

Cover Page  
APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS  
IN BIOMEDICAL OR BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

Title of Project: The Social and Cultural Adjustment of Minority and International Students at a Predominantly White Campus

Principal Investigator: Amy Welch

Faculty Sponsor (for student research only): Pearlene Breshears

We, the undersigned, approve this research as appropriate to the mission of our departments, colleges, and Southwest Baptist University.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Sponsor (only for student research)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Department of

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean, College of

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

(THIS FORM IS FOR RRB USE ONLY)

RRB RESEARCH REVIEW DETERMINATION

- Exempt from Review (Chair RRB)
- Expedited Review (RRB Subcommittee)
- Full RRB Review (Full RRB Committee)

RRB RESEARCH APPROVAL DETERMINATION

- Disapproval
  - Full Approval
  - Conditional Approval\* (circle A or B)
    - A. Approval, subject to minor change
    - B. Approval in general but requiring major alterations, clarifications or assurances
- (\* Data collection cannot begin until Full Approval is given by the RRB Chair)

COMMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Research Review Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS  
IN BIOMEDICAL OR BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

Please Type

1. Principal Investigator's Name: Amy Welch

Co-Investigator:

Department: Residence Life

Phone: 328.1826

2. If you are a student, provide the following:

Faculty Sponsor: Pearlene Breshears

Department: Psychology

Phone: 328-1729

Is this your thesis research? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

3. Title of Project: The Social and Cultural Adjustment of Minority and International Students at a Predominantly White University.

4. Has this project previously been considered by the RRB? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X

If yes, give approximate date of review:

5. Is a proposal for external support being submitted? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X

If yes, you must submit one copy of that proposal as soon as it is available and complete the following:

a. Is notification of Human Subject approval required? Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

b. Is this a renewal application? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X

c. Sponsor's Name:

d. Total project period: From: March 2007

To: April 2007

6. In your judgment, does your research fall under one of the EXEMPT categories listed in the RRB Guidelines and Application for Research Involving Human Subjects, section II2IA1-4?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you believe it does, indicate the number of the category under which you are claiming an exemption:

7. Does your project fall under one of the categories eligible for EXPEDITED REVIEW as listed in the RRB Guidelines and Application for Research Involving Human Subjects, section IIIB1-5?

Yes  No

8. Have you included copies of all pertinent attachments including, but not limited to: questionnaire instruments, informed consent(s), letters of approval from cooperating institutions, copy of external support proposal, etc.?

Yes  No

**Proposed Research Project:** Please type your answers to the following questions and provide supporting documents in appendices.

- A. Provide a brief description of the proposed research. Include major hypotheses (or research question), research design and a brief review of the literature supporting your position.

### *Purpose of the Study*

This study will examine the social and cultural adjustment of minority and international students at a predominantly white, private university. This study will further explore perceptions of the campus climate, ethnic identification, social networks, and social and cultural adjustments issues students experience when coming to Southwest Baptist University and during their undergraduate years.

### *Research Questions*

This study seeks to answer specific questions as it relates to the perceptions of minority and international students when they arrive on the SBU campus. Secondly, this study will attempt to understand minority and international concerns and experiences while at SBU. The following detailed questions will be addressed in this study:

1. What are the perceptions of the campus climate and community as a minority or international student?
2. What adjustment issues are students experiencing when they arrive on campus?
3. What psychological stressors are students experiencing while at SBU? Furthermore, this researcher will examine the differences between gender, race, and athletic Vs non-athletic sub-groups in regards to adjustment issues and psychological stressors.
4. Do minority and international students have a sense of ethnic identification or group membership on campus? If so, what kind of impact does a social network have on adjustment?
5. What factors appear to help or mediate adjustment problems at SBU?
6. Do minority or international students feel supported (by peers and administration) at SBU?
7. Are students aware of any services available on campus?
8. If so, what services are they seeking out?
9. How can counseling services benefit students with adjustment issues, as well what is the role of the counselor?
10. Overall, what are the specific needs of minority and international students?

11. What services are needed on campus in order to better serve this particular cohort?

### *Introduction to the Study*

The college years are crucial and can be stressful as the student learns to cope and adjust to the collegiate environment (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994; William, 1999). For many minority and international students, they experience social and adjustment struggles when arriving on a predominantly white university or college. Many minority and international students report experiencing psychological distress when arriving on a campus that is much different from their culture of origin. Furthermore, trying to fit into the dominant culture creates psychological stress. In addition to this stress, this particular student group experiences adjustment difficulties when they perceive the campus as not being supportive of their ethnic identification. Most research supports the notion that minority and international students have a more difficult time adjusting and assimilating to a new college environment in which there is a less than ideal environment (Jay & D'Augelli, 1991; Wilton & Constantine, 2003; Duan, 2000).

Secondly, students who are unable to identify with their ethnic group are more likely to experience psychological distress. However, research has found when students are provided a sense of social and emotional support, or can identify with their ethnic group on campus, students are more likely to adjust better and succeed at the university (Phinney & Kumiko, 2003; Jay & D'Augelli, 1991; Heiman, 2004). This study aims to further delve into this research phenomena at Southwest Baptist University.

B. Describe the source(s) of subjects and the selection criteria. Specifically where will you obtain the names of potential subjects and how will you contact them?

I will send a campus survey to all minority and international students via mail with a cover letter and consent form included. I have included a statement that says a \$40 gift card drawing will be conducted for those who return the survey by the deadline. Based upon those surveys returned, I will recruit a diverse group of students for my focus group.

6 male participants: (2 male athletes, 2 Hispanic, 1 Asian, 2 African American, 1 international)

6 female participants: (2 female athletes, 1 Hispanic, 1 Native American, 2 Asian, 1 African American, 1 international)

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C. Informed Consent: Describe the consent process and attach all consent documents.

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See attachments:

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D. Procedures: Provide a step-by-step description of each procedure, including the frequency, duration, and location of each procedure. Attach copies of surveys or other

research materials as appropriate.

March 1: mail surveys.

Second week of March: conduct focus group (Union)

March 15: surveys due

Spring Break: compile data

E.

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(note: additions or changes in procedures involving human subjects as well as any problems connected with the use of human subjects once the project has begun must be brought to the attention of the RRB).

- E. How will confidentiality of the data be maintained? It is stated in the consent form and listed on the focus group itinerary to be covered. All data will be filed in a secured and locked location in my home.
- F. Describe all known and anticipated risks to the subject including side effects, risks of placebo, risks of normal treatment delay, etc. Honest feedback about the school. How it will be received by administrators. However, all subjects names and identity will be protected.
- G. Describe the anticipated benefits to subjects, and the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result. Present needs and provide support that a multi-cultural student services department needs to be established as well as other areas the university can support minority and international students.

Office of Student Life  
1600 University Ave  
Bolivar, MO 65613

Dear Minority or International Student:

You have been selected to participate in a voluntary study on the social and cultural adjustment of minority and international students at Southwest Baptist University. My goal is to assess the needs of minority and international students and to present data to university administrators.

Your participation is important to me. I have enclosed a survey to gain your feedback, as well as ask if you would be interested in participating in a focus group (form is enclosed). The focus group is an opportunity to gather 10-12 diverse students to gain more in depth feedback in an open-ended discussion. Please note that students who elect to participate may withdraw from the study at any time. All information (survey & focus group) will be held confidential and your name withheld. You also have the right to review and edit the information gathered from the study at any time.

Please fill out the enclosed survey and return to the Office of Student Life. I have enclosed an envelope for your convenience. If you would be willing to participate in the focus group, please fill out the consent form and return with your survey. If you return both the survey and focus group consent form, your name will be placed in a gift certificate drawing for \$40 to either Wal-Mart or the Battlefield Mall! I will ask that you sign for it.

Thanks again for taking the time to read this information, filling out the survey and consent form. Please let me know if you have further questions!

Sincerely,

Amy D. Welch  
Director of Residence Life  
Multicultural Student Program Coordinator  
DaVine Student Ministry Advisor  
Counselor Intern  
Southwest Baptist University

Southwest Baptist University-Bolivar, Missouri  
*Consent to Participate in Under-graduate Collegiate Focus Group*

**The Social and Cultural Adjustment of Minority and International Students at a Predominantly White Campus**

I am conducting research for a research seminar paper at Missouri State University in Guidance and Counseling. I currently serve as the Director of Residence Life at SBU, as well as the multicultural student program coordinator and advisor for a student ministry organization called Da'Vine.

I am inviting you take part in a research study to help myself and SBU learn more about the needs of minority and international students. You have been selected because you represent this particular student cohort, in which I am conducting the study. Your participation in this focus group is voluntary. Your decision to participate in this study will not affect your student status or access to services on campus.

### **PURPOSE OF STUDY**

The purpose of this focus group is to gain more feedback from minority and international students'-for example: perceptions of the campus climate, social and cultural adjustments, needs and experiences while at Southwest Baptist University.

### **PROCEDURES**

A focus group is a group of under-graduate students who come together to share their thoughts and feelings on a particular topic. I will be leading the group and will have a list of questions for the focus group to discuss. If you agree to be in this focus group, we ask you to do the following things:

- We will ask you to participate in a group discussion with about 10-12 other minority or international students.
- The discussion will take about 2 hours, and will cover topics such as:
  - Perceptions of the campus and community climate.
  - Social and Cultural Adjustment.
  - Needs of minority and international students.

### **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

You will be asked to share personal information as it relates to your culture and race as a student at SBU. You may choose not to share any information or answer any question you do not wish to answer.

### **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR SBU**

By participating in this study, you may learn from the experiences of others in this group. In addition, you may help by providing valuable information to SBU regarding the needs of minority and international students.

### **A PARTICIPATION DRAWING**

All students who complete the enclosed survey will be placed in a drawing for a \$40 Walmart or Battlefield Mall gift certificate. When you receive the gift certificate, I will ask that you sign a receipt acknowledging that it was received. Refreshments will also be provided.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Because you might be sharing experiences that you have had, the issue of confidentiality is very important. I will use the information you provide during the focus group for research purposes. The information you share will be

utilized to address the needs of minority and international students at SBU. Your name shall be kept anonymous.

I will audiotape the discussion as well as take notes to make it easier for me to keep track of notes. The tape will only be utilized by myself. You have the right to review, edit or erase, in whole or part, any portion of the audiotape including focus group notes. All information recorded will be kept in a locked file cabinet and will not be made available to anyone outside the research. Once the study is completed, all information will be destroyed to protect your confidentiality. When the report is written, the statements you make during the discussion will not be associated with your name in anyway.

Because you will be taking part of a group, I will ask that each participant promise to keep the identities of other group members and their comments confidential. However, you will most likely recognize and know people in your group. Someone in the group might not follow instructions to keep all comments confidential, so we recommend you avoid saying anything that you feel uncomfortable about other participants knowing.

## ***PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL***

I understand that if any topic becomes too personal or upsetting, I do not have to discuss them. If there is any information you do not feel comfortable sharing, you may share with the researcher afterward by phone, mail or email. You may withdraw from the focus group at any time. Your participation is strictly voluntary.

## ***IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATOR***

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as research subject, contact the Internal Review Board at 328.1735.

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to be in this focus group. I will be given a copy of this form, if participating in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

In my judgment, the participant is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent and possesses the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Social and Cultural Adjustment of Minority and International Students

### Protocol-Semi-Structured Focus Group for College Students

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Focus Group Leader: Amy D. Welch

Date: March 2007

6 male participants: (2 male athletes, 2 Hispanic, 1 Asian, 2 African American, 1 international)

6 female participants: (2 female athletes, 1 Hispanic, 1 Native American, 2 Asian, 1 African American, 1 international)

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**INTRODUCTION** Allow fifteen minutes for students to read and sign consent forms. Some questions may be shortened due to time constraints and follow up questions may arise based on student responses to the questions.

**WELCOME-** Thanks for agreeing to participate in the focus group.

**IDENTIFY SELF AND OTHERS-**My name is (name) and I . . . . . (allow students the freedom to introduce themselves).

- You and others were invited to share your thoughts, feelings and experiences as a minority or international student on campus.
- I am interested in hearing about your social and cultural adjustment when you arrived on campus and psychological stresses you may or may not have experienced.
- I am also interested in finding out what services you are currently utilizing on campus, and if so would you be willing to utilize the counseling center for any struggles as a minority or international student.
- I am interested in your perceptions of the campus climate, perceptions of social networks, and ethnic identification on campus.
- Overall, I want to hear what your needs are as a minority or international student at SBU.
- The information you share will help to develop a proposal as to what the needs are of your group on campus.

#### **HOW DOES THIS GROUP WORK?**

- Define focus group-this is going to be a discussion on various topics that I ask you about.
- You need only answer what you feel comfortable discussing. You can remain silent or pass on any question. You can leave the study at any time without penalty.
- There are no right or wrong answers-just different points of view. I am just as interested in negative comments as positive ones so feel free to share your opinion.
- Please speak up. Only one person should talk at a time.
- The session is being tape-recorded and I will be taking notes because I don't want to miss any of your comments. What you have to say is important, and I'm sure I will not be able to take all notes. Just as a reminder, you have the right to review, edit, and erase, in whole or in part, the parts of audiotape in which you were speaking.

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- We'll be on a first name basis during our discussion.
- I will not use your names in my report or other information that could identify you.
- The law states that if I learn of certain types of serious harm to you or someone else, I will need to tell the authorities.
- Because this is a group discussion, we need you to all agree that you will respect the privacy and confidentiality of everyone in the group. No information discussed here should leave the room or be talked about when you leave. Do you all agree?

Do you have any questions or comments about what we will be doing tonight? About how focus groups work? About confidentiality? Anything else?

## *FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS*

### **BEGIN**

1. Do minority and international students have a sense of ethnic identification or group membership on campus?
  - a. What kind of impact does having or not having an ethnic identification group have?
  - b. What kinds of groups do you feel a sense of belonging to now?
  - c. What kind of impact does your social network have on you as an individual?
  - d. Can you identify with the faculty and staff here based on your minority/international status?
  - e. Can you relate to faculty and staff?
  - f. Can you relate to your peers? Why or why not?
  - g. Do you feel like you are a part of the SBU community? Why or why not?
  - h. What positive experiences have you had overall and what do you contribute this to?
  - i. What would be helpful overall?
  
2. What adjustment and transition struggles did you experience when you arrived on campus?
  - a. What psychological stressors did you experience?
  - b. What are some of your daily hassles that you deal with as related to your minority or international student status.
  - c. What about your experience in the community?
  - d. What factors helped you as a minority/international student to adjust?
  
3. What support or services is needed to help with adjustment struggles?
  - a. As a minority or international student, do you perceive or feel a sense of support by SBU?  
List areas:
  - b. How can SBU serve to meet the needs of minority and international students?
  - c. What services/programs/organizations on campus are you currently utilizing?
  - d. Would you be willing to utilize the counseling center to help with adjustment? Why or why not?

## **SBU Minority and International Student Survey**

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

This survey has been designed to gain valuable feedback from minority and international students at SBU. Please respond to the following statements on the basis of how you feel about being a minority or international student at SBU. There are no right or wrong answers, so please provide your honest reactions and opinions.

### **Demographics:**

Gender: \_\_\_ M \_\_\_ F                      \_\_\_ Non-Athlete \_\_\_ Athlete

International student: \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N

Race (please list): \_\_\_\_\_

Year in school: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please read each statement carefully, and indicate how true each of the following questions are by using the following scale:**

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Disagree Somewhat

4 = Neutral

5 = Agree Somewhat

6 = Agree

7 = Strongly Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. I perceive or feel supported by the university administration as a minority or international student.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. I feel my needs are being met at the university as a minority or international student.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. I feel supported by my peers at the university as a minority or international student.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. I have a social network of peers with whom I can identify on campus.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Having a social network of peers has helped me to better adjust to college life.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. I can identify with an ethnic group on campus.

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. I have group membership with an ethnic group on campus.

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\_\_\_\_\_ 7. I have NOT been able to identify with my ethnic group on campus, and it has affected my adjustment and psychological well-being.

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\_\_\_\_\_ 8. Overall, my being apart of the SBU community has little to do with how I feel about myself.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. In general, belonging to the SBU community is an important part of my self-image.

\_\_\_\_\_ 17. I have a positive affiliation for SBU.

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. I am able to identify with faculty and staff based on our shared ethnic identity.

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\_\_\_\_\_ 19. I am able to relate to faculty and staff despite my minority or international status.

\_\_\_\_\_ I experienced adjustment difficulties when I came to college.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. I experienced culture shock (stress/adjustment difficulties coming to a new place and culture) when I came to college.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. I have experienced culture shock (acculturation stress) within the local community.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. I currently experience psychological distress as related to my minority or international status.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. I currently experience discrimination or racism as related to my minority or international status.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. I would be willing to seek out counseling services to help me with my psychological distress.

**Please circle one of the following only for each question:**

18. My mental health is:

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Very Bad      Moderately Bad      Neither Good or Bad      Moderately Good      Very Good

19. The current level of stress in my life is:

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Very Bad      Moderately Bad      Neither Good or Bad      Moderately Good      Very Good

20. I have experienced depression as a student at SBU.

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Never      Very Little      Neutral      Somewhat      Very Much

21. I have experienced anxiety as a student at SBU.

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Never      Very Little      Neutral      Somewhat      Very Much

22. I have experienced adjustment difficulties as a student at SBU.

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Never      Very Little      Neutral      Somewhat      Very Much

23. I have experienced racism or harassment at SBU or in the community.

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Never      Very Little      Neutral      Somewhat      Very Much

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Please include any other comments you would like to share about being a minority or international student at SBU.

Thank you for your participation! All results will be presented to the President.

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