Global Competence and Cosmopolitan Practices
in a First-Year Composition Writing Unit

by

Kristina Dawn ByBee

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

James Blasingame, Chair
E. Sybil Durand
Wendy R. Williams

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This research presents findings from a classroom-based case study to determine how a global competence framework influences first-year composition (FYC) students’ understanding of global competency and cosmopolitanism. Sub-questions included examining how participants demonstrated skills as global and cultural communicators, how their perceptions changed about the audience, and how they believe their global competence and cosmopolitanism practices will transfer to their personal and professional lives. For educators seeking ways to prepare students for an increasingly interconnected global society, Appiah’s new cosmopolitanism theory (2006) proposes moving beyond multiculturalism to global engagement and exchange, creating opportunities for students to engage in literacy practices with a global lens as they build skills in empathy and understanding of other cultures (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2014).

In this five-week writing unit, undergraduate students enrolled in this one-semester composition course at a large U.S. university created multimodal, research-based compositions for a global audience about issues drawn from the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Using the “U.S. Department of Education’s Framework for Developing Global and Cultural Competencies to Advance Equity, Excellence, and Economic Competitiveness,” this study examined participants’ growth in three framework domains: collaboration and communication, diverse perspectives, and civic and global engagement. Qualitative data were collected and analyzed at the completion of the writing unit to assess participants’ growth in global competence: 1) participants’ unit assignments, 2) participants’ reflections, 3) researcher teaching notes and observations, 4) participants’ demographic surveys, and 5) participants’ pre- and post-unit questionnaires.
Findings suggest students’ perceived increases in their ability to communicate with diverse audiences through speaking and listening activities completed in the unit. Students’ perceptions of their understanding of audience also increased. Further, students’ understanding of global competence and cosmopolitanism increased which may transfer to their personal and professional lives in the future.
DEDICATION

I am fortunate to come from a family of educators and education supporters. I grew up seeing smart, educated women in my family devoting their careers to public education; it was an honor to grow up in that space. This work is dedicated to them, but especially to my mother, Patricia ByBee, who I miss every day. An avid reader and learner, she nurtured my own love for reading with many visits to the public library in my childhood.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This classroom-based dissertation case study examines how university students in a one-semester, first-year composition course perceived their experience with a writing unit that invited them to research and write about a current global or local issue. Students researched topics drawn from the United Nations 17 Sustainability Development Goals during a five-week writing unit. The writing unit was designed to support and measure students’ learning in a global and cultural competency framework with three domains: 1) collaboration and communication, 2) diverse perspectives, and 3) civic and global engagement. This study draws from the United States Department of Education’s International Affairs Office’s Global and Cultural Competency Framework to determine how freshmen college students demonstrate global and cultural communication skills to audiences and with each other and how they plan to transfer these practices to their personal and professional lives. This chapter presents a statement of a problem in first-year composition curriculum, explains global competence and cosmopolitanism, and shares my journey to teaching global competence in a first-year composition classroom in a large metropolitan university. I also highlight the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guide me in this study and in my teaching.

Statement of Problem

First-year composition curriculum as it is taught at many colleges and universities in the United States does not include skills relating to engagement with global community. This is a problem because these students—who will graduate and join local and global spaces—need skills to communicate and collaborate effectively with citizens in
their own and other countries. In our interconnected world, the ability to communicate and collaborate with others in person and virtually is a skill needed for engaging with, learning about, and solving global issues large and small “that affect all people, and have deep implications for current and future generations” (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018). In most outcome-based first-year composition (FYC) courses taught at U.S. post-secondary institutions, writing tasks are not globally focused and do not invite students to investigate their place within the global community, thus students miss an opportunity to build global competencies and cosmopolitan habits of mind (Appiah, 2006; Hull et al., 2010). Educating for global competence in first-year college composition classrooms can be one way composition instructors can prepare students to be global citizens with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives to participate in the global community and global economy (Asia Society, “Five reasons why global competence matter”; Vander ark & Leibtag, 2017).

Additionally, little research has been conducted in the United States on the inclusion and instruction of global competence skills in the first-year composition classroom. This dissertation will respond to both a need for more research in this area and the challenge made by Hull, Stornaiulo, and Sahni (2010) in English Education for English teachers “to support their students in developing twenty-first century literacies--both the technological competencies and the values, knowledge, and dispositions--needed to participate confidently and critically as citizens of local and global worlds” (p. 331).

Many students arrive at college having engaged in out-of-school literacies that placed them in virtual spaces through various media. These literacies include creating Tik Tok videos, viewing anime, reading Japanese manga, writing fan fiction, and listening to
K-pop (Korean popular music). They also interact with others on social media platforms, including Snapchat, Instagram, Discord, and messaging apps. Participation in these global and local affinity spaces are often highly valued by young people who connect their personal identities to out-of-school activities (Gee, 2017). While some students are using out-of-school literacies to connect with global youth in a non-academic forum, most U.S. secondary students are not connecting in any way with the global community while at school (Gee, 2017). This lack of preparation in global and cultural competence puts U.S. college students at a disadvantage. The inclusion of learning tasks with a global competency-focus at all levels and disciplines of K-12 through higher education should be a priority in U.S. education policy moving forward (Tichnor-Wagner, 2016; 2019).

This dissertation examines global and cultural competency skills-building and students’ perceptions of learning experiences at the post-secondary level with students who have exited the K-12 system and are continuing their education at the college or university level (Tichnor-Wagner, 2016; Global and Cultural Competency, 2021).

Defining the global competencies. While various education-minded organizations, foundations, and governmental agencies have developed their own lists of global competencies, Tichnor-Wagner and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) suggest that the global competencies these various groups advocate for can be grouped into one of three categories: dispositions, knowledge, and skills (2016; 2019). Dispositions include “empathy and valuing multiple perspectives” and “commitment to promoting equity worldwide.” Among the knowledge elements are “experiential understanding of multiple cultures” and “understanding of intercultural communication.” Finally, skill elements include several that connect to
literacy skills: “integrate learning experiences for students that promote content-aligned explorations of the world,” “create a classroom environment that values diversity and global engagement,” and “facilitate intercultural and international conversations.”

**Project alignment with Writing Program Administrators outcomes.** Many universities, colleges, and community colleges in the United States design first-year writing programs based on outcomes recommended by The Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA). The WPA “is a national association of college and university faculty with professional responsibilities for (or interests in) directing writing programs” (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2024). The most recent “WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition” was approved by the WPA in 2014 (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2019). Global competence instruction does not contradict WPA outcomes. First-year composition instructors can lead the way in teaching key components of global competencies as the competencies align with the Council of Writing Program Administrators outcomes of (1) rhetorical knowledge; (2) critical thinking, reading, and composing; (3) processes; and (4) knowledge of conventions (2019). Further, instructors and students can develop global competence knowledge using currently available technology (Vander ark & Leibtag, 2017). For this case study, a first-year composition course writing task was designed and implemented to examine students’ perceptions of investigating and writing about global issues for a *global audience* (Asia Society, 2023). More specifically, the writing task was a research-based, argumentative article of a global topic drawn from the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals website (2023). Students research a topic, synthesize information from several sources, and create a multimodal composition for a global
audience. While this dissertation does not seek to measure students’ growth in WPA outcomes, the teaching unit aligns with several WPA outcomes approved in 2014.

**Researcher Background & Stance:** This case study provided an opportunity for me, as an instructor-researcher and Ph.D. candidate at a large public university in the United States, to examine first-year composition students’ understanding of global competence and cosmopolitanism in a globally focused literacy unit. I wondered, in what ways might students transfer their global competence and cosmopolitanism skills from the FYC classroom to their personal and professional lives? How do students demonstrate their ability to compose for a global audience before and after engaging in an investigative research unit designed to develop this skill? How do students demonstrate their ability to communicate their investigation topics with their peers and with a potential global audience of readers?

My own curiosity about ways of teaching students more about the world around them began in my high school English Language Arts classroom seven years ago when I revised the curriculum for a FYC dual enrollment composition class that I had taught for several years. Dual Enrollment programs on high school campuses allow students to enroll in college classes through affiliated community colleges and universities to earn transferable college credits (Arizona Department of Education). Over the years, I became increasingly motivated to reframe this composition course to incorporate a deeper exploration of global issues and the global community. The impetus for bringing in discussion, research, and writing about global issues arose due to my students’ general lack of exposure to global concerns in their high school classes, regardless of discipline, and the increasingly noticeable political trend at that time toward U.S. isolationism and
nativism. I wanted my students to consider their place within a globally connected society framework and how they might be better equipped with the necessary communication skills to live and work with empathy in the global community.

I began by transforming the course’s summative research writing project to include an exploration of current issues of global concern such as climate change, healthcare, food production, and equity. Employing a backwards design curriculum approach (McTighe & Wiggins, 2005), I added activities, discussions, and assignments throughout the year that supported learning more about the global readiness theme. Students had the freedom to explore topics; however, they often chose to research issues that connected to their education or career goals or their personal interests such as global healthcare management, clean water access, and endangered species protection.

Upon seeing increased student engagement and quality of writing produced in the composition classes, I began adding more globally minded lessons to my ELA courses. I encouraged and provided the time and space for students to read both fiction and nonfiction by authors outside the Western ELA canon commonly taught in U.S. secondary classrooms. Listed below are several examples of nonfiction memoirs and Young Adult fiction books from different genres that students chose to read that center the stories of young people resisting and challenging power structures.

Memoirs:

- *Man’s Search for Meaning* (Frankl, 1946).
  - The author’s experiences as a prisoner in several Nazi concentration camps during World War II.
  - The author’s experiences growing up in Apartheid-era South Africa as the child of an illegal interracial relationship.
• *I am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World* (Yousufzai, 2014).
  o The author’s experiences as an education activist growing up in Pakistan where she becomes a target of the Taliban.
• *A Long Way Gone: Memoir of a Boy Soldier* (Beah, 2007).
  o The author’s experiences as a child soldier in the Sierra Leone Civil War in the 1990s.

Young Adult Fiction:

• *Children of Blood and Bone* (Adeyemi, 2018).
  o Inspired by Nigerian mythology, protagonists are on a quest to restore magic to a world where it has been suppressed by an evil king.
• *Everything, Everything* (Yoon, 2015).
  o Madeline, being treated for severe autoimmune deficiency, cannot leave her house; she meets the new boy next door and learns the truth about her condition.
• *The Marrow Thieves* (Dimaline, 2017).
  o In a future world devastated by climate change, the only people who can dream are Indigenous people of North America; the key to dreaming is in their bone marrow.

Critical reading of fiction and nonfiction was one way we engaged in global competence and cosmopolitan practices. We also discussed current issues and how something that happened on the other side of the world could impact our lives in the U.S. (Tichnor-Wagner, 2016). Students were also invited to share their own stories--of traveling to other countries, of living in other places, of where they would like to go someday--and I shared my own travel stories of chaperoning students on international trips to Europe. We learned more about each other in the process. Over several years, I saw positive results from the changes I made in adding global-readiness content to the curriculum. I also saw a transformative change in my own teaching philosophy as I included more lessons about the world around us. These changes to the curriculum and to my teaching philosophy inspired me to learn more about educating for global awareness.
which, in turn, leads me to pursue this dissertation study to examine students’ perceptions of their literacy skills as measured through a global competence lens in the FYC classroom.

**Importance of a global competence classroom:** Global competency scholars view moving beyond multiculturalism as essential for 21st century learners to compete on the global stage (Asia Society, 2011; Tichnor-Wagner, 2016). Students who attended U.S. PK-12 schools will likely need instructional support to build the skills necessary to communicate face-to-face and virtually with the global community since global competence skills development is not commonly taught here. At the college level, the global competencies and cosmopolitan habits of mind are especially crucial for our students (OECD Results, 2020) as they progress in their fields of study, engage in rich civic lives, and prepare for careers in a globally connected society. College instructors in all disciplines can help students build global competencies several ways through instruction, as noted by Parkhouse and Tichnor-Wagner (2019):

1. Create a classroom environment that values diversity and global engagement
2. Integrate content-aligned global learning experiences
3. Develop local and global partnerships

The writing unit designed for this dissertation case study addresses teaching strategies 1 and 2 on the above list. While my long-term goal is to create and teach a FYC course that will also address strategy 3, without global competence instruction in 1) Create a classroom environment that values diversity and global engagement and 2)
Integrate content-aligned global learning experiences, we cannot move on to 3), Develop local and global partnerships.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

This study is grounded in sociocultural theory to understand the social processes of writing (Vygotsky, 1978). Each student composed a research-based, multimodal article about a topic of global significance drawn from one of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals website; however, students had several opportunities to engage in collaboration with each other during the writing process. Bezemer and Kress (2008) point out that digital media is increasingly the mode of delivery of text and that writing is transforming from the use of words to the use of images and that these significant changes require more research. Writing is a social process and multimodal writing can contribute to the social nature of the writing process through collaboration, motivation, and reflection (Prior, 2005). This unit connected students and their peers through collaboration in the classroom using 21st Century technologies which have the potential to create a new, virtual, discourse community of practice where one did not previously exist (Wenger, 1999; Gee, 1996).

Appiah’s new cosmopolitanism theory provides an ideal conceptual framework for a study addressing global competence skills (2006). Educators seeking to include pedagogical practices beyond multicultural literature (common in the late 20th century), found new cosmopolitanism, with its tenets of acceptance, rather than assimilation, and
respect for educational and cultural creativity, a method “to reimagine citizenship and identity in ways befitting a global age” (Hull et al., 2010, p. 331). In recent years, education researchers have sought ways to bring cosmopolitanism from theory to practice in the classroom. Hansen notes researchers frame cosmopolitanism as “both a concept and a lens for interpreting educational practice” (2014, p. 2) Hull’s research with Stornaiuolo brought forth everyday cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitan literacies as ways to examine and experience cosmopolitanism within the field of education and youth literacies (2014).

**Defining cosmopolitan habits of mind.** Appiah suggests cosmopolitanism is a challenge rather than a solution which builds upon “the idea that we have obligations to others, obligations that stretch beyond those to whom we are related by the ties of kith and kind, or even the more formal ties of a shared citizenship” (p. xv). As an educator who chooses to embrace this notion, I must include appropriate practices in the classroom to develop students’ cosmopolitan habits of mind. It is common for FYC curriculum to provide little or no globally minded content unless the instructor chooses to include such content.

Cosmopolitanism as a theoretical framework for literacy research draws on New Literacy Studies (NLS) and connected scholarship which regard literacy as a social practice (Gee, 1996; Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2014). Providing opportunities for students to engage in literacy practices with a global lens and write for an audience of readers in locations far from their own classroom builds skills in empathy and understanding of other cultures.
A cosmopolitanism-in-practice pedagogical approach provides a framework that invites students to share their learning experiences with other students through virtual connections (Hull, et al, 2010). In this study, each student in a FYC classroom had several opportunities to connect with peers to share ideas, offer feedback, and celebrate accomplishments as they moved through the activities of the unit.

**Purpose of the Study**

This study’s purpose was to determine how FYC students’ perceptions of themselves as writers for a specific audience change when they engage in a global competence writing unit and are asked how they will use these skills in the future. I wondered how teaching global and cultural competence concepts influenced students’ learning experiences through researching topics drawn from the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals chart, writing for a specific audience, communicating with each other about their research topics, and creating a multimodal composition. To answer this question, I designed and taught a five-week writing unit with the following goals for students: 1) to investigate an issue related to one of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, 2) to recognize the diverse perspectives of classroom peers and of other people in the world through a research task, and 3) to communicate their ideas to their audience(s) through the modes of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This dissertation case study arose from my curiosity about students’ perceptions of their learning experiences with these global and cultural competence tasks.
Research Question and Sub-questions

This case study sought to answer the following research question and sub-questions:

How does writing within a global competence framework influence first-year composition university students' understanding of global competence and cosmopolitanism?

a. How do students demonstrate skills as global and cultural communicators?

b. How do students’ perceptions change about the audience?

c. How do students believe their global competence and cosmopolitanism practices will transfer to their personal and professional lives?

I employed qualitative case study methodology to answer these questions (Creswell, 2009, p. 4). I collected data from multiple sources, including teaching notes of classroom observations, student-participants’ assignments and reflections as artifacts, demographic surveys, and pre- and post-unit questionnaires from eight student-participants.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

“When we recognize our interconnectedness and the fundamental dignity and equality of every human being, we help to build a world that is more accepting, secure and free.” Barack Obama, Statement by the President on Holocaust Remembrance Day, May 4, 2016

All twenty-first century students deserve instruction that will prepare them for a lifetime of interactions with global communities. Now more than ever before, students need to develop the skills, knowledge, and disposition that will serve their needs in the future. A global competence writing curriculum can support and build on students’ overall global competence abilities for positive, equitable global and cultural communication that disrupts negative stereotypes about others in our interconnected world by situating students in communication with each other.

To respond to the need to deliver such instruction, this case study provides an opportunity for research into global competency-based composition instruction. I will begin by reviewing the important work of scholars in the fields of cosmopolitanism, global competence education, multiliteracies, and curriculum design which support and intersect to form my understanding of these key areas.

The first portion of this chapter will recount the ancient idea of cosmopolitanism, how it serves today as a foundation for global competence education research and its framework, and ways global competence education can be practiced in secondary and
post-secondary English classrooms. Next, I will introduce three global competence frameworks, highlighting their similarities and differences. The last section of this chapter will review multiliteracies and the curriculum concept of Understanding by Design™ (McTighe & Wiggins, 2014) that I used to design this writing unit for the FYC classroom.

Global competence instruction can be differentiated for all learners and woven into any of the discipline areas, from art to English to science. Although there are some global competence curriculums in service in the United States, they have been primarily taught in private or magnet schools. In fact, conservative politicians are pressuring state departments of education away from global education through legislation or policy (Resnik, 2024). This is not an instructional method that should be reserved for students at elite private schools any longer (Reimers, 2012).

Educational researchers, non-governmental organizations, and governmental agencies have published support for global competency education in our public schools; in this chapter I will also examine three websites with supporting materials:

- “What is Global Competence?” Asia Society.
- “PISA 2018 Global Competence” Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).
- “Global and Cultural Competency.” The International Affairs Office, U.S. Department of Education.

The California Global Education Project provides educators with the global competence framework, definitions, indicators, and benchmarks for K-12 students on its website. This is not the norm, though, as most U.S. states have no guidance for PK-12
teachers in global competency. Instead, teachers are doing the work to engage their students with the world without the support of local districts or state departments of education, often creating connections with educators across the world on their own, and they may not be familiar with the term and concepts of global competence (Tichnor-Wagner, 2016). Adding global competence skills to any traditional or standards-based curriculum in local public-school systems and in higher education institutions will support both teachers and students by raising awareness of the importance of “understanding and appreciating other parts of the world, different religions, cultures, and points of view” (Global and Cultural Competency).

Cosmopolitanism

The modern-day frameworks for teaching global competence, global citizenship education, cultural competency, or similar pedagogies have roots in the centuries-old philosophical concept of cosmopolitanism (Hansen, 2008; Reimers, 2009). In both ancient Greece and Rome, the idea of cosmopolitanism was influenced by the interactions that Athenians and Romans had with people outside of these city-states. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2021) provides a chronological history of Cosmopolitanism, including this general definition:

The word ‘cosmopolitan’, which derives from the Greek word kosmopolitēs (‘citizen of the world’), has been used to describe a wide variety of important views in moral and socio-political philosophy. The nebulous core shared by all cosmopolitan views is the idea that all human beings, regardless of their political affiliation, are (or can and should be) citizens in a single community.
The above definition presents cosmopolitanism in a positive light. Politics and political borders aside, we are all stuck here on Earth (unless you are a billionaire entrepreneur with your own rocket ship). However, naming someone a cosmopolitan may not suggest a positive connotation if you think of a cosmopolitan as a person who has the financial means and personal freedom to leave their home country and interact with others across the globe. Few people enjoy such privileges. Is a cosmopolitan a world-traveler, an adventurer, an elite jetsetter? Must one be from a first-world nation and have the financial means to physically travel the world to be cosmopolitan?

Rather than limiting our view of cosmopolitanism to world travelers, we can broaden the definition to those who wish to learn about and communicate with the world. If we accept a broader definition, what does cosmopolitanism mean for educators today?

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, educators and researchers across the globe began to seek ways that we can use technology to achieve cosmopolitan goals. In 2006, Kwame Anthony Appiah published *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, which became a foundational text for a new cosmopolitanism. Appiah’s ideas for modern-day cosmopolitan practices in an increasingly connected global society laid the groundwork for educational scholars, governmental entities, and non-governmental organizations to connect cosmopolitanism to global education for elementary through college-level students across content areas as his work is regularly cited in publications by Asia Society, PISA, and Fernando Reimers, among others.

The past two decades have brought us more cosmopolitanism-informed educational research studies and informed discussion. The work of scholars David T.
Hansen, Fernando Reimers, Glynda Hull, and Amy Stornaiuolo have informed my own ideas about what cosmopolitanism and global competency has the potential to accomplish when applied in an English classroom.

Both Hansen and Reimers suggest a cosmopolitanism framework can be presented in education to advocate for peace and social justice. Hansen noted that while scholars in various academic fields were taking up cosmopolitanism in their research, the concept was not being applied to educational research. Hansen (2008), arguing for cosmopolitanism in education, notes,

I believe that a cosmopolitan-minded education can assist people to retain cultural and individual integrity while also supporting peace, social justice, and other globally lauded goods...A cosmopolitan orientation spurs people to reimagine the creative possibilities in the local, the universal, and the unfathomable spaces between. (p. 206)

Reimers has invoked a similar stance in his writing and lecturing in global education. In *Empowering Global Citizens: A World Course* (2016), Reimers states, “The idea that schools help students learn about different people and cultures is as old as the field of education itself and can be traced through history and modern education. Historically, education aimed to help people transcend their own immediate circumstances in order to adopt a more cosmopolitan outlook.”

In his crafting of the term *educational cosmopolitanism*, Hansen draws on the writings of both ancient and modern-day philosophers who define philosophy traditionally as “‘the art of living’ or ‘the care of the self’” to suggest that “Educational
cosmopolitanism presumes a creative potential on the part of persons everywhere to craft lives of meanings and purpose” (2008, p. 208). Hansen’s stance invokes a similar concept that guides many teachers; we want our students to develop skills and habits while they are in school that will sustain them throughout their lives; lives that feature engaging with others in peaceful, respectful ways. Cosmopolitanism moves us beyond learning the facts of a school subject; for example, having the knowledge that students in other countries also write for school and themselves, to instead evince a mindset of welcoming to those students, their writing, and their “art of living” (Hansen, 2008, p. 208). Hansen sees cosmopolitanism as much more than a transaction between two individuals or groups across borders, he refers to this idea as “hospitality” and notes that to properly engage with cosmopolitan learning, teachers must provide space and time for students to do so in the classroom.

**Cosmopolitan habits of mind in secondary and higher education English classrooms.** In “Cultural Citizenship and Cosmopolitan Practice: Global Youth Communicate Online” (2010), Hull and colleagues defined the “primary tenet” of cosmopolitanism as a habit of mind of “compassionate connections” (p. 333). Other cosmopolitan habits of mind developed from this primary tenet. To communicate with those around the globe expeditiously, people need access to online spaces where they can connect. These scholars call for a “newly invigorated English education that recognizes literacies as multimodal, identities as hybrid, and Englishes as plural in our shifting and increasingly complex and interconnected social worlds” (p. 333).

Noble (2013) argues that cosmopolitanism can be more than just a frame for examining practices; habits can be taught to students and then examined by researchers:
“I argue for a ‘performative’ definition of cosmopolitanism and an observational methodology which attempts to capture the nuances of such situated performances” (p. 169). He researches how cosmopolitanism can work to overcome racism and promote positive interactions between various groups at local levels such as schools. He also cautions researchers against “romanticizing” the reach of cosmopolitanism. Noble states cosmopolitanism is not an easy fix for big problems such as racism; this is where he believes the practice of *conviviality* can make a positive difference (p. 165).

Noble notes that social scientists must measure habit through ethnography since it is quite different from the way a psychologist would measure a habit (for example, the routine habit of going to bed at a certain time). Noble’s interest is in measuring cosmopolitan habits of people of differing ethnicities living in “multicultural neighborhoods” (p. 182), particularly people whose home languages are not the dominant language of the country (Noble lives in Australia). He sees local neighborhoods and community groups as active and complex spaces for cosmopolitan habits to develop among the inhabitants because “this sense of locale is marked not by stasis but by mobility, which offers the possibilities of new connections, new networks of cohabitation” (p. 182).

Noble’s argument for a methodology to measure cosmopolitan habit is complex and as he notes, “an elusive concept” (p. 182). Multi-year ethnographic case studies may be well-suited to measuring whether human subjects develop a cosmopolitan habit.

Cosmopolitan scholars do not have a prescribed list of cosmopolitan habits of mind; rather, different scholars remark on concepts that are compatible with 21st century skills. Therefore, researchers and practitioners can choose to focus on habits suitable for a
study. For example, Hull and colleagues (2010) summarize five major components that may be useful for English teachers in practice: (1) media in interconnected worlds (personal and mass media), (2) increasing globalization via flows of people and goods, (3) participatory cultures employing technologies, (4) cosmopolitan education practices, and (5) cultural citizenship through civic engagement (p. 333-337).

For this unit and study, the concept of cosmopolitan habits of mind will be kept simple and measurable. This concept will refer to the cosmopolitan education practices employed in this FYC writing unit that promote “compassionate connections” and a cosmopolitan disposition: 1) using socioemotional skills for compassionate communication with others, 2) building problem-solving skills and knowledge for investigation of issues of global significance, and 3) demonstrating empathy and understanding of diverse perspectives. These cosmopolitan education practices align with global and cultural competencies.

**Global Competence**

More academic research and publications arose following Appiah’s *Cosmopolitanism* in 2006 and the emergence of global citizenship education. In 2009, the United States, with the election of Barack Obama, appeared poised to engage with the world again. President Obama’s first speech to the nation’s school children in September 2009 asked students, “What’s your contribution going to be? What problems are you going to solve? What discoveries will you make?” (“Remarks by the President in a National Address to America's Schoolchildren”).
Also in September of 2009, Fernando Reimers, in an article published in *Educational Leadership*, called on the U.S. and international educational community to promote global competency: “Now more than ever, education should prepare students for global civility and peace. So, what in the world are we waiting for?” Reimers, a Harvard professor, is the author of multiple books about global citizen education, global competence, and teacher education. Reimers’ research from the early 2000s to present day shows the powerful connection between cosmopolitanism and global competence.

His books, video-recorded speeches to educators, and lectures are available through Creative Commons. He maintains a personal website of many of these resources including videos and research. Reimers views local and global concerns as intertwined; therefore, students can connect local issues to similar issues on a global scale. Additionally, since his research indicates students can build skills as early as kindergarten (‘EdTalk: Empowering students to engage in a changing civil society,” 2018), Reimers advocates for global competencies to be included in all public schools through integration in curriculum via national and state standards. All students will need global competency skills, not a selected minority of students as in past decades when the prevailing sentiment was that only students who intended to work in foreign service, international business, or similar careers required knowledge of global affairs. In Reimers’ view, “global competency should now be a purpose of mass education, not just of elite education” (*Educating for Global Competency*, 2017, p 186).

Reimers’ definition of global competency seems to be the one that other researchers come back to often: “I define global competency as the knowledge and skills to help people understand the flat world in which they live, integrate across disciplinary
domains to comprehend global affairs and events, and create possibilities to address them. Global competencies are also the attitudinal and ethical dispositions that make it possible to interact peacefully, respectfully, and productively with fellow human beings from diverse geographies” (Educating for Global Competency, 2016, p.184). Practicing global competence and cosmopolitanism within this lens places students’ voices in the forefront of the 21st century classroom. Campano and Ghiso (2010) noted that immigrant students in U.S. classrooms have historically been ignored and silenced, when they should instead be valued as cosmopolitan intellectuals for their identities and experiences.

In the literacy classroom, these scholars suggest, “One possible avenue for addressing students’ identities is the continued commitment to providing texts that echo students’ experiences and portray a multiplicity of cultural, linguistic, and migratory representations within any given community” (166).

In 2015, DeJaynes and Curmi, building on to the pedagogical stance of Campano and Ghiso, stated:

By seeing youth as cosmopolitan intellectuals, we cultivate new kinds of classroom spaces. When students’ social concerns and intellectual interests drive the curriculum, teachers productively destabilize our positions as the knowers in the classroom and move toward more equitably sharing decision-making power in the space. (77)

The concept of global citizenship is interconnected with global competence and cosmopolitan habits of minds. The focus of the December 2016/January 2017 issue of Educational Leadership was “The Global-Ready Student.” The articles in this issue inspired me to learn more about global education practices and provided me with the
background knowledge to read further in this critical area of literacy. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, my teaching philosophy for many years has included practices in supporting my students to learn more about global issues and encouraging them to read about other cultures, but cosmopolitanism demands more than reading and research. To truly embrace cosmopolitan-minded education requires the time and space to develop hospitality (Hansen, 2008). This is how a global competency approach can be useful in the classroom. Before 2016, I had done little research into cosmopolitanism or global competency. I knew the term global citizenship because I followed the work of Hugh Evans and his foundation, Global Citizen. Global Citizen engages in an action-oriented approach to global issues through outreach and advocacy. While I found their work compelling and important, I did not see connections to literacy research. What I did not know then was “take action” was one of four of the domains of global competence (Jackson, 2016/2017). The other three domains are “investigate the world,” “recognize perspectives,” and “communicate ideas” (Jackson, 2016/2017; Asia Society, 2023). The more I learned more about global competence, the more I could see how the domains of “investigate the world,” “recognize perspectives,” and “communicate ideas” could be applied in an English classroom.

In general, the following entities have the four global competence domains in common, although the language may differ. Here are the three examples that have influenced this dissertation study:

The Asia Society, a globally minded think tank, has developed, published, and continually updated “The Four Domains of Global Competence” on its website. The domains are as follows:
1. Investigate the World  
2. Recognize Perspectives  
3. Communicate Ideas  
4. Take Action  

The four domains are graphically depicted as equal sections of a circle or a pie chart. The chart can be viewed on the website and in a supporting 37-page guidebook called, *Teaching for Global Competence in a Rapidly Changing World* (2018). While a teacher could choose to incorporate all four competencies into their curriculum, it is also appropriate to focus on one or two domains which are more applicable to a content area or even a particular lesson plan. For this case study, which includes students investigating, evaluating, and composing, the domains *Investigate the World, Recognize Perspectives* and *Communicate Ideas* are most applicable to the learning goals of the unit and the case study.

**The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)** has its own global competence graphic, also depicted as a circle (2018). PISA’s 33-page global competency framework guide, *Preparing our Youth for an Inclusive and Sustainable World: the OECD PISA Global Competence Framework*, serves as the foreground for its global competence assessment.

PISA (2018) refers to global competence as a “multidimensional capacity” in four equal sections:

1. Examine local, global, and intercultural issues.  
2. Understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others.  
3. Interact successfully and respectfully with others.
4. Take responsible action toward sustainability and collective well-being.

PISA’s dimensions are quite like Asia Society’s domains; in fact, they are nearly interchangeable. Further, PISA also stresses that schools, worldwide, can promote global competence in all grade and ability levels since, “developing a global and intercultural outlook is a process—a lifelong process—that education can shape” (2018). Of special interest to this dissertation study, PISA defines four reasons for why we need global competence and global competence education: 1) to live harmoniously in multicultural communities; 2) to thrive in a changing labour market; 3) to use media platforms effectively and responsibly; and 4) to support the Sustainable Development Goals. Since this dissertation study includes a unit plan for students to research and write about one of the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the idea that global competence supports the goals is an important one, as “…educating for global competence can help form new generations who care about global issues and engage in tackling social, political, economic and environments challenges” (2018).

No US Participation in Global Competence Assessment. The first ever OECD PISA Global Competence assessment was administered in 2018 and the results were released in 2020 in the publication, *PISA 2018 Results (Volume VI): Are Students Ready to Thrive in an Interconnected World?* It is important to note that U.S. students did not participate in the OECD PISA global assessment. The results were gathered from 79 participating countries around the world. The results included these three most common learning
activities reported by the students who participated in the OECD PISA assessment (2020):

- “Learning about different cultures” (76% reported engaging in this activity).
- “Learning how to solve conflicts with other people in the classroom” (64% reported engaging in this activity).
- “Learning how people from different cultures can have different perspectives on some issues” (62% reported engaging in this activity).

While these three activities are important, and certainly a good start, there is so much more that can be taught in the classroom to build global competence. The fourth highest percentage learning activity is “I learn how to communicate with people from different backgrounds” and further down the list of ten is “I analyse global issues together with my classmates in small groups during class.” Both activities are important skills in global competence development that are needed throughout our lives. As mentioned in the conclusion to the results report,

“Schools and educators could integrate several learning activities to cover a wide range of global and intercultural topics. Effective learning requires a consistent approach rather than sporadic or one-off activities, however.”

(2020)

Students in secondary institutions around the world are learning global competence skills through diverse curriculum in their classrooms, preparing them for the global community and the global economy. What are we doing in the United States to compete on the same playing field? Where will our students learn the skills to engage
compassionately, effectively, and collaboratively with the rest of the world? We are putting our secondary and higher education students at a disadvantage when we have no national, state, or local global competence curriculum in any discipline being taught in most U.S. states.

The United States Department of Education International Affairs Office’s “Global and Cultural Competency” framework titled, *Framework for Developing Global and Cultural Competencies to Advance Equity, Excellence, and Economic Competitiveness* is another global competency framework that advocates for the global and cultural competency skills to be taught in early childhood through college. The Department of Education International Affairs Office presents this framework as a foundation for success in the global economy: “Today, more than ever, our students need to be equipped with the critical thinking, communications, socio-emotional and language skills to work collaboratively with their counterparts in the United States and all over the world.” The framework features four areas:

- Collaboration and Communication
- World Heritage Languages
- Diverse Perspectives
- Civic and Global Engagement

Noting the slightly different language when compared to Asia Society’s four domains and PISA’s four dimensions, nevertheless, there are striking similarities. A difference is The International Affairs Office devotes one of its four areas to promote U.S. students to become proficient in at least one language other than English. Since English Language Arts (ELA) and FYC classrooms are commonly taught exclusively in English, the areas of interest for ELA and FYC in the above framework are the first,
third, and fourth: *Collaboration and Communication, Diverse Perspectives,* and *Civic and Global Engagement.* As mentioned in the previous chapter, I will use this framework as a measurement device for student growth in global competence skills in this study. I chose this framework because of its origin in The U.S. Department of Education and more direct connection to US educational teaching and learning approaches. For this study's purposes, I adapted the framework into a table (Table 1) with the domains measured in this study labeled with Roman numerals: I) Collaboration and Communication, II) Diverse Perspectives, and III) Civic and Global Engagement. The measurement criteria from Secondary and Postsecondary levels (also called Higher Education or College) are included to better illustrate the differences and growth from Secondary to Postsecondary learning goals and outcomes.
**Figure 1**

**Framework for Developing Global and Cultural Competencies to Advance Equity, Excellence and Economic Competitiveness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Early Learning</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Postsecondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration and</td>
<td>Emerging socio-emotional skill-building—focus on empathy, cooperation, and</td>
<td>Progressive socio-emotional skill-building—focus on empathy, perspective</td>
<td>Strong socio-emotional and leadership skills—emphasize on multicultural</td>
<td>Advanced socio-emotional and leadership skills, ability to effectively collaborate and communicate with people in cross-cultural settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>problem solving</td>
<td>taking and conflict management</td>
<td>understanding and working with diverse groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World and Heritage</td>
<td>Developing language skills in English and other languages</td>
<td>Basic proficiency in at least one other language</td>
<td>Proficiency in at least one other language</td>
<td>Advanced proficiency — ability to work or study in at least one other language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse Perspectives</td>
<td>Emerging global awareness through exposure to diverse cultures, histories,</td>
<td>Deepening global awareness through continued exposure to diverse cultures,</td>
<td>Deepening local and global knowledge and understanding, including through</td>
<td>Highly developed ability to analyze and reflect on issues from diverse perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>languages and perspectives</td>
<td>histories, languages and perspectives.</td>
<td>classes, projects, study abroad and virtual exchange</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic and Global</td>
<td>Growing awareness of community and institutions</td>
<td>Age-appropriate civic engagement and learning</td>
<td>Demonstrated ability to engage in key civic and global issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Foundation of Discipline-Specific Knowledge and Understanding**

Table 1

Adapted “Framework for Developing Global and Cultural Competencies to Advance Equity, Excellence and Economic Competitiveness”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Postsecondary (Higher Education)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Collaboration and Communication</td>
<td>A. Advanced socio-emotional and leadership skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Ability to effectively collaborate and communicate with people in cross-cultural settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Diverse Perspectives</td>
<td>A. Highly developed ability to analyze issues from diverse perspectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Highly developed ability to reflect on issues from diverse perspectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Civic and Global Engagement</td>
<td>A. Demonstrated ability for meaningful engagement in a wide range of civic and global issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Demonstrated ability to be successful in one’s own discipline/specialty in a global context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pedagogical Framework**

**Multiliteracies**

As this project is a case study involving a set of participants that seeks to understand how a group of humans write for an audience, it employs a sociocultural theory framework (Perry, 2012). Vygotsky’s (1978) theory that learning is both social and a process which involves activity for learning to occur is important for this study which seeks to observe a learning experience activity.

   Sociocultural theory is wide-ranging and applicable in several ways to understand literacy practices. Three versions used in literacy research include literacy as social
practices, multiliteracies, and critical literacy (Perry, 2012). Each of these three perspectives have merit and could be examined for this study. Multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000), which looks at modes of communication beyond print or written texts, is often applied to literacy research using digital technologies, especially if the text includes “visual, audio, and spatial patterns of meaning” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). Critical literacy looks at literacy as more than just a skill; this perspective explores how people use literacy to expand their power, agency, and identity (Perry, 2012). Since this study is designed to observe the literacy practices students engage in as they write and share their writing in digital form for a global audience, I will be applying the sociocultural theory perspective of literacy as a social practice while remaining open to the other two perspectives as well (Perry, 2012, p. 53).

**Virtual Communication.** A body of literature that connects to this case study revolves around virtual communication practices in schools. As technology use in schools has become more accessible in schools around the world, more teachers and researchers have studied ways that students can effectively use technology to communicate with each other and with others for educational purposes. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Position Statement (2019), *Definition of Literacy in a Digital Age*, reminds us that technology is ever-changing, and thus, our “curriculum, assessment, and teaching practice itself” must also change over time to meet the needs of learners. All nine bullet points in this position statement are not only significant for teaching ELA and FYC today, but the points can also be viewed through the lens of global competence (communication and diverse perspectives, in particular) and are relevant to the goals of this case study. For example, details from the first bullet point, “Participate effectively
and critically in a networked world” asks if learners consider audience and purpose and if they “communicate their ideas in a variety of ways in different modalities.” Writing for a specific purpose (to investigate the world) and considering the audience for the writing (an international audience) connect to the goals of this study (2019).

Another key point from the NCTE position statement that I want to highlight because it has relevance in this study is the fifth bullet point, “Build and sustain intentional global and cross-cultural connections and relationships with others so as to pose and solve problems collaboratively and strengthen independent thought.” Students who participated in this writing unit were empowered to choose a global topic of investigation, engaged in collaborative activities, and received peer feedback, thus strengthening literacy practice skills needed for working with others in academic and civic settings.

In some of the most recent scholarship in global literacy instruction, Hawkins and Velarde (2020) argue for digital communication on a global level as a necessary literacy practice for students: “Committing to equity means preparing students to interact with not only their local peers but also diverse global ones” (p.14). Their youth literacy instruction research led to a working definition of critical cosmopolitanism and a new term, transmodalities. Hawkins and Velarde argue that when people from diverse backgrounds communicate as strangers the results are often negative and can reinforce stereotypes. However, communication between youth in an educational space that supports kindness and inquiry creates a critical cosmopolitan stance that “addresses difference and diversity and issues a call for initiatives that work toward equity” (p. 14).
The term *transmodalities* came about to address not only communication that occurs across global borders but also communication that uses new literacy forms beyond traditional text such as “sound, gesture, motion, timing, icons, and symbols (and so on) which may have different meanings in different cultures and contexts” (Hawkins & Velarde, 2020, p. 14). Such forms of communication are often taken up by local and global youth in ways that make sense in their respective spaces. It becomes imperative then that local and global communicators consider their *audience*.

**Instructional Design**

Effective instructional design is equally important in higher education as secondary education at the unit and curriculum level in a student-centered classroom. I recall an introduction to the idea of backward design when I was a secondary ELA teacher; I don’t remember the exact year, but the term *backward design* was used repeatedly in the public school district where I was employed when we began redesigning our curriculum to meet our state’s version of the national Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initiative that was published in 2010. In the summer of 2012, I was a member of a committee tasked to revise our district’s 12th grade ELA curriculum to meet the new state standards using backward design methods. We looked at the goals the state standards expected students to meet by the end of the 12th grade year in ELA, discussed various ways that students could meet the standards, and provided resources and ideas for classroom teachers to create content that would guide students to meet the standards. The backward design process was carried over into district, school site, and department professional development trainings many times during the years that I worked in the district. While there is valid criticism of standardized curriculum and standardized
testing, the concept of student-centered instruction through backward design at the course, unit, and lesson-levels has many benefits for students and teachers.

Using planning strategies that I have practiced for many years, including the tenets of Understanding by Design™ (UbD) (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), I created the unit goals, essential questions, activities, writing tasks, and pre- and post-questionnaires based on the information and language from the UbD framework. Two components of the UbD framework I want to highlight that are relevant to this study are understanding and transfer. Wiggins and McTighe distinguish between knowledge and understanding in learning (2005) by explaining that knowledge contributes to understanding (p. 41). Understanding is much more than knowledge and skills as understanding “requires more: the ability to thoughtfully and actively ‘do’ the work with discernment, as well as the ability to self-assess, justify, and critique such ‘doings’” (p. 41). This case study examined FYC students’ understanding of the audience when writing within the framework of global competence.

Also, I design all writing units around the concept of transfer because students are building the skills of academic reading, writing, research, and communication in this required first-year course. Transfer is another key component in the UbD framework.

**Authentic audience engagement.** In Asia Society’s, *Teaching for Global Competence in a Rapidly Changing World*, the authors suggest that in Language Arts classes, students need to consider the audience when writing: “To be globally competent, students need to be able to express their ideas to a variety of audiences, making it important that they are able to write clearly and persuasively. Language arts students should learn to write in a variety of formats, such as essays, narratives, and arguments”
(2018). When students understand how these formats (or genres) help them to reach an intended audience, then they are moving beyond writing something to receive a grade in a course.

**Contribution of this study**

This case study is designed to contribute additional data to the increasing calls for the inclusion of equitable cosmopolitan practices in secondary and higher education ELA and FYC classrooms. I argue that students benefit from literacy practices that also support global competence skills in investigation, communication, collaboration, and global engagement. The Investigating Global Communities unit provided opportunities for first-year composition students to engage in reading, writing, researching, speaking, and listening activities that may promote growth in their understanding of audience in terms of global competence and cosmopolitanism.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

“With these strategies in hand, the time is now for teachers to engage themselves, and their students, with the world. The lives of all students, no matter their zip code or their cultural, racial, linguistic, or economic background, are in some way influenced by the wider world.” Ariel Tichnor-Wagner, 2016

This dissertation case study evolved out of my years-long interest in helping students become global-ready scholars and citizens. In this section, I will describe two pilot studies I conducted in classrooms that contributed to developing this dissertation case study. I will also describe the school site, participant recruitment, instructor-researcher positionality, instructional design, and data collection.

Pilot studies

One example of my interest in global competence education is a case study I conducted in 2018-2019. The study examined a poetry writing exchange between students at a large public high school in the southwest United States and students at a high school in Indonesia. Students in each country wrote personal narrative poems and posted the poems on a shared website. While communication between the students was not instantaneous as with social media, the website enabled students to read and respond to each other’s poems in a virtual environment that encouraged communication between students living thousands of miles away from each other.
Building on my learning and experience with the poetry exchange study and other global education activities over the years as an ELA classroom teacher and then a college composition instructor, I designed the current study to meet the outcomes for students in a FYC course with the addition of the global competence framework applied to a research-based writing task. In the 2022 spring semester, I taught a version of this dissertation case study as a pilot study at the university where I am employed full-time as an instructor. I scheduled the unit for three ENG102 sections in the final three modules of the 15-week semester and, due to time restrictions, I adjusted the unit’s requirements, so students had the option to work in pairs or groups of three. I began the unit by providing time in class for students to explore the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals website. Students found two or three topics of interest to them individually and I created a simple Google spreadsheet with the 17 SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) across the top of the sheet. Students then placed their names under any of the goals that they were interested in investigating for the unit project. This process allowed students to make connections with classmates with similar research interests and form a partnership or small group for the unit. The pairs or groups then worked together to narrow down a topic suitable for researching that met the expectations of the unit.

Even within this shorter unit, the students grew their knowledge of people, places, and events they were unfamiliar with before the unit began. Some students investigated issues connected to their future career paths, while others chose to pursue topics unrelated to their fields of study as they found the topic interesting or timely. For example, a pair of students chose to investigate internet accessibility using SDG #9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure because they wondered about equity of internet access around the
world, especially during the global Covid-19 pandemic when many students required internet access for education because they could not attend school in-person. These two students learned through research that there is a nonprofit organization working to bring internet access to places that lack infrastructure. This is just one example of many from the pilot study that encouraged me to continue with my research and instruction in global competence in first-year composition courses.

Site

Conducting sociocultural research in a university provided an opportunity to examine the social nature of learning global competences within a 21st century context in a post-secondary setting (Vygotsky, 1987; Gee; 2017). The following sections will provide the context for this study that draws on a sociocultural framework.

The University. This study took place in a physical location and in shared virtual spaces. The physical location was at a large public research university in the southwest United States where I am employed as an instructor of first-year composition. The university, with Research 1 (R1) and Hispanic-serving Institution (HSI) designations, is one of the largest universities in the United States. The university had a total student enrollment (including online enrollment) of 142,616 in Fall 2022; the total undergraduate enrollment was 107,425 and the combined on-campus enrollment was 65,492. The satellite campus where I taught this FYC course had an enrollment of 5,825 in Fall 2022. Undergraduate headcount totals for this university by race and ethnicity for Fall 2022 is provided in the Figure 2 (Arizona Board of Regents, 2022):
Figure 2  
*Undergraduate Headcount by Race and Ethnicity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaskan Native</td>
<td>1213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>7351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>6060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>26,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>53,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>5,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Resident Alien</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>3,167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Arizona Board of Regents Fall 2022 Enrollment*

The university provided a shared virtual space for this course using the Canvas platform, a learning management system which houses course materials uploaded by the instructor, students’ course grades, students’ course attendance, and email communication ([instructure.com](http://instructure.com) and [canvas.net](http://canvas.net)). Students, instructors, and staff have access from the university to an internal Google Drive with Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides. Additionally, university students and instructors can download a version of Microsoft Word for Students onto their personal computers from the university’s website.

**The University and the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals.** In 2022, this university was recognized as the top university in the United States and number two globally by *Times Higher Education* for its work toward meeting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 193 United Nations member states adopted
the SDGs in 2015 and are working together to achieve the goals by 2030. Various projects, programs, and initiatives are in place that led to the number two global ranking including “the university’s efforts on such issues as poverty and hunger, gender equality, clean water and air, and climate change” (Terrill, 2022). While this case study is not part of any of these programs nor is it a factor in the ranking, the ranking suggests that the university administration is not only aware of the UN 17 SDGs, but it is also receptive to students learning about and working on projects designed to meet the SDGs. When the university received the news of the *Times Higher Education* ranking, I shared this accolade with the students in the pilot study since we were in the middle of completing the project. The ranking was featured prominently on the university’s website home page for several days during the final days of the 2022 spring semester.

**The University and Virtual Communication Access.** In this study, students worked in person and in shared virtual classroom spaces such as the learning management system Canvas ([instructure.com](http://instructure.com) and [canvas.net](http://canvas.net)) and Padlet ([padlet.com](http://padlet.com)). Students may have also communicated with each other through university email, text, or other platforms of their choice. At the end of the unit, students created Padlet “tiles” on our class Padlet page that included their names, their Investigating Global Communities unit project title with a brief explanation of the topic, and the URL to their completed projects on Google Sites.

**The Course.** The course in which this study took place, *English 105 – Advanced First-Year Composition*, is one of several first-year composition course options for undergraduate students at the university. Advanced first-year composition at this university has the following course description in the online enrollment system:
Concentrated composition course for students with superior writing skills; intensive reading; research papers; logical and rhetorical effectiveness. Students enrolled in this course are majoring in various fields of study, although most students on the campus where this study took place are in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields, working toward a Bachelor of Science degree. At this campus, first-year composition courses are typically taught by residential composition faculty. This study was conducted while I was a member of the composition faculty and a doctoral student in English Education at the university. I was the instructor of record. Sections of ENG105 are typically capped at 25 students; most sections meet twice a week, 75 minutes each class, for 15 weeks. The assigned ENG 105 section included the case study participants.

Description of the physical classroom. The class met two times a week on campus, in-person on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 pm to 4:15 pm in a large classroom with a capacity of 40 people, although this course had 24 enrolled students. Students sat at long tables that all faced the same direction in the classroom with either 4 or 6 seats at each table. Students were not assigned seats. The classroom is equipped with an instructor station with a computer, monitor, projector, and whiteboard.

Participant Recruitment. I recruited students for this study by emailing all 24 students in the course via university email a recruitment script and asking for volunteers for the study. All university participants at the site were recruited from the students in one on-campus, face-to-face class section in the fall semester of academic year 2022-2023 taught by the researcher. Participation in the study was voluntary, and no student grades were tied to it. Requirements for participation and inclusion in this study included: (1)
enrolled in the 15-week semester course titled *English 105 – Advanced First Year Composition*, (2) completed the global competence writing unit assignments, and (3) were at least 18 years of age.

The assignments that I created for the Investigating Global Communities Unit were part of the regular curriculum for this English 105 section; no students were asked to complete additional work for this study. Students completed the assignments in the unit, submitted their work on Canvas, and added their finished projects (as Google Sites) to the designated Padlet. After the unit was completed and all grades for the course were recorded in Canvas, interested students completed a form indicating their consent to participate in this study and that they were at least 18 years old. Each potential student-participant returned the signed form via university email. While the unit was ongoing in the class, I did not know who would consent to be a participant in the study. A student’s participation in the study had no impact on their unit grade or final grade in this course. I prepared and submitted the study to the university’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) on January 7, 2023, and received approval on January 18, 2023. After receiving IRB approval status in January, 2023, I invited 24 students to participate, and eight joined the study. Student participant demographic data is included in Table 3 (participant names are pseudonyms):
### Table 2

**Student Participants’ Demographic Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Educational Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Applied Biological Sciences</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalil</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>English, Bengali</td>
<td>Informational Technologies</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barani</td>
<td>Non-binary</td>
<td>English, Gujarati</td>
<td>Pre-veterinary Medicine</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Did not respond</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Robotics</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zack</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Software Engineering</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Mechanical Engineering Systems</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naomi</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sasha</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Applied Biological Sciences</td>
<td>Bachelor of Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the instructor of record as well as the researcher of this case study, I took on a participant-observer role (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). I recognize there are pros and cons to this role. During the unit’s time frame, I informed the students that the Investigating Global Communities unit would be the source of data collection for my dissertation study. Since this writing unit began in week 9 of the semester, students in the course were familiar with me and my teaching style. This may have been advantageous...
as students may have been more willing to participate in a study with an instructor that they knew in comparison to an outside researcher who had not spent time in the classroom previously (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). In contrast, there is a possibility that students responded to the questionnaire and completed the unit activities with the sole intention of earning a grade because I was in a position of power as the instructor. Both possibilities are important to consider and are less likely to have an impact on the findings because I engaged in good research design, methods, and data triangulation (Creswell, 2009).

Case Study Research

This case study uses qualitative methods to answer the following research question and sub-questions:

How does writing within a global competence framework influence first-year composition university students' understanding of global competence and cosmopolitanism?

a. How do students demonstrate skills as global and cultural communicators?

b. How do students’ perceptions change about the audience?

c. How do students believe their global competence and cosmopolitanism practices will transfer to their personal and professional lives?

Qualitative research case studies are defined by Creswell (2009) as
a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Case studies are bound by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time. (p. 13)

The qualitative data collected from the participants’ course assignments was analyzed to understand and include participants’ experiences with the Investigating Global Communities unit. Additional data includes a demographic survey, a pre- and post-unit questionnaire and teaching notes which provide context to the participants and learning events during the unit.

Data Collection

For this dissertation study, the data collected included assignments from the daily and weekly activities during the Investigating Global Communities unit. The data included all or portions from several assignments submitted on Canvas from the student-participants and my instructor teaching notes: 1) demographic survey, 2) pre-and post-unit questionnaire, 3) elevator pitch: explaining your topic, and 4) reflection questions. When I downloaded the data from Canvas in February 2023 to a secure drive on my laptop, I saved materials in files named with each participants’ pseudonym and assignment name. Next, I converted the surveys and questionnaires from Google Forms onto Google Sheets, and then I printed each participants’ demographic and pre- and post-unit questionnaire responses from the files and placed them in color-coded sections in a binder. I also printed each participants’ Elevator Pitch and Reflection responses and placed these papers in a separate file. I wrote teaching notes during the unit in a personal
notebook and later transcribed the notes along with additional details from instructional slides into a Word document.

Two written response assignments were collected for analysis and coding purposes, “The Elevator Pitch: Explain Your Topic” and a set of reflection questions assigned at the end of the unit. The pre- and post-unit questionnaires were a combination of likert-scale and yes/no response options. The questionnaires were used to examine adn provide context to students’ perceptions of global and cultural competence terms such as diverse perspectives, knowledge of ways to investigate global and local issues, and disposition to collaborate and communicate with others. The instructor's teaching notes provided contextual details of class interactions and student participation in activities. The demographic survey was referenced when choosing participants and providing additional details about their background and educational goals.

The research questions for this study seek to determine how FYC students writing within a global competence framework demonstrate skills as global and cultural communicators, perceive changes in the ways they write for a global audience, and transfer these practices to their professional and civic lives. Assessing global competence can be a complicated process because global competence is more than skills development. *Skills* are one piece of global competence development; of equal importance are *Dispositions* and *Knowledge*. Each of these parts must be assessed in the global competence unit or curriculum and instructors should note that students may be at different ability levels at any given time. Deardorff (2018) and Tichnor-Wanger, et. al (2019) provide insight into effective assessment of students’ global competence skillsets.
in any discipline. In this section, I will describe the process I used to examine the data collected during the case study and how the data answered the research questions.

To analyze the qualitative data, the students’ written responses went through three cycles of coding: initial, values, and concept (Saldaña, 2016), to understand ways the students’ written responses reflected global competence development in the three areas of dispositions, knowledge, and skills. I also coded for connections to the U.S. Department of Education’s Global and Cultural Competency Framework and for FYC outcomes of rhetorical situation, multiliteracies, and transfer. Using a “top-down” or deductive approach, I created a code book based on the Framework domain learning objectives (Global and Cultural Competency). I have included examples of my coding with explanations of my process.

**Coding.** My first analysis process for the Elevator Pitch activity and reflection question artifacts from the eight case study participants included creating a table for each students’ open-ended responses to the questions. Next, I transferred the responses into tables for the three types of coding analysis.

I began the analysis with Initial Coding (Saldaña, 2016, p. 115) which provided me with an opportunity for a close reading of students’ responses. For the Initial Coding cycle, I was curious to read what the participants thought about their learning experiences four weeks into the unit with the Elevator Pitch activity responses and the completion of the unit with the reflection questions. The next round of coding was Values Coding (Saldaña, 2016, p. 131). The Values Codes are the dispositions, knowledge, and skills practiced in this unit. Along with this round of coding, I added a column for the Framework’s global competence domains. In the last coding cycle, I looked again at the
participants’ responses for words and phrases that suggested communication, audience, and transfer. These three concepts are present in the sub-questions of my research question, but they are also important elements in the rhetorical situation. I used Kalil’s responses to the Elevator Pitch activity for examples of my Initial Coding, Values Coding, and Concept Coding. The Initial Coding example is shown below in Table 3.

Table 3

*Initial Coding Example*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Excerpt</th>
<th>Initial Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question: What went well for you when you were speaking to your group members?</td>
<td>Explaining topic to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalil: My elevator pitch went well as I was able to explain my topic thoroughly and have my groupmates understand everything I was saying. I was able to start with a problem, dive more into the problem, show why the problem affects many people, and how we can solve this problem.</td>
<td>Thinks others understood him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question: Did you answer questions?</td>
<td>Explaining topic linearly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalil: I answered most of the group’s questions and helped them get further clarity on my SDG goal</td>
<td>Answered others’ questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question: What would you do differently next time?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalil: Next time, I would’ve presented some multimodal elements like a short video showing the women on their hike or maybe a picture showing the women and their children with drums of water.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question: What went well for other members of your group when they were speaking?

Kalil: As an audience member, I was interested in all the information since 2 of my group mates had my SDG goal for clean water and proper sanitation. It was interesting to know that there’s more topics and goals out there for people to fix the water crisis. One thing I picked up on while being an audience member was that multimodal elements help your presentation so much. I wish I could've presented some.

Sees value in multimodality
Interested in others’ topics due to same SDG
Global issue is complex
Group members use of multimodality was helpful

This method of coding was helpful by providing me with an overview of each participants’ perceptions of their small group presentation and their listening skills. The Elevator Pitch activity was an in-class activity in the fourth week of the unit in which students prepared short presentations (3-5 minutes) to share in randomly assigned groups of 4 or 5 peers. Familiarizing myself with each participants’ responses prepared me for the next two cycles of coding.

Values coding. The next coding cycle employs Values Coding. According to Saldaña (2016), “Values Coding is the application of codes to qualitative data that reflect a participants’ values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or worldview.” The concepts of global and cosmopolitan dispositions fit most closely into the category of values than other coding options since it includes a persons’ attitude: “An attitude is the way we think and feel about ourselves, another person, thing, or idea” (p. 131). I reviewed participants’ responses to each of the written reflection assignments. There, I identified language that suggested global competence and cosmopolitanism dispositions, knowledge, and skills. The values coding process allowed me to better determine frequency of mentions of global competence development. In Table 4, I show
the Values codes and the global competence domain for the same excerpt from Kalil’s Elevator Pitch responses.

**Table 4**

*Values Coding Example*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Excerpt:</th>
<th>Coding</th>
<th>GC Domain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question: What went well for you when you were speaking to your group members?</td>
<td>Kalil: My elevator pitch went well as I was able to explain my topic thoroughly and have my groupmates understand everything I was saying. I was able to start with a problem, dive more into the problem, show why the problem affects many people, and how we can solve this problem.</td>
<td>Self-awareness; socioemotional skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question: Did you answer questions?</td>
<td>Kalil: I answered most of the group’s questions and helped them get further clarity on my SDG goal</td>
<td>Active listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question: What would you do differently next time?</td>
<td>Kalil: Next time, I would’ve presented some multimodal elements like a short video showing the women on their hike or maybe a picture showing the women and their children with drums of water.</td>
<td>Using critical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question: What went well for other members of your group when they were speaking?</td>
<td>Kalil: As an audience member, I was interested in all the information since 2 of my group mates had my SDG goal for clean water and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflecting on learning is an important component of global competence assessment. Deardorff (2018) notes, “Reflection is considered to be a key way to focus on the process of competence development and in so doing, move from a results-orientation to a process-orientation, which is crucial to developing global competence.” In the excerpt above, Kalil is engaging in process-orientation. He is both self-aware of his presentation process (“I was able to start with a problem, dive more into the problem, show why the problem affects many people, and how we can solve this problem”) and thinking critically about other students’ processes (“One thing I picked up on while being an audience member was that multimodal elements help your presentation so much, I wish I could’ve presented some”).

**Concept coding.** The third method of coding was Concept Coding. As Saldaña (2016) notes, “a concept suggests an idea rather than an object or observable behavior,” so I employed this method of coding to examine participant’s written responses for concepts such as recognizing and acknowledging the rhetorical situation and multimodality in their Investigating Global Communities unit projects. Further, *communication* skills (speaking and listening), writing for an intended, but unseen global *audience*, and *transfer* are concepts in my research question’s three sub-questions. An example of concept coding is shown below in Table 5.
Table 5

Concept Coding Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data:</th>
<th>Concept Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Question: What went well for you when you were speaking to your group members?** | **Rhetorical Situation;**
| Kalil: My elevator pitch went well as I was able to explain my topic thoroughly and have my groupmates understand everything I was saying. I was able to start with a problem, dive more into the problem, show why the problem affects many people, and how we can solve this problem. | speaking with credibility; connecting with the audience. |
| **Question: Did you answer questions?**                                | **Rhetorical Situation;**
| Kalil: I answered most of the group’s questions and helped them get further clarity on my SDG goal | speaking with credibility; effective message. |
| **Question: What would you do differently next time?**                 | **Multiliteracies;**
| Kalil: Next time, I would’ve presented some multimodal elements like a short video showing the women on their hike or maybe a picture showing the women and their children with drums of water. | video |
| **Question: What went well for other members of your group when they were speaking?** | **Rhetorical Situation;**
| Kalil: As an audience member, I was interested in all the information since 2 of my group mates had my SDG goal for clean water and proper sanitation. It was interesting to know that there’s more topics and goals out there for people to fix the water crisis. One thing I picked up on while being an audience member was that multimodal elements help | connecting with the audience; effective message. |
|                                                                      | **Multiliteracies;**
|                                                                      | video |
While the above concepts are not always mentioned in relation to global and cultural competence, they are important outcomes and goals for all students in the discipline of first-year composition (WPA, 2014; Bullock & Weinberg, 2016). Global and cultural competence can be applied in most disciplines to teach and prepare students to engage the world with 21st Century skills (Vander Ark, 2017). In this example, Kalil is making connections between FYC outcomes and the Investigating Global Communities unit projects.

When I completed first-cycle coding, I reviewed each participant’s mentions of global competence and cosmopolitanism *dispositions, knowledge, and skills* and created a table with the categories for each of the codes and the corresponding global competence domains (*Global and Cultural Competency*). This aggregation of data allowed me to see which domains were mentioned most frequently, suggesting participants’ increased understanding, knowledge, or habit of global competence and cosmopolitanism. Table 6 is an example:

**Table 6**

*Code Category Example*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Demonstrating ways to connect with audience when speaking or writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Codes</td>
<td>Content knowledge impacts audience understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diction impacts audience understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eye contact impacts audience understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization impacts audience understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation impacts audience understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the above example, “Demonstrating ways to connect with audience when speaking or writing,” I sorted codes that connected with Domain I “Collaboration and Communication” that were mentioned in the qualitative data. Some of these codes were also important for understanding participants’ perceptions of the audience.

From these code categories, I made connections between the categories and the three research sub-questions. Since I did not use a software program, I created a separate document listing each Framework domain and companion research sub-question followed by selected quotes and interpretations. I organized the data in chronological order as it was assigned to participants in the Investigating Global Communities unit.

**Questionnaire Data Analysis**

The questionnaire data consists of the pre- and post-Investigating Global Communities questionnaires collected from the eight case study participants. First, I created a Google sheet with the responses to each of the sixteen questions to obtain an overall sense of the responses. Responses to the questions were either 5-point Likert scale, agree/disagree, or yes/no/maybe options. Next, I made tables for each question with the totals in number of students in parentheses, percentage with the data for the pre- and post-questionnaires side-by-side, and percentage change from pre- to post-questionnaire. This process allowed me to see which questions indicated positive, neutral, or negative changes between the pre- and post-questionnaires for the group of participants. I also viewed the questionnaires of individual participants to learn how they responded before and after the unit to the questions. I have included an example in Table 7:
Table 7

*Questionnaire Data Example Question: I have knowledge of global issues.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>(#) Pre-unit %</th>
<th>(#) Post-unit %</th>
<th>Change %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>(1) 12.5</td>
<td>(2) 25</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>(2) 25</td>
<td>(5) 62.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>(2) 25</td>
<td>(1) 12.5</td>
<td>-12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>(3) 37.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Validity**

When conducting a case study, it is crucial to integrate or synthesize all the qualitative data purposefully (Cresswell, 2009; Yin, 2018, pg. 63). For this case study, the qualitative data is drawn from the participants’ written reflective responses, the demographic surveys, and the instructor’s teaching notes. The pre- and post-questionnaire data provides another source of information that informs the case study's findings (Cresswell, 2009; Yin, 2018, pg. 64). As mentioned previously, measuring global competence development is challenging, particularly since it is a *habit or way of thinking*
developed over our lifetimes about the way we interact with global people within physical and virtual spaces (Boix Mansilla, 2016/2017; Vander Ark, 2017). The qualitative case study method provides an opportunity to examine the data in a way that may provide additional richness to the findings. Also, by comparing these various sources of data, I am contributing to the validity of the results.

Learning Unit

In this section, I briefly explain the learning unit for this case study. In APPENDIX A, I provide more details of the daily lessons, tasks, and readings for the five modules which comprise the writing unit for this dissertation study. The daily and weekly activities, assigned readings, discussions, and writing tasks contributed to students’ knowledge, understanding, and transfer of global and cultural competence skills, cosmopolitanism, and writing for a global audience.

The five-week writing unit for this case study was the third of four writing projects in the 15-week semester course. I titled this unit “Investigating Global Communities” and referred to the unit in class, on Canvas, and on assignments by this title or as “Project 3.” Students received a syllabus at the beginning of the course with details for each week of the semester (each week is one module). The syllabus listed each unit, weekly learning goals, readings, and tasks and activities. The Investigating Global Communities unit was scheduled for the equivalent of five weeks, and for the purposes of this study, the modules were labeled Module A, B, C, D, and E.

The writing task I designed for the Investigating Global Communities unit is a research-based article and the summative assessment for the unit. Here is the task as
students saw it in the instructions document on Canvas: You will investigate and evaluate programs, software, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or corporations that have a global and/or local impact on sustainable development in the global community. You will use your research to create an article with multimodal elements.

I have included a table of the eight student participants’ Investigating Global Communities research topics in Table 8 below:

**Table 8**
*Student Participants’ Investigating Global Communities topics.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Research Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barani</td>
<td>Eradicating Child and Forced Marriages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>Environmentally &amp; Economically Sustainable Cities through Green Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe</td>
<td>The Overproduction &amp; Overconsumption Crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Enacting Policies &amp; Actions to Stop Climate Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalil</td>
<td>Women’s &amp; Girls’ Access to Clean Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naomi</td>
<td>How Technology Empowers Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sasha</td>
<td>How to Reduce Infant &amp; Maternal Deaths</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Limitations.** There are several limitations to this study. Although every study’s site and participant group are unique in some way, I want to acknowledge the circumstances for this study. First, the site setting was taught on a university campus which offered students majors with a focus on applied sciences, engineering, technology, management, professional aviation, and education; it is a technical college. Also, the participants in the study were unique as they were enrolled in an advanced composition course, and many were members of the University’s honors’ student college. Seven of the eight students in the study indicated on the demographic survey that they intend to continue their studies in graduate school programs.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

“Global competence integrates knowledge of the world and the skill of application with the disposition to think and behave productively. Global competence is not restricted to knowing about other cultures and other perspectives. In addition to knowledge of the world, a globally competent citizen exhibits habits like critical thinking, rational optimism, innovation, empathy, and awareness of the influences of culture on individual behavior and world events.” Tom Vander Ark, 2017

The students enrolled in this first-year composition course were freshmen at the university when this study took place. They arrived in the classroom on the first day of the Fall 2022 semester with their own varied and unique life and educational experiences. Some students had completed projects in high school or in other college classes that exposed them to global competency concepts, although most had no experience with these ideas. Each student walked in the classroom door with their own individualized level of global and cultural competency. As an instructor of first-year college composition, I designed the Investigating Global Communities unit to provide students with the space and opportunity to build onto their own levels of global and cultural competency, especially as academic writers (Deardorff, 2018).

The adapted Department of Education’s *Global and Cultural Competency Framework* (Figure 1) provided the measurement instrument for this case study. I chose to examine students’ growth in the “Postsecondary” (Higher Education) column and in
three of the four domains: I) *Collaboration and Communication*; II) *Diverse Perspectives*; and III) *Civic and Global Engagement* (third column; in bold font). Each domain includes two objectives or *dispositions* that can be assessed in this study (OECD, 2018; Tichnor-Wagner, et al., 2019); I added the “A” and “B” designations to make it easier to distinguish each part of the objectives.

**Table 1**

“*Framework for Developing Global and Cultural Competencies to Advance Equity, Excellence and Economic Competitiveness*” adapted for this case study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Postsecondary (Higher Education)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Collaboration and Communication</td>
<td>A. Advanced socio-emotional and leadership skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Ability to effectively collaborate and communicate with people in cross-cultural settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Diverse Perspectives</td>
<td>A. Highly developed ability to analyze issues from diverse perspectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Highly developed ability to reflect on issues from diverse perspectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Civic and Global Engagement</td>
<td>A. Demonstrated ability for meaningful engagement in a wide range of civic and global issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Demonstrated ability to be successful in one’s own discipline/specialty in a global context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this study, first-year composition students engaged with global competence and cosmopolitan concepts by investigating global and local issues of significance, writing for global audiences, communicating their research with classroom peers, and publishing work as websites with the potential to be viewed in global virtual spaces. Most
students had never done this type of project before, especially in a writing–focused course. Writing in the article genre and publishing their writing on a self-designed website with multimodal elements was a new experience for most students. I provided the students in this course with the following list of unit goals:

- **To investigate an issue** related to one of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- **To recognize the perspectives** of classroom peers and of other people in the world through a research task.
- **To communicate your ideas** to your audience(s) through the modes of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

To measure students’ progress in global competence using their written responses, I applied objectives of *Dispositions, Knowledge, and Skills* (Tichnor-Wagner, et al., 2019). *Dispositions* are habits and attitudes closely connected with social-emotional skills. For example, the Framework for Developing Global and Cultural Competencies for the *Collaboration and Communication* domain suggests postsecondary students have “advanced socioemotional and leadership skills.” *Knowledge* in global competence suggests students understand global and local issues. *Skills* in global competence is measured in students’ ability to investigate issues, especially using 21st Century technologies. All three components work together as students critically communicate, collaborate, analyze diverse perspectives, investigate, and problem solve.

The pre- and post-unit questionnaires provided context to the participants’ written artifacts. Participants’ responses to the pre- and post-unit questionnaires were analyzed
both aggregately and individually. Questions were aligned to the three research sub-questions based on the content of the question.

In this chapter, I report the findings for how the Investigating Global Communities unit instruction in this university course influenced FYC students’ understanding of global competence and cosmopolitanism. My findings from participants’ written responses to assignments and results from pre- and post-questionnaires contributed to answering the following questions:

- How do students demonstrate skills as global and cultural communicators?
- How do students’ perceptions change about the audience?
- How do students believe their global competence and cosmopolitanism practices will transfer to their personal and professional lives?

In the following pages, I present the findings organized by each of the research sub-questions and the connected domains of the adapted Framework (Figure 1). Each domain is aligned to one of the case study’s research sub-questions. Findings in each section are organized in pre-unit, during-unit, and post-unit format as applicable to the collected data and include an example from the instructional unit if applicable, pre-unit questionnaire data, qualitative results including representative student responses that indicate growth or learning in the domain, and post-unit questionnaire data.
How Do Students Demonstrate Global and Cultural Communication Skills?

The Framework Domain I) *Collaboration and Communication*, aligns with the first research sub-question, how do students demonstrate skills as global and cultural communicators? I examined selected pre- and post-unit questionnaire data and written responses from two questions from the Elevator Pitch: Explaining Your Topic assignment that asked them to reflect on their learning experiences and growth as communicators during the Investigating Global Communities unit in:

- advanced socioemotional and leadership skills.
- ability to effectively collaborate and communicate with people in a cross-cultural setting.

Through various instructional methods during the unit, students were exposed to the concepts of global competence and cosmopolitanism, including concepts, strategies, and practices that build communication skills with others, both face-to-face and virtually. This instructional unit does not have a collaborative writing component, but students did have opportunities to discuss their individual projects with each other and participate in peer feedback sessions. Additionally, the results from four questions on the pre- and post-unit questionnaires (5, 11, 13 and 16) align with the first research sub-question because these questions ask students to consider their communication skills within a global competence framework.

**Domain 1: Collaboration and Communication**

*Pre-unit.* The Investigating Global Communities unit began with an introduction to the concept of global competency (Tichnor-Wagner et al, 2019). On the first day of the unit, students completed the Pre-Investigating Global Communities Unit Questionnaire.
(APPENDIX C). The questionnaire introduced students to global and cultural competency concepts and the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

This is the slide students saw when they entered the classroom that day:

**Figure 3**

*What is Global Competence? Slide*

On that day, students took their seats, opened their laptops, and signed into Canvas. I told students that they will begin a new, five-week long writing project this week that will include researching a global issue topic and presenting their research in a multimodal format. I then proceeded with a whole class discussion to introduce the Investigating Global Communities unit. Organized discussions are one way that instructors can incorporate student-centered, global competence pedagogy in the classroom (OECD, 2018, p. 17). I asked the class the following questions to get them thinking critically about and discussing global competency concepts through “respectful communication” (OECD, 2018, p. 17):

- “Do you think your future career will require you to communicate with people, either in person or virtually, in other countries?”
- “Is there a possibility you may work in a country other than the U.S.?”
- “Do you currently communicate with people outside of the U.S.?”
For this last question, I bring up social media and online video game playing. This becomes an informal discussion as students raise their hands, chat with classmates, and share responses with the class. There is general agreement that most people do communicate with others around the world and that many of them will work in fields that have a global presence. I then shared the following questions on a slide:

**Figure 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are you developing strategies to communicate effectively with the global community? Qs to consider:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Do you know effective strategies to <strong>investigate the world?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o What are “local” issues and what are “global” issues?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do you know effective strategies to <strong>listen to, appreciate and respond</strong> to perspectives different from your own?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do you know effective strategies to communicate with <strong>authentic audiences</strong>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Global Competence Communication Strategies slide*

After giving students some time to read and consider the questions, I asked for a volunteer to provide an example of a local issue and a global issue. Kalil offered the following example of water issues, “a local water issue is Lake Mead water evaporation while a global water issue is a lack of clean water access in communities worldwide.” At the time of this case study, Lake Mead, a large reservoir on the Colorado River in the states of Arizona and Nevada, was frequently in the news due to its decreasing water levels so this was an example that many students were familiar with. Kalil’s example demonstrated his understanding of the difference between local and global issues, and he
later chose women’s lack of access to clean water in developing countries as his research topic for this project. Next, students completed the pre-unit questionnaire.

**Pre-unit questionnaires**

Four questions on the questionnaire contributed to the findings for sub-question A:

- I have the skills to discuss ideas in an open cultural exchange.
- I have the ability to engage in discussion of key civic and global issues.
- I can discuss the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
- I can discuss local and global issues that affect my field of study.

Each of these four questions asked students to consider their communication skills in tandem with their knowledge of specific concepts connected to global competence, cosmopolitanism, and the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Participants responded to the questions by choosing one of the Likert-scale options.

The most notable results of the pre-unit questionnaire for this framework domain revealed that seven of the eight participants could not discuss the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals before this unit. Also, half of the participants indicated they could not discuss local and global issues that affect their field of study.

**Student assignments**

*During the unit.* Self-awareness and social awareness are the recurring themes I noted in students’ reflective responses to the assignment, The Elevator Pitch Activity. This suggests they prioritize skills in organization and content knowledge when communicating within the global competence framework. When reflecting on their own performance when speaking during the Elevator Pitch activity or on their peers'
performances, there were 11 comments that mentioned organizational skills. For example, Naomi exhibits self-awareness about the organization of her Elevator Pitch presentation when she uses the words “progression” and “plan” when asked what she would do differently if asked to explain her topic again:

If I was going to redo this elevator pitch, I would establish a clearer progression of ideas for myself to follow. Near the middle of some of my points, I began to ramble some and creating an easy-to-follow plan would help remedy this.

Some participants recognized their peers’ effective communication skills through organization of their content in comparison to their own preparation for the group presentation activity. Barani commented, “My group members explained their topics well because they all had a basic outline for their elevator speech that they followed, unlike me. The way that they explained their topics made complete sense...”

Content knowledge was the second most-mentioned theme in participants’ Elevator Pitch performance reflections; I coded for content knowledge 10 times. Demonstrating content knowledge of their global community investigative topics through words and gestures in a group setting is aligned with the second point in Domain I of the framework, ability to effectively collaborate and communicate with people in cross-cultural settings. In this activity, students had the chance to present their topics in a group and to actively listen and respond to their peers’ presentations. Cameron, who investigated the use and sustainability of green infrastructure for his project, reflected on what went well for him during the Elevator Pitch activity:

I did a good job of elaborating on how green infrastructure worked and examples of it before I told of how it benefits society, which is good for
Cameron’s reflection suggested he presented content in his presentation with enough details that his group members understood his topic. While Cameron’s confident interpretation may or may not be accurate, his perception is that he presented his content effectively during this learning activity. His words in this selection also indicate socioemotional skills of self-awareness (“elaborating”) and social awareness (“benefits society;” “conceptualizing”).

**Post--unit questionnaires**

In the post-unit questionnaire data, each of the four questions aligned with global competence communication skills showed positive percentage increases to the Likert-scale responses of “strongly agree” and “agree.” Returning to the two questions highlighted previously in this section, the largest increase, by far, was the response to the question, “I can discuss the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.” The pre-unit results indicated only one of the eight students could discuss the UN SDGs, but at the conclusion of the unit, all eight participants responded with “strongly agree” or “agree.” Also, the question, “I can discuss local and global issues that affect my field of study” previously indicated that half of the participants could not discuss such issues. In the post-unit questionnaire, all eight students responded to this question with “strongly agree.”

**How Do Students’ Perceptions Change About the Audience?**

In this section, I share findings from the unit that address sub-question B, how do students’ perceptions change about the audience? An ever-present challenge for FYC
instructors is teaching students ways to write for authentic audiences. Many first-year composition students have little to no experience writing for anyone other than their teachers. The Investigating Global Communities unit provides students with the opportunity to share their article with their peers and to produce an article published on a Google Site that could be viewed around the world. The addition of a multimodal composition on a Google Site adds a layer to the project that a traditional essay lacks. Additionally, by engaging in activities, discussions, and readings that encourage thinking critically about ways their compositions could reach an audience with the resources to solve the local and global issues, they are working within the framework’s *Diverse Perspectives* domain. When the example of local and global water issues was referenced in class by Kalil on the first day of this unit, many students understood the reference because they had heard or read about declining water levels at Lake Mead. But it was unlikely any students in the classroom that day had researched, written, and published an essay on that topic. The *Diverse Perspectives* skill set asks students to use critical thinking to see the world through the eyes of others. In this unit, the Diverse Perspectives domain was aligned with writing for authentic global audiences.

**Domain 2: Diverse Perspectives**

Writing for a range of audiences is important in FYC courses since audience is a key component of the rhetorical situation. Students need time to learn and practice the rhetorical situation and this unit prepares students for writing in their discipline, in a civic context, and for cross-cultural settings. While this task may be challenging for first-year students, I have seen and read how proud they are of the work they do on their projects. Data to answer sub-question B is drawn from participants’ responses connected to the
Diverse Perspectives domain’s disposition, knowledge, and skills outcomes of “using critical thinking to see the world through eyes of others” and from the pre- and post-unit questionnaire responses to questions 1-4.

**Pre-unit questionnaires**

Four questions on the questionnaire contributed to the findings for sub-question B:

- I am aware that differences exist between cultures.
- I am open to diverse perspectives.
- I have the skills to analyze diverse perspectives.
- I reflect on my own perspectives.

In three out of four questions on the pre-unit questionnaire, participants chose “strongly agree” or “agree” responses. However, the question, “I have the skills to analyze diverse perspectives” did not have any “strongly agree” responses. Seven participants responded “agree” and one participant responded “neutral” to this question. This question differs from the other three in that it is asking students about *skills* instead of *mindsets*. This question presented an area for student growth during the unit.

**Student assignments**

*During the unit.* Participants’ responses to steps 1 and 2 of the Elevator Pitch activity provided data for the Diverse Perspectives domain. Steps 1 and 2 were completed in preparation for a 3–5-minute presentation in small groups. Students were prompted to introduce themselves, their topics, and how their topics connected to the UN SDGs. The instructions also included suggestions in the form of questions that they responded to and then used that text to present their topic to the group members. The suggested questions to answer are listed below:

- What have you learned about your SDG and your article topic?
• What has surprised you in your reading and research about the SDG and research?
• What has “squared” with your previous knowledge about your article topic?
• What promising actions/research/funding is happening with your topic?

Participants’ responses to these questions and any additional content they included in steps 1 and 2 of this assignment provided substantive qualitative data for this study because students were familiar enough with their research topics to discuss them in detail, but they were not finished with the project and reflecting yet. Specifically, I coded for students’ responses that illustrated an analysis of research about their Investigating Global Communities topic. In Naomi’s preparation for the Elevator Pitch activity, she wrote an analysis of research about how unpaid labor affects women globally:

Another major factor is the amount of unpaid labor women often carry the burden of. In less affluent countries, gathering water is often a task delegated to women, which takes up a large portion of their days. Even in affluent countries, women often have little time to spend away from the house because they often are given the responsibilities to take care of the home or look after children.
· Women not being paid for a lot of the work is an issue itself, but…
· Then, I concluded that the changing technology of the time must play a role in helping women achieve better situations.

In this excerpt, Naomi demonstrates her depth of knowledge of the topic and ability to analyze issues from diverse perspectives.

Similarly, Kalil’s preparation for the Elevator Pitch activity shows his depth of knowledge and analysis skills of clean water and sanitation issues that affect women globally:

Proper sanitation in a community also leads to families being less vulnerable to diseases, and since women carry the water, if they get sick, their families are getting sick too. Women also need to have other sanitary
methods met such as proper menstrual tools and access to hygiene supplies. Women will often be ashamed to be around people since they feel dirty for not keeping up with their hygiene. Fixing the global water crisis would not only help with an essential basic human need, but it would also further boost the morale of the community it’s helping.

_Post-unit._ The post-unit reflection provided students with an opportunity to explain how they composed for authentic audiences within the Investigating Global Communities project using rhetorical appeals. Their responses were important for me, as the FYC instructor, to measure growth in FYC rhetorical knowledge outcomes, specifically related to writing for audiences (WPA Outcomes, 2019). In the example below, Jordan reflects on how they connect their use of writing elements of diction, details, and tone to their audience. Tone as a voice element in writing is stressed in this course frequently and defined in the course textbook as “The way a writer’s or speaker’s stance toward the readers and subject is reflected in the text” (Bullock, 2016 p. 64-67). In response to the reflection question, “what have you learned about writing for different and authentic audiences?” Jordan wrote:

I feel confident that I know what to change when taking audiences into account: the style of writing and the way the topic is presented. If I were to, say, write for a younger audience about climate change, I would avoid using overly drawn-out words and I might use more informal words. I would present it by acknowledging their specific circumstance of having to grow up in a world that is considered doomed by their adult peers.

Barani also mentioned tone as an important tool when appealing to the audience:

Yes, I feel confident writing for different and authentic audiences. I have learned that you have to change your tone based on the audience you are writing for. It is not a one-size-fits-all. For example, you would change your tone for a paper you write on a medical ethics issue based on whether the audience are medical professionals or not.
Post--unit questionnaires

Returning to the four questions listed previously in this section, the post-unit questionnaire data indicates significant changes in the responses to the question, “I have the skills to analyze diverse perspectives.” Six of eight students responded, “strongly agree:” an increase from zero students on the pre-unit questionnaire. Two students responded “agree,” which is a decrease from seven on the pre-unit questionnaire, suggesting five participants moved their responses to “strongly agree” on the post-unit questionnaire. The other three questions did not indicate significant positive or negative change from pre-unit to post-unit questionnaire.

How Do Students Believe Their Global Competence and Cosmopolitanism Practices Will Transfer to Their Personal and Professional Lives?

In this section, I share findings for sub-question C, “what differences do students believe this experience in global competence activities will make in their academic and civic lives from now on?” The question seeks to understand how students reflect on their learning experiences and potential for continued growth as writers, researchers, and learners after the Investigating Global Communities unit. This question also seeks to understand how students place themselves as citizens in the global community; a concept that can be a challenge for FYC students, most of whom are in their first semester of college and may be trying to adjust to the university experience. Overall, what I hope this unit does is to plant a seed of knowledge, understanding, and compassion for the complexities of the myriad local and global issues facing our world now and in the
future; if it does, then these students are exhibiting growth in the framework domain of  

**Civic and Global Engagement.**

- Demonstrated ability for meaningful engagement in a wide range of civic and global issues.
- Demonstrated ability to be successful in one’s own discipline/specialty in a global context.

**Domain 3: Civic and Global Engagement**

The Investigating Global Communities project introduced many students to ideas, issues, and concepts that were new to them as learners. The students embraced this learning experience by choosing relevant and varied topics, researching them thoroughly, composing, and then presenting their completed compositions to their peers and me. The data for sub-question C is drawn from questions 6-10, 12, and 14 of the pre- and post-unit questionnaire and from participants’ open-ended responses from the Elevator Pitch steps 1 and 2 and the reflection questions that aligned with global competence dispositions, knowledge, and skills of “critical investigation of issues to understand them, propose strategies, and/or problem solve” and “knowledge of ways one’s discipline engages with the global economy and community.”

**Pre-unit questionnaires**

Eight questions on the questionnaire contributed to the findings for sub-question C:

- I have the skills to work with diverse groups of people.
- I have knowledge of local issues.
- I have knowledge of global issues.
- I know how to investigate local issues.
- I know how to investigate global issues.
- I have knowledge of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
- I have knowledge of local and global issues that affect my field of study.
- I can write about local and global issues with supporting evidence.

In the pre-unit questionnaire results, most participants indicated that they disagreed or were neutral about their knowledge of both local issues and global issues. The results of these two questions indicated potential for growth during the unit. Half of the participants indicated that they “know how to investigate” local issues and global issues, so that was another area for growth during the unit since building knowledge of issues of global and local significance and investigating such issues are key goals in the Investigating Global Communities unit.

The results of two questions on the pre-unit questionnaire suggested even more global competence learning opportunities for students. Only one of the participants knew of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals before the unit and three of them knew of local and global issues affecting their field of study.

**Student assignments**

*During the unit.* Meaningful, critical engagement with relevant and credible source material is important in FYC courses, so students’ making good research choices for the Investigating Global Communities unit aligned with FYC outcomes and the unit goals. Step 1 of the Elevator Pitch included a list of bullet points to encourage students to think critically about their investigations into a global issue as they prepared for their group presentations. Most students responded to step 1 with relevant research and analysis of the research to share in their groups. For example, Chloe, who wrote about
overconsumption and overproduction, provides engaging background information and relevant research, and connects it to her own life experiences in her response to step 1:

Several issues have been brought to attention as I’ve researched my SDG and article topic. Most of what I’ve learned goes hand-in-hand with what I can see: that people have grown too comfortable with the idea of overconsumption, having an overabundance of material possessions is looked on as living “the life”, when the consumer is unaware or ignorant of its impacts on the environment. Studies show that humans are wasting over 30% of materials harvested.

Cameron also connected his life experiences with his topic and research about sustainable green infrastructure. He acknowledged that he did not fully understand what green infrastructure was until he engaged with his research materials:

I have learned what green infrastructure is. Green infrastructure surprised me, because I realized I have seen it, yet always just thought it was for appearances, and didn’t realize the actual benefit of it. The fact that I have seen it implemented is encouraging, as it shows that is being used. The main purpose for my article is to advocate for it and encourage the growth of the use of it in society.

There might be questions on what an example of it may be if people have seen similar things in their life. It mostly deals with water reuse and redirection but can be used to support the surrounding environment both on a micro and macro scale. I was also familiar of small-scale water collection systems being used for individual farms back in ND, but that was generally only seen for garden use.

Vander Ark (2017), in his list of “7 Global Competences,” notes a practice called *Intelligent Humility* defined as, “students understand that their knowledge is not finite and appreciate how much more there is to learn about the world and its complexities.”

Chloe and Cameron both demonstrated the importance of good academic research skills and critically engaging with source material to increase knowledge when writing within the global competence framework.
Post-unit. After submitting their revised projects, the next step was reflection. The reflection process is a valuable socioemotional tool in global competence and FYC instruction, one that I hope students will continue to practice throughout their college careers and beyond (WPA Outcomes, 2019). Coding for engagement with source material and multimodal composition processes in the reflection questions indicated most participants feel confident in their abilities to complete assigned research and writing tasks at the college level, which affirms that the global competence practices will transfer beyond this FYC course. In the first example, Kalil reflects on his growth as an academic writer who incorporates engaging research and multimodality in his writing projects:

I grew as a writer since the beginning of the semester, incorporating more details and facts from articles, using more media, and finding my own voice in my writing. I tend to add things I feel are important to the project, so it makes me want to research those topics more. I sometimes found myself going from article to article to find more facts that I can include.

Sasha also reflected on learning to use multimodality to achieve purpose in her project as well as her ability to find reliable research:

I learned how to use different resources such as google sites. On top of this, I was also knowledgeable of using different visual elements to really give purpose and explanation... I feel confident in my ability to complete college level writing tasks as I am now able to understand writing processes better and use my resources to establish better writing habits. I am able to effectively find information on topics and apply them to my writing as well as cite these sources properly.

Post-unit questionnaires

Results from the previously discussed questions indicated participant growth in areas of knowledge of and ability to investigate global and local issues. Knowledge of global issues increased more than knowledge of local issues, as seven of eight participants responded either “strongly agree” or “agree” in comparison to four
participants responding “strongly agree” or “agree” to having knowledge of local issues. I suspect that global knowledge increased more than local knowledge because most students chose global issues for their project topics. The results for the two questions about investigating local and global issues suggest that most students (n=7) in the study experienced growth in the ability to investigate these issues.

Also, in the post-unit questionnaire, all participants agreed that they have knowledge of the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
CHAPTER 5
IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine how writing within a global competence framework influenced first-year composition students’ understanding of global competence and cosmopolitanism. The study also sought to determine how the participants demonstrated skills as global and cultural communicators, how their perceptions of the audience changed, and how they believe they will transfer global competence and cosmopolitan practices to their personal and professional lives. During this five-week unit, students engaged in the writing process to produce a multimodal research-based article published on a Google Site. After being introduced to the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals, they chose current global or local topics drawn from the list of 17 SDGs that were of interest to them to research and write about in an article. They also had the freedom to write to a global audience of their choice, to select relevant multimodal elements, and to design their own website for the article publication. Through analysis of qualitative data including instructor notes and materials, a demographic survey, a pre- and post-unit questionnaire, and student-participants’ artifacts, the findings suggest writing within the global competence framework influenced students’ understanding of global competence and cosmopolitanism during the five week-long unit.

My key findings include 1) students could communicate their global research topics to others effectively, 2) students demonstrated an ability to compose for different audiences, 3) students indicated ability to transfer dispositions, knowledge, and skills from the Investigating Global Communities unit to other academic settings and 4)
students grew in their knowledge of and ability to investigate globally significant issues drawn from the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

I began this dissertation case study because I kept finding myself interested in ways to be a globally competent teacher; one who could create lessons and units relevant for today’s learners. Although I was previously encouraging my students to research and write about current global issues, it was not until I began my doctoral studies that I explored current research in the fields of global competency, 21st century skills, and multimodal composition. Graduate courses such as Teaching Post-colonial Literature for Young Adults; Youth, Identity, and Education in a Global Context; and Teaching L2 Writing helped me develop knowledge and skills needed to approach this study from a researcher’s mindset. In my current teaching position as a FYC instructor, I can refine and revise the Investigating Global Communities unit each semester for different student populations including on-level, honors, and L2 learners. Also, before I left my secondary ELA teaching position in 2019, I was teaching students to use global competency skills with literature analysis and poetry writing.

My long-term goal is to connect students enrolled in my courses with college students around the world through collaborative research projects so they can communicate, collaborate, and investigate ways to solve global issues together. Organizations such as The Stevens Initiative are facilitating virtual connections for elementary, secondary, and college students every semester. In 2023, 12,000 students participated in their virtual exchanges, and this is just one of several exchange programs available to teachers.
Discussion

Educating for global competence in first-year college composition classrooms is one way first-year composition instructors can prepare students to be global citizens with the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to participate in the global community (Asia Society, 2018; Vander ark & Leibtag, 2017). This case study contributes research in the field of global competence education in the United States at the college level. Using qualitative research methodology, I examined the perceptions of students engaged in an investigative research-based writing unit with globally significant topics drawn from the United Nations 17 Sustainability Development Goals. The unit placed an emphasis on global competence skills and cosmopolitan habits of mind which are essential for today’s college students who will graduate and participate in the global economy in their careers (Appiah, 2006; Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2010; ASCD, 2021). Perhaps most importantly, they practiced communicating with diverse peers, building skills in understanding audience that they will use in their future academic and civic lives, also. Developing dispositions, including “empathy and valuing multiple perspectives” and “commitment to promoting equity worldwide” along with knowledge of other cultures and intercultural communication during their years in school better prepares students for global-readiness (Tichnor-Wagner, 2016; 2019).

Students spent five weeks researching and writing on their own, communicating with each other in groups, and meeting with the instructor as they researched, composed, and published their projects. Each student-participant indicated perceived growth in one or more ways; three of the most often mentioned in reflections are knowledge of the audience, academic research skills, and effective presentation of their work using
multimodality. Also, questionnaire responses indicated increases in skills to analyze diverse perspectives, how to investigate global issues, and knowledge of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

**Implications**

The results of this study build on existing evidence of the value of global competence practices for students in all levels of education, from pre-Kindergarten through post-secondary. This study differs from previous studies in its combination of discipline, first-year composition, and its student-participants, freshmen at a large U.S. university. The results suggest that students’ perceptions of their ability to investigate local and global issues, communicate effectively with others, and recognize the perspectives of others can be developed at the post-secondary level, thus preparing college students for participation in the global community and economy.

**Students value the opportunity to research global and local issues of their choice whether connected to their field of study or not.** The students entering their first year of college in 2022, when this study was conducted, were members of a generation that grew up in a world more interconnected than ever before in history. Many of these students spent a year or more learning in an online environment, away from their high school campus and their friends, because of Covid-19 school campus closures. They missed out on many traditional, in-person high school activities. They have concerns about global issues such as health and wellbeing, climate action, clean water access, equality, and, of course, education; all issues that are on the minds of many around the globe. These young people have also experienced increasing wars and political tensions including Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, China’s tense relations with Taiwan, and the
lengthy Syrian civil war. Many people displaced by conflict and climate change contribute to discourse around immigration, crime, and citizenship. Young people are aware of these issues, and they are concerned (DeJaynes & Curmi, 2015). By including more literacy activities that include global competence and cosmopolitanism, instructors can promote peace and social justice education in our classrooms (Hansen, 2008; Reimers, 2009; Campano & Ghiso, 2010). Our students want to know more; they want accurate information, and they want to learn how we can all work together to solve these local and global problems. College English instructors and secondary English Language Arts teachers can help students develop global awareness through activities including current global issue research projects, critically reading fiction and nonfiction books by diverse authors, and creating partnerships with global classrooms (Yoon, et al, 2018).

**Instructors should provide time and guidance in the composition classroom for students to practice speaking and listening skills.** First-year composition instructors should provide space and time for cosmopolitan learning and cosmopolitan “hospitality” (Hansen, 2008) since they connect well with most FYC learning outcomes (Council of Writing Program Administrators). Unfortunately, cosmopolitanism is not the easy solution for educations and society’s problems such as racism, sexism, and other forms of inequalities (Noble, 2013); instead, we must promote cosmopolitan *habits for life* that prepares students with a “toolbox” of skills for global and cultural interactions that can promote peace, kindness, and equality (Hawkins & Velarde, 2020, p. 14).

**Future Research**

The small participant group was one of the limitations of this case study. If given the opportunity for similar global competence research, I would invite participants from
other FYC courses, including online courses. I also see great potential in rich research data through student-participant interviews or focus groups. When I was analyzing the data for this case study, I sometimes found myself thinking about more questions that I would ask participants, if I had the opportunity. Interviews with individual students or groups of students after the unit would have added additional data for understanding students’ perceptions of their learning experiences. Time was another limitation as a semester-long course with a global competence focus would have provided the opportunity for making connections with a classroom in another country. Participating in a global virtual exchange is a priority for me as an instructor in the future. Virtual exchanges can be facilitated through organizations such as the Stevens Initiative which advocates for connecting students in “digital spaces to gain practical skills and build friendships” (see: Stevensinitiative.org).

More global competence research is needed at all levels of teaching and disciplines. I intend to continue teaching global competence and welcome opportunities to conduct more research in my courses. Two areas that interest me are making connections with global classrooms which invite students in the U.S. and another country to engage in projects, research, and project-based learning. Making connections requires preparation and time, so a course with a global competence focus is needed (instead of a short unit). Also, a longitudinal study of global competence dispositions, knowledge, and skills used by U.S. university students would be an ideal research concept (Noble, 2013). I am interested in learning how global competence influences students throughout their university education experience and then enter the workforce.
Reimers (2017) argues global competency education must be taught in all educational settings, not just the elite or private schools, as has been the norm. As more universities, community colleges, and K-12 schools develop global competence learning opportunities for students, the greater the need will be for data collection and research in this field. As global competence promotes investigation, collaboration, and communication, teachers will need to teach students responsible use of technology. Teachers can refer to NCTE’s Position Statement (2019), *Definition of Literacy in a Digital Age*, materials from organizations such as the Asia Society, and texts written by experts in the field of globally competent teacher training.

**Global Competence Teaching and Learning Needs**

Global competence education is needed in all levels of education from preschool through college to ensure our students are highly prepared for interacting with people in an increasingly complex world. In the United States, we can support all students in their journeys to becoming globally ready citizens.

**Higher education.** All higher education institutions should include designated global competence-focused courses in all disciplines, including first-year composition courses. Some public universities offer certificates in global competence, but it must become the norm rather than the exception in the United States if we want our students to have all the tools to compete on the global stage. We must look toward offering students guidance and support in ways to engage in “purposeful work” that is personally fulfilling as well as a benefit to local and international communities (Spencer, 2024). U.S. universities must also invest in research that seeks to solve the world’s most pressing global issues as defined by the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
(Impact Rankings 2022). Developing curriculum and funding research in these areas will benefit both U.S. college students and international students who come to our universities to earn degrees. There is a potential for increasing global research programs and partnerships that will contribute to solving global issues and meeting the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

**K-12 education.** More investment in global competence teaching instruction and curriculum is needed at the state level. State departments of education can provide support and professional development for the district- and school-level. There are a few programs in place now; Wisconsin Department of Education offers a program called Global Scholars. Participating districts apply to the program and train teachers in global competency through professional development (Global Scholars Program). The districts offer students coursework in global competency to earn a Global Competence Certificate. Also, The California Global Education Project is a statewide partnership administered by the University of California, California Department of Education, and other universities, community colleges and stakeholders. The website provides up-to-date information on professional development opportunities, projects, events, and resources. Most importantly, if more state departments of education implement global competence educational opportunities for teachers and students, there must be effective measurement tools, training, and funding to ensure that students are progressing in their learning.

US schools lag the rest of the world in second language instruction. The US Department of Education’s Global Competence Framework includes a domain devoted to world and heritage language instruction for PK-postsecondary students. This is a critical need area for US students to compete in the global economy and society. All US students,
not just those from wealthy families, need opportunities to travel outside the US (Vander Ark, 2017). Also, local field trips can support place-based education; many students lack opportunities to explore cultural areas in and around their own communities.

**Preservice teaching.** Global competence instruction is needed for all disciplines; this must be a requirement in PK-12 teaching programs. Harvard’s Graduate School of Education’s Project Zero includes a Global Competencies project with access to resources for early childhood through secondary teachers. More support is needed for global competence teaching practices from national organizations such as National Council for Teachers of English for both current and preservice teachers. National and state level teaching organizations should add Global Competence strands to conferences.

Secondary English Language Arts preservice teachers need instruction in global competence and culturally sustaining teaching practices to meet the needs of 21st century learners. As our classrooms become more diverse, it is critical “to provide more equitable learning opportunities for immigrant students and tap into the cosmopolitan energy of our diverse school populations” (Campano & Ghiso, 2010, p. 172). Developing cross-cultural understanding is a necessary skill and habit of mind for future ELA teachers (Yoon, et al, 2018).
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APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF UNIT MODULES A-E
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module # / Class #</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading(s)</th>
<th>Writing Tasks &amp; Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mod A Cl 1</td>
<td>Introduction to Unit; What is Global Competence?</td>
<td><em>Norton Field Guide</em> chapters to review: “25: Writing as Inquiry” &amp; “26: Collaborating”</td>
<td>Pre-unit demographic survey &amp; Pre-unit Questionnaire; Write 5 quiz questions for chap 25 &amp; 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod A Cl 2</td>
<td>What are the 17 Goals? Choosing a topic</td>
<td>UN 17 Goals website</td>
<td>UN 17 Goals Inquiry Chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod B Cl 1</td>
<td>Brainstorming Chart</td>
<td>Article “how to” examples</td>
<td>Brainstorming Chart; Post your topic &amp; its connection to UN 17 Goals on Padlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod B Cl 2</td>
<td>Creating a Research Question (handout) Researching your topic</td>
<td>Read research for use in your report or article</td>
<td>Create a research question. Article structure discussion; Read &amp; take notes on source materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod C Cl 1</td>
<td>Drafting your article; Meet-up day 1: similar topics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Crafting your claim; Thinking About Audience chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod C Cl 2</td>
<td>Drafting your article; Meet-up day 2: differing topics</td>
<td>Read <em>NFG</em> pages 461-462 “Images, Sound, and More”</td>
<td>Choosing effective multimodal elements; Rough Draft due.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod D</td>
<td>Final revising &amp; drafting</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peer feedback activity; instructor feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod D</td>
<td>Instructor: student conferences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod E</td>
<td>Emails &amp; Reflections</td>
<td></td>
<td>Publish final draft to Padlet; compose 2 emails &amp; Post-writing Reflection; Post-unit Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY
Investigating Global Communities: Student Demographic Questionnaire

1. What is your name?

2. What is your age?
   - 17 or younger
   - 18-24
   - 25-35
   - 36+

3. What is your gender?
   - Woman
   - Man
   - Non-binary/non-conforming
   - Transgender woman
   - Transgender man
   - Prefer not to respond

4. Where do you think of as home?

5. How many languages do you speak?
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3 or more

6. List all the languages you speak:

7. What is your college major?

8. What is your grade level?
   - Freshman
   - Sophomore
   - Junior
   - Senior

9. What is your lifetime educational goal (BA, BS, Graduate school, etc.)?
   - Bachelor of Science
   - Bachelor of Arts
   - Graduate school (Master’s or Doctorate degree; JD/law; Medical degree)
   - Not sure
   - Other
APPENDIX C

PRE- & POST-UNIT QUESTIONNAIRE
Investigating Global Communities: Student Questionnaire

Global and Cultural Competencies

1. I am aware that differences exist between cultures.
   Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

2. I am open to diverse perspectives.
   Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

3. I have the skills to analyze diverse perspectives.
   Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

4. I reflect on my own perspectives.
   Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

5. I have the skills to discuss ideas in an open cultural exchange.
   Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

6. I have the skills to work with diverse groups of people.
   Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

7. I have knowledge of local issues.
   Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

8. I have knowledge of global issues.
   Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

9. I know how to investigate local issues.
   Yes; No; Maybe

10. I know how to investigate global issues.
    Yes; No; Maybe

11. I have the ability to engage in discussion of key civic and global issues.
12. I have knowledge of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Agree; Disagree

13. I can discuss the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

14. I have knowledge of local and global issues that affect my field of study.

Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

15. I can discuss local and global issues that affect my field of study.

Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

16. I can write about local and global issues with supporting evidence.

Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree
APPENDIX D

ELEVATOR PITCH: EXPLAINING YOUR TOPIC (LESSON)
Step 1: Prepare your elevator pitch
- What have you learned about your SDG and your article topic?
- What has surprised you in your reading and research about the SDG and research?
- What has “squared” with your previous knowledge about your article topic?
- What promising actions/research/funding is happening with your topic?
- What questions might audience members have about your topic?

Step 2: Introduce yourself and your topic
When you get into your group and it is your turn to speak, introduce yourself and your topic. Explain how your article topic connects to the SDG goal(s) and share the information you wrote down in Step 1. You can make additional notes about what you will say in the space below:

Step 3: Group members’ names and SDG #
1.
2.
3.
4.

Step 4: Reflect on your elevator pitch
What went well for you when you were speaking to your group members? Did you answer questions? What would you do differently next time? Write 3-5 sentences.

Step 5: Reflect on what you learned from your role as an audience member.
What went well for other members of your group when they were speaking? Write 2-3 sentences.
• In what ways did you meet your own goals to "grow" as a writer in a college setting? Provide a few examples.

• In what ways do you feel confident about your ability to complete college-level writing tasks? Provide a few examples.

• Do you feel confident writing for different and authentic audiences? Provide a few examples.

• What have you learned about writing for different and authentic audiences? Provide a few examples.
APPENDIX F

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD EXEMPTION
On 1/18/2023 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Review:</th>
<th>Initial Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>Employing a Global Competence Framework for Investigating Global Communities in a First-year Composition Classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigator:</td>
<td>James Blasingame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB ID:</td>
<td>STUDY00017249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Title:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant ID:</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Documents Reviewed:</td>
<td>• ENG105 Syllabus 2022 Fall, Category: Other; • Investigating_Global_Communities_FYC, Category: IRB Protocol; • Investigating_Global_Communities_FYC_Consent, Category: Consent Form; • Recruitment Script Investigating Global Communities.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Student Unit Assignment , Category: Other;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (1) Educational settings on 1/18/2023.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required.
Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Kristina Bybee
    Kristina Bybee