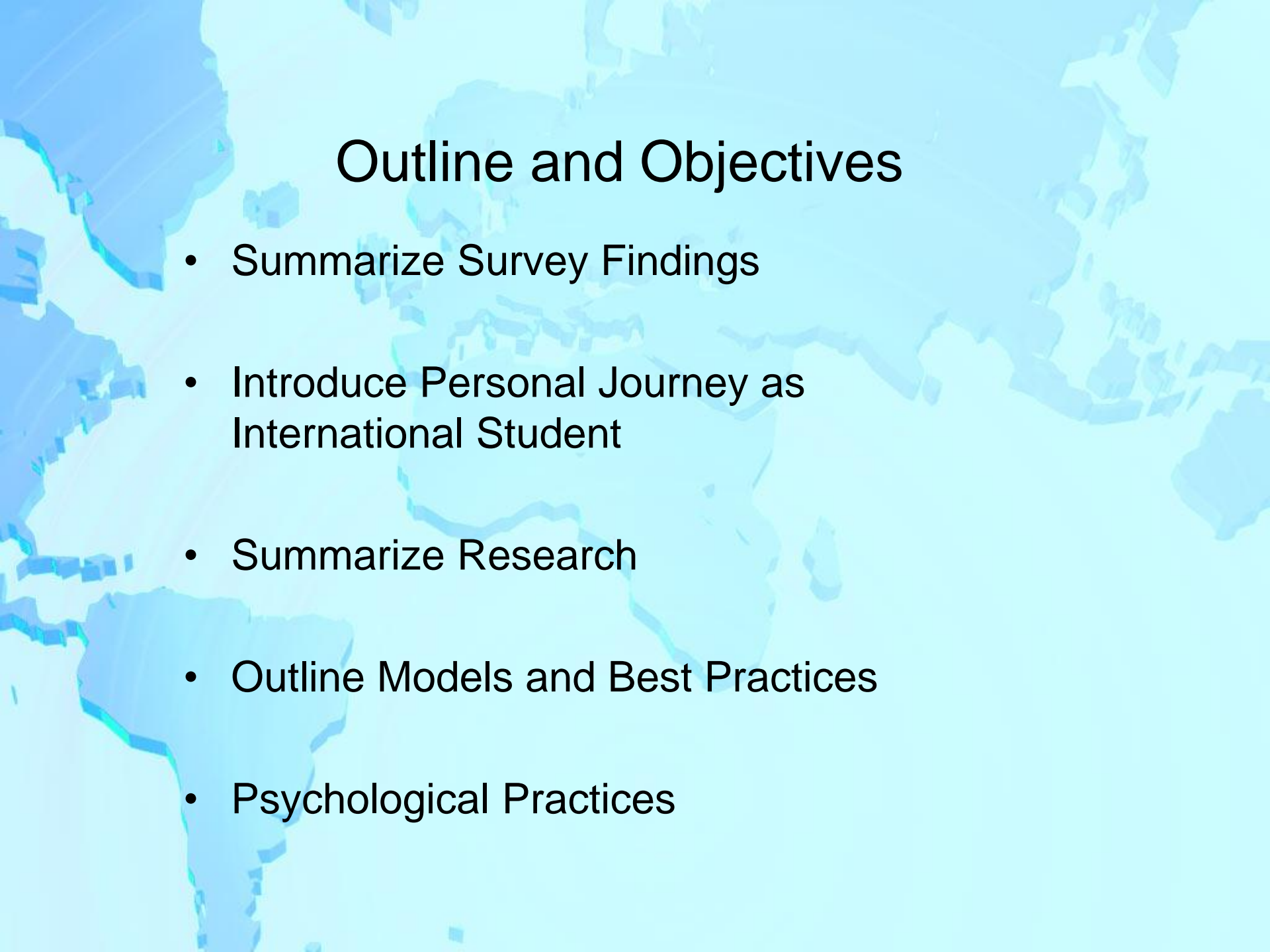# Admission of International Students

Fernando A. Ortiz, Ph.D., ABPP

Gonzaga University

St. John Vianney Center

Outline and Objectives

- Summarize Survey Findings

- Introduce Personal Journey as International Student

- Summarize Research

- Outline Models and Best Practices
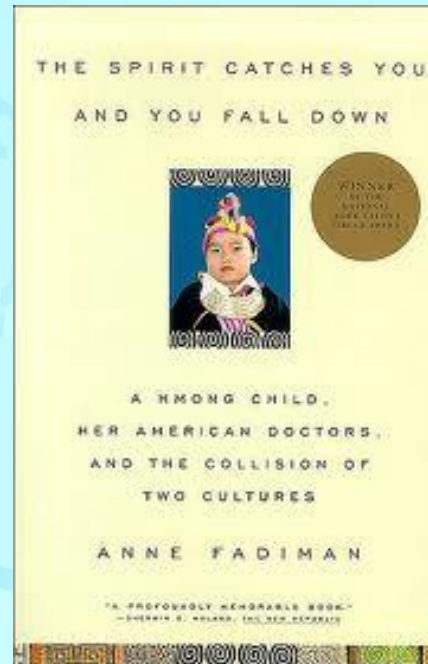
- Psychological Practices

Challenges

- Language
- Transitions
- Adjustment to culture
- Cultural differences
- Academic Formation
- Visa / Immigration Status
- Financial Difficulties
- Criminal Backgrounds
- Ministry with Women
- Pastoral Styles

What is culture in reference to challenges?

Culture is shared learned behavior and meanings that are socially transferred in life-activity settings. Cultures can be (1) transitory (i.e., situational), (2) enduring (e.g., ethnocultural life styles), and/or (3) dynamic (i.e., constantly subject to change and modification). Cultures are both internally and externally represented; (4) internal (i.e., values, beliefs, attitudes, orientations, epistemologies, consciousness levels, perceptions, expectations, personhood) and (5) external (i.e., behaviors, practices, communication styles) and with this, our concepts of (6) normality/abnormality and morality. Cultures can be (7) pathogenic and/or salutogenic.

Normality vs. Abnormality

THE SPIRIT CATCHES YOU
AND YOU FALL DOWN

A HMONG CHILD,
HER AMERICAN DOCTORS,
AND THE COLLISION OF
TWO CULTURES

ANNE FADIMAN

- Communication Styles
- Boundaries
- Thinking (cognition)

Strategies to Confront Challenges

- Faculty
- Director of International Students
- Collaboration with Vocation Directors
- Individualized Educational Programs
- Peer Mentor Programs
- Psychologists on Staff
- Enculturation Classes
- Field Trips
- Conversation Partners Programs
- Immigration Attorneys and Legal Support

Strategies to Confront Challenges cont…

- ESL classes

- Assessment Meetings

- TOEFL Examinations

- Financial Assistance

- Ministry Opportunities and Supervision

- English Evaluations

- Training for Registrar

Diocesan Realities

- Dioceses recruiting more actively in other countries
- Pastoral mismatch
- Legal liability
- Home grown vocations versus international vocations
- Increasing ethnic diversity
- Globalized faith and polarized church
- Effective intercultural realities
- Inculturation of the Gospel

Problems through Formation

- Initial Psychological Screening
- Cultural noise versus human growth and psychological needs
- Cultural boundaries and culturally appropriate attitudes (e.g., toward authority, toward women)
- Integration into community
- Integration of human and spiritual formation
- Games (search for a car, spending money, benefactors, outside work, decision not to return to home country, unforeseen educational challenges)
- Native language in academic work and in *practica*

Main Cultures

- Africa (Uganda, Congo, Nigeria)

- Latin America (Mexico, Columbia)

- Caribbean (Haiti, Puerto Rico)

- Asia (Vietnam, Korea)

- Philippines

- Europe (Poland)

Benefits, Strengths and Positive Contributions

- Increased awareness to some very different realities of Church

- Greater sense of global church

- Expansion of worldview

- Richer diversity of Catholic experience

- Religious heritage/devotional practices in U.S. Church and worldwide Church

- Multi-cultural competencies

- Vocational gifts

- Enriched human and pastoral formation

Interculturally Competent Formation

In order to be culturally competent, formators must be able to:

(a) Be aware of own cultural conditioning,

(b) understand and accept the legitimacy of alternative world views,

(c) develop culturally appropriate formation strategies for international and diverse students, and

(d) be aware of systemic forces affecting both students and themselves.

Personal Journey

- Phases and stages of adjustment

- Coping resources

- Predictors of success in admissions and retention

- Latino culture and other cultures

Common Features of Acculturation

- Language Difficulties
- Stress
- Separation from Family
- Experiences of Discrimination
- Shift in Social/Cultural Status
- Adjusting to New Systems of Communication

Predictors of Academic Success

- Age
- Time in the U.S.
- English Proficiency
- Academic Adjustment
- Personal Emotional Adjustment
- Social Adjustment
- Institutional Loyalty
- Help-Seeking

Communication Styles

Aspects of communication that transcend the written or spoken word:

- ❖ Proxemics

- ❖ Kinesics

- ❖ Paralanguage

- ❖ High-low communication

Nonverbal Communication

❖ Nonverbals oftentimes occur outside of our level of awareness.

1. Proxemics: Perception and use of personal and interpersonal space.

2. Kinesics: Bodily movements (i.e., facial expressions, posture, characteristics of movement, gestures, eye contact).

Nonverbal Communication

3. <u>Paralanguage</u>: Other vocal cues that individuals use to communicate (e.g., loudness of voice, pauses, silences, hesitations, rate, inflections).

4. <u>High-Low Context Communication</u>: Anchored in the physical context (situation) or internalized in the person.

Misunderstood Communication

❖ We may misunderstand others' communications if we solely focus on the explicit, coded part of the message.

❖ Low-context (LC) cultures place a greater reliance on the verbal part of the message.

❖ LC cultures have been associated with being more opportunistic and individualistic and as emphasizing rules of law and procedure.

Worldviews of
Culturally Diverse International Candidates

We need to understand their definitions of:

- ❖ People-nature Relationship Dimension
- ❖ Time Dimension
- ❖ Relational Dimension
- ❖ Activity Dimension
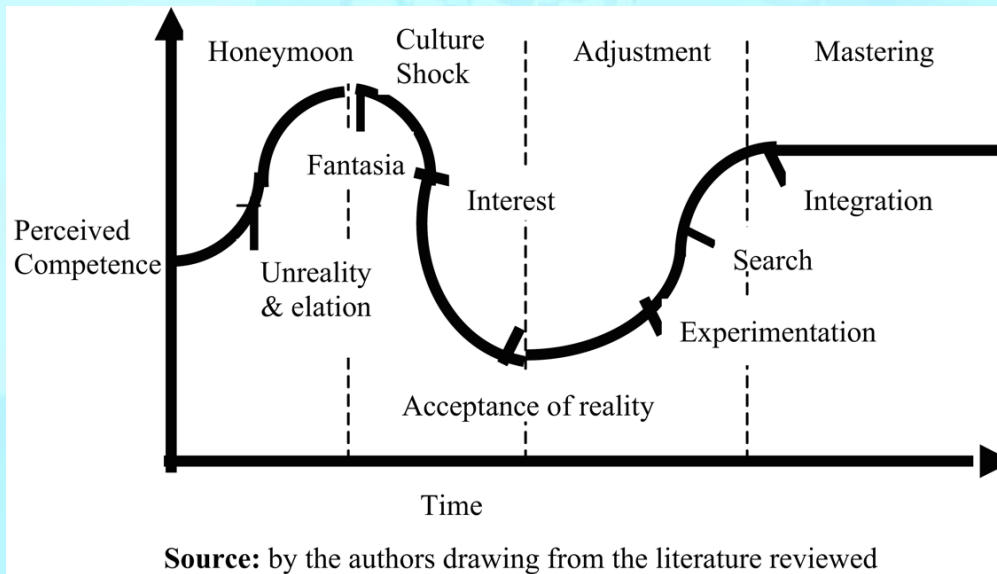- ❖ Nature of People Dimension

Five Stage
Process Integration Model

1. Conformity Phase
2. Dissonance Phase
3. Resistance and Immersion Phase
4. Introspective Phase
5. Integrative Awareness Phase

Acculturation & Assimilation

Five cultural orientation types:

1. Traditional
2. Marginal
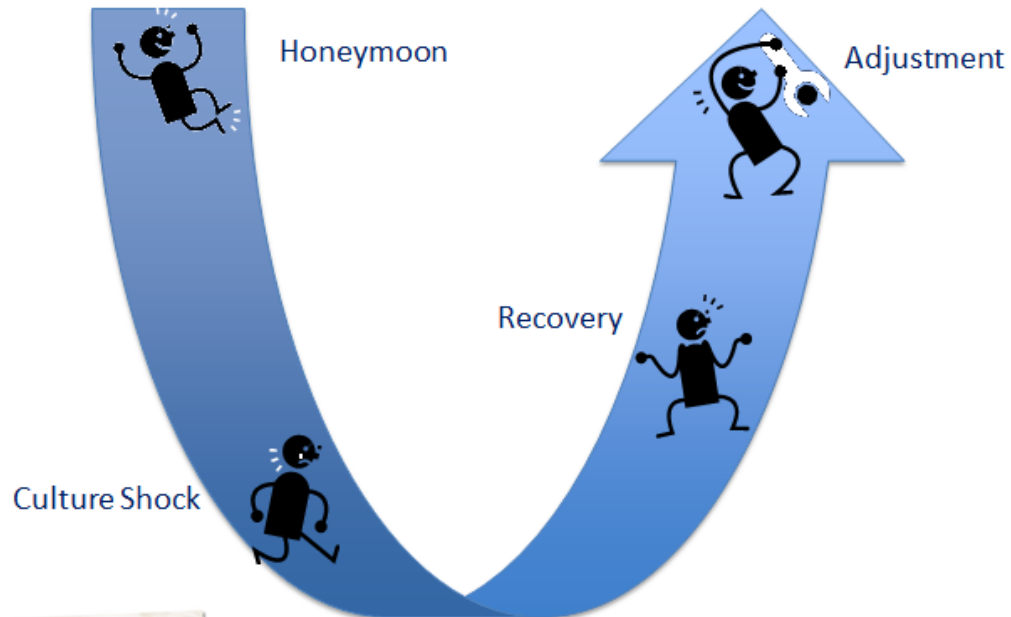3. Bicultural
4. Assimilated

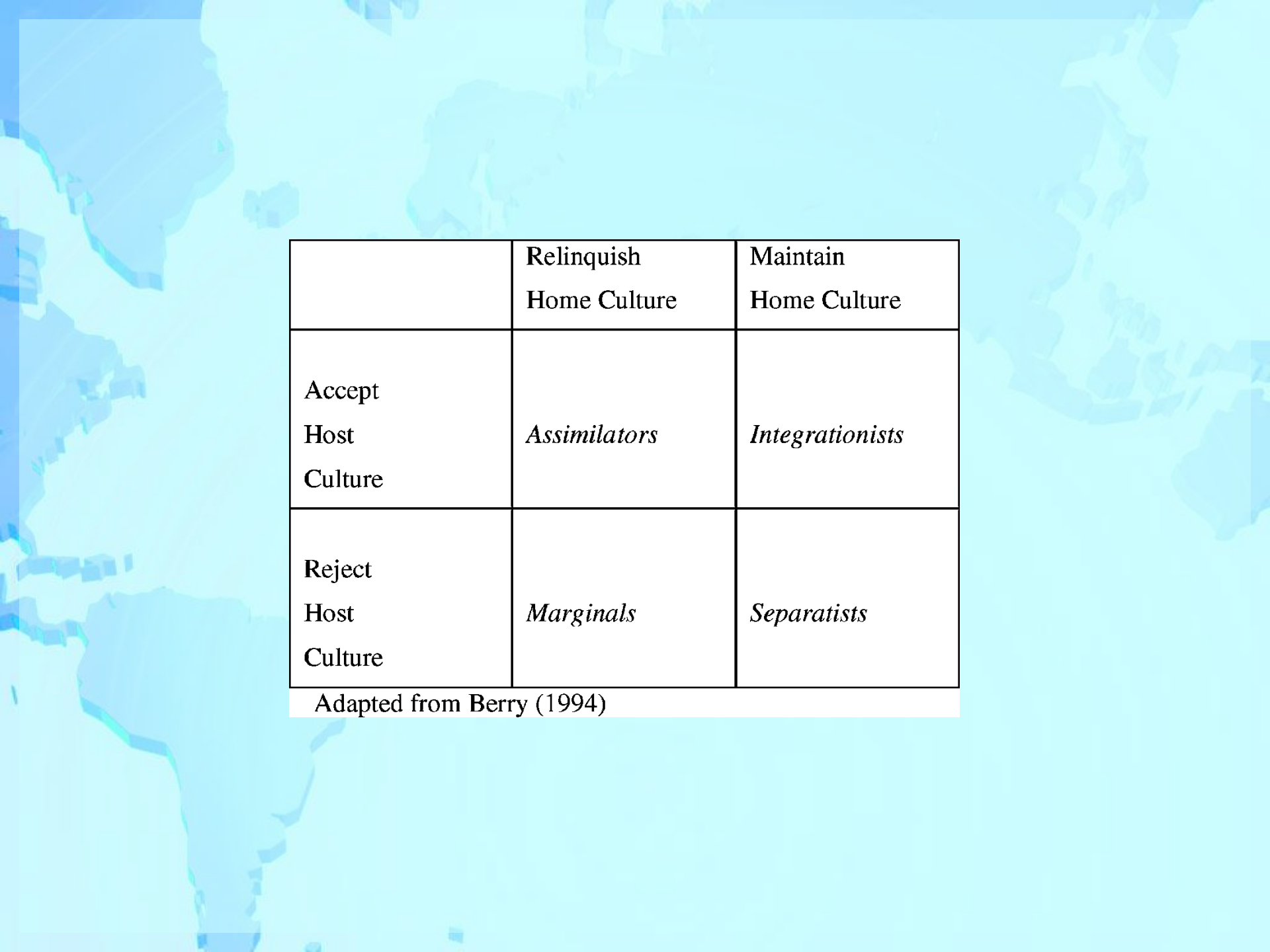**Source:** by the authors drawing from the literature reviewed

Dimensions of Worldviews

Worldview: How a candidate perceives his/her relationship to the world (nature, institutions, other people, etc.).

❖ Worldview is highly correlated with a student's cultural upbringing and life experiences.

	Relinquish Home Culture	Maintain Home Culture
Accept Host Culture	*Assimilators*	*Integrationists*
Reject Host Culture	*Marginals*	*Separatists*

Adapted from Berry (1994)

Remediation of Bias in Working with International Applicants

| Locus	Source	Remedy
Clinician	Ethnocentricism	Examine own identity
	Racism	Immersion in another culture
	Prejudice	Training
	Stereotyping	Supervision
Service Delivery	Anglo style social etiquette: Impersonal, formal, task-oriented	Culture-specific styles
Tests/techniques	Anglo emics or imposed etics used as etics	Cross-cultural equivalence in language (translation), constructs, and metric/scalar
DSM-IV	Anglo emic symptoms, syndromes, and disorders used as genuine etics	Cultural formulations Culture-bound syndromes

MMPI/MMPI-2 Interpretation Guidelines with International Candidates

Guideline	Data Source	Description
Orientation Questions	Demographics	Reason for assessment? Cultural typicality of candidate?. Need cultural orientation status?
Service Delivery	Moderator Instruments	Examine profile credibility for international candidates.
Normative data	MMPI + MMPI-2	Examine validity, clinical, and supplemental scales regardless of magnitude of differences from normative expectations; double profile; compare with available national normative data.
Response Sets	Validity Indicators	Use standard scale/profile validity indicators plus attention to culture-specific sets/styles identified by existing scales
Items	All elevated scales	Identify potentially culture-specific items in elevated scales and examine these items with international candidates.
Clinical Scales		Examine all elevated clinical scales for possible psychopathology confound

MULTICULTURAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Phase One: Identify Cultural Data

- **History taking**
- **Use multiple data collection methods**

Collect Salient & Non-salient Clinical Data

Phase Two: Interpret Cultural Data

- **Differentiate cultural data from idiocyncratic data**
- **Apply base rate information**
- **Differentiate dispositional from environmental stressors**
- **Differentiate clinically significant from insignificant data**

Formulate a Working Hypothesis

Phase Three: Incorporate Cultural Data

- **Rule out medical explanations**
- **Utilize psychological testing**
- **Compare data with DSM-IV criteria**

Test the Working Hypothesis

Phase Four: Arrive at a Sound Assessment Decision

DEBIASING STRATEGIES

International Candidates and Immigration Process
New Direction:
Toward a National Streamlined Process

Current State

↓

Analyze

↓

Streamline

↓

Improve

↓

Standardize
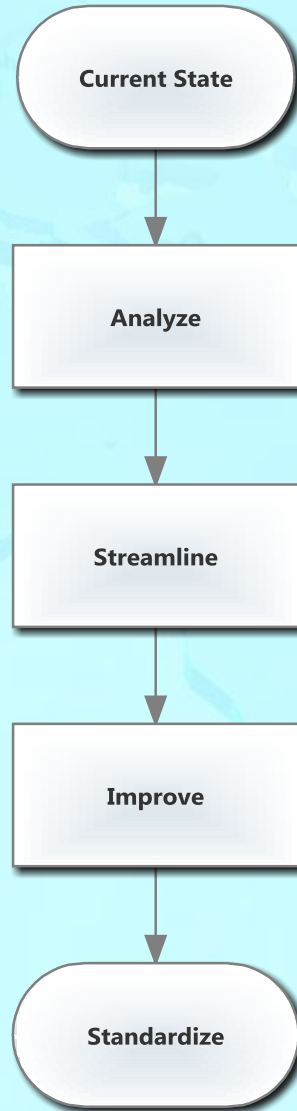
Thank you.

Questions.

Fernando A. Ortiz, Ph.D., ABPP

Gonzaga University

509-313-4126

ortiz2@gonzaga.edu