advisors often can develop a broad vision for the students (Appleby, 2001; Ryan, 1992).

By guiding students through communication and information exchanges and serving as a

resource, advisors can therefore play an important interpretive role with administrators,

faculty, and staff, helping them further understand students' academic and socio-cultural

needs.

For Zachary (2000), the mentoring (advising) process in general advising involves

growth and learning for both the mentor and the mentee. Advising relationships that fail

usually do so for a specific reason, as defined by Zachary (2000), in her book, *The

Mentor's Guide*. The advisor and advisee take their roles for granted, without discussing

expectations. The advisor assumes a role too large for his part in the advising process.

The lines of authority between advisor and advisee become blurred and perhaps

overlapping, or the advisor intervenes in areas where assistance is not needed or

welcome. Predominantly, graduate student advisors do not deliberately think about nor do they prepare themselves to serve in that role (Zachary, 2000).

Studies in *academic* advising examine the important roles of faculty and advising in graduate education. A study focused on faculty and graduate student perceptions regarding the current and ideal role of the graduate student faculty mentor indicated perceived differences by degree of program, nationality, gender, and ethnicity (Barrick, Clark, & Blaschek, 2006). The purpose of the study was to gather perceptions from faculty and graduate students regarding the role of the faculty mentor. The objectives of the study were to: (a) ascertain the perceptions of the faculty regarding the ideal role of the faculty mentor; (b) ascertain the perceptions of graduate students regarding the ideal and current roles of the faculty mentor; and (c) compare the perceptions of the ideal and current roles of the faculty mentor (Barrick et al.). Faculty and graduate students were asked to complete an online survey regarding the role of faculty mentors in graduate education. The researchers used a modified Survey of Doctoral Education and customized the section about mentoring and advising into a graduate student form and a faculty form. Graduate students were asked to indicate their agreement/disagreement on the four-point scale of Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree on 25 questions related to behaviors /characteristics of their "ideal mentor" and their "current mentor." Faculty members were asked to indicate their agreement/disagreement related to behaviors and characteristics of an ideal mentor. Demographic data were collected for graduate students and faculty. Graduate students were asked to identify whether they were Masters or Ph.D., as well as their age, gender, gender of their mentor, gender of ideal mentor, their

own racial identity and whether they were a domestic or international student. Faculty were asked to indicate whether they mentored Masters or Ph.D. students or both, age, gender, and racial identity. A total of 248 faculty and 631 graduate students were invited to participate in the study. A description of the study and directions for accessing the instrument were distributed using the campus e-mail system. 31% of the faculty (76) and 31% of the graduate students (194) had completed the instrument and provided data for the study.

Although no major differences in responses were noted on the basis of degree program, nationality, gender, or ethnicity, the study concluded that still particular attention should be nonetheless given to the extent of differences and similarities based on these demographic traits (Barrick et al., 2006). The results of this study indicated that doctoral students expressed more concerns than the master's students regarding the role of the graduate student mentor (Barrick et al.). The statements that doctoral students tended to disagree with most frequently were: (a) teaches student survival skills; (b) teaches student to write grant and contract proposals; (c) provides emotional support; and (d) takes an interest in the student's personal (Barrick et al.). International students indicated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed to a greater extent than domestic students on the following statements: (a) helps the student develop professional relationships with others in the field; (b) teaches student to write grant and contract proposals; (c) takes an interest in the student's personal life, and (d) has the student's best interest at heart (Barrick et al.). Student responses regarding the current role of the graduate student mentor did not differ between male and female respondents with one

exception. While 85% of the males agreed or strongly agreed that the mentor takes an interest in the student's personal life, only 65% of the females agreed or strongly agreed with that statement (Barrick et al.). There were no significant differences in the graduate respondent group by ethnicity. When differences occurred, White/Non-Hispanic students tended to agree with the statements to a lesser degree than Asian or Hispanic students.

Furthermore, an ongoing study at a university in the United States has as its purpose to assess the climate for women and underrepresented minorities in doctoral programs at the university (UM ADVANCE Project, 2006). The researchers administered a survey addressing skills, training and learning experiences, advising and mentoring, career planning goals, department climate and background information. Out of 5,340 participants, 1,454 responded to the survey (27%). The data collected allowed the researchers to develop an overview of how graduate students in general (and by gender and race ethnicity) experience several domains of their experience (morale, department climate, experiences of graduate education, advising and support, and career goals). In terms of advising and support, the study indicated that on average, students reported a higher level of advice and help from faculty and other students than from members of other groups (e.g. staff). The overall results of the study revealed that female students' and the underrepresented minority students' experiences of the climate as well as their relationship with their advisors (and other UM faculty) play a powerful role in the students' confidence that they can be successful academics and their interest in pursuing a faculty career at a top research university (UM ADVANCE Project, 2006).

International Students' Academic Experience Related to Faculty

A review of the literature reveals studies on international students' academic experience related to faculty. Although international students have an overall positive experience of studying abroad, a number of concerns are raised regarding the students' academic experience and relationship with faculty (Fox, 1994; Nazarenko, 2006).

In *Listening to the World*, Fox (1994) explores international students' academic writing experiences. Fox's study investigates why students from other cultures find it difficult to learn academic writing and to understand its purpose in the university in the United States. Fox's action research included observations, student writing analyses, and interviews. The participants in the study were from Asia, Latin America, and Africa, and were undergraduate and graduate students – some of them mid-career professionals, published writers in their own countries. Systematic conversations with students revealed that some students in the study were frustrated because of the cultural norms and expectations United States faculty members had in their writing courses. The results indicated that the students' writing was influenced by the cultures where they come from; students come to study in the United States with their own histories reflected in their writing by features like overly polite language, indirectness, and over-contextualization.

A research study focused on the educational and cultural experiences of Latin American and Asian women students at one of the United States Southwest border universities (Nazarenko, 2006). The study employed qualitative research methodology which consisted of three sets of in-depth phenomenological interviews. The researcher explored issues encountered by 21 international women students (10 Latin American and

11 Asian). The interview was based on open-ended questions addressing important events and experiences in the participants' lives prior to becoming international students in the United States, participants' present educational and cultural experiences, and participants' understanding of the meaning of being international students in the United States. In their reports, the participants indicated a significant discomfort with group projects and relationships with their professors and domestic students. Many participants also reported concerns about their English skills, the poor quality of instruction and/or advising, and insufficient departmental resources for their program development. Moreover, the data showed that the relationships with their professors played an important role in the participants' adjustments to the new educational environment. Both Asian and Latin American participants expressed some degree of discomfort with their understanding of what the teacher-student relationship should be like (Nazarenko, 2006). The results of the study indicated that it was important that the professors at the Southwest Border University understood their students' concerns and helped them ease their adjustment process. The international students who were interviewed reported that the encouragement of their advisors was the most valuable aspect in their academic program. The participants also emphasized that a non-threatening classroom environment and having a simple chat with faculty could lower anxiety and make the instructional process more enjoyable (Nazarenko, 2006).

To broaden the understanding of international graduate students' academic satisfaction, a recent study was done at a major research university in the Midwestern United States (Trice & Yoo, 2007). The study focused on international graduate students

in the United States and how well United States graduate education matched their academic goals. To collect data, the researchers surveyed 2001 international graduate students – the entire population at the university. Out of 2001, 497 responded to the questionnaire. The respondents were 38% from East Asia, 11% from Southeast Asia, 13% Western Europeans, 6% Eastern Europeans, 10% Latin Americans, 6% Middle Easterners, 4% Canadians, 2% Oceanians (Australia, New Zealand) and 2% Africans. The questionnaire addressed the students' experiences in the classroom, their relationships with faculty members, their social life, their satisfaction with specific offices on campus, and concerns regarding post-graduation work plans. Data analysis consisted in descriptive analyses to establish a general overview of students' academic experiences and inferential analyses to explore whether components of the academic experience were related to post-graduation work employment.

Students surveyed in Trice's and Yoo's (2007) study were generally satisfied with their relationships with faculty and advisors. For example, students considered that they had the same access to faculty outside of class as the domestic students had to faculty outside of class. They also felt that at least one professor had a positive impact on their intellectual development. However, the respondents were slightly less positive about the course content in their department, their advisor's role in their development, and their department's help with their adjustment to the graduate program. The study concluded that (a) departmental leaders should consider how their curriculum could be adapted to meet international students' needs better; (b) departmental leaders and academic advisors should explore in some depth the factors that are related to international students feeling

ill-prepared to work at home after graduation; (c) and the need for attention related to academic advising and students' relationships with faculty members (Trice & Yoo).

Greisberger (1984) conducted a study on the academic advising of international students from developing nations. The purpose of this study was to assess the needs of faculty members at a large Midwest research institution in advising international graduate students from developing nations. Data were collected from a systematic sample of 600 faculty members by means of a survey questionnaire which was developed by the investigator and mailed to the participants. The findings of the study indicated that faculty advisors perceive that they have special needs in terms of advising international graduate students. In many instances faculty also believed that they needed more information about their international advisees than they did about domestic advisees in order to advise them effectively. Faculty considered it important to have information related to cultural background, academic background, English language proficiency, and job opportunities and the conditions in which students would work in the home country. Similarly, the faculty responses indicated that certain traits, behaviors, and characteristics important in advising domestic graduate students were needed to a greater extent when advising an international student. For example, faculty perceived the need for more patience and flexibility when working with international graduate students as opposed to dealing with domestic graduate students. Participants also expressed a greater need for well developed communication skills when advising international graduate students. Also, faculty considered that checking on the academic progress of international students needed to be done more often than with domestic graduate students. Moreover,

participants indicated a need for more information about their international advisees

concerning their financial support and family background.

In addition, faculty advisors in Greisberger's study (1984) desired to have

information about the role and function of the international student advisor in order to

more effectively advise international students. The faculty participants surveyed in the

study indicated that they would find printed information and orientation sessions on

advising international students useful to them. These surveyed faculty advisors were

committed to providing the best academic advice possible to students by drawing upon

their own experiences, attending information meetings on advising international students,

and working with the international student advisor. Greisberger reports that, in general,

graduate faculty advisors realized that advising international students requires special

skills (well developed communication skills) and knowledge (knowing international

students cultural and linguistic background).

Research on academic advising of international students also reveals problems

that arise when working with diverse cultures. Khabiri (1985) researched the issues

involved in academic advisement of international students at a university in the central

Southwest. Khabiri made comparisons among the three groups using three separate

specifically designed survey instruments. Each instrument was composed of five parts:

(a) demographic data, (b) the advisor's interest in advising advisees, (c) advisee-reported

satisfaction with the advisement process, (d) roles and responsibilities of both academic

advisors and advisees (international and domestics graduate students), and (e)

communication between advisors and international graduate students. The research

population of the study was composed of 187 international graduate students, 184 domestic graduate students, and 69 graduate faculty advisors who returned the questionnaire (Khabiri). The response rate for each group exceeded 50 percent of the population surveyed.

Based on descriptive statistics for analysis, the survey data in Khabiri's (1985) study indicated that: (a) international graduate students perceived that their advisors were less interested in them than their advisors indicated; (b) international graduate students perceived that they were less satisfied with the advisement process than their faculty advisors believed them to be; (c) international graduate students perceived that both parties (students and faculty) of the advisement process had performed their roles and responsibilities to a lesser degree than was perceived by faculty advisers, and (d) international graduate students and faculty advisors believed that their ability to communicate was a problem area. Khabiri drew the following major conclusions: (a) international graduate students have higher expectations of the advisement process than do faculty advisors; graduate advisors, by virtue of their professional commitment naturally feel more positive toward the advising process than do graduate students and are reluctant to admit low-level performance; (b) cultural factors may lead to students' generalized feelings of frustration and ineffectiveness for which the advisor and the advising process are blamed; and (c) communication is of crucial importance for the success or failure of the advising process.

Continuing the investigation on graduate education in regards to international students, Seeger (1993) conducted a study with a focus on graduate Indonesian students

and their mentors at a university in the United States. The purpose of the study was to examine the extent to which students and their mentors perceive learning experiences in United States graduate schools as appropriate for the students pursuit of individual development and national development of their home country. Seeger used five hundred and thirty-five questionnaires with randomly selected Indonesian students and their mentors. The data were gathered from 69.2% of the surveys and frequency analysis and chi-square were used to analyze the data. The areas of the survey were (a) the importance of the goals for a Third World nation's development and the students' personal educational goals, (b) the accessibility and relevance of learning experiences to help the students apply new knowledge and skills, and (c) the overall relevance of their United States universities' programs to helps students to transfer new knowledge and skills to their own institutions in Indonesia.

The results of Seeger's (1993) study showed divergent perceptions between students and their mentors within each of the three areas of the survey. For the importance of the goals for a Third World nation's development and the students' personal educational goals, the students perceived a need for considerable adjustment in their academic programs if, as students, they were to acquire the learning experiences that would enable them to return to their own institutions in their home country with valuable knowledge and skills. However, the mentors considered that changes in the academic programs to provide learning experiences to help Third World students transfer the knowledge and skills back home was not the university's responsibility. While students considered important gaining knowledge and skills in their field and adapting them to the

realities of their country, their mentors placed considerable importance on the acquisition

of credentials for the students' prestige and less importance for the attainment of

knowledge. For the accessibility and relevance of learning experiences to help the

students apply new knowledge and skills, the difference between students and faculty

perceptions was particularly evident in regards to the accessibility of opportunities to

develop research and technical skills, and to attend recreational events and converse with

both domestic and other international students. While faculty advisors viewed these

opportunities as very accessible to Indonesian students, the students considered these

opportunities less accessible or inaccessible. For the overall relevance of their United

States universities' programs to helps students to transfer new knowledge and skills to

their own institutions in Indonesia, the students perceived that many of their learning

experiences lacked relevance and would not be applicable upon their return to their home

country. Furthermore, they considered that relevant learning experiences (i.e.,

internships, field experiences, and development of technical, research and managerial

skills) were not accessible to them. In opposition, their advisors viewed these experiences

as accessible to the students. Overall, while mentors stressed the importance,

accessibility, and relevance of students' cross cultural opportunities of interacting with

domestic and other international students, they showed reluctance in considering

international education in all its complexity.

A more recent study related to international graduate students and faculty advisors

was conducted in Canada. The purpose of the study was to explore the frequency of

interpersonal conflict between international graduate students and faculty advisors

("supervisors" in the study), their understanding and experience of conflict, and their needs for managing and preventing it (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007). A total of 55 international graduate students participated in the study, of which 66.7% were Master's students and 31.5% were PhD students. Fifty-three faculty supervisors participated in the study. Most faculty originated from Canada (79.2%).

International graduate students and faculty members completed a survey addressing: (a) issues identified in the literature as sources of conflict, and (b) issues and ideas that emerge from preliminary interviews with international students, supervisors, and service providers who have experience with such conflict. To analyze data, the researchers used descriptive statistics (means, frequencies, and percentages) to analyze demographic information, chi-square tests and $t$ tests to identify significant group differences, and repeated ANOVAs to analyze within- and between- group differences, followed by post hoc Tukey comparisons.

In Adrian-Taylor et al.'s (2007) study, data indicated that 22% of international graduate students and 34% of faculty supervisors had experienced student-supervisor conflict. Data from the study revealed that the sources of conflict most frequently identified by the international graduate students, including lack of openness, lack of time, and different expectations regarding responsibilities, were reported as frequently by the faculty supervisors. However, there were also sources of conflict upon which faculty and students did not agree. While faculty supervisors considered that "poor English proficiency"(p. 108), both written and oral, and inadequate research skills were the most common sources of conflict, a considerably smaller percentage of international graduate

students viewed these to be sources of conflict. In addition, the international graduate students and faculty supervisors reported a preference for dealing with conflict independently (i.e., without outside help). To prevent conflict, both faculty advisors and international graduate students indicated the importance of having more information regarding common sources on international graduate student-supervisor conflict. Methods and skills as well as clear examples were suggested as important to help resolve conflict situations: "a) the roles and responsibilities that students and supervisors usually assume; b) feedback that students find helpful and not helpful; c) the steps of the problem-solving process; d) how to have honest conversation without promoting defensiveness, hurt, and anger; and e) how to minimize ones' own defensive reactions" (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007, p. 110-111).

<div align="center">Summary</div>

In the last decades, U. S higher education institutions have faced a large influx of international students who, with characteristics that distinguish them from domestic students, have contributed to the complexity of an educational environment continuously influenced by societal and political changes. An examination of the literature concerning international student population reveals a multitude of needs which international students have in United States higher education (Fatima, 2001; Parr et al., 1992; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1991). While these needs can be classified as socio-cultural and academic, they are closely intertwined. Language proficiency (Pedersen, 1991; Yeh, 2004), culture shock (Leong & Chou, 1996; Lin, 1998), and development of support networks and help sources (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Ladd & Ruby, 1999) are problematic aspects in an

international student's life and may interfere with the students' adaptation, interaction with others, and potential learning in a new environment.

This literature review also illustrates the importance and effectiveness of advising in higher education institutions. As a critical function of education, advising is an ongoing process and the responsibility of both student and advisor. Research studies concerning student-teacher relationship reveal that frequent faculty-student contact in and out of the classroom is a critical factor in student motivation, involvement, and satisfaction (Astin, 1985; Chickering & Gamson, 1991). Moreover, frequent interaction with faculty can have a positive impact on a student's intellectual, academic and personal development (Alexitch, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). In addition, the literature provides evidence regarding the importance of the role of faculty advisor and its impact on graduate student education (Barrick et al., 2006; UM ADVANCE Project, 2006). Furthermore, researchers report that, although international students have an overall positive experience of studying abroad, concerns are raised in regards to students' academic experience and relationship with faculty (Fox, 1994). Overall, results from these studies reflect the importance of the role of faculty in international students' education and adjustment to the new educational environment (Nazarenko, 2006; Trice & Yoo, 2007).

In addition, the literature provides examples of research studies with a particular focus on faculty advising graduate international students. While some faculty are reluctant to see international study in its complexity (Seeger, 1993), some faculty are aware of the international students' needs and express their desire to know more about

their students (cultural and academic background, language proficiency, etc.) and international education in general (Greisberger, 1984). Also, studies indicate that international students have special needs in their academic experience and there can be various sources of conflict in a student-advisor relationship (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007; Khabiri, 1985). Therefore, the researchers emphasize the importance of future research and the need for more information about advising graduate international students (Greisberger; Seeger; Adrian-Taylor et al.).

Although a large amount of research focuses on the needs and problems of international students at a general level (Carter & Sedlacek, 1986; Pedersen, 1991), there is a lack of research related to issues specifically relevant to the international graduate student-faculty advisor relationship (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007; NAFSA, 2007; Trice, 2003). While previous studies contributed to the literature in the area, they suggested future research on faculty advising international students. Moreover, the research studies found in the area of advising graduate international students are predominantly descriptive (Adrian-Taylor et al.; Greisberger, 1984; Khabiri, 1985; Seeger; Trice & Yoo, 2007). The purpose of these studies is to identify and obtain information on and to determine the frequency of occurrence of the characteristics and attitudes of the population under study and the extent to which these types of variables co-vary with each other and other variables of interest. The results of these studies are reported based on data analyses consisting in descriptive and inferential analyses (Adrian-Taylor et al.; Trice & Yoo). Although these descriptive studies gather a wide range of information from a large number of participants, they lack a particular focus and in-depth information

on advising graduate international students. Considering the complexity and diversity of the international student population (Greisberger; Seeger) as well the crucial role advising has in international graduate education (Barrick et al., 2006; Nazarenko, 2006), there is a need for in-depth investigation in the area of faculty advising graduate international students.

Therefore, an exploratory approach to examine faculty advising graduate international students will provide insights, clarify concepts, and gather explanations on the topic while looking for patterns and ideas rather than testing or confirming a hypothesis. A qualitative case-study design with features of phenomenological inquiry will contribute by further exploring the experience of advising as it is perceived, in particular, by faculty and doctoral international students. By using this approach, personal contact will help ensure a higher level of confidentiality and flexibility will allow for follow-up questions and clarification of issues in the participants' reports. In sum, this methodology will provide insights into how advisors engage with international students and insights into student and faculty perspectives on advising.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Prior studies on faculty advising related to graduate international students provide evidence of the need for faculty members and international graduate students to take a closer look at the present advisory system and develop strategies to facilitate effective advising (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007; Greisberger,1984; Khabiri, 1985; Seeger, 1993). Language proficiency, culture shock, and development of support networks and help sources are problematic aspects in an international student's life on a United States campus (Lin, 1998; Selvadurai, 1992; Trice, 2003; Yeh, 2004). They all may interfere with the international students' adaptation, interaction with others, and potential learning in a new environment. While previous studies have contributed to the research in the field, they suggested that faculty advising graduate international students is a complex area which needs in-depth investigation. Moreover, these studies have generally gathered data by surveying large populations of participants and they have not used an in-depth exploration of the advising experience lived by the particular population of doctoral international students and faculty advisors.

The purpose of the present study is to explore the advising experience as it is lived and perceived by selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in the College of Education in a Midwestern university. This chapter will present the study design, the selection of participants, and the procedures regarding data collection and analysis from the informant reports.

## Study Design and Rationale

The aim of the study was to gain an in-depth understanding about how selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in the College of Education in a Midwestern university live and perceive their advising experience. The following section will describe the research methodology chosen, including the selection of participants and instruments to answer the research question guiding the study.

### Qualitative Inquiry as a Research Methodology

The methodology chosen for the present study followed a qualitative case study design adapted from LeCompte and Preissle's (1993) approach embedded with aspects of phenomenological inquiry from van Manen (2002). The case study method, and in particular the multiple-case studies design, seemed appropriate for the research questions of the study because it allowed the informants to share their perceptions and experiences regarding advising in a rich and descriptive manner. In addition, the researcher was able to explore the particularity and complexities within the advising experience as it was perceived by selected doctoral international students as well as faculty advisors.

The study attempted to illuminate the particulars of human experience (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) in the context of faculty advising. The focus of the study was on the experiences and insights of a selected number of doctoral international students and faculty advisors and the way they made sense of the advising process. Following a common approach in conducting qualitative inquiry, the researcher looked at real life cases and explored the participants' advising experiences through a detailed investigation of their individual reports in an attempt to create a vivid reconstruction of the

participants' lived experience (LeCompte & Preissle; van Manen, 1990). The participants were prompted to share their stories through recollecting, commenting on, and making sense of advising experiences that they had "already passed or lived through" (van Manen, pp. 9-10). In this study, the participants' experiences as they were lived in the world and the meanings derived from the lived experiences were the essence of advising.

Qualitative approaches typically involve purposeful selection (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Patton, 2002; Stake, 2000). Purposeful selection focuses on choosing information-rich cases whose investigation illuminated the questions under study. The intent of purposeful selection is to achieve in-depth understanding of selected individuals. With that in mind, the cases for this study were purposefully selected to explore the experiences lived by doctoral international students and faculty advisors. The location of the study was chosen considering the researcher's time and access to fieldwork. The research site was the College of Education in a Midwestern teaching institution.

There were two groups of participants. The first group consisted of three students and the second of three faculty members. Given the purpose of the study, the time, and access to fieldwork, a "criterion-based selection" (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p.69) was used to identify the participants. The following criteria were applied when selecting the student participants: (a) being willing to participate, (b) having a faculty advisor and (c) were available within the time frame suggested. The researcher selected doctoral students from all departments in the College of Education of the Midwestern institution in the study. Faculty participants were identified in a student nomination process designed to find the names of faculty considered exemplary in their advising of doctoral

students. Faculty participants were selected considering (a) the student nomination process, and (b) faculty willingness to participate in the study. Based on this selection process, the researcher identified six participants: three doctoral international students and three faculty advisors. There were three female and three male participants. The number chosen allowed the researcher to examine the participants' accounts through layered content analysis within individual cases and across cases (LeCompte & Preissle,; Stake, 1995).

In-Depth Interview and Interviewer's Role

The uniqueness of human experience with its particularities is an essential characteristic of qualitative research. With an interest in each individual story, this approach set the context for the researcher and the participants to build a dialogue that brought them to a better understanding of the advising experience. For this reason, in-depth interviewing was used as the means to collect data for the study. The interview had the purpose of exploring and gathering experiential narrative material or stories, which served as a resource for developing a richer and deeper understanding of a human phenomenon – advising (van Manen, 2002).

In-depth interviews required the researcher to be insightful throughout the data collection to obtain rich descriptions and interpretations of various participants (students and advisors; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995). In-depth interviewing not only helped accomplish the investigative task, but also allowed the participants to recollect, analyze, and reflect on their own experiences. The purpose of in-depth interviewing was not to "get answers to questions, nor to test hypotheses, and not

to 'evaluate' as the term is normally used," but to be interested in other individuals' stories "because they are of worth" (Seidman, 1998, p.3).

The researcher used one-to-one interviews to gather information about the respondents' experiences in respect to advising. Through personal interaction and elicitation, the researcher was able to acquire rich data addressing the research question of the study (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993): How do selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in the College of Education in a Midwestern university live and perceive their advising experience?

The interview was built upon open-ended questions based on the researcher's agenda for each interview. As it was summarized in the literature review, previous studies on the topic showed a need to investigate the present advisory system and develop strategies to facilitate effective advising (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007; Seeger, 1993). The major task was to build on and explore the participants' responses related to their advising experiences.

There were two sets of individual interviews; each set aimed to investigate particular aspects related to the participants' advising experiences. The first interview provided the background to the participants' experiences and addressed their present advising experiences. To gain participants' insights on advising, this first dialogue gave them the opportunity to share any information related to their experiences. The exploration of their past and present perspectives in the first interview built a continuum for the second interview. Using the researcher's journal notes, follow-up questions were

constructed from themes, issues, and data derived from the initial interview while moving to future recommendations regarding faculty advising.

The role of the interviewer was to take notes and to record interpretations in a reflective journal (Fontana & Frey, 1994) and to ask additional questions to probe and clarify information when necessary. The investigator also followed up on key ideas and themes that needed further exploration. To do so, the interviewer assumed the role of an active listener, paying close attention to the data provided by the participants, and making sure that the data were understood correctly (Seidman, 1998). Since it was important for the in-depth interviewing not to interrupt the participant, the researcher's notes served as reminders for the follow-up questions and future clarifications.

<center>Data Collection and Analysis</center>

Construct validity is especially problematic in case study research. It has been a source of criticism because of potential researcher subjectivity. To counteract this, Yin (1994) proposed three solutions: using multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having key participants review draft study reports. In this study, perspectives on advising were shared by both faculty and student participants. There were two sets of interviews per each participant. The open-ended questions as well as a second individual interview allowed probing questions to produce in-depth and comprehensive information about the advising experience. The participants reviewed the theme summaries and provided clarification wherever necessary. To explore the participants' advising experiences, there were four events of data collection: (a) individual interview

(interview guide questions), (b) individual interview (follow-up questions), (c) individual member checks, and (d) final individual member checks.

Data collection and analysis were interwoven in this study (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) as follows: (a) individual interview (interview guide questions), (b) analysis of initial set of questions, (c) individual interview (follow-up questions derived from analysis), (d) theme analysis within-case, (e) individual member checks, (f) theme analysis across cases, (g) final individual member checks, and (h) final theme analysis. As simultaneous and interactive activities, the steps for data collection and analysis helped the researcher to focus and to shape the study throughout its process.

The qualitative research methods used in the study fostered an opportunity for the researcher to develop "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973) that vividly communicated the participants' experiences. To accomplish its goals, the study was organized in the following phases:

I. Phase 1

    A.  Construction and piloting of interview questions (informally, with two faculty advisors and two international students)

    B.  Selection of participants

II. Phase 2

    A.  Data collection with participants

        1. Individual interview (student and faculty interview guide questions)

        2. Data analysis to obtain questions for the follow-up interview

        3. Individual interview (student and faculty follow-up questions)

    B. Data summary preparation (twelve individual interviews transcribed verbatim)

    C. Individual member checks

    D. Theme analysis within-case

III. Phase 3

    A. Theme analysis across cases

    B. Individual member checks

    C. Final theme analysis

    D. Final review of literature

    E. Final report

Phase 1

This phase included the construction and piloting of interview questions and the selection of participants. The initially formulated questions were tried out in a pilot form. The purpose of piloting the questions was to determine how the participants would respond and if the protocol, in fact, could collect the type of information the researcher intended to collect. More precisely, piloting the questions was used to find any possible issues that could arise from interviews with faculty advisors and doctoral international students as well as refining the first set of interview questions.

Two faculty advisors and two doctoral international students with advising experience were interviewed. The researcher contacted faculty and students with whom she was acquainted for this informal interview. Piloting the questions was essential for trying out the methodology and "coming to grips with some of the practical aspects of establishing access, making contact, and conducting the interview" (Seidman, 1998, p.

32). Thus, for example, when asked to describe a successful advising experience, some of the participants in the pilot gave brief answers without many details. These types of answers informed the researcher about possible prompting questions by tapping into the participant's answer, eventually leading to more in-depth information for each question in the first interview. In this way, piloting the questions allowed the researcher to step back and reflect upon her experience and then apply what she had learned from the pilot experience (Seidman). Any data provided during piloting of the questions were used to inform the development of the interview instrument and were not data for the study. Participants in the pilot were not a part of the pool of candidates for participation in the study.

The researcher invited students and faculty to participate in the study using an informed consent letter. Through the informed consent letter, the researcher obtained signed and dated permission for release of data and to guarantee participants' confidentiality (see Appendices A, B, and C). The informed consent letter also provided the participants with the nature and purpose of the study as well as an explanation of procedures and confidentiality. Informed consent letters were used both for faculty nomination and interviews.

Faculty participants were identified in a nomination process. Doctoral international students in the college were asked to name faculty they considered exemplary advisors. Generally, doctoral students have up to two formal faculty advisors throughout their program, if the situation requires a change of advisor. Some students might have considered exemplary advisors faculty that were not formally listed as

advisors in their programs. Student nominations of both formal and informal advisors allowed for more names to surface and provided the researcher with a broader base of names.

For this particular study, the researcher's initial intent was to contact doctoral international students in one particular department who were exposed to a full-time course load and were in their second and third year in the doctoral program. However, after obtaining the Internal Review Board approval, the information related to doctoral international students in the department became accessible. The researcher realized that the number of doctoral international students was rather small. Some changes were necessary in the methodology. The larger the number of students contacted and the larger the criteria of student selection, the more chances there were for student responses. In addition, this change in methodology allowed for a higher confidentiality level in regards to student participants. Therefore, the researcher considered it important to extend the invitation to participate (through faculty nominations and invitations to participate in interviews and meetings) to all international students in the doctoral programs of the college.

Following the Internal Review Board approval of methodology changes, doctoral international students in the college were asked through an invitation and consent letter to complete the Faculty Nomination Form (see Appendix A), naming faculty they considered exemplary for his/her advising. Although 20 doctoral international students were listed as active per total in all departments, only 15 could be contacted by the researcher. Only these 15 students had their mailing addresses available. It was possible

that the other 5 students had graduated and/or left the area. Also, considering that these 15 students were at different stages in their doctoral program (including dissertation stage), it was possible that some might not have been available in the university area and, therefore, might not have received their mail in time.

The invitation letter to nominate, including the Faculty Nomination Form, was sent by mail to all 15 doctoral international students in the departments of the college. The researcher provided coded, return addressed, stamped envelopes for the student respondents, and asked the students to return within one week the nomination forms using the coded envelopes. The coded envelopes ensured that student response to faculty nominations could be documented without the student's name becoming a part of the nomination data. This process also allowed the researcher to keep track of the students responding and ensured that one student did not send multiple nomination forms. Out of 15 doctoral international students, 10 responded to the Faculty Nomination Form. Faculty advisors were nominated from different departments of the college. Although students nominated either three, two or only one advisor, three names of faculty advisors were chosen at least twice by various students. The researcher compiled student responses and selected three faculty participants applying the following criteria: (a) the name of a faculty advisor was mentioned frequently (at least twice) by the participating students, and (b) faculty willingness to participate.

Considering the changes in methodology regarding doctoral international students, to select the student participants, the researcher applied the following criteria: (a) being willing to participate and (b) having a faculty advisor. An invitation to

participate and consent letter were separately mailed to all 15 doctoral international students in the departments. Each student was provided a return-addressed stamped envelop. The researcher asked the students to return within one week the consent letter in the envelope provided. The consent letter ensured the confidentiality of the process. Although six students in all responded to the invitation, three students responded within one week and were available to participate in the study (including interviews and meetings). The researcher selected three doctoral international students who were (a) willing to participate, (b) had a faculty advisor, and (c) were available within the time frame suggested.

Phase 2

Data collection with participants, data summary preparation, individual member checks, and theme analysis within-case occurred in this phase. The data collection was conducted through interviewing. First-hand knowledge and insights on advising experiences were gathered through the participants' own words. All 12 interviews were conducted in one-to-one sessions, recorded in audio format (both tape and digital format) and then transcribed.

There were two interviews for each informant including interview guide questions and follow-up questions related to the participants' advising experience. The interviews were semi-structured so as to allow other questions to emerge during the interviewing and additional issues that surfaced to be explored. Two interview protocols were used to collect data for this study: one protocol for use with doctoral international students and one protocol for use with faculty advisors (See Appendix B and C). The protocols

provided structure as well as areas that allowed for exploration, probing, and clarification.

Piloting the questions (as described in Phase 1) helped to refine the first set of interview questions and inform the researcher about possible prompting questions to obtain in-depth information and clarify data provided by the participants. In addition, the researcher's journal proved itself to be an essential tool for keeping a detailed record of (a) steps and changes in the methodology, and (b) reflective notes on the phases of the study (including content and process of interviewing, researcher's assumptions and biases, etc.). For example, the journal notes helped inform the second set of interview questions (the follow-up questions) through key words and post interview reflections by the researcher.

From the very beginning of each interview, the researcher ensured that the details of the interviewing process and the use of data were clarified and/or reiterated for the participants. The researcher not only repeated the confidentiality information provided in the consent letter, but was also more specific about the researcher-participant communication. For example, the researcher and participants established that there would not be any communication via e-mail related to the content of interviews and meetings. E-mail communication could always expose confidential content to a third party on the internet. Therefore, e-mail was used only for setting up times for the meetings using vague information related to sharing the transcripts (called "documents" or "papers") with each participant.

Although the researcher planned on taking notes during the interviews, from the very first interview this seemed to draw participants' attention from their flow of ideas. The researcher found herself adopting a more open posture, facing the interviewee, and showing full attention to the participant's answers. However, the researcher wrote down key-words to help her record important points and to return to the issues for further clarification later in the interview as well as to build a continuum between the first and the second interviews.

Each interview lasted approximately one hour. Each recorded interview was transcribed verbatim in order to preserve the entire conversation in its original form. The researcher used pseudonyms for participants' names. In addition, the use of pseudonyms ensured that the identities of the participants were concealed and kept confidential.

The data analysis commenced with transcribing the first set of interviews while their content was still fresh in the researcher's mind. Besides using the journal notes and key words written down during the interviews, the researcher used these transcriptions to gain a better understanding of the first participant reports and to build upon them in the development of the follow-up questions of the second interview. Any questions the researcher had regarding the participants' answers were clarified over the phone or in face-to-face meetings with the participants. Themes emerging from the first set of individual reports helped create a set of guiding follow-up questions for the second individual interview for both students and faculty. While these individual initial themes were used to guide the second interview probes, the researcher's approach was to avoid any in-depth analysis of the interview data until she had completed all the interviews

(Seidman, 1998). Although salient topics were identified in the first set of interviews, the researcher did her best to avoid imposing any meaning from one participant's interview on the next, constantly keeping track of these issues in her journal. While using a set of guiding questions, the researcher continued to probe and clarify participants' data in the second interview. For example, if the participant would use the terms "good communicator" to describe a good/excellent faculty advisor, then the researcher would tap into that particular idea by asking about the meaning of those words and for any examples relevant to the answer.

The data summary preparation consisted of transcribing all twelve interviews and organizing them for in-depth analysis. Transcribing provided the opportunity to relive the interviewing process. As the researcher was listening to the participants' voices and typing their stories, she came to know every one of these individual stories in detail. Moreover, as the researcher was listening to the interviews and reading the transcripts multiple times, she could better realize the meaning embedded in the data (Seidman, 1998). Individual member checks consisted of the participants' review of their individual accounts. The transcripts were revised based on participants' notes, clarifications, and suggestions.

An ongoing process of data analysis stimulated the researcher's new thoughts and new connections throughout the study. As the researcher was working with the texts, she was able to see emerging themes rather than hypothesize about what should emerge. The researcher used the constant comparative method (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) while considering participants' key phrases and words, and the categories

emerging from their language. The theme analysis within-case began with "scanning" (LeCompte & Preissle) the data. Always focusing on the research question leading the study, the researcher reviewed all twelve interview transcripts to acquire a sense of the lived experience. Then, a close reading of each transcribed interview sought to identify significant statements within each case. While using the entire text was very important, the researcher realized that in-depth interviewing generated a large amount of data. To present the most important issues related to the present study, the researcher highlighted in the text of each report significant statements consisting in phrases and sentences related directly to aspects of advising experience (for example, "guide them" or "advisors need to be accepting differences"). This way, the researcher could describe aspects of advising as experienced by each informant.

Mapping procedures and a writing summary helped the researcher to reflect on the larger picture that emerged from the data and to identify themes. Key words were printed out on individual pieces of paper. At that particular moment, the researcher realized the analogy of pieces of data with the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Similarly, to a natural landscape jigsaw puzzle, the pieces of data seemed to represent different areas of the puzzle. For example, "the house" with its components (roof, windows, etc.) was illustrated by "understandings of the international student" with its respective areas (definition of an international student, faculty perspectives, and international student perspectives).

The researcher organized the categories of significant statements by themes. Particular areas within the major themes emerged from the data. Themes were identified

within the interviews through an examination of recurrent patterns by comparing and contrasting the data (all the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle). The researcher ended this phase by writing a summary of the themes.

Phase 3

Phase 3 included the theme analysis across cases, individual member checks, final theme analysis, final review of literature, and final report. The researcher compared significant statements across student interviews, across faculty interviews, and then across student and faculty interviews, searching for patterns ("regularities," a term used by LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) across participants' data. The purposes of this part of analysis were to compare the experiences of all the respondents and to identify categories of themes common among cases.

Identifying themes and making connections between them were essential parts of the data analysis. Interpretation of the data was done with particular sensitivity to the participants' contexts. Making sense of one's findings can be both artful and political. Although multiple criteria exist in regards to evaluation of qualitative research, there is no single interpretative truth (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Although, to an extent, it was important to let the profiles and thematic fragments speak for themselves, the researcher asked herself what she learned from interviewing the participants, exploring the transcripts and labeling them, and organizing categories of the statements selected. The following questions guided the researcher in interpreting the material:

1. What connections were there among the experiences of the participants interviewed?

2. How did they understand and explain those connections?

3. What surprises emerged from the data collection and analysis?

4. How were their interviews consistent and/or inconsistent with the literature?

5. How did the information obtained from the interviews go beyond the literature? (Adapted from Seidman, 1998).

For a concluding review and validation of the researcher's interpretations and themes found, individual member checks were used with each faculty and student participant. Although the initial intent was to have meetings with the faculty group and the student group, the small number of international students contacted for the study dictated a higher level of confidentiality and, therefore, individual member checks were used with the participants. After the corroboration by all participants, the researcher did a final theme analysis. A final review of the literature led to the final report.

## Researcher Biases and Assumptions

A detailed portrayal and thorough examination of information-rich cases took place through the interpretative lens of the researcher as participants' insights and experiences revealed. The understanding and the interpretation of data were filtered through the researcher's personal beliefs, biases and experiences as an international student and advisee.

Researcher Biases

Given the fact that the researcher has been an international student and advisee in the doctoral program in the College of Education, her particular biases became an inherent component of this research study. The researcher was an important part of the research process, interpreting the data through the lenses of her worldview and of her background as a student and advisee.

The researcher's biases were rooted in her educational background in her home country. She was brought up in a Romanian society where the teacher was viewed as an unchallengeable and infallible figure. Coming to a United States higher education institution was quite a contrast for the researcher. Due to previous encounters with a few university students and faculty members, the researcher felt welcome from the very first days on campus.

The researcher experienced excitement and accomplishment as well as doubt and frustration as an international graduate student and advisee. In an attempt to fully enjoy the intellectual and academic life of a graduate student, the researcher worked to find a balance between positive and negative experiences. A feeling of gratefulness helped overcome any negative experiences lived throughout the graduate years.

As an international student, the researcher encountered a number of confusing situations and experienced culture shock. Aspects of formality vs. informality, assertiveness vs. non-assertiveness, and direct vs. indirect came out when contrasting her perceptions of the student-faculty relationship in her home-country and in the United States. Considering the teacher's role in the researcher's home-country, the informal

student chats with faculty members in campus dining centers or coffee shops and the domestic student-faculty relationship norms were rather relaxed, to the point that students would call professors by their first names rather than their professional title.

The researcher's interest in exploring the advising experience from the perspectives of doctoral international students and faculty advisors started out with subjective feelings and personal curiosity. Nevertheless, a selected review of literature shows that international students face serious socio-cultural and academic challenges and advising has a significant role in the international student learning and adjusting to the new environment (Greisberger, 1984; Khabiri, 1985; Seeger, 1993).

Assumptions/Expectations

Going into this study, the researcher accepted several assumptions. As the researcher did not have any experience in terms of faculty advising, as a faculty member, there were no specific assumptions about the data collection and analysis related to faculty advisors.

The international students might be concerned about their participation in the study. They might consider that disclosure of information might affect their position and eventually cause them to lose their status gained, possibly, with challenges (scholarship, visa, etc.). To decrease the level of the students' concern, the interviews were held on an individual basis and the students were reassured with a high degree of confidentiality.

The researcher assumed that her status as a doctoral international student might create an interview environment and conditions in which the participants might feel comfortable and secure enough to speak openly about their experience. Asking clear

questions, one at a time, might avoid misinterpretation or lack of focus on the topic. Follow-up questions might increase the richness of data. The interview might enable the researcher to use prompts and small cues to reach deeper insights on the matter explored.

The researcher supports the notion that the natural subjectivity of the investigator shapes the research (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Moreover, the researcher agrees that gaining some understanding, even sympathy, for the study participants may help to gain entry into their experiential world and to the meaning they have made about the phenomenon being investigated (Marshall & Rossman). However, based on Marshall's and Rossman's recommendations, the researcher provided the following controls for bias within the interpretations by ensuring that: (a) there was checking and rechecking of the data; (b) free and reflective note taking were practiced in a journal format; (c) professional experts (committee members) played 'devil's advocate' and questioned the researcher's analysis critically; and, (d) the guidance of professional researchers was followed in order to control the data quality (adapted from Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 147). In addition, the researcher kept a continuous diary that chronicled her response to the data categorization process. The assumption was that this particular methodology would indeed aim at accomplishing the purpose of the study: an in-depth exploration of advising international students as it was lived by a selected number of participants.

## Summary

In Chapter III, the researcher presented the methodology and the procedures used to complete this qualitative research study with the aim to answer the following research question: How do selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in a

college of education in a Midwestern university live and perceive their advising experience? This chapter included the following: the study design and rationale, including the selection of participants and instruments, the collection of data, the explanation of how data were analyzed, and researcher biases and assumptions.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of the study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the advising experience as it is lived and perceived by selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in a College of Education in a Midwestern university known for its focus on teacher preparation. The present study aimed at engaging the participants in discussions of their advising experiences in order to elicit themes and meanings significant to them and to hear their voices through unfolding stories of their advising experiences. Using the interview data, this chapter examines faculty and student perspectives through the lenses of the study participants and their own words.

The purpose of this chapter is (a) to introduce the faculty advisors and doctoral international students who participated in the study, (b) to explore the themes, grounded as they are in the participants' accounts of the lived experience, and (c) to provide an explanation of these themes with meanings that are true to that experience. Through in-depth interviews, the faculty and student participants in the study shared their past and present experiences to illustrate how they lived advising in the context of the College of Education in a Midwestern institution. Participants' emotions revealed during the interviews challenged at times the researcher to remind herself of the need to maintain a neutral position.

Following Marshall and Rossman's (1989) recommendations, the researcher provided the following controls for bias when interpreting the data ensuring that there were: (a) checking and rechecking of the data; (b) free and reflective note taking in a

journal format; (c) a professional expert who played 'devil's advocate' and questioned the researcher's analysis critically; and, (d) guidance of an outside researcher for initial and ongoing feedback on the analysis process.

Keeping a continuous diary helped the researcher chronicle her response to the data categorization process. For example, although salient topics were identified in the first set of interviews, the researcher did her best to avoid imposing any meaning from one participant's interview on the next constantly keeping track of these issues in her journal.

<div align="center">Introducing the Participants in the Study</div>

In the fall of 2007, when the researcher asked doctoral international students from the College of Education of a Midwestern Institution to nominate faculty they considered to be exemplary as advisors, the intent was to identify faculty who had experience with advising doctoral international students and who were willing to share that experience for this study. In addition, the intent was to explore doctoral international students' perspectives on advising. Therefore, doctoral international students were selected based on having a faculty advisor and being willing to participate in the study. The voices that articulated the experiences of advising were the voices of three faculty advisors and three doctoral international students. To protect participants' anonymity, the researcher used the following pseudonyms: for faculty, Alex (male), Maya (female), and Chris (male); and for students, Lucas (male), Nermina (female), and Ana (female). It was inevitable that faculty and student participants' experiences had been influenced by the cultural and educational environment back in their respective countries. The participants' individual

experiences and knowledge shaped their own identities over time and contributed to their present perspectives on the advising process.

Some background information helped set the context for the interviews and contributed to a smooth beginning of the relationship built between the researcher and the participants. Faculty and student participants were all from the College of Education at the same institution. However, they were from different departments in the college. To maintain a high level of confidentiality of the participants' identities as well as to prompt people to speak freely during the interviews, particular information about the faculty, the students, and their departments (e.g., names of institutions, countries, etc.) was not used in this study.

Both faculty and students were asked questions about their international travel experiences as well as about their time spent at the institution in the study. While two of the faculty participants, Alex and Chris, had extensive travel experiences both at the personal and professional level as faculty, the third, Maya had some international travel experience on a personal level. Maya and Chris had seven years of professional experience at this institution, while Alex had thirty-two years of experience. Two of the students, Lucas and Ana, also had international travel experience prior to their arrival at this institution. The purpose of their previous international travel experience was both personal and academic/professional. However, for Nermina, coming to this university was her first international traveling experience. Although both Lucas and Nermina had previous learning experiences in a Master's degree program at this institution, Ana's first experience at this institution was the doctoral program. All the student participants had at

least three years of experience in this institution. The students had a common interest to study at this institution in the United States to further their education and their professional careers. All student participants had prior information about the doctoral program in the college through their experiences in the Master's program at this institution and/or through relationships they had built with faculty members from this university before arrival in the United States.

## Advising: Participants' Lived Experiences

An ongoing process of data analysis was a result of the researcher's new thoughts and new connections throughout the study. To analyze the data, the researcher used the constant comparative method (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The researcher compared and contrasted participants' statements (key words and phrases), and categories emerging from their own language, while focusing on the research question of the study: How do selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in a college of education in a Midwestern university live and perceive their advising experience?

The purpose of this process was to search for patterns and connections (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) across participants' data. Specific areas within the themes were identified within the reports through an examination of recurrent patterns. The data from the interviews were categorized into four major themes: guiding/being guided, subjective experiences and expectations, growing and adapting, and unfolding the personal.

A summary of these themes and the areas corresponding to them are presented with excerpts from the interviews in the following sections. These themes were articulated in some way by every interviewee when sharing their lived advising experiences through their own individual lenses. Overlapping of themes as well as connections among them were inherent throughout the data analysis. As a result, a certain degree of redundancy occurs in this chapter when explaining the themes. The experience can be compared with a symphony (Canning, 1988). The themes are reiterated across different sections of the orchestra and throughout various movements. Themes are played against each other and sometimes they create patterns of elaborate counterpoint leading to an overall image of harmony. This is not only the nature of a symphony, but the nature of the advising experience lived by the participants in this study.

I. Guiding/Being Guided

> Being told or guided, being guided towards what you should do…and that is what you should actually do. So, my advisor and other professors with whom I communicated questions about what to do or when gave me advice and guidance which facilitated the flow of my program until now and I could successfully take the classes at the times I was supposed to be taking. And I did that. And that was very successful. I guess that's what I meant by quality advising is to be giving a piece of advice which would work, and which would make your program smooth and easy to get things done at the right time, at the right pace and that was very good for me. (Lucas, November, 2007)

In his words, one of the students, Lucas, captured the essence of a major theme: guiding/being guided. This theme emerged from all student and faculty interviews. In their accounts, participants refer to guiding/being guided as a process where the advisor helps the student, directing the student to follow the appropriate procedures through paperwork and requirements. The theme of guiding/being guided could also be

encountered in the interviewees' accounts when describing the roles of advisor and advisee. According to students and faculty, the ultimate goal of guidance was to work together, following mutual agreements, and guiding/being guided towards academic achievement.

A. The process: What is advising? While perspectives of faculty and students showed similarities with regard to advising as a process, a broad range of approaches shaped by their own values, beliefs, and experience was evident. This area was characterized by both students and faculty as a comprehensive, individually-based process where there is two-way communication, teamwork, and shared responsibility. To emphasize the character of advising, Maya talked about an "individualized process and you think of it in the context of teaching in that one-on-one contact" (February, 2008).

The relationship between advising and teaching became apparent when all participants stressed the importance of an advisor being knowledgeable and prepared, to create an environment conducive to learning through guiding, and to encourage the advisee's autonomy. According to Nermina, an advisor "should be very knowledgeable about the area of advising" and the advising relationship should be "warm and cordial…because I know faculty advisors are busy people also, they have their own schedule. But I know they are also ready for you as you go because we communicate through e-mail or we call to set up an appointment. Or sometimes you just go and knock on their door, and the person would be around. It always has been cordial and receptive" (November, 2007). To create an environment conducive to learning, participants considered that an advisor should encourage the advisee, collaborate, discuss solutions

and alternatives, and "make referrals" (Alex, February, 2008). To explain their perspectives Nermina thought "the way advisors would communicate with you should really encourage you and help you realize that 'yes, you can do it'" (November, 2007), while Ana commented: "there are always few alternatives so in case this doesn't work let's try this or how about this" (November, 2007). Nermina continued her idea by saying: "I think I should cooperate with my advisor. We need to come to an understanding of what needs to be done; because we have a goal to achieve... we need to work together, to collaborate. Collaboration is very important" (November, 2007).

Considering advising as teaching philosophy, Alex, Maya, and Chris wanted their advisees to academically succeed. To do so, Chris, stressed how important it is to "help them [advisees] navigate through paperwork and requirements" and to "go through it [advising] together" (February, 2007). Alex considered it important to ask himself what he could do to help advisees to get to that place they want to go to, to be available to them, and to "encourage them to utilize his advising services" (Alex, February, 2007) when desired or needed. Alex also thought "it is very important that we as advisors carefully protect or value the student's autonomy, whether an international student or an American student. We can strip from them their responsibility to manage their own life, including academic life, by making decisions for them" (February, 2007). Maya reiterated in her interviews the idea of advising as an extension of teaching:

> [...] because I see advising as part of teaching and that is just from my background and some of my training, too, when I was a doctoral student as well. Advising is a teaching process, so it's individual. [...] I do feel that teaching, that support, that one-on-one time is part of what makes a good advisor. It's not necessarily just like in the classroom. It is not just like filling the student with information, telling them what roles, what they need to do, but it is trying to have

a two-way communication and to understand what their goals are, what their needs are and how that fits in into the requirements the university has for a doctorate degree. [...], and if you have to give homework in that advising session that's okay too, if you think about it as teaching versus advising... [...] It's an extension of my teaching responsibilities. (February, 2008)

Moreover, Maya emphasized the importance for an advisor to "enjoy talking with students" and to "enjoy hearing what their goals are" (February, 2007).

Along the same lines, student interviewees also wanted their advisors to be enthusiastic about what they do by being "willing to listen", "willing to walk through things", and "willing to embrace differences" (Ana, November, 2007). Furthermore, according to students, carrying out advising in the form of "brainstorming", "throwing out ideas trying to come up with solutions or possible alternatives" (Ana, November, 2007) and providing feedback that informs by "giving a piece of advice which would work" (Lucas, November, 2007) were also important aspects of advising.

Ana considered advising as "a partnership... that the advisor is there but you are there as well" (November, 2008). The participants also agreed that the advising process could either facilitate the program or hinder the success of the program. "Clarity in the guidance", "periodic meetings" (Lucas, November, 2007), and understanding were important factors which led to a "smooth sailing" (Ana, November, 2007) through the program. To point this out, Ana stated:

> Now that I'm trying to think back, what made that smooth sailing is that we mutually agreed on, if you want to call them, the rules of the game, from the very beginning. We knew what we were doing, what my responsibility was, and what my advisor's responsibility was and we both stuck to these rules. (November, 2008)

Although both students and faculty addressed the informal aspect of advising by getting to know each other on a personal level, students emphasized the importance of "getting to know the advisor and the advisor getting to know me as a person with needs, not only from the academic perspective" (Nermina, November, 2007) and of advising going beyond the academic while focusing on "the whole person" (Nermina, November, 2007). Ana underlined the same idea:

> [...] looking at the relationship of advisor-advisee, it will play a very important role in your life for two years or three years or four years, as long you are going to be in the program. So, if you don't have that comfort zone with them... and I think comfort zone comes with those personal relationships or personal understanding. But if you have that understanding, it makes it easier and it also transforms into your academic life. That is my understanding. (November, 2007)

However, all faculty interviewed agreed that knowing the students' cultural and educational background and being aware of their academic and personal needs facilitated the advising process and communication between advisor and advisee. To point this out, when sharing his perspectives on good advising Chris said:

> That is being a mentor, being a friend when it's needed, being supportive of the student and their needs, and actually sticking up for the student in faculty meetings [...]. You get to know the student in a different way in advising than you do in a classroom, because you are working one-on-one with the student for the most part. (February, 2008)

Along the same lines, he continued:

> [...] you need to get to know the student. An American student that would come here I would ask "where are you from?", "where did you grow up?", "what was your town like?", "what did you do there when you were younger?" It's the same thing with international students. We should know something about their country or at least make an effort to find out something. (February, 2008)

When expressing their views on advising, the participants highlighted the idea of guidance as a process. For the participants, guiding or being guided was about providing

or receiving help to navigate through paperwork and requirements, reaching a goal while

working together, following through with mutual agreements, and directing or being

directed towards the right courses and/or resources. To make advising successful, Alex

thought:

> [...] it's successful when you're really working as a team toward the achievement of their goals and when the faculty advisor is "other directed." It's like I want this person to academically succeed and then asking the question, "What can I do to help them get to that place they want to go?" (February, 2008)

B. The people: What roles do they play? When reflecting on their experiences

with advising, the participants clearly pointed out the importance of the role of a faculty

advisor and of the role of an advisee. The idea of guiding/being guided was reiterated in

participants' accounts when describing the roles of advisor and advisee. Both faculty and

student interviewees stressed the need for the advisor to be knowledgeable, available,

encouraging, patient, open to different ideas, and understanding of differences. For a

successful advising experience, Ana considered that it was important for the advisor to

be:

> Willing to listen and understand the problems and concerns; willing to walk through those things with you and knowing that just because you have a different background, especially because you have a different background, cultural, social, religious, whatever, that you don't see things in the same way; willing to be open to understand those differences even though you might not necessarily agree with them. Patience... and I guess that human element besides being knowledgeable and actually knowing what you are talking about, what you are doing. (November, 2007)

By the same token, Maya saw advising as a teaching process and, therefore, as an

individual process. She stated: "when you're advising, I think of hearing from the student

about what their story is, what their questions are, what their needs are" (Maya, February,

2008). Although an advisor's availability and willingness to spend time with an international advisee were common patterns in both student and faculty interviews, it was evident that students and faculty defined the role of a faculty advisor through different lenses. Overall, student interviewees did not consider advising an "add-on" (Lucas, November, 2007). On the contrary, they viewed advising as a "serious business" (Lucas, November, 2007) that could facilitate or hinder the success of the program. In addition, the students interviewed considered the role of advisor as a real and active part of the faculty work in the institution. According to Nermina (November, 2008), it was important for the advisor to be "present," "focused," "ready," and "helpful."

However, while faculty members considered the role of being an advisor important, the actual advising component was not recognized for tenure and promotion by the university. This influenced the faculty attitudes towards advising.

> Advising is something extra to do because it does not count for tenure or promotion and that in many universities for the most part, unless it's in the structure of that specific university that makes advising structures different. What everybody wants you to do is research. Everybody wants you to bring in grants. And if you do that you don't even have to teach well because you are bringing in money. They will go into your classroom, they will look at your teaching evaluations, but those things related to advising won't be pronounced in that, if they show up at all. Even with other universities that see advising as service, I don't consider advising as service. I see advising as being part of the teaching role and it could be incorporated into some of your responsibilities and get more weight if it was considered part of your teaching. Even so… some universities would say you have to be an exceptional teacher, but when the research is needed there are only so many hours in a day. (Maya, February, 2008)

"Being human" was another trait of a good advisor. Both faculty and students stressed the importance of the human aspect which could help build the relationship of advising. Student interviewees did not want to be just a student on a list. They wanted

connection and relatedness. They viewed an advisor as a guide who would be easily available and could tune in to the advisee role. Two of the students were very specific when referring to an advisor as being human by pointing out the need for the advisor to "understand what the person was going through" (Nermina, November, 2007), to "be warmhearted" (Nermina, November, 2007), and to be interested in the student's personal life by "getting on that personal level" (Ana, November, 2007).

Nermina talked about an advising relationship being "warm and cordial...because I know faculty advisors are busy people also, they have their own schedule". At the same time, she considered it important for an advisor to be "ready for you as you go because we communicate through e-mail or we call to set up an appointment. Or sometimes you just go and knock on their door, and the person would be around". For her it was important for the advising relationship to be "cordial and receptive" (November, 2008).

In other words, students wanted advisors to know the student as a person as well as to help the student feel comfortable in a new environment. Sharing her experience, Nermina said:

> A little bit of... being human! Being human and understand that this is what the person is going through. I remember when I came first and I was thinking in the back of my mind of my daughter ...this was really impacting my studies. Sometimes I would dream that she was sick. [...] Going beyond the box to understand people, because all these things have an impact on student learning. In my experience with the doctoral advising, my advisors would strictly focus on the academic. If you have any personal worries they don't care about that. All they care about are the courses that you're supposed to take, this is what you're supposed to do, and the learning/advising never went beyond the academic. (November, 2007)

By the same token, faculty considered that part of the role of the advisor was to understand advisee's goals and needs, to "help the advisee feel relaxed" (Chris, February,

2008), to "be open to different ideas, be flexible" (Chris, February, 2008), and to show

sensitivity/empathy. For example, Maya said:

> Is it just the classes they (faculty) instruct or is it something that is more than that?
> And I think it is something that is more than that: understanding struggles that
> people are going through, where is something in their lives getting in the way of
> studying. It may not be that I have a solution for it, they may just have a baby that
> is crying all night, they can't get any sleep and they are exhausted. If that is
> getting in the way of them proceeding, I can't change that but I can empathize
> with that situation and especially at the graduate level ...or suggest options to
> meet the goals they have. (Maya, February, 2008)

When describing their advising experiences, all faculty and students focused on shared

responsibility as essential for successful advising. While faculty saw the need to carefully

protect and value the advisees' autonomy and freedom of choice related to their academic

program and their lives, they also considered that an advisee should be "self-directed",

"inner-motivated", and "more assertive" (Chris, February, 2008), and be "responsible

back" by "seeking out the advisor's support and assistance" (Alex, February, 2008). Alex

emphasized shared responsibility in advising as follows:

> [...] an advisor is an advisor and the student is the decision maker. I try to
> maintain fairly rigid boundaries there. There are many times when in my role as
> an advisor the fastest, easiest, most efficient thing for me to do is to say "here is
> what you need to do, do this." And, in so doing, we take away the autonomy and
> the responsibility from the student. The students have rights to freedom of choice
> related to their academic program and their life. And along with those rights come
> the responsibilities that correspond to them. [...] We can strip from them their
> responsibility to manage their own life, including academic life, by making
> decisions for them. As an advisor I hope that I guard that rule carefully and that I
> relate to them as an advisor... here are the advantages, disadvantages, or telling
> them that this is a situation you don't have much control over. I can't say you have
> freedom of choice with something that is a university requirement. But in most
> areas we can advise them that they need to take one course from this block of
> courses. And we can talk about the advantages and disadvantages of each of those
> classes, but at the end of the day, I'm the advisor they're the decision maker. They
> choose which courses they take. (February, 2008)

In their role of advisees, students also agreed with the mutual responsibility in advising. In their views, an advisee should have "initiative," and be "prepared," "punctual" (Lucas, November, 2007), be "willing to learn and try and listen" (Ana, November, 2007), "be up to the task", and "understand what is at stake" (Nermina, November, 2007). According to student participants, good advisees should take responsibility by planning ahead, exploring and doing research on their own as well as by sharing with their advisor their needs, their goals, and any other information relevant to their culture and education. Lucas gave the following examples:

> I would see an advisee to be responsible...to be initiative; try to find out things before just asking. For example, before asking my advisor what classes I should be taking probably I should go and ask [...] students who started before. [...] I met with some students, some people who were in the program, some people who were about to finish the program [...] I talked to them, and I got some advice. I would think an advisee should not depend entirely on the advisor, should have some role in exploring, investigating, asking about things...should be also [...] punctual, should have some plans [...] some suggested proposals before meeting the advisor. [...] I always have my agenda; I have some issues, some topics to discuss with him/ with her. I communicate with my advisor before I go. I send them an email saying "these are the issues I'm concerned with and this is what I think I should be doing. Am I right or am I wrong? What should I do? So, preparation and planning, reliability and punctuality, these are some the features/traits of a good advisee. (November, 2007)

Ana pointed out the advisee's responsibility by saying:

> I think at the graduate level, especially at the graduate level, a lot of responsibility lays on us. So, the advisor is not there to chew everything and put it into our mouths and we are just there to swallow it. What they do is giving us some information and then we should process that information and we should search for more information. We should do a large part of our job. [...] because when you enter a masters or doctorate program first of all you're not sixteen years old anymore and you should know that since you have gone to that stage you should take some responsibility, too. I guess responsibility would be number one and [...] willing to understand your advisor also because everyone is a human being. People have their own issues and problems and if you ask them a question or if you give them a draft of paper and you expect an immediate response the next day

that's not feasible, that's not possible. So, you have to be understanding as well and willing to do your part [...]. I guess it's again a combination of knowing what to do and being a good person. (November, 2007)

Through their individual perspectives, faculty and students acknowledged guiding/being guided as a major theme in the process of advising and in the role behavior of advisor and advisee. While advising referred rather to the academic side of the process, guiding/being guided came out in their accounts in broader terms that incorporated the affect and personal aspect of the advising relationship. They captured the essence of this theme by referring to advising as an "individualized process" (Maya, February, 2008) that goes "beyond academic issues" (Nermina, November, 2007), where responsibilities are shared and the "human side is just as important as the academic side of advising" (Ana, November, 2007).

## II. Subjective Experiences and Expectations

There should be different considerations and serious considerations regarding the advising when it comes to international students [...] so they (faculty) make sure things are clear culturally and linguistically [...]. I think an advisor should put this into consideration: X is an international student at me from a different culture and has a different language... they (advisors) should be aware of that. (Lucas, November, 2007)

The quotes above are quintessential examples of the theme of subjective experiences and expectations illustrated by both faculty and students in their accounts when revealing their personal and professional perspectives related to advising international students. This theme was reiterated in the participants' interviews in the following areas: (a) cultural and educational differences, and (b) understandings of the international student.

<u>A. Cultural and educational differences</u>. Both faculty and student interviewees recognized not only the importance of knowing and understanding each other, as previously mentioned, but specifically the need of knowledge and awareness in regards to the international advisee's cultural and educational background. Participants considered that it was essential to focus on any factors that could hinder or facilitate advising and to build an advising relationship through guidance and personal communication. At the foundation of the communication between advisor and advisee was a "comfort zone" (Ana, November, 2007) that came with personal understanding. As Ana pointed out, "communication is the key to everything.... to understanding, to the relationship. If you look at different aspects of both verbal and nonverbal communication, they do play an important role because that is how you established that comfort zone" (November, 2007). Similarly, Maya shared her perspective:

> Well, the more I know about a person and what their interests are, what their backgrounds are, it is helpful in making that experience unique instead of everybody on the assembly line and go through this doctoral process. I think it is important when it comes down to how much I should know it just depends on how comfortable somebody is with sharing things with me. (February, 2008)

Along the same lines, Lucas considered that the communication process in an advising relationship could be facilitated and improved by the advisor's knowledge of the advisee's background. He thought it was important for the advisor to "be aware of cultural, linguistic, and educational background of their advisee" (Lucas, November, 2007). On the same note, Ana commented on the advisor's knowledge of the international student's background:

> You never really know the person until you know their background. I don't think you'll ever really know the person completely, but knowing that background,

where the person comes from, their culture and their previous experience will help [me] understand why they're behaving this way or why they are understanding you this way. Just because they are used to certain things they might be expecting some kind of behavior or some kind of language when they are not getting that. Their background explains that. This is why it is important to know. (November, 2007)

Both students and faculty acknowledged the different perspectives, experiences, and expectations that international students brought with them to campus as well as the importance of accepting these differences. Language as means of communication and the impact of language on advising was an area touched on by all participants. While all faculty participants agreed with the need to check for understanding, to provide clarification, and to be aware of the international advisees' English skills, they also considered language a possible barrier in their communication with international advisees. Alex explained:

I think it's important for the advisor to clarify with the international students because sometimes there may a person who is listening intently and still not quite picking things up, especially earlier on in their time here. That's just a case of slowing down a little bit and asking for clarification, "Do you understand?" and have them explain back to you what it is that we're going to do now. [...] If they didn't speak English very well when they arrived they are headed down the right path. I think just slow down and try your best to communicate. (February, 2008)

When talking about language and communication, Chris provided the following example from his advising experience:

I advised a student about which classes to take doing a full term and that student really didn't listen or understand why I was saying these classes were appropriate for that term and they took a class that I advised them not to take and they failed the class because they were not ready for that class. After the F in the class at the doctoral level, the student came to me and said "I should have listened to you." So to me, it was more that they could not understand why I was saying what I was saying. A language barrier... not that the student was not bright enough. (February, 2008)

On the same note, Maya gave some examples from her experience:

> First thing that comes to mind is about specific, theoretical concepts and there might be a misunderstanding of how that concept is applied. Sometimes I might not have the examples to clarify or redirect the student in their thinking. This can help with any student but I think when the language is different I am not sure whether my examples or metaphors are helpful. And the only thing I have to go by is that when the student goes away or they come back and then explain that concept, will they have understood it more clearly or they will still be explaining it from maybe on the incorrect assumption? When you have difficult concept of human behavior, they are difficult to begin with, and you know they are not getting it right, you don't want to say "no, no, you have it all wrong" but you are trying to ask questions about their thoughts, trying to redirect them. (February, 2008)

According to faculty, advising would take more time when repetition of issues and clarification of misunderstandings due to language were present. To explain that, Chris said that international students could "miss the intent or the message I am trying to convey. It takes longer to get through the advising the process which is okay but...sometimes I have to have them write on paper what they mean and what they are after and then I have to respond in writing what they mean and what they are after" (February, 2008). By the same token, Alex identified more challenges with the international advisees' writing skills than with their speaking skills. In his opinion, "verbal English skills advance faster than the written English skills" (Alex, February, 2008) of international students. To clarify his point, Alex gave the following examples:

> The language issues that I've run into have been mostly in working with students on their thesis or their dissertation and so, it's written communication that lags behind I think a little bit, even with those students who are fairly fluent verbally in English. Their writing skills may be struggling a little bit, or they move along a little slower. I was reading a thesis one time and the student had written "I dun understand why this happened" something "D U N" and I kept trying to figure out what exactly she was saying. She was phonetically saying "I don't understand" but throughout the entire paper there were all these "duns" that were in there. I mean you have to go back and say "you know this is close". "This is real close,

we just need to change the spelling a little bit." It's just little things like that quite often or a difference maybe that they haven't yet learned the plural of some terms. They might express singular instead of plural and I just think that goes with the territory. I don't mind assisting with those sorts of situations. You really are hopeful that the student has picked it up after the first time you have gone through this and that they have then made the editorial changes themselves and that the final paper reflects their writing skill at that point in time even though it might not have been as solid at the start of their thesis or dissertation. (February, 2008)

Although faculty shared various experiences with international students where language was a more or less challenging factor in communication, students believed their language proficiency and advanced English language skills helped them avoid any miscommunication/misunderstanding in their own relationship with their advisor. All three international students interviewed had rather rich practical experiences in terms of using English as a foreign language. Therefore, they did not encounter any linguistic obstacles in their communication with their advisor due to their advanced language skills. For example, Nermina considered that "the level of language counts in communication" (November, 2007). In her home country, English was also considered an official language. However, she stated that "Americans over here seem to say it 'okay, you have an accent.' The only thing that differentiates the kind of language we speak". She also thought that professors did not use slang in American language and that they used English language in ways that students could understand. Furthermore, Nermina pointed out that it was important for speakers of English as a foreign language to be careful when choosing their ways of expressing themselves when communicating with others:

I don't think that with my advisor there has been any kind of miscommunication. It looked like we understood each other when we talked. But I know there are some other people who came from other places and that sometimes I talk with and they ask: "what did you say?" You need to say it over and over for them to get the meaning or the message of what you're saying. Sometimes the actual language

you use - the words that come out of your mouth - also is very important. Well, I haven't had any of these problems with my advisors, but with students when I was a graduate assistant and I was teaching. I said something and that student didn't like it, he certainly acted very fervently "what did you say?" I said "I'm sorry" so I had to revise my decision for the word that I used. So I think it is very important to mind the ways you communicate. (November, 2007)

Like faculty, student participants considered language a serious factor that could

facilitate or hinder advising international students. Ana indicated that language issues

might arise in the communication with an advisor, but they always would come up at the

beginning of the advising process and they would be clarified along the way. She

explained her point by saying:

> Because you always go through the process of adjusting, of adapting to each other and I had these situations myself. If there are some cultural or language differences or if you can say the same thing but just because you come from a different background you mean different things, it always comes out right away. So, I think once these things are sorted out then it becomes less important. But from the beginning it is important to know that some people might mean different things when they say something. I went through that and I know other people went through that, too. But it evens out with time. (November, 2007)

To facilitate communication in the advising process, Lucas emphasized that it was

imperative the advisor understood what the advisee said and what the advisee said was

"the right thing to be said in this language" (November, 2007). To clarify this idea, Lucas

gave an example of different cultural practices when greeting people in his home country:

> [...] there are ways to greet people back home, people here say hi and that's it. For example, back home you would have to say hello, you would ask about family, about their kids... "How is the family?", "how are your kids?", "how is your wife?" So, this is what I mean. There are certain ways to be said in a language that are different in another language. (November, 2007)

Lucas shared his own strategies to facilitate communication with his advisor:

> Generally speaking when I communicate with my advisor or my professor, because of my understanding that I come from a different language and culture, I

write the e-mail, for example, in Word document, I read and reread the document, I make sure I'm using the right vocabulary, it's not too direct. I try to use [...] polite expressions, and then after I look at my e-mail, I go ahead and cut and paste. So, that is one of the precautions I do before I e-mail my professor or my advisor. These are some of the considerations. I make sure that I am using the right language; I make sure that my e-mail, my correspondence is polite enough. Probably sometimes I'm too polite, I don't know, but I preferred to be too polite than impolite. (November, 2007)

While all faculty advisors pointed out that it was essential to "be aware of cultural differences" (Maya, February, 2008), to "recognize [...] special differences" (Alex, February, 2008), and to "show respect to differences" (Chris, February, 2008) when working with their international advisees, they focused more on the cultural aspect of these differences than the educational aspect. In their opinion, various cultural factors and different traditions and customs could affect advising. They expressed their concern about accidentally offending an international student if rejecting an expression of appreciation. One example encountered in all faculty accounts was related to how gift giving was perceived in various cultural environments including the United States. To explain his perspective, Chris stated:

It also depends where they (students) are from in the world. There are certain courtesies that some Asian students have that faculty mistake as a bribe, when they mistake it that the student is trying to be nice to get a grade and that is not the case. I think that the student is trying to show respect, [...] but some faculty take it as a...I guess a bribe, trying to –we say – "kiss up" to get a grade. I refer to gift giving. And it's usually very small and significant gifts about their country little trinkets. So, some faculty are uncomfortable about that. But that's a custom and it shows respect. (February, 2008)

Alex thought it was important to know about the cultural background of the international advisee to avoid any possible offense towards the student. He gave the following example:

I was working with a Korean graduate student who went home either for the winter break or the summer I can't recall. But, anyway, he went home and he came back to the United States with a gift from himself and his parents for me. A very nice tea set – a tea pot and tea cups. There is a law in Iowa that government employees cannot accept gifts that are valued over three dollars. I think maybe that law has been modified some. The intention of the law was to prevent legislators from accepting gifts from lobbyists. The intention wasn't really for professors. The intention was for legislators, but it was established for all state employees. No question in my mind this gift that the student was giving me was way beyond three dollars in value. And I'm faced with the decision of do I just accept this or do I say I'm sorry I can't accept this because of the Law. And I'm a law abiding citizen, ok. I knew without question that it would be a great offense to the student and his parents if I did not accept this gift. As graciously as I could I accepted the gift, and wrote his parents a thank you note and extended my appreciation. Whether that was the right thing or the wrong thing to do – in my mind it was the right thing to do. [...] I think it would have been very offensive to reject his family's expression of appreciation to me. And, I think that was very much a reflection of what was culturally appropriate [gift giving] in their culture. (February, 2008)

Maya also pointed out how particular cultural courtesies could have an impact on

advising:

[...] a lot of times international students would give me gifts, really small, for example, "here's a cardholder from my country, here's a little thing that you can put on your desk" which is wonderful, I really like that and appreciate that. But I may not know what the cultural response is that I should give to that. I usually ask if I can open, if it's a card or something... "Can I open it in front of you?" because I don't know. Do I just take it aside without opening it because that's the culturally appropriate way or do I open it in front of that person and say thank you? And that is an example when there's gift exchange that is happening. Not knowing cultural differences may translate into other awkward types of communication...I don't know... but I do know enough that there are different traditions and cultures that I don't really know about that could affect the advising process. (February, 2008)

On the other hand, students talked about cultural differences as well as

educational differences. They reiterated the importance of understanding "where the

differences are coming from" (Nermina, November, 2007) and the importance of

awareness that certain cultural variables might be offensive to some people but these

variables might not be offensive to other people. As Nermina pointed out, it was important to know "what is acceptable and what is not acceptable to somebody" (November, 2007).

However, Nermina and Ana shared a common perspective: although with different backgrounds, "as humans, we have commonalities" (Nermina, November 2007) and, therefore, "we are more similar than we are different" (Ana, November 2007). Likewise, Lucas underscored that, as an international student, "you need some time to observe and see how people do things, how people say things, and then try to adapt yourself or conform to the new culture" (November, 2007).

Students' answers also triggered the researcher's questions related to culture shock. According to the student interviewees, culture shock was about different cultural experiences. Although their perspectives on culture shock were slightly different based on their own lived experiences in a new cultural environment, they shared common ideas. Lucas, for example, strongly disagreed with the use of terms "culture shock". He explained:

> I just feel that you're talking about some kind of electrical source, electricity, because I don't actually agree with the terminology culture shock. [...] I've had this conversation with colleagues and friends. I think it should be called cultural difference or cultural differences, or if you want to call it something close to shock, maybe call it cultural incompatibility or something like that. But culture shock is very negative and I don't think it's a shock, it's just a difference. It's about cultural differences. You need some time to observe and see how people do things, how people say things and then try to adapt yourself or conform to the new culture. So that was my take on "culture shock" which I think should be called "cultural difference" or "cultural differences" or "cultural incompatibility," or - I don't know - but not "shock." (November, 2007)

Ana shared her views on culture shock referring to examples from her personal

experience:

> If you define culture shock as a lifestyle that is completely different from what
> you're used to then no, I may say I didn't experience that. If you define culture
> shock as a change, then for me a bigger culture shock was going back home
> visiting after being here for a while and noticing all the changes that happened at
> home. Here, I did not encounter people who were very different than how I was.
> People were human, they were willing to talk and help, they were curious, and
> they wanted to know about you and help you out in any way they could.
> Lifestyle? …perhaps a little different, since it's a campus community it is a little
> different. Maybe it would have been a culture shock if I had been living in a
> dorm. That could have been a bigger culture shock. I never had that experience so
> I wouldn't know. […] But I was expecting it. Everybody was talking about. I
> knew about that. In a way I was looking forward to that both in a positive or
> negative way. I wanted to feel it and I wanted to tell someone after a while how it
> feels but it never happened…. There are a lot of changes that you notice. And
> then you become one of those people that say "oh, we don't do this or we don't eat
> that or we don't wear that kind of clothing; you don't go to school in your flip
> flops and your pajamas turned inside out". That was a kind of shock, but not a
> culture shock. (November, 2007)

Nermina made her point by defining culture shock in the big picture of culture

and relating it to both personal and professional experience lived in the United States.

She considered culture "a total share of life with people", including their beliefs and

understandings. For her, culture was "everything, every aspect of life of that person". She

used the following examples:

> There is stereotyping. People's culture starts from infancy and it's hard for you to
> change abruptly. So, maybe one needs to take the time. So maybe when I look
> this way that doesn't mean I am shy, I look away from you, it's just the way our
> culture demands us to behave. […] it used to be my practice to look away from
> people when talking, but now I'm trying to accommodate. […] Maybe the
> accent… I don't have the accent of an American. They always listen to you
> talking and say "oh, you have an accent". And that should be normal with them
> because it's not going to change or destroy the meaning or the impact of what I
> am talking about or whatever it is. I think I deserve an audience. (November,
> 2007)

Connecting her ideas about culture and culture shock, Nermina pointed out that "culture shock is about a different experience" and "culture is based on your experience because experience differs from place to place" (November, 2007). She continued emphasizing that "culture shock is about something that is totally unfamiliar. You are very unfamiliar with the culture, you have no idea… it is entirely new to you…. new experiences altogether, culturally. It is something that you haven't even thought of that exists." Using examples based on her lived experience, Nermina not only indicated the interconnection between the personal and professional aspects of her life in the United States, but also she stressed the important role that an advisor could play in an international student's adjustment to the new cultural and educational environment. Nermina recalled her own situation when she came to the United States:

> I had a cultural shock even when I landed at the airport […] the plane had the wings frozen while we were on board and could not move. There was a lot of snow which I hadn't seen before. That was something new to me. Let alone that I was wearing some light clothing. It was very cold. I was wearing some jeans and a shirt. I thought that was okay. But as we landed […] I realized it was really really cold, it was freezing. And thanks to my advisor and all the faculty who came to meet me at the airport, it was so heartwarming. When I saw them I was relieved "at least, I have people here for me". Then they took me to a place that was very warm. They had everything for me: sweaters, all the clothing that I needed, I had a stationary for my coursework, I had books, I had everything I needed ready to start immediately for the fact that I came two weeks late. At least anything that I needed to start because I was coming from a warm country. Everything that I had was for warm weather and here it was so cold. […] I think that was very very helpful for me. My advisor and I continued our relationship and I could call her anytime. She would also warn me about weather changes "tomorrow there will be so and so degrees and you need to dress properly". When there was a change of time. I had no idea because in my home country we never do that. But here you have to move the clock back or forward. She would also tell me about that. […] She was interested in my personal life. It really helped. Not that she was interfering, but helping me settle even psychologically… you know, the adjustment was stressful. So, I think an advisor can play a great role if they are so dedicated to what they are doing. (November, 2007)

All faculty and student participants agreed that not only cultural differences but also educational differences might hinder or facilitate advising and communication in advising. Chris, for example, considered that in order to be a good advisor, it was essential to know about international student's background. In his opinion, it was beyond a basic quality of being a good advisor, it was "out of respect for the student as it's supposed to be" (February, 2008). Asked what he thought about how the international student's background could impact advising and his relationship with his international advisees, Chris explained:

> I think in some instances the students will do whatever the advisor says and it might not be right. So, they won't ask questions or they won't disagree in a positive way and say "well, I think it should be this way". So, they are caught in a situation where they are doing what they're told to do and not doing what probably they should be doing. [...] In some cases it is expected that the student does not ask questions by the professor or the advisor because it's disrespectful. So, the advisor should understand that and help the student feel as relaxed as possible about what needs to take place. (February, 2008)

Alex emphasized the adjustment of the international student to a new educational environment by accommodating the student's educational needs. He supported his perspective with the following example:

> In our liberal arts core students are required to take two humanities classes and I've worked with international students who have had similar course work in their high school program of study. If they come to here, they are still going to have to go through that liberal arts core, but you wonder how much we are duplicating areas of studies that they've already had. I'm certain some of what our students are learning in Humanities or perhaps in other liberal arts coursework are things that these students already have had in an advanced high school curriculum. We can't advise against them taking it. I think maybe just understanding what their background is... I've worked in one situation with a refugee student for whom we had no records of her academic background. She literally escaped from her country with nothing more than the clothes on her back and a Bible in her hand and no opportunity to get her academic records. So, the advising process involved sitting down and visiting with her about what coursework she had in high school

and in college. She had taken college classes in her home country. What coursework she had, and then having our faculty establish proficiency exams in those areas. So, if she told us that she'd had anatomy and physiology we might create a process of testing out in that area for that one international student. I realize that the refugee situation is much different than the vast majority of our international students. (February, 2008)

To raise or increase awareness of cultural and educational differences related to

international student background and the impact these differences could have on

advising, Alex also suggested:

> I would put it on the faculty member's shoulders. If I accept responsibility for advising a student from a country that I'm not familiar with, which could be most countries, I need to study. I need to learn more about the traditions, culture, and educational processes in that country. That's all available to us, readily available through the Internet, these days. And possibly the international student program could assist with that, too. You know through development of brochures or fact sheets that they could distribute to advisors. I don't recall receiving things like that. If I'm assigned to serve as an advisor to a student from Brazil it might be very helpful if along with that came a fact sheet or information sheet on some common points of interest that might be helpful for an advisor working with a student from Brazil. (February, 2008)

Student participants also stressed the importance of educational differences and

the impact these differences could have on the advising process. According to Lucas, an

advisor should consider the relationship between the cultural difference or cultural

incompatibility and the educational background of the international student. He supported

his thought by considering the perspective of the instructor as an unquestioned figure in

other educational systems in the world:

> For example, if I am coming from a country where the teacher is kind of god who knows everything and who should be doing everything, so when I come to this culture I would expect my advisor to be doing everything, to be guiding me all the time and doing things for me. Now, I think if I am the advisor I should be aware of this, I should guide these students and tell them that how they should do it [...], and show them how to do things and it's not done this way in this country, in this system the way it is done in their country. [...] back home everything is done by

the teacher, in the schools or at the University, the teacher teaches, he lectures, gives us assignments, and we go and do them, but there is a lack of self-study and do-it-yourself and that would transfer to advising also because if I'm coming from that system then probably I don't have the habit of doing things myself. I will need to be given too much guiding. (November, 2007)

To support her perspective, Nermina used the following example to illustrate the educational differences between her home country and the United States:

I think advisors here are more tolerant than the advisors I had at home. Maybe the programs were also different. I was studying for my bachelor degree; I was an undergraduate student in my country. We had a system of advising that was not individual. Everything was written out there. I came here for a graduate program. The relationship with the advisor was more one on one... getting to know the advisor, and the advisor getting to know me as a person with needs, not only from the academic perspective. Advising was beyond advising educationally, but advising the whole person. In my former department, advisors were everywhere; they were there for me [...]. So, it was a cordial relationship. [...] Here it was quite smooth, but maybe because of the level of education and advising. The advising relationship was closer than what I had back home. (November, 2007)

B. Understandings of international student. Asked about how they would define an international student, participants – both faculty and students – agreed: An international student was someone who is not from the United States, who would come to the United States for the purpose of studying, and would enter the country on a visa. In addition, all participants pointed out that an international student would have a different cultural and educational background, and would speak a different language. According to Maya, "an international student is someone who is not a United States citizen. [...] it would be their visa. Because that would be another whole set of issues. International students have visa issues. So, an international student is anybody who is not an American citizen coming to an American school" (February, 2008). Based on his overall experience as an international student in the United States, Lucas said:

To me, an international student is a student who is coming here, who is not from the United States of America. That's for me an international student [...] that's how I understand an international student. Now, an international student, of course, could be here for a long time but they are still international. So, because they are international students most likely they have a different language and a different culture. So, culture and language. Being an international student would entail having a different culture and a different language, a different background probably a different education, a different educational system. (November, 2007)

By the same token, Nermina extended her perspective by focusing on cultural and

educational differences:

[...] being on international student means that you're coming from a foreign land, you are a foreigner, you were not born here, you are not a citizen or permanent resident. You are just coming from a different cultural background, you have different cultural experiences, communication and social norms, acceptable norms but different than the ones over here. And even educational experiences sometimes also differ. There are differences... for example, the grading system I found over here, a system that is different than in my country. So I think somebody who is totally new, inexperienced in the society, with a different cultural background than what pertains to the American society. (November, 2007)

Ana explained her understanding of being an international student by referring to

individual experiences which impact not only international students' decisions to come to

the United States but also their life on campus:

People come here by different routes. Some people come as exchange students, some people come for a specific project, some students come because they know someone because they were invited, and some come because their family or friends are here. So, there are different routes. I see two scenarios. I see people, who fall out and feel very lonely, abandoned and not understood and discriminated against and I see other people who do not necessarily blend in or, better said, try to find their way and their way would be different then a typical American student's way. It's their way. It's how they live through their experience. (November, 2007)

Although faculty and students shared their views when defining an international

student, they all explained their understanding was based on their individual points of

view and experience, as faculty advisors and international advisees. Faculty interviewees

related their understanding to their own overall work with domestic and international

students while emphasizing the cultural and educational differences international students

bring with them. Alex named a number of differences he noticed when advising

international students. When he justified his point, Alex gave examples of international

students' behaviors and attitudes that could influence the advising relationship correlating

these examples with his work experience with domestic students.

> I believe that that you'll see more one-on-one contact with international students, as an advisor, and that they will seek you out with questions. So, many just do not want to make mistakes. They want to be successful. They want their professors to feel good about them and there is a great desire to please the professor. I mean far beyond what I think I've experienced with Iowa students, as an example. [...] In my interactions, I have felt that with almost every international student I've ever worked with. Very much appreciation is demonstrated by international students and, that is very appreciated by me as an advisor and coming with that I think there's a little more time involvement that we should expect if we take on international students as advisees. Secondly, it's just the nature of the relationship because they will need it and want it and that will result in more contact. And for me personally, I like that. I wish I had that type of experience with Iowa students as well. I try to encourage it but international students are much more likely to come in and sit-down and visit. (February, 2008)

Similarly, Chris presented his perspective on an international student while making

references to the impact international students might have on the domestic students.

> I think they make the student body better. [...] because I think they come with different perspectives, experiences, and expectations. They tend to work harder than the American students, which is a good example for our students. They take it more seriously usually. In terms of great performance, I wouldn't say they are much better but part of that. I think it's language again. They certainly have the intellectual ability to do this. And, I also think our students realize that "here is someone that doesn't speak English as a first language but has taken a chance in life and done something very differently" [...] It's a good, positive experience. (February, 2008)

Like Alex, Maya related her view on international students to behaviors and attitudes that international students brought with them to the academic environment. While Chris pointed out English as a foreign language as a factor that might influence international students' academic life, similarly, Maya referred to communication as a factor which might influence specifically the relationship between an advisor and an advisee.

> International students are incredibly hardworking, they are very diligent, and they want to improve. And, I think if they don't understand. they will pretend that they do understand, with nonverbal communication.... You know, with a shaking of the head "yes, yes, that makes sense". And so I will say "okay, great". Do I say then "repeat it again"? Does that sound condescending? Or just say "okay, I am glad that you understood, I am glad that I could help". But from their perspective I think they may already know that they are taking time or effort and don't want to impose so they pretend that they would understand when they really don't fully understand. Or the advisors think they understand but they don't understand. (February, 2008)

Shaped by their own personal values, experience, and knowledge, faculty and students revealed subjective experiences and expectations as a major theme in their accounts. They emphasized subjective experiences and expectations by addressing cultural and educational factors that could facilitate or hinder the advising process as well as their understandings of and views of international students in the United States.

III. Growing and Adapting

> They [educational and cultural experiences] make you a different person. [...] we come here as international students or international faculty. We go through a personal transformation, if you want to call it living through a culture shock or living through a different culture or just living through a different way of life [...] I am exposed to the whole world of resources to explore and to develop and to become a better person". [...] with these experiences we become better people because we grow academically and we grow personally. (Ana, November, 2007)

The quotes above capture the theme of growing and adapting reiterated by faculty and student participants throughout their interviews. Both faculty advisors and doctoral international students talked about the impact and gain related to their personal, academic and, more specifically, advising experience in the context of the institution in the study. However, faculty not only stressed the importance of impact and gain based on their work experience with international students, but also talked about the umbrella under which this experience occurs, the university culture of the institution in this study.

A. Impact and gain. All faculty interviewees concluded that working with international students broadened their horizons and their perspectives on the world. According to faculty interviewed in the study, the international student body is a valuable resource not only to faculty but to the domestic student population and the whole academic environment, in general.

Alex, for example, considered that working with international students helped him become "a more global person". Reflecting upon the experience and benefits gained from working with international students, Alex provided the following example:

> I know without question that I'm a better person, a better human being because of my professional contacts with one of our students – an international refugee. She's taught me so much and I treat people differently because of my contacts with her. I think that could happen to anyone ... I've asked students in class and on an individual basis "Have you met this person X?" and if the answer is no I say, "You should meet her; you should volunteer with her organization." "Call her up and take her to lunch." Or, "She's here to speak to a class…make sure you go to that presentation and introduce yourself afterwards," because I know that simply meeting her, talking to her, learning her story, and learning who she is – that will change people. You come away from knowing her a better person. You realize the strength that people can have. We have people here who have not only survived (when simply surviving would be an amazing accomplishment), but they have succeeded afterward… after experiences that would destroy most people. They have the strength, the inner strength and the spirituality, to come past those

experiences and move on, to thrive and to influence other people. And she's done that for me. No question. No question at all. (February, 2008)

Based on his extensive international professional work, Chris presented his experience with international students as very positive. To support his point, he stated:

> I was lucky because I could work in Europe also and that was a very nice experience that I won't forget and then in Hawaii where most of my students were international students. You know, having students who might have been the first person in their family to leave the country and to see them grow and experience different things and new things. And then many go back home and I still have that contact with them. We even worked on articles and published together and stuff like that. It's been very nice. I wouldn't trade it. It makes my job more interesting. (February, 2008)

In the same way, Maya shared her view on the influence that working with international students has had on her own personal and professional experience:

> It broadens your perspective on the world. So, what sort of things might be happening in Europe, in the history of their country? [...] it just broadens my sense of the world. I may not be able to afford to travel to those places but, you know, when I hear something is going on in Beijing, knowing somebody who is from there is nice, it's nice to have that kind of connection. "Oh, so and so is from Taiwan" and there might be something happening in the world... in Taiwan. Whereas before, I might not have known anybody from Taiwan. Before, I would just relate Taiwan to electronics. That would probably be one of the benefits that I have of working with international students. You know, people say "oh, you have to come and visit me in my country". And I probably would not do that because they are just students in my class, but that is always nice. So that is another thing that is a nice gesture although I wouldn't show up at the doorstep and say "okay, I'm in China now". So, this is something that I think it has enhanced my connection with the other parts of the world. (February, 2008)

Ana and Nermina also indicated how educational and cultural experiences as international students at the same university influenced them as individuals. They both emphasized how the experiences living in a new educational and cultural environment influenced their academic and personal growth.

> They make you a different person. [...] I found very interesting what someone told me. She said "you know, people don't understand that when we come here as international students or international faculty we go through a personal transformation, if you want to call it living through a culture shock or living through a different culture or just living through a different way of life, but we also learn so much academically because the access to resources here is greater for me personally than the access to resources I would get doing the same program at home. So I am exposed to the whole world of resources to explore and to develop and to become a better person". [...] I agree with her in that once we're done with these experiences we become better people because we grow academically and we grow personally. (Ana, November, 2007)

From her perspective, Nermina revealed how an international student's educational and cultural experiences could take both positive and negative forms. In her accounts, Nermina pointed out how the personal life of an international student could have an impact his/her academic life. Being rather specific in her examples, Nermina explained how cold weather, food, transportation, and people's attitudes could strongly influence an international student's life at the university. In her opinion, international students "have a lot of problems with transportation, and financial difficulties. Advisors should know about these things and see how best they can also help with these things to make the experiences a little bit easier which can also impact their learning" (November, 2007).

However, according to Nermina, more or less challenging educational and personal experiences could only help a person learn and grow as an individual. In Nermina's point of view, "there have been worthwhile experiences, but others have brought a lot of pain. Because life is holistic we don't live it separately. Coming here is a continuation of life. [...] life doesn't cease because you are here. Everything you need to do as a person continues (November, 2007). Furthermore, once again, she pointed out all the facets of her learning experience by stating:

It's hard. It's different. When you go to my country is so different. You can see people outside and you can talk to as many as you like. But here you wonder "where are the people?". It's like you are somewhere alone. You know, the shock of it, that you cannot turn around and see that you're alone, drove me crazy the first time I came here. Especially when you are in an apartment where you walk out and there is nobody, you can only see the cars parked over there. Very tough. But on the other side the educational experiences... at least I've learned a lot, I've learned interacting with people some good stuff. People are nice; they are kind and willing to share. Also, going to class, being a graduate assistant, but at the same time personal issues... trying to meet all the obligations that go with the academic and your insurance and everything. It's been tough. It was very tough. Sometimes I would have to postpone my classes because I couldn't handle all together. I think I had people who understood when you have to ask for an extension, not being able to finish the program in time. They understand and they work with you. [...] And we had to adjust to all the differences we encountered. Sometimes mixing with Americans is also hard. Some look at you like they don't even know you and sometimes they don't even want to sit close to you. They don't want to have anything to do with you because they don't know you. It's tough. And here you are, far away from home with nobody around who knows you. Sometimes I would call my sister and tell her I was so lonely over here. [...] I think I had both positive and negative experiences. (November, 2007)

When talking about their learning experiences, student participants also referred to how the experiences lived at this institution would affect their future plans. Lucas, for example, focused on the impact of advising experiences on anticipated future behavior. Yet again, Lucas emphasized the importance of the advisor's and advisee's roles which could facilitate or hinder advising and the communication which occurs between an advisor and an advisee.

Probably being more organized in the way of obtaining advice and guidance. I learned here, through advising, that I should have an agenda before going to a meeting, to an advising session. So that's one thing I learned that will impact my future. Any time in the future if I'm going to give some counseling or advising or advice to anybody, if I'm going back if I give advice to teachers, I should have an agenda when I go. I should communicate with these people... I should communicate with these people and I should know that the person that I would be meeting with knows why we're meeting, what we're going to talk about. This is one thing. Second thing is the communication problem, the flow in the communication that will impact me positively because I will try not to do that to

> my advisee or any person who I would be giving some guidance to. I will try to be on time, I will try to communicate as often and fast as possible. Again the third thing is that I should make sure they understand what I'm saying and I understand what they're saying. (November, 2007)

In regards to how the experiences at this institution influenced her future plans, Ana concluded:

> I think you have more doors to open. There are more doors open for you. And you cannot deny that. If you look at a resume or you speak to a person and you notice that they have their educational experiences and professional experiences in different countries, cultures, you immediately put that person a little away from others because you realize that just being exposed to different cultures and different systems and different ways of learning and teaching it makes them in a way unique. So, I guess it is a unique experience and I am just very grateful for having that experience. (November, 2007)

B. University culture. Concerns emerged from faculty interviews when referring not only specifically to the impact of working with international on their own personal and professional activities and beliefs, but also when they placed international students in the larger context of the educational and cultural environment of the institution in the study. For example, Maya pointed out that to deal with improving advising international students two factors should be considered: the role of an advisor as a faculty member and the culture of the university.

> I think it's part of the unwritten rule of a faculty member, but it's another thing that faculty see as time consuming. So they may or may not to put any time or energy into advising. So, at this stage, when research is considered more important, if you teach well, you are evaluated by how they see you in the classroom. To improve on how advising takes place, I think you're going to have to look at the culture of the university… there is a conflict there, if you're really going to improve advising of international students. (Maya, February, 2008)

Sharing his point of view, Chris made reference to informal advising (provided by other faculty than faculty advisors) and its impact on the international students' educational experience.

> [...] there is the advisor, but then there are other faculty that do informal advising and I think that they probably have some impact and, unfortunately, often times a negative impact. [...] I think that some faculty are not, particularly at this university, or a least in this school/department, are not really excited about having lots of international students and I don't know why that is. But I think that the faculty in the classroom setting tend to be harsher with those students probably because they cannot write as well or something. [...] We [advisors] do this probably because we like to work with students. But there are other faculty who either interfere with advising or create other problems that the advisor has to deal with on behalf of supporting that student. So, there needs to be an education among all faculty about international students and what they bring to the university and to this geographical area. [...] There are particular faculty members, who are not supportive. (February, 2008)

In an attempt to explain the lack of support of faculty towards international students, Chris considered that there could be many reasons. Among these reasons, he thought there might be a "narrow definition of what graduate education is about" (February, 2008). Moreover, Chris did not think "this university is prepared very well to deal with international student on different levels of funding and how to help them be here" (February, 2008). According to him, funding for faculty to travel to other countries, visit other higher education institutions, and have an international experience that way could help change faculty attitude towards international students at this university.

In his interviews, Alex raised the problem of social integration of domestic and international students in the cultural and educational environment of the university.

> I wish I could figure out what we could do within the university community to socially integrate American students and international students better than we do. I just think there is still far too much segregation. I think there's good integration among the international students. I think they're mixing and mingling quite well.

> But, I don't see as much of the next step where the American students are mixing and socially integrating with international students. And maybe it goes both ways – how can we encourage international students to socially integrate with the American students? (February, 2008)

In sharing their individual perspectives, both faculty and student participants in the study acknowledged growing and adapting as a major theme. In their interviews, advisor and advisee participants addressed learning considering the impact and gain resulting from from their cultural and educational experiences at this university. Students referred to their future plans influenced by their lived experiences at the same institution. Faculty tackled various factors related to the university culture which could have an impact their work with international students and the presence of these students in the cultural and educational context of the university.

## IV. Unfolding of the Personal

> Being human and understand that this is what the person is going through. [...] Going beyond the box to understand people. Because all these things have impact on student learning. [...] go beyond just the academic. (Nermina, November, 2007)

Unfolding of the personal is the fourth major theme emerging from the student and faculty participants' interviews. This theme refers to the personal aspect and the affect embedded in professional experiences lived at the institution in the study. The theme became apparent while participants' stories unfolded from the very first set of individual interviews. At different moments during the interviews, all the participants addressed the more or less strong impact of the personal factor interrelated with their professional life. Therefore, the theme "unfolding of the personal" brings together all major themes emerging from the data.

In the context of the first major theme, guiding/being guided, faculty and student participants emphasized the personal aspect when describing the factors which facilitated or hindered advising as a process and the roles advisors and advisees played had an impact the advising relationship. According to the interviewees, "being a mentor, being a friend when it's needed, being supportive of the student and their needs" (Chris, February, 2008), and "getting to know the advisor and the advisor getting to know me as a person with needs, not only from the academic perspective" (Nermina, November, 2007) contributed to successful advising. Moreover, to have a "partnership" (Ana, November, 2007), to "be open to different ideas, be flexible" (Chris, February, 2008), and to "empathize with that situation" (Maya, February, 2008) are essential elements to build an advising relationship that, from the participants' perspectives, should go beyond the academic and focus on "the whole person" (Nermina, November, 2008). In other words, the "comfort zone" in advising "comes with those personal relationships or personal understanding" (Ana, November, 2007).

In their accounts, faculty and student interviewees addressed subjective experiences and expectations by indicating the interconnection between the personal and professional aspects of their advising experience. To explain their perspectives, interviewees considered advising as a process going "beyond academic issues" (Nermina, November, 2007), where the "human side is just as important as the academic side of advising" (Ana, November, 2007), and where there is "understanding the struggles that people are going through (Maya, February, 2008). In addition, participants pointed out the essential part that an advisor played in the international student's adjustment to the

new environment in having an "important role in your life as long as you are in the program", " knowing that you don't see things the same way" (Ana, November, 2007), and making advisees "feel at ease" (Chris, February, 2008). Participants also emphasized the importance of knowledge and awareness of the international student cultural and educational background. They talked about difference in "perspectives, experiences, and expectations" (Chris, February, 2008) and how "traditions and cultures" could affect advising (Maya, February, 2008).

The theme of unfolding of the personal was reiterated throughout the participants' interviews in the context of growing and adapting by sharing their perspectives about the professional and personal impact and gain resulting from their advising experiences in the context of the Midwestern institution. Faculty pointed out that they learned from international advisees "where they [students] have come from and why they are who they are (Alex, February, 2008). The international students "enhanced my connection with other parts of the world" (Maya, February, 2008). In addition, working with international students "makes my job more interesting" (Chris, February, 2008) and "broadens your perspective on the world" (Maya, February, 2008).

Faculty and student participants stressed how the experiences lived in a new educational and cultural environment influenced their professional/academic and personal growth. These experiences contributed to a "personal transformation" (Ana, November, 2007) as there was collaboration in working on articles and publishing "together" (Chris, February, 2008).

Within the context of unfolding of the personal, student participants also made

direct references to the personal and informal aspect of the advising relationship. Lucas,

for example, explained the informal aspect, by pointing out factors that might positively

influence advising.

> [...] clarity in advising, examples of what I'm supposed to do, reliable
> communication, and availability. I would think that an advisor should be in reach,
> should be available, periodic meeting with the advisor. I think advising would
> need some kind of informality. I wouldn't feel comfortable if I need to schedule
> an appointment like two weeks ahead...or three weeks ahead. If I'm an advisor, I
> would try my best to be available to my advisee as much as I can. If my advisee
> would like to meet with me tomorrow, I would make all my efforts to meet with
> him tomorrow. (November, 2007)

Nermina, on the other hand, provided specific examples considering the personal mutual

understanding and the human aspect in an advising relationship. According to her

personal understanding could facilitate international students' learning experiences.

> There are certain things that impact the life of the student as well as the life of the
> professor. For instance, there was a time when I was supposed to meet with my
> advisor and she wasn't able to come and then she came later saying "okay, I had
> this problem with my son", he had to go to school but he lost the key and my
> advisor had to take care of the problem. That's where the human aspect comes in.
> Sometimes advisors need to go beyond just the academic. [...] I think that
> understanding should help. Even me walking from my home and coming to
> campus sometimes...it's not easy. International students have a lot of problems
> with transportation, and financial difficulties. Advisors should know about these
> things and see how best we can also help with these things to make the
> experiences a little bit easier which can also impact their learning. (November,
> 2007)

Another area addressed by some of the participants in their interviews, was the

international students' preference in regards to sources of help/support. Although from

two different points of view, Alex, as a faculty member, and Ana, as a student, thought

that a faculty advisor was the number one source of support for international students. To

explain his opinion, Alex considered that international students in need "instead of asking a friend they are more likely to come to the faculty advisor and to get an answer from the adviser rather than just hearsay information from a fellow student" (February, 2008). By the same token, Ana viewed her advisor the main source of help because she/he was the first person she knew when she arrived on campus: "My advisor would be number one because he was the first person I knew when I came here. Two would be my roommate who became a very close friend who was in the same shoes that I was an international student in a different country. Three…help in terms of advice of course my family" (Ana, November, 2007). In contrast, Nermina, named the church community as her major support and then friends, while advisors would be the third source of help: "Considering academic experience in the big picture, I would say church… church community is a big support for me and friends, friends that I have around here. And the advisors are the third" (Nermina, November, 2007).

<div align="center">Summary</div>

In Chapter IV, the researcher (a) introduced the faculty advisors and international students who participated in the study, (b) explored the themes apparent in the faculty and student interviews, and (c) provided an explanation of these themes with meanings that are true to the participants' lived experiences of advising. The major themes emerging from the data were: (I) guiding/being guided, (II) subjective experiences and expectations, (III) growing and adapting, and (IV) unfolding of the personal. A certain degree of redundancy occurred in this chapter when explaining the themes and their respective areas. This redundancy was not only a result of overlapping of themes and

areas, but also a result of emphasizing essential connections and contrasts among themes as well as individual participants' stories.

Participants referred to guiding/being guided when sharing their perspectives on advising as a process as well as on the roles of advisor and advisee. Guidance/guiding/being guided was seen as a process where the advisor directs student through paperwork and requirements and where advisor and advisee work together, follow mutual agreements, and provide guidance towards/be guided/academic achievement. Faculty and student interviewees also stressed the importance for the advisor to be knowledgeable, available, encouraging, patient, open to different ideas, and understanding of differences.

The theme of subjective experiences and expectations was apparent in both faculty and student accounts when participants revealed their personal and professional perspectives related to advising international students. In their interviews, faculty and students addressed cultural and educational differences as well as their understandings of the international student. Both faculty and student interviewees recognized the importance of knowing and understanding each other and the need of knowledge and awareness in regards to the international advisee's cultural and educational background. Participants emphasized subjective experiences and expectations when addressing cultural and educational factors that could facilitate or hinder the advising process as well as their understandings of and views on an international student in the United States.

Growing and adapting was also a theme reiterated in faculty and student accounts. Faculty and students revealed shared their individual perspectives about the impact and

gain related to their personal, academic and their advising experiences in the context of the institution in the study. While student interviewees referred to their future plans influenced by their lived experiences at the same institution, faculty tackled factors related to the university culture influencing their work with international students and the presence of these students in the cultural and educational context of the university.

Unfolding of the personal was the fourth major theme emerging from the student and faculty participants' interviews. This theme was reiterated while participants' stories were being unfolded from the very first set of individual interviews. It became apparent in the participants' accounts that the personal aspect and the affect were embedded in their professional experiences lived at the institution in this study. The personal theme brought together all major themes emerging from the data as the participants revealed their advising experiences while continuously addressing the personal factor interrelated with their professional life.

Shaped by their own personal values and knowledge, participant perspectives on their advising experiences revealed the following major themes: guiding/being guided, subjective experiences and expectations, growing and adapting, and unfolding of the personal. By exploring in-depth selected case studies of both faculty advisors and doctoral international advisees, the findings of the present study are relevant to the literature on advising international students by providing insights into how advisors engage with international students and insights into student and faculty perspectives on effective advising.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

International students contribute to United States higher education by adding diversity to the academy, serving as student resources, enhancing cultural exchange, and promoting internationalization of higher education. In the last five decades, higher education in the United States has faced a large influx of international students (Institute of International Education, 2004). However, a review of selected literature showed a paucity of research on faculty advising graduate international students. Moreover, the literature pointed out that not all institutions were prepared to work with the international student population (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007; Khabiri, 1985; Seeger, 1993) and that further investigation was needed in the area of faculty advising related to international students (Adrian-Taylor, et al., 2007; Trice, 2003). Therefore, this study focused on the following research question: How do selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in a college of education in a Midwestern university live and perceive their advising experience?

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

An examination of the literature about international students in the United States higher education revealed a multitude of needs which could impact the life of international students on campus (Fatima, 2001; Parr et al., 1992; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1991). Although these needs could be classified as socio-cultural and academic, they were closely intertwined. As the literature showed, language (Pedersen, 1991; Yeh, 2004), culture shock (Leong & Chou, 1996; Lin, 1998), and development of support

networks and help sources (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Ladd & Ruby, 1999) were considered

problematic aspects which might interfere with the international students' adaptation,

interaction with others, and potential learning in a new environment.

Similarly to what was found in the literature, in this study, all faculty and student

participants pointed out the impact of language on advising. However, while all

participants considered language a serious factor that could facilitate or hinder advising

international students, they focused on the idea of language as means of communication.

Although all faculty participants considered language a possible barrier in their

communication with international advisees, they agreed with the need to check for

understanding, to provide clarification, and to be aware of the international advisees'

English skills. From the faculty perspective, advising would require more time when

repetition of issues and clarification of misunderstandings due to language were present.

While faculty participants shared experiences related to international students where

language was a more or less challenging factor in communication, student participants

considered that their language proficiency and advanced English language skills helped

them avoid any miscommunication/misunderstanding in their relationships with their

advisors. All three international students interviewed had a rich practical experience of

speaking English as a foreign language. Therefore, they did not encounter any linguistic

obstacles in their communication with their advisor due to their advanced language skills.

In the literature, culture shock referred to intense disorientation, confusion and

anxiety experienced by people when they were immersed into a new and unfamiliar

culture with different social conventions, values, and norms (Chapdelaine & Alexitch,

2004; Furnham & Bochner, 1982). In this study, students' answers triggered questions related to their views on culture shock. While all three students defined culture shock in a similar way, they experienced it more or less differently. According to the student interviewees, culture shock was about different cultural experiences and cultural incompatibility. As it was found in the literature, some of students interviewed in this study considered that new physical environments, social contexts, and institutions, as well as community expectations could present unfamiliar challenges for international students and interfere with proper adaptation and potential learning (Winkelman, 1994). However, while the perspectives of student participants on culture shock were slightly different based on their own lived experiences in a new cultural environment, they shared common ideas. Students pointed out the uniqueness and subjectivity regarding the definition of culture shock based on individual experiences.

As illustrated in the literature review, social support networks played a significant role in an international student's life in the United States higher education institutions (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Britton et al., 2003; Ladd & Ruby, 1999). A comparison of international students' and domestic students' preferences for help sources revealed that international students were more likely than domestic students to prefer faculty members and counselors and less likely to prefer friends for help with their problems (Leong & Sedlacek, 1986). In this study, although from two different points of view, Alex, as a member of the faculty, and Ana, as a student, also thought that a faculty advisor was the main source of support for international students on campus. In contrast, one of the

students, Nermina, named the church community as her major source of support, followed by friends, while advisors were the third source of help for her.

The literature review also indicated the importance and effectiveness of advising in higher education institutions. Advising, as defined in the literature, was the medium through which the college's educational goals and the student's educational goals were negotiated and the only structured service on campus in which students had the opportunity for on-going, one-to-one contact with a representative of the institution (Davis & Cooper, 2001; Habley, 1981). In addition, the literature showed that faculty advisors could have a positive impact on a student's intellectual, academic, and personal development (Alexitch, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). As a critical function of education, advising was viewed as an ongoing process and the responsibility of both student and advisor.

Although similarities were present at the general level when comparing what the literature found in regard to advising with the findings of this study, in-depth and detailed information was revealed in the participants' accounts about their individual experiences related to advising. For example, participants in this study emphasized the idea of guidance/guiding when sharing their perspectives on advising as a process as well as on the roles of advisor and advisee. Guidance was seen as a process where the advisor would help students navigate through paperwork and requirements and where advisor and advisee would work together, follow mutual agreements, and provide guidance/be guided towards academic achievement. Guidance, guiding, and being guided were used in their accounts as broader terms which included the affect and personal aspect of the advising

relationship while advising referred rather to the academic side of the process. Faculty and student interviewees pointed out the importance for the advisor to be knowledgeable, available, encouraging, patient, open to different ideas, and understanding of differences. When describing their advising experiences, all faculty and students considered shared responsibility essential for successful advising. In addition, faculty participants emphasized the need to carefully protect and value advisees' autonomy and freedom of choice related to their academic program and their life. They also considered that an advisee should be self-directed, assertive, and responsible for seeking advisor's support and assistance. The participants concluded that advising seen as guiding/being guided was a comprehensive individually based process characterized by two-way communication, teamwork, and shared responsibility.

Also, frequent interaction with faculty could have a positive impact on a student's intellectual, academic and personal development (Alexitch, 2002; Pascarella, & Terenzini, 1991). Similarly, student participants in this study saw regular meetings with advisors as an important factor leading to a successful completion of the program. Furthermore, researchers reported that, while international students had an overall positive experience of studying abroad, concerns were raised in regards to students' academic experience and relationship with faculty (Fox, 1994). Results from these studies reflected the importance of the role of faculty in international students' education and adjustment to the new educational environment (Nazarenko, 2006; Trice & Yoo, 2007).

In the present study, although advisor's availability and willingness to spend time with an international advisee were common patterns in both student and faculty interviews, it was evident that they defined the role of a faculty advisor through different lenses. Overall, student interviewees did not consider advising an add-on. On the contrary, they considered advising as an important faculty task that could facilitate or hinder the success of the student's program. In addition, student participants viewed the role of advisor as a key component to being a faculty member, a real and active part of the faculty work in the institution. However, the literature showed that, for a successful advising experience, it was necessary for faculty to balance their advising time demands with their teaching and scholarship, which may affect both their interest in advising and their availability to students (Gordon et al., 2000; Reinarz, 2000). Likewise, in this study, while faculty members considered the role of being an advisor important, the actual advising component was seen as an additional task not recognized for tenure and promotion by the university, which impacted the faculty attitude towards advising.

The literature addressed advising as inevitably intertwined with teaching (Appleby, 2001; Crookston, 1972; Eble, 1988). Referring to their individual experiences, faculty participants viewed advising as an extension of their teaching role by being knowledgeable and prepared, creating an environment conducive to learning through guiding, and encouraging advisee's autonomy.

In addition, the literature provided information on the importance of the faculty-student relationship and the availability of a strong support person which could have an impact on international students' academic achievement (Boyer & Sedlacek, 1987). In

this study, student participants wanted faculty advisors to know the student as a person as well as to help the student to feel comfortable in the new environment. Moreover, all participants pointed out that personal understanding could facilitate international students' learning experiences.

In the literature, it was also found that some international students particularly appreciate the informal student-professor interaction, the approachability of professors, and the free exchange of ideas (Ladd & Ruby, 1999; Thornton, 1988). Although both students and faculty in the study addressed the informal aspect of advising by getting to know each other on a personal level, students emphasized the significance of knowing the advisor and the advisor knowing the advisee beyond the academic perspective as a person with needs. By providing in-depth information and specific examples, faculty and student participants stressed the importance of the human aspect which could help build the advising relationship. Student interviewees wanted connection and relatedness considering the advisor as a guide who would be available and could tune in to the advisee role. By the same token, faculty thought that part of the role of the advisor was to understand advisee's goals and needs, to help the advisee feel at ease, to be flexible, and to show sensitivity/empathy.

The literature review illustrated that international students found differences from their familiar norms surprising, if not stressful considering that, in some cultures, students' saw the instructor as an unquestioned figure whose authority on instructional matters was final where the student was subordinate to the teacher (Ladd & Ruby, 1999; Nazarenko, 2006). Consequently, the relationship with faculty in the United States played

an important role in the adjustment of the international student to the new educational system (Nazarenko, 2006). Student participants in the study stressed the importance of educational differences and the impact these differences could have on the advising process. For example, considering the perspective on the instructor as an unquestioned figure in other educational systems in the world, one of the students, Lucas, pointed out that an advisor should consider the relationship between the cultural difference and the educational background of the international advisee. By the same token, faculty participants also emphasized the importance of helping international students adjust to a new educational environment by accommodating the student's educational needs.

Moreover, the literature review provided examples of research studies with a particular focus on faculty advising graduate international students. While some faculty were reluctant to see international study in its complexity (Seeger, 1993), some faculty were aware of the international students' needs and expressed their desire to know more about their students (cultural and academic background, language proficiency, etc.) and the international education in general (Greisberger, 1984). In the present study, all participants stressed the importance of awareness and knowledge of international student's background for a successful advising experience. Faculty and student participants pointed out that it was essential to be aware of, recognize, and respect cultural differences when working with international advisees. However, from the participants' perspectives, various cultural factors and different traditions and customs could affect advising. Participants in the study also agreed that knowing the students' cultural and educational background and being aware of their academic and personal

needs facilitated the advising process and communication between advisor and advisee. Therefore, participants considered that it was important to focus on any factors that could hinder or facilitate advising and to build an advising relationship through guidance and personal communication.

Although clear connections and similarities could be found between the literature review and the results of the present study, the novelty of this study lies mainly in the methodology used to explore in-depth the advising experience from the perspectives of a selected number of faculty advisors and doctoral international students. While research studies contributed to the literature on advising graduate international students (Adrian-Taylor et al., 2007; Greisberger, 1984; Khabiri, 1985; Seeger, 1993; Trice & Yoo, 2007), they were predominantly descriptive, gathered a wide range of information through surveys from a large number of participants, and lacked a particular focus and in-depth information. Considering the complexity and diversity of the international student population (Greisberger; Seeger) as well the crucial role advising has in international graduate education (Barrick, et al., 2006; Nazarenko, 2006), this study provided a more thorough investigation of insights into how advisors engaged with international students and insights into both student and faculty perspectives on advising. An exploratory approach was used to examine faculty advising doctoral international students to provide insights, clarify concepts, and gather explanations on the topic while looking for patterns and ideas rather than testing or confirming a hypothesis. The qualitative case-study design with features of phenomenological inquiry contributed by further exploring the experience of advising as it was perceived, in particular, by faculty and doctoral

international students. This approach helped ensure a greater confidentiality through face-to-face interviews and helped provide an in-depth examination through follow-up which clarified issues raised by the participants. Through this process detailed reports emerged of individual advising experiences.

The methodology contributed to engaging the study participants in discussions of their advising experiences in order to elicit themes and meanings significant to them and to hear their voices through unfolding stories of their advising experiences. Shaped by their own personal values and knowledge, participant perspectives revealed subjective experiences and expectations by addressing not only cultural and educational factors that could facilitate or hinder the advising process, but also their understandings of an international student in higher education in the United States.

Although participants in this study shared common views on defining international students in regards to their status in the United States, they explained their understandings based on their own perspectives and experiences, as faculty advisors and as doctoral international advisees. The faculty related their understandings to their own overall work with domestic and international students while emphasizing the cultural and educational differences international students brought with them to the institution in the study. For example, faculty made references not only to behaviors and attitudes that international students brought with them to the academic environment but also to the impact international students might have on the domestic students. Student participants explained their understandings of being an international student by referring to individual

experiences which impacted not only international students' decisions to come to the United States but also their personal and academic life on campus.

Moreover, the participants' stories revealed new insights about advising related to international students. Both faculty and students emphasized the importance of growing and adapting as a result of the advising experience. This growth and adaptation was influenced by the university culture. Another important insight was the unfolding of the personal within all aspects of the advising experience. Student participants, for example, indicated how educational and cultural experiences as international students at the same university impacted them as individuals and how these new experiences influenced their academic and personal growth. All faculty interviewees concluded that working with international students broadened their horizons and their perspectives on the world. According to the faculty, the international student body should be seen as a valuable resource not only to faculty but to domestic student population and the whole academic environment, in general.

However, a particular issue emerged from faculty interviews when they referred not only specifically to the impact of working with international students on their own personal and professional learning experiences, but also when they talked about the umbrella under which the advising experiences occur – the university culture of the Midwestern institution in this study. For example, faculty considered that a number of factors at the university level could impact advising international students: definition of graduate education, role of an advisor as a faculty member, training faculty for advising, and culture of the university. In addition, another factor which could influence advising

was financial support in terms of scholarships and funds for international students and of international experiences/exposure for faculty to improve their awareness and knowledge in their work with international students.

Moreover, the participants' accounts revealed the personal aspect and the affect embedded in their professional experiences lived at the institution in the study. The personal aspect became apparent while participants' stories were being unfolded from the very first set of individual interviews. By being omnipresent in all participants' accounts as well as being tackled in different areas of discussion throughout the data collection, unfolding of the personal became a major theme bringing all the other themes together. For example, faculty and student participants talked about the personal and human aspect when describing the factors which facilitated or hindered advising as a process and the roles of advisors and advisees which impacted the advising relationship. Faculty and students stressed the importance of being human which could help build the advising relationship. Participants described the advising relationship as a partnership where advisors and advisee were flexible and open to different ideas. In their opinion, this type of relationship should go beyond the academic and should focus on the person as a whole. In their accounts, faculty and student interviewees indicated the interconnection between the personal and professional aspects of advising when referring to their subjective experiences and expectations. In addition, to explain their points of view, interviewees considered advising as a process where the "human side is just as important as the academic side of advising" (Ana, November, 2007), and where there is understanding of "the struggles that people are going through (Maya, February, 2008).

Faculty and student participants pointed out how the experiences lived in a new educational and cultural environment influenced their professional/academic and personal growth and how these experiences contributed to their personal transformation.

Through an in-depth investigation of particular case studies of both faculty advisors and doctoral international advisees, the results of the present study contribute to the literature on advising international students by providing insights into how advisors engage with international students and insights into student and faculty perspectives on effective advising. Therefore, several implications may be drawn from the data findings of this study. The nature and the aspects of faculty advising in the educational and cultural context of the Midwestern university in the study provide evidence of the need for faculty, departments, and university offices in charge with international students: (1) to take a closer look at the advisory system, and (2) to develop strategies to improve advising by considering factors that could facilitate/hinder advising. Also, the subjective experiences and expectations of faculty and student participants as well as their common concern in regard to communication in advising indicate: (1) a need for awareness and knowledge of the cultural and educational background of the international students and its impact on advising and their academic life on campus in general, and (2) a communication network among various college and university departments and university offices specifically concerned with the international students' life on campus.

## Recommendations

As a result of the findings of the study, a number of recommendations are offered in regard to the advisory process and to the international students on campus, specifically

at the university in the study. According to faculty participants in the study, major factors in improving faculty advising international students should be training faculty about good advising and promoting education among all faculty members about international students. Faculty participants pointed out that funding for faculty to travel to other countries and creating opportunities for faculty to visit other higher education institutions and to have an international experience could help change faculty attitude towards international students at this university. In addition, faculty participants emphasized the importance of communication and the use of resources regarding the international student body at the university level. For example, faculty interviewed recommended that information about international students should be shared through meetings and brochures or fact sheets on all the countries the international students come from. Moreover, faculty participants also indicated the problem of social integration of domestic and international students in the cultural and educational environment of the university. Faculty suggested a more social integration of domestic students with international students and an exposure of domestic students to people from different countries by allowing and encouraging initial contact and opportunities for domestic students and international students to mix and mingle.

By the same token, student participants in the study emphasized the importance of communication and information sharing related to advising and international students. For instance, they suggested that more availability of advisors and faster flow in communication would be essential steps for improving communication and, consequently, for effective advising. Student interviewees also recommended meetings,

flyers and an advising manual to inform students, faculty, and other university staff members about advising international students and about the international student body on campus. In addition, student participants strongly indicated the value of organizing advocacy groups, workshops, seminars, symposiums, and forums on advising where experiences and concerns could be shared through direct communication by faculty, students currently enrolled in the program, former students, and university staff concerned with international students on campus.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made for further study and research:

1. By exploring how doctoral international students and faculty advisors in the College of Education in a Midwestern university lived and perceived their advising experience, a large and rich amount of data emerged from the multiple cases selected for this study. Therefore, a single case study following a similar methodology would lead to more insights into the advising experience of an international student or faculty advisor, by focusing, for example, on the personal aspect of advising.

2. The present study could be adapted in the context of other higher education institutions.

3. Other methodology and instruments could be developed to determine the effectiveness of advising related to international students with comparisons to be made with the results of this study.

4. A comparative investigation of the advising experience could be carried out with the focus either on (a) undergraduate and graduate international students, (b) graduate domestic and graduate international students, or (c) undergraduate domestic and undergraduate international students.

5. An exploratory study following similar methodology could be designed considering the relationship between the advising task and the teaching functions of faculty members with the purpose of defining faculty advising in higher education and the advising-teaching relationship. The focus of study could be on faculty advising either at the undergraduate or graduate level or on a comparison between faculty advising at the undergraduate level and faculty advising at a graduate level.

6. An exploratory study could also be considered to examine the dynamics of international experience on faculty teaching and advising at the graduate and undergraduate level.

7. Studies could also be designed to improve conditions which facilitate information sharing and communication not only between faculty advisors and international students but also between faculty members, international students, and university offices and departments regarding the international student population.

8. The present study could also be extended and adapted in the area of Culture and Intensive English programs where international students are enrolled in classes of English language study and cultural orientation.

9. The present study could be extended and adapted in the area of Study Abroad programs where domestic students become international students when going abroad to study and where advising at their home institution is an important component of their international experience.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER
AND
FACULTY NOMINATION FORM

Dear student:

Given that you are a doctoral international student enrolled full-time in the program, I would like to invite you to participate in my doctoral dissertation research by nominating faculty you consider exemplary as advisors for international students on the nomination form attached (page 3).

This letter provides information on the study and the procedures related to your participation.

Title of the study: A Journey through Advising: Experiences of Selected Graduate International students and Faculty Advisors in a Midwestern Teaching Institution

Name of Investigator: Madalina F. Tincu

The purpose of the proposed qualitative research study is to explore the advising experience as it is lived and perceived by selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in the College of Education in a Midwestern university. With this letter, I am seeking nominations for faculty advisors whom I can invite to participate in this project.

If you accept this invitation, I would ask that you use the enclosed nomination form to nominate a faculty member or members who you consider to be exemplary as an advisor. Please return the nomination form in the provided envelope within one week.

While the nomination form does not ask for your name, the enclosed coded envelope will be used to document your return of the nomination form.

Your participation is completely voluntary. The information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept confidential. Your responses for the nomination of the faculty members will be used strictly for the selection of faculty participants in the study. Your identity in this faculty selection process will not be revealed in any verbal and/or written form (discussions, presentations, present dissertation or any other writings/publications related to this research).

If you have questions about the study you may contact me via email at madalina@uni.edu or via telephone (319) 222-5810. You can also contact the office of the IRB

Administrator, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-6148, for answers to questions about rights of research participants and the participant review process.

If you are willing to participate in NOMINATION PROCESS of this study, please COMPLETE THE AGREEMENT FORM BELOW AND SEND IT ALONG WITH YOUR NOMINATION OF EXEMLARY FACULTY ADVISORS. PLEASE return BOTH THESE FORMS within one week USING return-addressed stamped envelope PROVIDED.

Thank you.

**Agreement form:**

> **I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement. I am 18 years of age or older.**

_____          _____
(Signature of participant)                (Date)


_____
(Printed name of participant)


_____          _____
(Signature of investigator)               (Date)


_____          _____
(Signature of instructor/advisor)         (Date)




FACULTY NOMINATION FORM

A. Year in the program:

B. Considering your formal and informal advising experience, please name a faculty

   member or faculty members that you consider to be exemplary in advising

   doctoral students.


_____

APPENDIX B


INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE AND INFORMED CONSENT LETTER
(FACULTY)

Dear (name of faculty):

As part of my doctoral dissertation research at the University of Northern Iowa, I asked students in the College of Education to name faculty they consider exemplary advisors. Your name was mentioned frequently by the participating students in their nominations.

This letter is to invite you to participate in this research study.

Title of the study: <u>A Journey through Advising: Experiences of Selected Graduate International students and Faculty Advisors in a Midwestern Teaching Institution</u>

Name of Investigator: Madalina F. Tincu

You are invited to participate in a research project conducted through the University of Northern Iowa. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project. The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to participate.

The purpose of the proposed qualitative research study is to explore the advising experience as it is lived and perceived by selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in a College of Education in a Midwestern university. The results will contribute to the literature on advising international students through in-depth information related to advising as it is experienced specifically by faculty advisors and doctoral international students. In addition, students' understandings and faculty members' understandings of advising will inform and benefit each other.

The informants for this study will be a selected number of both faculty members and international students. If you accept this invitation, you will be asked to participate in two one-hour interviews over the next few months and one scheduled meeting with the other faculty informants regarding a final check on the data. The interview protocols will provide context as well as areas related to advising that will allow for exploration, probing, and clarification. The interviews will be scheduled at times and locations convenient for you. All interviews will be conducted in one-on-one sessions and recorded in audio format. Then the interviews will be transcribed verbatim for in-depth analysis.

Your participation is completely voluntary. The information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept confidential. Although some of your responses may appear in my final dissertation, your identity will not be revealed in the dissertation or

any other writings/publications related to the research. Pseudonyms will be used for your names as informants in the study.

If you have questions about the study you may contact me via email at madalina@uni.edu or via telephone (319) 222-5810. You can also contact the office of the IRB Administrator, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-6148, for answers to questions about rights of research participants and the participant review process.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please complete the agreement form below.

Thank you.

**Agreement form:**

> **I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement. I am 18 years of age or older.**

_____          _____
(Signature of participant)                        (Date)


_____
(Printed name of participant)


_____          _____
(Signature of investigator)                        (Date)


_____          _____
(Signature of instructor/advisor)                 (Date)

APPENDIX C

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE AND INFORMED CONSENT LETTER
(STUDENTS)

Dear (name of student):

Given that you are a doctoral international student enrolled full-time in the program, you would contribute to a rich and comprehensive understanding of the faculty advising experience. For this reason, you were selected to participate in my doctoral dissertation research at the University of Northern Iowa.

This letter is to invite you to participate in this research study.

Title of the study: A Journey through Advising: Experiences of Selected Graduate International students and Faculty Advisors in a Midwestern Teaching Institution

Name of Investigator: Madalina F. Tincu

You are invited to participate in a research project conducted through the University of Northern Iowa. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project. The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to participate.

The purpose of the proposed qualitative research study is to explore the advising experience as it is lived and perceived by selected doctoral international students and faculty advisors in the College of Education in a Midwestern university. The results will contribute to the literature on advising international students through in-depth information related to advising as it is experienced specifically by faculty advisors and doctoral international students. In addition, students' understandings and faculty members' understandings of advising will inform and benefit each other.

The informants for this study will be a selected number of both faculty members and international students. If you accept this invitation, you will be asked to participate in two one-hour interviews over the next few months and one scheduled meeting with the other student informants regarding a final check on the data. The interview protocols will provide context as well as areas related to advising that will allow for exploration, probing, and clarification. The interviews will be scheduled at times and locations convenient for you. All interviews will be conducted in one-to-one sessions and recorded in audio format. Then the interviews will be transcribed verbatim for in-depth analysis.

Your participation is completely voluntary. The information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept confidential. Although some of your responses may

appear in my final dissertation, your identity will not be revealed in the dissertation or any other writings/publications related to the research. Pseudonyms will be used for your names as informants in the study.

If you have questions about the study you may contact me via email at madalina@uni.edu or via telephone (319) 222-5810. You can also contact the office of the IRB Administrator, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-6148, for answers to questions about rights of research participants and the participant review process.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please complete the agreement form below and return it in the envelope provided.

Thank you.

**Agreement form:**

> **I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement. I am 18 years of age or older.**


_____          _____
(Signature of participant)                    (Date)


_____
(Printed name of participant)


_____          _____
(Signature of investigator)                   (Date)


_____          _____
(Signature of instructor/advisor)           (Date)

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONS FOR FACULTY ADVISORS

Interview Guide Questions

Date: _____                    Time: _____

(Introduction:
- o  Show appreciation of informant's willingness to participate in the study.
- o  Reassure the informant about the confidentiality of their identity and also the information provided.)

Warm ups
1. Name:
2. Country of origin:
3. International traveling experience:
4. Years of professional experience in the institution:
5. Major field of teaching:
6. For how long have been advising students? And, specifically, for how long have you been advising international students?

1. What specific expectations did you have before any advising experience?
2. Throughout your experience with advising in the doctoral program at UNI, in what ways have your views about advising changed if any? Prompt: What views have stayed the same and why?
3. How would you best describe a successful advising experience that you've had?
4. How would you describe an excellent advisor? Prompt: What qualities do you think an advisor should have?
5. How would you describe an excellent advisee? Prompt: What qualities do you think an advisee should have?
6. If you could change anything about advising, what would it be?
7. Would you like to share any other information you might consider relevant?
8. What are some of the issues with advising international students?

Follow- Up Questions

Follow-up questions will be constructed from themes, issues, and data derived from the initial interview.

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Interview Guide Questions

Date: _____          Time: _____

(Introduction:
  o  Show appreciation of informant's willingness to participate in the study.
  o  Reassure the informant about the confidentiality of their identity and also the information provided.)

Warm ups
  1.  Name:
  2.  Country of origin.
  3.  International traveling experience:
  4.  Years of learning experience in the institution:
  5.  Related area of study:
  6.  What triggered your interest in coming to study in the United States?

  1.  What specific expectations did you have before any advising experience?
  2.  Throughout your experience with advising in the doctoral program at UNI, in what ways have your views about advising changed if any? Prompt: What views have stayed the same and why?
  3.  How would you best describe a successful advising experience that you've had?
  4.  How would you describe an excellent advisor? Prompt: What qualities do you think an advisor should have?
  5.  How would you describe an excellent advisee? What qualities do you think an advisee should have?
  6.  If you could change anything about advising, what would it be?
  7.  Would you like to share any other information you might consider relevant?
  8.  What are some of the issues with advising international students?

Follow- Up Questions

Follow-up questions will be constructed from themes, issues, and data derived from the initial interview.

APPENDIX F

LIST OF SKILLS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND ADVISORS

Effective Teachers:
a) Master their subject matter
b) Plan, organize, and prepare materials for classroom presentation
c) Engage students actively in the learning process
d) Provide regular feedback, reinforcement, and encouragement to students
e) Create an environment conducive to learning
f) Stimulate student interest in their subject by teaching it enthusiastically
g) Help students learn independently
h) Teach students how to evaluate information
i) Act as co-learners during the learning process
j) Serve as a resource to students
k) Relate course content to students' experiences
l) Provide problem-solving tasks to students
m) Personalize the learning process
n) Deliver information clearly and understandably
o) Exhibit good questioning skills
p) Exhibit good listening skills
q) Exhibit positive regard, concern, and respect for students
r) Are approachable outside the classroom
s) Present themselves to students in an open and genuine manner
t) Serve as role models who can help students understand the mission, values, and expectations of the institution
u) "Promote effective learning climates that are supportive of diversity" (Puente, 1993, p. 82)
v) Use outcomes assessment to "make data-based suggestions for improving teaching and learning" (Halpern, 1993, p. 44)
w) "Stimulate learning at higher cognitive levels" (Mathie, 1993, p. 185)
x) Help students "choose careers that best suit their aptitudes and interests" (Brewer, 1993, p. 171)
y) Utilize interactive computer software that promotes active learning (Mathie, 1993).

Effective advisors:
a) Possess accurate information about the policies, procedures, resources, and programs of their departments and institutions
b) Are well prepared for advising sessions
c) Enable advisees to actively participate in the advising process by challenging them with new, more demanding learning tasks involving alternative ideas or choices and encouraging them to ask questions to clarify these ideas and explore these choices

d) Provide timely feedback, reinforce learning that has taken place, and applaud student successes

e) Create a good learning climate within advising sessions

f) Project enthusiasm for their area of academic expertise and their advisory duties

g) Encourage advisees to become self-directed learners

h) Help advisees evaluate and re-evaluate their progress toward personal, educational, and career goals

i) Set performance goals for themselves and their advisees

j) Provide materials to advisees and refer them to others when referral is an appropriate response

k) Assist students in the consideration of their life goals by helping them relate their experiences, interests, skills, and values to career paths and the nature and purpose of higher education

l) Provide tasks to be completed before the next advising meeting that will require the advisee to use information-gathering, decision-making, and problem-solving skills

m) Help students gain self-understanding and self-acceptance

n) Communicate in a clear and unambiguous manner with advisees

o) Serve as catalysts by asking questions and initiating discussions

p) Listen carefully and constructively to advisees' messages

q) Provide a caring and personal relationship by exhibiting a positive attitude toward students, their goals, and their ability to learn

r) Provide accessible and responsive advising services

s) Provide a climate of trust in which advisees feel free to ask questions, express concerns, revise ideas, make decisions, and share personal experiences and knowledge

t) Model the tenets of the university, and demonstrate enthusiasm and knowledge about the goals and purposes of higher education

u) Respect diverse points of view by demonstrating sensitivity to differences in culture and gender

v) Make changes or add to advising knowledge and skills by assessing the advising process

w) Help students move beyond rote memorization or recall (Grites, 1994), help advisees test the validity of their ideas (Hagen, 1994), and "challenge students to confront their attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions" (Laff, 1994, p. 47)

x) Help students explore career goals and choose programs, courses, and co-curricular activities that support these goals

y) Utilize institutional technology (e.g., degree audit reports) to augment advising, recommend interactive software (e.g., SIGI PLUS) that can help advisees clarify goals and identify career options (Rooney, 1994), and communicate with advisees via e-mail.

*Note:* The lists above represent Ryan's synthesis (1992) and Appleby's (2001) additional characteristics based on more recent teaching and advising literature.