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International Students in the Campus Carry Debate: A Descriptive Phenomenological Inquiry

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Education
by

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This dissertation is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

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Abstract

This qualitative phenomenological study purposefully sampled 15 graduate international students at a Southern University (SU). Semi-structured interviews were used to determine their perceptions and attitudes regarding the implementation of campus carry policies at the institution. The study aimed to answer the following research questions: How has the implementation of the campus carry policy at SU impacted international students' perceptions of their experiences at the institution? How has the implementation of campus carry policies at SU influenced international students' perceptions of the social ecology of the institution? and How did SU formally include international students in the on-campus campus carry policy discussion and implementation? Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) was applied to ascertain the factors that informed the participants' perception of the phenomenon.

The results showed that the participants were not impacted by SU's campus carry policy, the social ecology at the university was not affected by the policy, and the participants were excluded from SU's campus carry implementation process. Based on these findings, I suggested that student affairs' practice geared towards international student support are intentional, encompass cultural sensitivity, and inspire campus carry development processes that are inclusive and informed by research that applies student development theory.

Keywords: Campus carry, international students, social ecology, inclusion

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Statement of the Problem

"Virginia Tech Shooting Leaves 33 Dead" (Hauser & O'Connor, 2007), the headline read like the opening credits of a horror film, chilling and thought-provoking. Thought-provoking because the massacre perpetrated by South Korean immigrant Seung Hui Cho catalyzed pro-gun lobbyists, Students for Concealed Carry on Campus (SCCC), at Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Virginia Tech) to lobby for their right to bear arms on campus (Fox, 2016; Kopel, 2009; Wiseman, 2012). The efforts of the SCCC gave rise to the generic term *campus carry*. Campus Carry describes the laws that allow and the act of college campus constituents, other than security personnel, legally taking concealed guns on public college campuses in the United States (U.S.) (Ewing, 2017).

The national discourse about the legalization of guns on college campuses is fueled and perpetuated in state legislatures and on college campuses by the SCCC (Fox, 2016; Kopel, 2015; McLelland & Frenkil, 2009). Today, campus carry deliberations continue in many state legislatures nationwide. However, a survey of the literature on the campus carry phenomenon signified that there is limited permissible input or response to the concerns of campus constituents. Even more, the welfare of international students is obscured by the demands of campus carry opponents and proponents in the available literature. As such, this study aimed to place international students in the milieu of literature on the issue using a descriptive phenomenological approach. I explored the environmental factors that inform their perceptions of and attitudes towards the campus carry policy implemented at a Southern University, referred to as "SU" from here on, using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993).

Additionally, the study had three explicit goals. The first goal was to ascertain international students' perceptions of the impact of campus carry on their experiences within the

social ecology of SU. The study integrated Renn and Arnold's (2003) interpretation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) into the campus carry literature. In addition, the ignored impacts of the phenomenon on the social environment in which international students study at SU, was addressed. Application of Renn and Arnold's (2003) interpretation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) as the theoretical framework for the study, allowed me to identify and analyze the environmental factors which inform international students' perceptions of the campus carry issue.

The second goal of the study was to determine the perceived impacts of the campus carry phenomenon on international students' experiences at SU. These findings will be communicated to the administrators at the institution so that they can generate strategies to mitigate the possible impacts campus carry policies may have on international students. The third goal of the study was to use the findings to motivate SU's administrators to consider the inclusion of international students in any future internal campus carry decision-making and policy formation processes.

Having established the intended outcome of the study, it is worth resuming my examination of the geneses of the campus carry issue. While the origins of the debate around campus carry was stimulated by the Virginia Tech campus massacre in 2007, there were a number of campus shootings in the years before which influenced the arguments in support of or against laws allowing individuals to legally carry handguns (guns) on college campuses. A roundup of lethal college campus shootings which influenced the campus carry discourse revealed that most campus related shootings were perpetrated by current students, alumni, and faculty at U.S. colleges and universities (Clines, 2002; Farrington & Fineout, 2014; Hoyt, 2016; Keyes, 2017; Montgomery, 2016; New, 2016; Wheaton & Dewan, 2010; Vanderhart et al., 2015; Wollan & Onishi, 2012; Woods, 2007).

The bellwether of mass campus shootings occurred in 1966 at the University of Texas at Austin (Montgomery, 2016). Since then, the University of Iowa−1991, Johns Hopkins University−1996, San Diego State University−1996, Wayne State University−1998, the University of Arkansas−2000, and the University of Arizona – 2002, all experienced student perpetrated shootings on their campuses (Woods, 2007). Likewise, in 2002, 43-year-old Nigerian, alumnus Peter Odighizuwa, shot and killed three persons and wounded three others at the Appalachian School of Law in Grundy, Virginia. The Appalachian Law School incident is significant to the campus carry debate because Odighizuwa was subdued by two armed police officers on campus. Both officers were students. The actions of the students prevented Odighizuwa from increasing the fatalities linked to the incident (Clines, 2002; New, 2016). The actions of these students are central to the *crime deterrence arguments* in support of campus carry (New, 2016). For clarity, crime deterrence arguments are used by gun rights proponents to highlight the personal benefits which gun owners gain from being allowed to carry guns in public (Birnbaum, 2013).

College campus shootings from the late 1960s to the early 2000s claimed the lives of numerous campus constituents. However, it was the Virginia Tech mass shootings in 2007 which triggered widespread concerns about the frequency and impact of these incidences. After the Virginia Tech incident, mass shootings transpired at the University of Alabama Huntsville in 2010 and Oikos University in California in 2012 (Wheaton & Dewan, 2010; Wollan & Onishi, 2012). Florida State University's Tallahassee main campus and Oregon's Umpqua Community College also experienced fatal shootings on their campuses in 2014 and 2015, respectively (Farrington & Fineout, 2014; Keyes, 2017). A mass shooting also took place on June 1, 2016, at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) (Hoyt, 2016).

It is important to discuss the details of the shooting at Umpqua Community at this point because it is often used by campus carry proponents and opponents to advance their positions in state legislatures (Keyes, 2017). The mass shooting at Umpqua Community College which was perpetrated by 26-year-old student Chris Harper-Mercer on October 1, 2015, left one assistant professor and eight students dead (Vanderhart et al., 2015). At the time, campus carry was legal in Oregon, but Umpqua Community College's governing board banned guns on campus (Glum, 2015). After the shooting, authorities learned that there were armed students in the vicinity of the shooting who did not attempt to deter the shooter or stop the fatalities that transpired as a result of the incident (Brantley, 2015; Keyes, 2017). Campus carry opponents often use the Umpqua Community College case to counter the crime deterrence arguments of campus carry proponents. However, the proponents of campus carry countered that Umpqua Community College's prohibition of guns on campus restricted the actions of the armed students who were near the incident (Keyes, 2017).

These campus shootings incited an increase in the permeation of campus carry discussions in state legislatures (Ferraro, 2015; Turkewitz, 2016). In reaction to the demands of campus carry proponents, ten states enacted laws which allowed qualified individuals to carry guns on college campuses (Aronowitz & Vaughn, 2013; Bartula & Bowen, 2015; Birnbaum, 2013; Grayson & Meilman, 2011; National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), 2016, 2017; Ortega-Feerick, 2017). The enactment of campus carry legislation in these ten states stimulated the need for research which reports the perceptions of campus carry among U.S. college campus constituents.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to conduct a descriptive phenomenological inquiry that explored the perceptions and attitudes of international students regarding the campus carry phenomenon at SU using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993). The research questions for this study are exploratory in nature and were designed to elucidate international student voices on the campus carry issue. The questions were also designed to elicit responses which speak to how the various elements within the *people, process, context, and time* (PPCT) domains of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) inform international student opinions of the campus carry phenomenon at SU. The research questions that guided the study are:

1. How has the implementation of the campus carry policy at SU impacted international students' perceptions of their experiences at the institution?
2. How has the implementation of campus carry policies at SU influenced international students' perceptions of the social ecology of the institution?
3. How did SU formally include international students in the on-campus campus carry policy discussion and implementation?

Engaging in a study of this nature contributes to the scant amount of literature incorporating international students' narratives about the perceived personal impacts of the campus carry phenomenon at U.S. higher education institutions. Baker and Boland (2011) and Birnbaum (2013) suggested that the presence of guns on college campuses creates fear for personal safety among campus constituents. In light of this, all campus stakeholders including international students must be given an opportunity to express their concerns during the campus carry policy development and implementation processes.

In the context of this study, campus carry implementation refers to the discussions surrounding the phenomenon in spring 2017 and the enactment of both Acts 562 and 859 in fall 2017. While the laws were enacted and mandated by the state of Arkansas, implementation of the state's policy took place on SU's campus. Furthermore, before Act 562 was amended to Act 859, colleges in the state debated the possible implementation of the Act 562 and its likely impacts on their campuses. This eventually led to the passage of Act 859. It is with this in mind that I explored whether international students were a part of the discussions during the review and implementation of the law.

Unfortunately, this is not the case on some college campuses where campus carry policies were implemented. For example, Cavanaugh et al. (2012) specified that a random sample of students at a public university in Texas indicated that they felt excluded from the campus carry policy implementation process and discourse. In Cavanaugh et al.'s (2012) quantitative study, the units of analysis included 38 classrooms through which the probable increase in the number of students carrying legal guns on campus was measured. Cavanaugh et al. (2012) failed to isolate the views of international students regarding the phenomenon. This omission by Cavanaugh et al. (2012) raises questions as to whether or not international students were a part of the study's sample.

However, this omission is not unique to Cavanaugh et al.'s (2012) study. Except for Watt et al. (2018), the perspectives of international students were excluded from campus carry related studies carried out by Abrams (2015); Anderson et al. (2015); Bouffard et al. (2012); Deboer (2018); Jang et al. (2014); Lewis et al. (2016); Murty et al. (2016); Patten et al. (2013); Patten et al. (2012); Spratt (2015); Thompson et al. (2013); Verrecchia and Hendrix (2018) and Wright

(2014). Consequently, a need arises to produce studies which add the voices of international students to the campus carry discourse.

Statement of the Problem

There is a dearth of empirical studies outlining campus constituents' opinion of the campus carry phenomenon, especially among international students. Interestingly, only one qualitative campus carry related study conducted by Watt et al. (2018) purposefully sampled and interviewed six international students at a large, public university in a Great Plains state. As a result, the key concern in designing this study was the scant number of empirical studies assessing international students' perceptions of and attitudes towards campus carry.

Nonimmigrants including international students are not allowed to legally own concealed permits and carry guns (Behnejad, 2015; Woodhouse, 2018). United States Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS) F-1 visa guidelines require international students to declare their intention to maintain and commit to reclaiming their residence abroad. As such, international students are not allowed to own guns since they are not permanent residents of the U.S. (Woodhouse, 2018). This means that the inclusion of international students in the campus carry discourse is of even greater importance. Inarguably, international students must be adequately informed about campus carry laws and how these laws apply to them (Behnejad, 2015).

Knowledge of campus carry policies reduces the likelihood of international students breaching the provisions of these laws (Behnejad, 2015). This assumption by Behnejad (2015) is plausible. In fact, Woodhouse (2018) reported that the FBI seized guns from eight Chinese international students at the University of Arizona. The students purchased the guns after illegally obtaining resident hunting licenses. One student, Yifei Gong, bought a RAS47 after he fraudulently acquired a resident hunting license at Walmart in 2017. Gong's purchase was

possible because of extant flaws in federal and Arizona State's firearms legislation. These laws exempt nonimmigrant visa holders including international students with hunting licenses, from laws prohibiting gun ownership (Woodhouse, 2018).

Woodhouse (2018) proffered that the international students held with the guns explained that they were intrigued by the U.S. gun culture and only wanted to shoot their own firearm. Gong said that he purchased the gun for self-defense but used it more for fun. Woodhouse (2018) said that Gong was cited "for fraudulently obtaining a hunting license, a Class 2 misdemeanor to which he pleaded guilty and paid a fine" (para. 9). The seven other students were also cited, and their guns taken away by Arizona state law enforcement officials (Woodhouse, 2018).

In the campus carry environment, international students may be similarly inveigled to fraudulently obtain gun permits and take guns on campus. These students may also cite self-defense as their reason for doing so. It is therefore important to explore their perceptions of enacted campus carry laws and gauge their likely response to institutional campus carry policies.

Additionally, more research incorporating international students' narratives about the perceived personal impacts of the campus carry phenomenon is warranted. The probable impact the phenomenon may have on this student group warrants an exploratory study gauging the attitudes of international students in the campus carry environment. U.S. colleges and universities risk losing the benefits international students offer their campuses if the students' campus involvement and participation reduces as a result of the colleges' campus carry policies (Watt et al., 2018).

In addition, all campus constituents desire equal opportunities to share their views about the campus carry phenomenon in the policy implementation discourse (Franz, 2017). This inclusion limits the likelihood of their inalienable right to safety being violated (Franz, 2017).

Franz (2017) conducted a qualitative inquiry garnering the opinions of 11 university presidents and one vice president about their ongoing campus carry decision-making, development, and implementation processes across universities in Texas, Mississippi, Kansas, and Wisconsin. The 12 participants claimed that their campus carry policy processes solicited the input of all campus stakeholders. Fifty-eight percent of the university leaders believed including all campus stakeholders in their policy processes allowed them to meet the needs of campus constituents (Franz, 2017). As a result, they were better able to limit infringing on the rights of campus constituents.

To accurately define the problem, an exploration of the current enrolment of international students in the U.S. and the benefits they bring to U.S. college campuses is necessary. According to the Association of International Educators (NAFSA) and the Institute of International Education (IIE) Open Doors Report, international student enrolment in the U.S. for the academic year 2016- 2017 totaled 1,078,822 and contributed 36.9 billion dollars to the U.S. economy (NAFSA, n.d.; IIE, 2018). These numbers show that international students contribute significant financial value to U.S. HEIs (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Lee & Rice, 2007; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013; Pandit, 2007; Ramos et al., 2016). However, the host of benefits international students contribute to U.S. colleges and universities extend beyond the financial and economic gains experienced by these institutions as a result of their enrolment.

The prestige and personality of U.S. HEIs are enhanced when international students choose to study in the U.S. (Gold, 2016; Pandit, 2007; Yao, 2014). Additionally, U.S. colleges and universities attain improved completion rates, global competence, diversity, and undertake competitive research as a result of international student enrolment (Knox et al., 2013; Korobova & Starobin, 2015; Kumi-Yeboah, 2014; Liu, 2011; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013; Mamiseishvili,

2012; Yao, 2014; Yao, 2016). To maintain conciseness in this section of the study, a more detailed delineation of the value international students add to U.S. HEIs is provided in the literature review.

To narrow the scope of this study, the state of Arkansas was selected to explore international students' perception of the campus carry phenomenon. I selected Arkansas because the state's legislature enacted its Campus Carry laws (Acts 562 and 859) while I pursued studies as an international student at a university within the state. Statistically, international student enrollment for academic year 2016-2017 in Arkansas was 6,455 students, supporting 1,174 jobs, and contributing 160.4 million dollars to the state's economy (NAFSA, n.d.). To be even more precise, at SU the site of this study, international student enrolment contributed over $15 million and supported over 90 jobs in the 2017-2018 academic year (NAFSA, n.d.). NAFSA uses the IIE *Open Doors* study abroad survey, a national data collection system, which collects data from colleges annually, to collate the aforementioned data about SU and other higher education institutions in the U.S. (NAFSA, 2009).

Apart from the need to garner international students' narratives about the campus carry phenomenon, my personal interest in conducting this study stemmed from intense debates in my classes about the imminent and presumed impacts of the phenomenon on the campus experience. These classroom discussions and my own personal concerns about campus carry piqued my interest and led me to question the possible impacts of the law on international students attending SU. I speculated that the campus experiences of international students could be impacted by the law and consciously decided to engage in research to explore this assumption.

The phenomenon became more interesting to me after reading that SU informed campus constituents that they would rely on the directives given by University of Arkansas system in

establishing their campus carry policies (Winn, 2017). Additionally, the university made constituents cognizant of the fact that they must have an enhanced carry permit to carry a gun on their campus. SU also stipulated that if individuals are seen with exposed guns or are in the act of threatening anyone with a gun, they should be reported immediately to the Arkansas state police. The University of Arkansas system directed SU to inform constituents that in the event of an active shooting on campus, they should follow the strategies learned during active shooter training (Winn, 2017).

Definition of Key Terms

The content of this study is replete with legal and technical terms that must be defined for the intended audience. The definition of these terms will assist the reader in comprehending the content outlined throughout the study. Additionally, defining these terms facilitates an appreciation of my decision to explore the attitudes and perceptions of international students at SU regarding the implementation of campus carry policies at the institution. The following key terms are essential to understanding the content throughout this study:

- *Active shooters* are one or more persons attempting to kill or are in the act of killing people in a populated area (Sikes et al., 2018).
- *Concealed Carry* refers to the right to carry and hold in proximity a concealed gun in public (Marciniak, 2015; O'Mara, 2016).
- *Defensive pessimism* is defined as a coping strategy used by a person "to prepare for any event perceived as stressful, by which negative thinking transforms anxiety into action" (Wright, 2014, p. 17).

- Social ecology or ecological systems refer to settings in which an individual's growth and development is molded and/or influenced by elements within the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts of society (Bronfenbrenner, 1993).
- A *mass shooting* is an active shooting situation in which four or more people are killed in an isolated incident (Sikes et al., 2018).
- *May Issue* states are states with enacted Right-to-Carry-Laws, but qualified persons must prove a need to acquire a permit (Moody & Marvell, 2018).
- *No Issue* states are states that do not have laws allowing citizens to carry concealed handguns (Buckeye Firearms Association, 2010).
- *Open carry* refers to the right to carry a gun out in public (Meltzer, 2014; Molla, 2014).
- *Right-to-Carry-Laws (RTC-Laws)* are laws allowing individuals to carry concealed guns (CCW) (Moody & Marvell, 2018).
- *Shall Issue* states are states with enacted Right-to-Carry-Laws where anyone who qualifies to acquire a permit can do so (Moody & Marvell, 2018).
- *International students* are defined as "students who have crossed a national or territorial border for the purpose of education and are now enrolled outside their country of origin" (UNESCO, 2017). In the U.S. these students are on a temporary sojourn and do not possess an I-51 or Green Card, are not undocumented immigrants, and are not refugees; instead, they remain in the U.S. on an F-1, J-1, or M-1 visa (Thorstensson, 2001; UNESCO, 2017).
- *Unrestricted or Constitutional Carry* refers to states in which a permit to carry a fireman is not required by law (NRA, 2018).

Again, the terms defined above are integral to understanding the information throughout the study especially the literature review. Most of these words speak to the broader political, social, legal, and cultural affinity for guns in the U.S. The next section of this study presents a summary of some of the relevant literature which supports its intended purpose. The section begins with a discussion of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993). This is the theoretical framework that was applied in this study.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The psychosocial development of students is affected when they are exposed to the anxieties and violence associated with the presence and use of guns within the campus environment. This makes the inclusion of student development theory vital to the campus carry debate (LaBanc et al., 2015). The application of student development theory in campus carry based research can illuminate student experiences as colleges create and implement campus carry policies. When studies of this nature are conducted, they may inform colleges and universities that they need to put programs in place to help students cope with the realities of the campus carry phenomenon (LaBanc et al., 2015). It also allows for a wider cross-section of input from students in the campus carry policy development process. Achieving a broader cross-section of student input may result in international students' perceptions of the phenomenon being added in the campus-wide discourse. Therefore, in this descriptive phenomenological study, I initiated the inclusion of the views of international students into the campus carry debate at SU. I used Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) to investigate how international students are affected by the legalization of guns on campus.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1993)

The reciprocal influence of international students on U.S. college campuses contributes to the construction of diverse campus environments. These environments impact the way colleges operate. Russian American developmental psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner developed a theory of human ecological development which inferred that an individual is affected by an interconnected and symbiotic ecosystem. Reciprocated interactions in symbiotic social settings influence an individual's development over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). The legalization of

guns on college campuses in the state of Arkansas may have produced a significant shift in the ecology of campus environments. This shift may affect all constituents including international students. A descriptive phenomenological inquiry informed by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) would clarify the nature of this transference and how it affects international students.

It is important to note at this point that the PPCT domains were a consistent feature of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) and numerous iterations after (Bronfenbrenner, 1995a, 1995b, 1998, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). As such, this research referred to numerous studies that used a later model of Bronfenbrenner's theory that integrated the PPCT domains that were originally outlined in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993). In addition, Renn and Arnold (2003) re-conceptualized Bronfenbrenner's PPCT domains to demonstrate how the ecological environment college students are exposed to impacts their development.

Theory Development and Evolution

Urie Bronfenbrenner began crafting his theory of human ecological development in the early 1900s. At the onset, Bronfenbrenner prioritized the importance of context in explaining the development of children (1979). An in-depth general systems theory espoused in his writings from 1977 to 2005 suggested that human development occurred in five systems. These systems are the *microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem,* and *chronosystem*. The systems were then converted into four domains - person, process, context, and time (PPCT). The chronosystem was acknowledged as *time* in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). The PPCT domains were created to show how the individual's biological characteristics and the contexts contained within each system inform

proximal processes or *developmental engines (*Bronfenbrenner, 1993). Each PPCT domain in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) is described below. Renn and Arnold's (2003) interpretation of each domain in higher education contexts is also explicated.

Person

In Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) the role of the person in the system and the influences of their biological characteristics on their development form the core of the theory. Bronfenbrenner (1993) surmised that as the person develops, some personal traits known as *developmentally instigative characteristics* will become more influential than others. Bronfenbrenner's first and yet to be named *developmentally instigative characteristic* connotes that different students on college campuses will extract varied responses from peers, faculty, and administrators.

Selective responsivity which denotes how individuals navigate their environments, is the second characteristic. Renn and Arnold (2003) used *selective responsivity* to describe the proclivity of college students to choose whether to be social or antisocial. When an individual is engaged in progressively intricate endeavors, they re-conceptualize their environment and seek intellectually challenging activities to engage in on-campus (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). Bronfenbrenner (1993) called this developmentally instigative characteristic, s*tructuring proclivities*. The final characteristic is directive belief. According to Renn and Arnold (2003) directive belief implies that when college students achieve academic success, they perceive it as their intentional efforts to meet known expectations. The study generated findings from the sample's stories which spoke to Bronfenbrenner's (2003) developmentally instigative characteristics.

Process

Bronfenbrenner (1993) used proximal processes to describe a tightknit reciprocal relationship between the person and those within their environment. These close mutual relationships influence personal development despite the individual's genotypic and phenotypic disposition. Renn and Arnold (2003) see processes as complex systems in the college environment. These systems delineate the relationships among college students and other campus constituents, especially peers (Renn & Arnold, 2003).

In this study, international students' perception of campus carry at SU were informed by proximal processes. These proximal processes included weapon socialization encounters with various players in the micro, meso, exo, and macro systems outlined by Bronfenbrenner (1993). Weapon socialization at home, within their peer groups, and at prior institutions where they pursued studies influenced some participant's level of support or opposition to the policy. Furthermore, the participants' reaction to the implementation of campus carry policies at SU was informed by their personal knowledge of Arkansas' Campus Carry Law. Media reports on Arkansas' Campus Carry Law were also channels of sensitization to the phenomenon.

Context

In Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993), four environmental systems are used to describe the bioecological contexts which affect individual development. These four systems are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and the macrosystem *(*Bronfenbrenner, 1993). Bronfenbrenner placed the individual at the nucleus of his theory or the microsystem. Here, explicit relational constructs defined the interaction between the proximal processes and actors such as family members, peers, college campuses, and communities (Bronfenbrenner,

1993). These relational constructs initiated the individual's social development within the system (Boon et al., 2012; Bronfenbrenner, 1993; Quintanilla-Ng, 2006).

The mesosystem emerges from the social constructions which constitute the microsystem. Bronfenbrenner (1993) outlined that the complexities of the relationships and experiences across the micro and mesosystems reinforces the individual's perceptions of social phenomena within their environment. Engulfing the micro and mesosystem are the indirect external stimuli, people, institutions, and systems that shape the individual's experience and development. This is known as the exosystem and includes distant family and community members (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). The most remote and complex nexus of social, political, and cultural influences in the individual's environment create the macrosystem. The macrosystem impacts the other systems in the theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). Relating Bronfenbrenner's context domain to the perceptions of international students regarding campus carry delineated the cross-cultural experiences which inform their views of the phenomenon.

Time

Time is a critical element in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993). Time describes the long-term duration of proximal processes in the development of the individual. Bronfenbrenner (1995a, 1995b) established the concept of the chronosystem in the time domain. The chronosystem showed that time influenced the individual's proximal interaction with the various systems in the context domain over their entire lifespan.

Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998) postulated that within the chronosystem there are three categories of time *micro, meso and, macro time*. Micro-time describes progression versus irregularity inside the continuous episodical phases of proximal processes. Meso-time is the intervals of these episodical phases over extensive interims of time, for example, days and

weeks. Macro time is the changing generational beliefs and happenings in the larger society that are influenced by the processes and outcomes of the human development trajectory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). The chronosystem system was incorporated into Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) which made it more adaptive to change.

As previously mentioned Renn and Arnold (2003) incorporated the chronosystem into the time domain of their adaption of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993). According to Renn and Arnold (2003), "The accumulation of life experiences over time is a lasting effect of the chronosystem on the individual, and students arrive at college with unique characteristics shaped by common social forces and by individual experiences" (p. 273). In the context of this study, international students experienced dissimilar lifelong exposure to gun ownership, use, and misuse. Their perceptions of the campus carry phenomenon was informed by these experiences.

Reason for selecting Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1993)

The PPCT concept within Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and all its iterations can be applied in contemporary research (Rosa &Tudge, 2013; Tudge et al., 2009). Moreover, numerous authors successfully used the PPCT concept in cross-sectional, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method studies in the higher education context (Douglas, 2014; Hwang, 2015; Jessup-Anger & Aragones, 2013; Johnson, 2016; Katz & Somers, 2017; Peltz, 2013; Renn & Arnold 2003; Ryder et al., 2016; Stebleton et al., 2017). In fact, Renn and Arnold (2003) advocated for the incorporation of human ecology theory into higher education research by examining campus peer culture using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993).

In their research, Renn and Arnold (2003) reasoned that administrators, faculty, peers, time, and academics influenced student development while they pursue higher education. As such, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) should be considered when conducting

research among college students (Renn & Arnold, 2003). Renn and Arnold (2003) reimagined the context and time elements in the PPCT aspect of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) and highlighted the composition of the bioecological environment of U.S. college campuses. Specifically, the concepts of micro, meso, and macro time from the chronosystem in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1995) was added to Renn and Arnold's (2003) reinterpretation of the theory. Figure 1 illustrates Renn and Arnold's (2003) re-conceptualized version of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) showing the use of the PPCT concept in higher education settings.

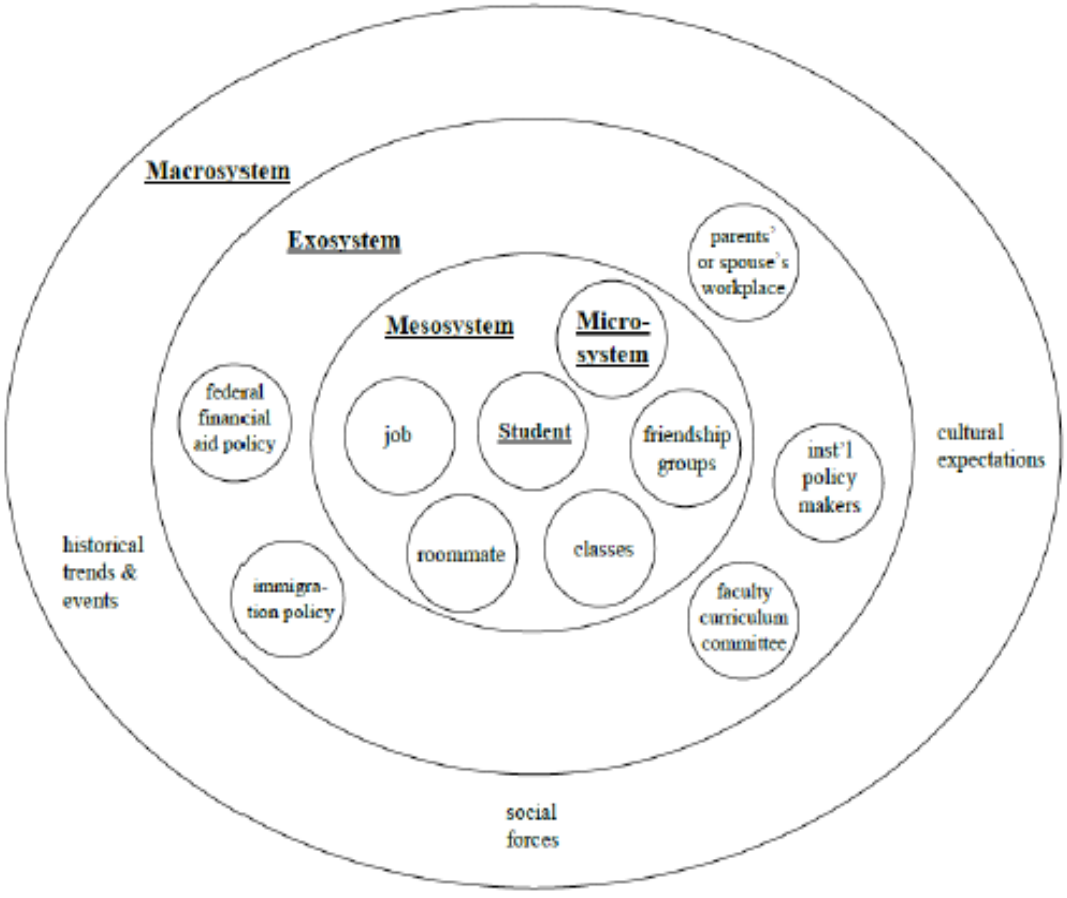

Figure 1. *Renn and Arnold's (2003) Reconceptualization of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) as applied in the College Environment (Renn & Arnold, 2003).*
Note: This model was used with permission from the Taylor and Francis Group (Appendix A).

The model provided a means through which college administrators can study the immediate (meso and exo-systems) and the wider societal factors (macro-system) which influences the experiences of students pursuing higher education (Renn & Arnold, 2003). In short, Renn and Arnold's (2003) work stimulated the acceptance of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) as a student development theory in higher education research, especially studies focused on student development in college (Patton et al., 2016; Renn & Arnold, 2003). However, Patton et al. (2016) critiqued Renn and Arnold's (2003) interpretation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) by stating that the evolutionary nature of the theory presents challenges to its use and application on a large scale. By the same token, Patton et al. (2016) believed the theory is effective in explaining how various contexts impact college students' higher education experiences.

As previously established, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) is the theoretical foundation on which Renn and Arnold's (2003) research was conducted. In this study, I used Renn and Arnold's (2003) contextual reinterpretation of Bronfenbrenner's PPCT concept to analyze the findings in this study. At the same time, I regularly referred to Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) as the theoretical framework for this study.

Application of Theory in Higher Education Research

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) is applied in higher education research to highlight that peer interaction, academics, and social interactions contribute to the holistic development of college students. As such, college student development should be studied and analyzed by focusing on the environmental culture in which the student develops over time (Renn & Arnold, 2003). The PPCT concept in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems

theory(1993) is replete in higher education research (Douglas, 2014; Hwang, 2015; Jessup-Agner & Aragones, 2013; Johnson, 2016; Katz & Somers, 2017; Peltz (2013).

Douglas (2014) used Bronfenbrenner's PPCT concept to analyze how first-year experiences in college impacted the social identity of 13 traditional-aged college students. The college students were purposely selected from a Southeastern 4-year public university in the U.S. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1994, 2005) combined with Berry's acculturation theory (1994, 1997, 2003, 2005, and 2006) was employed by Hwang (2015) to carry out a descriptive phenomenological study at a public university located in rural, Southeast Texas. The study had two purposes. The first purpose was to "understand the needs and concerns of Asian international graduate students in their adjustment within their university community" (Hwang, 2015, p.11). The second purpose was to "understand the daily cross-cultural experiences of Asian international graduate students in the master's program at a tier II university" (Hwang, 2015, p. 11). Data was collected using semi-structured interviews among five purposefully sampled Asian international graduate students (AIGS) in a master's program.

By the same token, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) was used by Jessup-Anger and Aragones (2013) "to explore students' peer interactions within their cohort and in the host countries during a short-term study abroad" (p. 24). Jessup-Anger and Aragones (2013) collected data using observations, individual semi-structured interviews, and document reviews via a qualitative case study. A total of nine students participated in the interviews. Johnson (2016) used the PPCT concept in Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development (2005) to ascertain how 42 African American males perceived the justice system. The study was conducted using qualitative phenomenological inquiry. The sampling method used was snowball sampling (Johnson, 2016).

In another study, Katz and Somers (2017) utilized Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) to investigate the relationship between personal and environmental factors and their impact on students' adjustment in college. A convenience sample of 241 first-year college students participated in the study. The study was conducted at a large Midwestern public university. The sample completed a survey which measured "college adjustment, coping skills, shyness, social support, parental support for the college transition, and perceived university environment" (Katz & Somers, 2017, p. 58).

Peltz (2013) used a case study to qualitatively gauge the experiences of eight male first-generation students at Kenmont College (a residential, liberal arts institution). The PPCT concept in the 2005 iteration of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory was the theoretical framework used in the study. The men in the sample were purposefully selected from a group of 28 male first-generation students (Peltz, 2013). They all matriculated into and persisted to their final year of undergraduate study at Kenmont College. Each participant was treated as a unit of analysis (individual cases). Narrative data were collected from them using semi-structured interviews (Peltz, 2013).

Across these studies, the PPCT concept from Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) and its later iterations were effectively applied in analyzing the findings of these studies. The application of the PPCT domains in these studies revealed the importance of studying college students in the contexts which they exist. For example, Douglas (2014) deciphered that as the participants in the study transitioned into the college context, their interactions within the system impacted their identity development. The students' social identities in the first year of college were affected by three elements -independence, peer interaction, and isolation. Family

ties, social identification, and balancing college life informed the students' identity development (Douglas, 2014).

Similarly, Peltz (2013) found that four significant themes emerged which influenced the participants' decision to attend Kenmont College. These themes were "parental investment in education, the influence of siblings, the impact of the high school environment, and the role of friendship groups" (Peltz, 2013, p. 188). Parents instilled the value of education by investing financial resources and cultivating a college-going mindset among the participants. Furthermore, the participants indicated that they had supportive and acrimonious relationships with their siblings which influenced their decision to attend college.

Moreover, parental attachment facilitated a sense of security and independence for the participants as they explored the new college environment (Douglas, 2014). This closeness of the relationship between the participants and their families acted as a source of personal reassurance. It helped them to develop a sense of security and independence while transitioning into the college environment (Douglas, 2014).

Likewise, Johnson (2016) established that within the microsystem, the parents of the participants in their study significantly influenced their perceptions of the justice system. Johnson (2016) also deciphered that "specific emphasis was placed on the macro system and the effect of laws and law enforcement on African American males" (Johnson, 2016, p. 91). Johnson (2016) found that the relationships in the process domain significantly influenced the participants' perception of the justice system. For example, racial socialization by their parents and warnings about how to conduct themselves in the presence of the police prejudiced the participants' perception of the police and criminal justice system (Johnson, 2016).

In Douglas' (2014) study, peer interactions in the first year meant that the participants developed new relationships with others. As the participants joined multiple groups on campus, they accumulated additional social capital which shaped their identity in the first year of college. Douglas (2014) concluded that multiple identities are created when individual interactions take place in new environments. These identities are molded as students realize that they need to adapt and assimilate.

Correspondingly, Peltz (2013) discovered that the participants' persistence and resilience at Kenmont College was influenced by faculty interactions. Campus diversity and inclusiveness, classroom diversity and inclusiveness, and academic expectations were also determinants of persistence and resilience. The pervasive learning community, intellectual and diverse body of students, and supportive co-curricular environment positively impacted the participants' experiences at Kenmont (Peltz, 2013). Peltz (2013) deduced that these were the most salient aspects of the Kenmont College environment which influenced the participants' experiences on campus. Douglas (2014) recommended that campus administrators pay attention to these realities within the campus context and design programs to foster student transition. Boon et al. (2012) supported Douglas' (2014) and Peltz's (2013) findings by proffering that the influences of close reciprocal relationships in the environment have the greatest impact on an individual's development.

In Hwang's (2015) study the key themes which defined the cross-cultural experiences of the Asian international graduate students (AIGS) were "recognizing differences, facing difficulties, and coping with difficulties" (p. 116). The application of Bronfenbrenner's (1994, 2005) PPCT concept showed that there was an established ecological interaction between the AIGS and their cross-cultural experiences (Hwang, 2015). This ecological interaction

represented “how individuals evolved into an agent while overcoming challenges created by the environment” (Hwang, 2015, p. 125).

Participants in the study stated that they noticed linguistic and cultural differences as soon as they entered the campus environment. Pedagogical styles, interactions with professors, scholastic policies, and academic goals were the key cultural differences the students found within the classroom and wider campus environment (Hwang, 2015). Other difficulties encountered were informed by personal attributes, such as their inner emotions and feelings conflicting with their efforts to adapt and assimilate into the new culture (Hwang, 2015). The AIGS felt marginalized and rejected on campus and in the wider community. They also felt a lack of resources in the campus environment such as housing and transportation made it difficult to culturally adapt (Hwang, 2015).

To cope, the AIGS accessed formal support provided by the International Services Office (ISO) and informal support from local/American friends. Moreover, a small number of the AIGS built relationships with their professors, academic advisors, senior students, and classmates in their academic departments as a coping mechanism (Hwang, 2015). Lastly, the participants in Hwang’s (2015) work did not perceive loneliness to be a negative psychosomatic problem since they were introverted and enjoyed being alone.

In their study, Katz and Somers (2017) found that college adjustment was significantly affected by maladaptive coping and shyness. This finding remained evident even after controlling for the interceding variables of parental support, social support, and perceptions of the university environment. Katz and Somers (2017) further postulated that “Gender was only associated with personal/emotional college adjustment, but not global, academic, or social college adjustment” (p. 62).

By the same token, Jessup-Anger and Aragones (2013) discovered that most of the students in their sample used significant amounts of time and energy thinking about their roles in the cohort. They also spent time reflecting on the study abroad environment and the context of the microsystem they share. The students' account of their social interactions exposed "their selective responsivity (Bronfenbrenner, 1993) to the environment and illustrated their personal stimulus characteristics (Bronfenbrenner, 1993) in relation to other students and the host countries. Their directive beliefs (Bronfenbrenner, 1993) were exposed by their response to their experience" (Jessup-Anger & Aragones, 2013, p. 27). Bronfenbrenner's (1993) ecological systems theory was found to be applicable to the study abroad experience since the "students' differing developmentally instigative characteristics, more than their demographic characteristics, shaped their approach to peers and experiences in the host countries" (Jessup-Anger & Aragones, 2013, p. 33). Jessup-Anger and Aragones (2013) surmised that the application of Bronfenbrenner's (1993) ecological systems theory to the study abroad environment reinforced the importance of studying the person and the context simultaneously.

The external validity of these studies was affected by unrepresentative samples, single-site selection, and potential language barriers. For example, Douglas (2014) had more minoritized students responding to the recruitment emails than Whites and males in their study even though the study was conducted at a predominately White institution (PWI). Likewise, Jessup-Anger and Aragones (2013) sampled a homogenous group of participants which limited the generalizability of the findings as it relates to race and ethnicity in their study. Douglas' (2014) findings were also ungeneralizable because the study focused on first-year residential traditional-aged students as opposed to looking at variables such as race, gender, and first-generation students. In all four studies, only one college campus was used to select the desired

sample (Douglas, 2014; Hwang, 2015; Jessup-Anger & Aragones, 2013; Katz & Somers, 2017; Peltz, 2013). Peltz (2013) only focused on the experiences of male students. Furthermore, a deep racial analysis was not possible because race was not a delimiting factor in the study (Peltz, 2013). Johnson (2016) opined that the study's scope could be broadened to include college males who were outside the 18 to 25 age group recruited for the study.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) and the PPCT concept therein is the ideal model to describe how students develop and learn about themselves in college (Everson, 2015). The theory also explicates their experiences as they interact with and reciprocate influence on U.S. college campuses (Everson, 2015). In essence, the application of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) in higher education research helps to determine how the interactions in the campus environment hinders or catalyzes student development (Renn & Arnold, 2003). The optimal growth and development of college students can be achieved if campus administrators and researchers use Bronfenbrenner's theory to understand the culture and climate of the campus environment. Administrators will then be able to customize programs and services that promote the positive development of students. These programs can help to alleviate any anxiety, fear, or apprehension students may feel while assimilating and interacting on campus.

As previously stated, this study used a descriptive phenomenological inquiry to explore the perceptions and attitudes of international students regarding the campus carry phenomenon at SU. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) is the theoretical framework through which I analyzed international students' perceptions of campus carry at the institution. Holistic application of the PPCT concept in higher education research and practice can trace student development in separate periods or over an extended period as they progress through college and

interact within the systems of the model (Patton et al., 2016). As such, revelations about how the campus carry phenomenon changed the climate and culture of the campus environment for this student demographic may be forthcoming when Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) is applied. In addition, the environmental elements which influence international students' perception of the phenomenon at SU were illuminated. Findings from this study may inform future studies which scrutinize international student development as they progress through college and grapple with the implications of campus carry.

Literature Review

The literature review of this study contextualizes the issue under investigation by comprehensively synthesizing the relevant literature on the campus carry phenomenon and international student experiences on U.S. college campuses. A synopsis of the United States' gun culture and safety on U.S. college campuses open the ensuing discourse. I also illuminated the nature and impact of the proponents and opponents of the campus carry phenomenon. The specific campus carry laws enacted by ten states are then briefly discussed. Subsequent to that, campus constituents' perception of the legalization of guns on campus is outlined in this section of the paper. Furthermore, I will elaborate on the experiences of international students on U.S. college campuses. The literature review concludes with a summary of the gaps and the key findings in the literature presented.

U.S. Gun Culture

A brief review of the United States' gun culture is vital to understanding the underlying reasons why Americans argue for and against laws allowing guns on campus. According to Cobb (2014) the U.S. maintains a gun culture in which gun ownership is considered a way of life. Howell (2015) postulated that gun ownership in the U.S. increased by 278% from 2007 to 2015.

The Crime Prevention Research Center (CPRC) emphasized that over 11 million U.S. citizens are concealed carry permit holders (Birnbaum, 2013; Lott et al., 2015). The number of concealed handgun permits in the U.S. stood at 14.5 million in 2016 (Lott, 2016).

The pervasive belief among concealed carry proponents is that the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects and guarantees an individual's rights to bear arms (U. S. Const. amend. II. 1791). The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution explicitly states that "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a Free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed" (Auwarter, 2000, p. 1). The Supreme Court of the United States in the *District of Columbia v Heller (2008)* advanced that the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution allows all U.S. citizens to legally bear arms in public or private.

In adherence, the federal government gave states the authority to create their own Right-to-Carry-Laws. However, to retain some level of control, the federal government enacted legislation restricting states from giving permits to unfit individuals. The right given to states to make their own gun laws bolstered the prevalence of and the ability to acquire guns in the U. S. (Cobb, 2014; Dahl et al., 2016; Rogers, 2013; Wright, 2014).

The Supreme Court also explicitly outlawed the possession of guns in sensitive areas including state and federal buildings in the *District of Columbia v Heller (2008)* case (Birnbaum, 2013; Cramer, 2014; Webster et al., 2016). Moreover, the Supreme Court in *McDonald v. City of Chicago (2010)* outlined that the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution prohibits states from forbidding guns in places not designated as sensitive areas (U. S. Const. amend. XIV. 1868; Birnbaum, 2013). Any violation of these rulings is unconstitutional and is open to challenges in the U.S. Supreme Court (Birnbaum, 2013).

Although colleges and universities are not identified as sensitive areas in either ruling, some states applied them in such a way that carrying guns on a college campus is illegal (Birnbaum, 2013; Cramer, 2014). This anomaly is a central argument used by some proponents of guns on campus. The crux of the matter is that in the *District of Columbia v Heller* decision, the Supreme Court identified schools as an example of sensitive areas. However, under the powers granted to them by the federal government, state governments dictated what constituted sensitive areas in their gun laws (Birnbaum, 2013). Moreover, the Gun Control Act (1968) restricted Congress' ability to direct how U.S. states defined sensitive areas in gun-related legislation (Webster et al., 2016). As a result, states and higher education institutions incongruously decided on the designation of college campuses as gun free zones.

Congress' enactment of the Gun-Free School Zones Act (1990) attempted to correct the sensitive places incongruity. However, it only restricted gun possession in elementary and secondary school zones and not on college campuses (Webster et al., 2016). Additionally, the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (1993) reduced the gun control limitations the Gun Control Act of 1968 imposed on Congress and specified the conditions under which states issued gun licenses. What's more, the provisions under the Guns Free Schools Act (1994) pressed states to maintain zero tolerance laws against gun possession in public schools. Students caught flouting these state laws were to be expelled from school for up to one year. However, the public schools mentioned in the law did not include colleges and universities (Underwood, 2017). The Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (1993) also had no provisions for the legal possession of guns on college campuses.

Congress passed the Jeanne Cleary Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Jean Cleary Act) in 1990. The Jean Cleary Act demanded that federally

funded HEIs annually report campus crime statistics to the federal government and the campus community. However, data on gun crimes are not specifically required from colleges under the Cleary Act (Gardella et al., 2015). Evidently, campus carry is not a major feature of these pieces of federal legislation because gun laws are made and amended in each individual state.

State Gun Laws

Currently, all 50 states have legislation allowing qualified citizens to carry concealed guns. Some states are classified as Shall Issue, May Issue, or Unrestricted states (Birnbaum, 2013; Cramer, 2014; Franz, 2017; Ghent & Grant, 2015; Maltese et al., 2013; Molla, 2014; NRA, 2014; Webster et al., 2016). However, states are allowed to issue nondiscretionary licenses, and this relaxed the federal regulations for acquiring gun permits. As such, most U.S. citizens find it relatively easy to obtain a license to carry a gun (Cramer, 2014).

Those states classified as Shall Issue states are Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas (changes to Unrestricted when travelling outside one's county of residence), Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, and Minnesota (Guns to Carry, 2018). Other Shall Issue states include Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, and Montana (a concealed carry permit is needed to carry a concealed firearm in Montana's cities and towns. Unrestricted and Shall Issue policies coexist in the state). In New Mexico, a permit is needed for concealed carry only and residents can legally open carry without a permit (Guns to Carry, 2018). New Mexico also operates as a limited Unrestricted state although designated as a Shall Issue state. North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin are all Shall Issue states (Guns to Carry, 2018).

States with Unrestricted gun laws include Alaska, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, and Missouri (Permits are not required, but can be obtained. The permit exempts the owner from local laws), New Hampshire, Vermont (Gun permits were never issued or required in Vermont), West Virginia, and Wyoming (Residents of the state can open or conceal carry without a permit but Non-residents must have a permit to do either) (Guns to Carry, 2018). There are 8 states considered as May Issue states: California, Delaware, Hawaii (functions as a No Issue state), Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island (Shall Issue and May Issue policies coexist in the state) (Guns to Carry, 2018). The various laws which give a U.S. citizen the right to bear arms are monitored by the National Rifle Association which offers protection against perceived violation of these rights (Lindeen, 2010).

Protecting the U.S. Gun Culture

The National Rifle Association (NRA), the most voluble concealed carry proponents, affirms the United States' gun culture and uses strident lobbying efforts to ensure that the Second Amendment rights of U.S. citizens are not violated. The NRA articulates to gun control proponents that allowing individuals to carry guns deters crime (Birnbaum, 2013; Hock, 2009; Lindeen, 2010; Lott, 2010). Lott et al. (2015) supported the NRA's stance and opined that U.S. citizens own guns to prevent crime. Furthermore, those states with Right-to-Carry laws witness lower rates of violent crimes and homicides (Lott et al., 2015; Right-to-carry, 2008). Concealed carry detractors cite increased suicide rates, increases in domestic homicides, limited crime deterrence, and loose concealed permit laws as their major arguments against U.S. gun laws (Duwe et al., 2014; Vernick et al., 2007).

The national gun debate continues today and in recent times the demand to change the "Right-to-Carry" culture evolved into bouts of national protests such as the "March for Our

Lives." The movement came about after mass shooting incidents at Parkland High School, Las Vegas, and the First Baptist Church in San Antonio, Texas (Gray, 2018). As the Right-to-Carry controversy grows nationally, the tempest in state legislatures and on college campuses continues to brew with renewed interests in states allowing guns on campus (Watkins, 2016).

Guns and Safety on U.S. College Campuses

Contradicting views among U.S. college campus stakeholders about the safety of U.S. college campuses is part of the reason campus carry debates are pervasive in state legislatures (Birnbaum, 2013; Blair & Schweit, 2014; Sanburn, 2015; Spitzer, 2015). Therefore, it would be remiss of me to continue our discussion without describing the general perception of safety on college campuses compared to the general U.S. society. Despite Roark (1987) suggesting that colleges are microcosms of society, Patten et al. (2012); Price et al. (2014) and Spitzer (2015) alleged that a statistical comparison of crime statistics in the general population versus college campuses proved that college campuses are inherently safe. Moreover, Birnbaum (2013) conveyed that the national homicide rates were 4.8 per 100,000 compared to 0.11 per 100,000 on college campuses. To further confirm the safety of college campuses, Sanburn (2015) reported a decrease in campus shootings since 2001. The total number of campus shootings stood at 23 in 2015 (Sanburn, 2015). However, Sanburn (2015) failed to describe the intricacies of these campus shootings. The next paragraphs offer a brief description of some of the most notable shootings on U.S. college campuses.

Gun Violence on U.S. College Campuses

An examination of lethal college campus shootings in the U.S. revealed that on August 1, 1966, student and Marine sniper, Charles Whitman, shot and killed 13 persons from atop the clock tower on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin (Montgomery, 2016). This

incident is widely perceived as the beginning of non-military mass shootings in the U.S. (Rosenwald, 2017). In the years since the shooting at the University of Texas at Austin and before the fatalities at Virginia Tech, deadly campus shootings occurred at the University of Iowa, Johns Hopkins University, and San Diego State University. Mass shootings also occurred at Wayne State University, the University of Arkansas, and the University of Arizona.

In November 1991, a post-doctoral student, Gang Lu, shot and killed five individuals and then committed suicide at the University of Iowa (Wood, 2007). At Johns Hopkins University, a senior student, Robert Harwood shot and killed sophomore Rex Chao in April of 1996 (Wood, 2007). Similarly, on August 15, 1996, three engineering professors at San Diego State University were killed by Frederick Davidson, a student at the university. Davidson was angry because he failed his master's degree thesis on his second attempt (Wood, 2007).

In another academic performance related shooting, Wlodzimierz Dedecjus shot and killed Professor Andrzej Olbrot on December 10, 1998, at Wayne State University (Woods, 2007). At the University of Arkansas, Professor John Locke was shot and killed on August 28, 2000, by his disgruntled advisee James Easton Kelly (Wood, 2007). Two years later, Robert S. Flores, Jr. a student at the University of Arizona who was at risk of flunking two courses, shot and killed three professors in their classrooms before committing suicide (Woods, 2007).

At the University of Alabama Huntsville, Biology Professor, Amy Bishop shot and killed three faculty members and wounded three others after being denied tenure (Wheaton & Dewan, 2010). Meanwhile, One Goh, a past student of Oikos University in California shot and killed seven people at the institution's campus on April 2, 2012 (Wollan & Onishi, 2012). In November 2014, lawyer, Myron May an alumnus of Florida State University's main campus shot three people at the university's Strozier library (Farrington & Fineout, 2014; Southall & Williams,

2017). Thirty-one-year-old May suffered from paranoia and committed the crimes out of fear that the government was watching him (Farrington & Fineout, 2014).

Lastly, on June 1, 2016, Mainak Sarkar, 38, shot and killed UCLA professor William Klug and wounded a second professor in Engineering Building 4 at the university (Chuck et al., 2016; Hoyt, 2016; Mather et al., 2016). The shooting happened because Sarkar suspected that Klug stole his computer codes and gave them to another student (Chuck et al., 2016). Sarkar committed suicide immediately after the shootings (Mather et al., 2016). The details of these shootings challenge Birnbaum's (2013) and Sanburn's (2015) arguments that college campuses are safe. As a result, the next section of this study outlines the perception of safety among campus constituents as reported in empirical studies.

Campus Constituents' Perception of Campus Safety

The findings in some of the empirical studies which sought campus constituents' perceptions of and attitudes towards campus carry spoke to the safety of U.S. college campuses. College presidents (Price et al., 2016; Price et al., 2014), campus security directors (Hosking, 2014), and faculty (Dahl et al., 2016; Thompson et al., 2012) all offered their perception of safety on U.S. college campuses. Students in studies by Bouffard et al. (2012); Deboer (2018); Jang et al. (2014); Spratt (2015); Thompson et al. (2013) and Verrecchia and Hendrix (2018) also expressed their perception of safety on U.S. college campuses.

Price et al. (2014) used statistical data to examine the attitudes of a national sample of 401 college presidents regarding concealed guns on campus. Ninety-eight percent of these presidents thought faculty and students were safe on their campuses and 81% said faculty and students did not avoid areas on campus out of fear for safety. However, gun-related crimes on campus were reported by 7% of presidents in the study (Price et al., 2014). Likewise, Price et al.

(2016) surveyed 103 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) presidents to question their views of concealed carry practices on campus. In the study, 94.9% of these presidents thought faculty and students felt safe on their campuses (Price et al., 2016). In addition, campus security directors in Hosking's (2014) qualitative study speculated that the college campuses in rural Wyoming are safe. They credited this to these colleges maintaining proactive security departments on their campuses (Hosking, 2014).

In faculty-based studies, Thompson et al. (2012) surveyed 1,125 faculty members at 15 randomly selected colleges in five Great Lake states. With a response rate of 70%, Thompson et al. (2012) found that 97% of faculty felt safe on campus and 82% did not fear or were even concerned about being victims of violence while on campus. Similar to the presidents' perceptions of safety in Price et al.'s (2014) study, 77% of the sample in Thompson et al.'s (2012) study did not avoid places on campus out of fear of safety. By the same token, Dahl et al. (2016) randomly quantified the perceptions of 1,889 community college faculty in 18 states about their attitudes toward campus carry policies at their institutions. The majority of participants in the study (82.4%) felt safe on their college campuses (Dahl et al., 2016).

Students on college campuses also perceived campuses to be safe. In demonstrating this, Spratt (2015) quantitatively measured the perceptions and attitudes regarding campus carry among a random and purposive sample of 20,798 students at a large Midwestern university. A total of 2,060 students completed the instrument and 85% conveyed that they felt safe on campus (Spratt, 2015). Furthermore, 91% of the respondents said that they were not victims of crime on campus (Spratt, 2015). Caucasians, males, students living off-campus, and LGBT students (94%) felt safest on campus (Spratt, 2015).

Similarly, Bouffard et al. (2012) measured the likelihood to carry guns on campus if prohibitive laws were lifted among 3, 261 Criminal Justice majors at a college in Texas and 2,014 at a college in Washington. The study revealed moderate concern (62%) about campus safety on both college campuses. Additional perceptions of campus safety among students were reported by (Deboer, 2018). Deboer (2018) conducted a quantitative comparative study to "examine the impact of gender and sexual orientation on students' perceptions of campus safety and carrying concealed handguns" (p. iv). Results from the study showed that male students (*M*=2.93) felt safer after dark on campus than female students (*M*=2.45). The same results were deciphered when the respondents were asked if they believed their sexual orientation influenced their perception of safety on campus (Deboer, 2018).

On the other hand, female students (*M*=3.31) paid more attention to personal safety out of fear of crime on campus than males (*M*=3.01) (Deboer, 2018). Congruently, females (*M*=2.53) were also more worried about being a victim of crime on campus than males (*M*=1.90). Females (M=1.84) also shared that their perception of safety on campus was more likely to interfere with their daily routine than males (*M*=1.53). Unlike males (*M*=2.93), females were more susceptible to feeling unsafe on campus (*M*=2.45) (Deboer, 2018).

As it relates to sexual orientation, LGBT students (*M*=2.70) were significantly more likely to fear being a victim of crime on campus than non-LGBT students (*M*=2.30). Although Deboer's (2018) and Spratt's (2015) studies were conducted in two separate regions of the U.S., there is a stark contrast between the perception of safety among LGBT students in both studies. Additionally, LGBT students (*M*=3.20) indicated that their sexual orientation was more likely to influence their perception of safety on campus than non-LGBT students (*M*=2.94) (Deboer, 2018).

Deboer's (2018) study was conducted among a purposive sample of 295 undergraduate students at a rural Northeast Texas college. Cross-sectional data was analyzed from the 275 (93.2%) respondents who completed the survey. The survey used in the study was a combined modification of Lenski's (1992) Campus Safety Survey and Bouffard et al.'s (2012) groundbreaking campus carry survey (Deboer, 2018).

In another study, Thompson et al. (2013) assessed the attitudes of a sample of 1,649 undergraduate college students at 15 randomly chosen Midwestern universities. The majority of students (93%) felt safe on their college campuses, 81% were not concerned about being a victim of campus crime, and 54% did not avoid places on campus out of fear (Thompson et al., 2013). To measure the explanatory factors influencing student perceptions of legal concealed guns on campus, Jang et al. (2014) surveyed a stratified random sample of 451 students at a mid-size university in Missouri. The findings revealed low rates of victimization among students in the sample. Additionally, Jang et al. (2014) deduced minimal concern for safety on campus from the data collected.

There is also the belief that campus shootings steadily increased in recent years (Ferraro, 2015). This notion is supported by the University of Texas and the FBI who specified that campus shootings increased from 2007 to 2013 (Blair & Schweit, 2014). Additionally, the campus constituents in some of the previously mentioned studies complained about safety issues on U.S. college campuses. HBCU presidents (71.8%) expressed that faculty and students were victims of crime on their campuses and only 1 in every 5 HBCU president reasoned that campus police reduced or prevented crimes on campus (Price et al., 2016). Price et al. (2016) also stated that 15.4% of all presidents conveyed that a student got shot on their campuses during their tenure (Price et al., 2016). As it relates to faculty experiences, Thompson et al. (2012)

determined that 9% of faculty members were victims of campus crimes and 22% had someone close to them experience campus victimization. Property crimes were the major infractions reported by 86% of faculty (Thompson et al., 2012); a congruent finding in studies among students conducted by Spratt (2015) and Bouffard et al. (2012).

Remarkably, victimization on campus agitated 68% of the students in Spratt's (2015) sample, while 58% thought campus security could not prevent crimes on campus. According to Spratt (2015), 5% of the students surveyed were victims of property crime, another 5% were victims of stalking and/or harassment, and less than 1% experienced gun-related crimes. Students in the study also reported family and friends experiencing crimes on campus (32%) and 6% specified family and friends being exposed to gun-related crimes on campus. Students who experienced pre-college crimes and those with a valid concealed carry permit were more likely to feel unsafe on campus. Moreover, members of firearm organizations, students classified in lower ranks, and those more likely to own guns also expressed feeling less safe on campus (Spratt, 2015).

In Bouffard et al.'s (2012) study, students emphasized low confidence in campus police being able to prevent campus violence (42%). Seven percent reported being victims of crime on campus. Concerns about campus violence were more common among students in Texas (52%) and they also expressed low confidence in the police being able to prevent campus violence (47%) (Bouffard et al., 2012).

Another study by Verrecchia and Hendrix (2018) used emailed surveys to gather data on students' perceptions of campus carry at two Mid-Atlantic colleges from 1,126 students. Verrecchia and Hendrix (2018) discovered that 54.8% of respondents did not feel safe on campus. Twenty-four percent remained neutral on the topic and 20.2% stated that college

campuses were safe. Only, 7% of the respondents did not respond to questions about campuses being safe on the survey (Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018).

As it relates to international students and campus safety, Lane (2013) surmised that these students are aware of and expressed concerns about the gun-related threats to their safety on U.S. college campuses. International students are often warned about these safety threats before leaving their countries (Emily Burt, 2014). Stuteville (2014) also explained that international students and their parents are cognizant of gun violence in the U.S. The U.S. gun culture is perpetuated in Hollywood films and international students often perceive life in the U.S. to be similar. Stuteville (2014) argued that there is genuine confusion among international students about the ease of access to guns in the U.S.

Moreover, some studies also reported the presence of armed students on college campuses. For example, in their study Cavanaugh et al. (2012) emphasized that 20% to 40% of students were armed across 15 academic buildings at one public university campus in Texas. Blair and Schweit (2014) agreed with Cavanaugh et al.'s (2012) finding, while Wright (2014) assumed that campus murders occurred because of the presence of these guns on campus.

In their study, Jang et al. (2015) surveyed a conveniently clustered sample of 451 students at a mid-sized university in Missouri to determine weapon possession among the student body. In addition, Jang et al. (2015) attempted to find out why students possessed guns and other weapons on campus. Findings from the study indicated that 6.2% of students carried guns on campus and 1.8% admitted to carrying firearms and other assault weapons. Overall, 11.3% recounted carrying a gun and other assault weapons on campus and 7.8% confessed to carrying non-defensive weapons such as Tasers, pepper spray, and stun guns (Jang et al., 2015).

Students with parents who owned guns (62%) and those with a friend who carried a gun on campus (13%) were more likely to carry assault weapons on campus (Jang et al., 2015). Male students were 3.9 times more likely than females to carry weapons, especially assault weapons on campus. It was determined that students predominantly carried weapons for self-defense reasons, especially females. Jang et al. (2015) conceded that the findings from the study are not generalizable because they used a convenience sample at a single university. The authors recommended that future studies cover more colleges and use random samples to produce more generalizable findings.

In defense of colleges, Anderson (2015) and Thompson et al. (2013) conveyed that institutional efforts to control crime since Virginia Tech usually reap success due to effective campus safety policies at 85% of public colleges and universities nationwide. Besides, in a qualitative phenomenological study among 7 campus security directors in rural Wyoming, Hosking (2014) ascertained that concealed guns were already on campus, but they were not used in any reported campus crimes pursuant to the requirements of the Jean Cleary Act (1990) and due to the presence of proactive security departments.

Moreover, since the U.S. Congress passed the Cleary Act (1990) public HEIs that are in receipt of federal funding are compelled to publish campus crime statistics (Franz, 2017). Higher education institutions are expected to be proactive and remain in compliance to continue receiving federal financial support. Under the Cleary Act (1990) colleges are not compelled to report all crimes occurring on or off-campus. However, Franz (2017) outlined that the Act encourages HEIs to report the location of crimes, the individuals to whom the crime is reported, the types of reported crimes, and the year in which a crime was reported. Documented crimes

under the Act must occur on campus, the properties where education takes place, and all properties immediately adjacent to these locations (Franz, 2017).

Furthermore, Franz (2017) said that four classifications of crimes are reported in the Cleary Act statistics "hate crimes; sexual offenses; and arrests or referrals for disciplinary action for weapons, law violations, drug abuse, and liquor violations" (p. 7). Incidents that fall into more than one grouping are separated into the relevant categories (Franz, 2017). The demands of the Cleary Act guarantee parents and students, in-depth information about crime statistics on college campuses so that they can make informed enrolment decisions. For example, in 2015 Cleary Act statistics indicated that 1,029 hate crimes, 56,987 arrests, 252,775 disciplinary actions, 14,726 cases of violence against women, and 1,118 unfounded crimes occurred across 11,306 colleges nationwide (United States Department of Education, n.d.).

Colleges face strict penalties when they do not report the data required under the Cleary Act (Winn, 2017a). In April 2017, Cleary Act fines amounted to $54, 789 per violation (Winn, 2017a). Penn State University was fined $2.4 million dollars under the Cleary Act in 2016 during the Jerry Sandusky scandal. This is the largest fine in the history of the Act (Winn, 2017a).

Some of the major criticisms of the Cleary Act are claims of fabricated and derisory data submitted by institutions and students (Birnbaum, 2013). While the Jean Cleary Act (1990) remains a financial burden to institutions, those in need of federal funding must ensure their security measures are proactive and sufficient to control campus crimes (Bennett et al., 2012; Ernest Burt, 2013; Gardner, 2015; Patten et al., 2012; Whissemore, 2016; Woolfolk, 2013). On college campuses where gun possession is legalized, the requirements of the Cleary Act forces colleges to put measures in place to control the likelihood of crimes occurring.

Another common notion is that college campuses lack the resources needed to maintain effective security departments and as such crimes on campus will increase over time (Bjelopera et al., 2013; Carnevale et al., 2013; Patton & Gregory, 2014). However, campus security policies today evolved to ensure that previous active shooter incidences inform preparation for any future recurrences (Franz, 2017). Price et al. (2014) discovered that five key campus safety measures were in place at 75% of the colleges in their study. The campus safety measures ascertained were "identifying and referring potentially violent students (91%), mass text alerts (91%), having an active shooter plan in place (85%), campus police presence (82%), and video cameras (77%)" (Price et al., 2014, p. 463). However, proponents of campus carry such as the NRA and SCCC continue to push the narrative that college campuses are unsafe and therefore laws legalizing guns on campus are needed to deter crime. The supporting and opposing arguments regarding the need for campus carry laws are outlined below.

Major Campus Carry Proponents

Campus carry proponents cite crime deterrence as the main reason for guns to be allowed on college campuses. These organizations and individuals hold firm to their views that increasing gun ownership on college campuses can reduce mass shootings (Couch, 2014). The major proponents of campus carry are the Students for Concealed Carry on Campus (SCCC), the NRA, and John Lott.

Students for Concealed Carry on Campus

Formed the day after the mass shooting at Virginia Tech in 2007, the group, Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, is the leading advocate for Campus Carry laws (Couch, 2014; Patten et al., 2012; SCCC, 2016). Boasting a nationwide membership exceeding 36,000 and a chapter in every state, the lobbyists used litigation in numerous state senates to secure the right to

carry guns on college campuses (Kopel, 2009; McLelland & Frenkil, 2009; Patten et al., 2012; SCCC, 2016). Upon its formation, the central argument of the SCCC was that the Virginia Tech tragedy was avoidable if there were legal guns on campus (McLelland & Frenkil, 2009).

The SCCC's main objective is to increase the concealed carry rights of U.S. college campus constituents. Ferner (2011) stated that the SCCC brought lawsuits against numerous institutions that prohibit guns on campus. The SCCC's most successful case to date was against the Board of Regents at the University of Colorado (Bouffard et al., 2012; Kopel, 2015). Beyond seeking legislative approval for concealed guns on campus, the SCCC members on various college campuses host the annual "Empty Holster Protest." The protest sees SCCC members wearing empty holsters in a peaceful demonstration against the prohibition of guns on campus and to initiate campus carry discussions on college campuses nationwide (Thevenot, 2009; SCCC, n.d.).

The National Rifle Association

Encouraging the SCCC in this lobbying effort is the Conservative and heavily funded NRA (Elving, 2017; Rothman, 2015). The organization has been the most vibrant supporter of U.S. citizens' rights to bear arms for over 50 years (Elving, 2017). The NRA was formed in 1871 by former Union Army officers Col. William C. Church and Gen. George Wingate, who were disgruntled with the poor training of Northern soldiers (Elving, 2017; Rothman, 2015). The organization did not start out lobbying for gun rights; in fact, the NRA was initially a sportsman's club (Melzer, 2012; Rothman, 2015). At its onset, the organization's major objectives were educating and training marksmen for war, hunting, and recreational shooting (Rothman, 2015).

The Black Panthers' occupation of the California Statehouse in 1967 signaled the beginning of the NRA's foray into the political arena in 1968 (Sugarmann, 1992). The design and passage of the Gun Control Act of 1968 was influenced by the National Rifle Association who agreed with federal government that the actions of the Black Panthers needed to be curtailed (Rothman, 2015). Davidson (1998) proffered that after the Gun Control Act 1968 was passed libertarians assumed control of the NRA and created the Institute for Legislative Action in 1975. The creation of the Institute for Legislative Action prompted the NRA to begin its gun lobbying efforts (Davidson, 1998; Rothman, 2015). Since then, the NRA has been credited with securing wins for gun rights proponents and losses for opponents in state and federal elections. Their most significant victory was the election of Ronald Reagan whom the organization endorsed in 1980 (Rothman, 2015).

Today, the NRA continues to stymie gun control legislation and protect the rights to bear arms for all U.S. citizens (SCCC, 2016). Weinberg (2016) posited that the NRA's backing resulted in the enactment of campus carry legislation in some states. For example, the NRA was behind Texas' Governor, Greg Abbott, signing the state's campus carry law into effect in 2016 (Weinberg, 2016). After Georgia's Governor Nathan Deal vetoed the state's campus carry bill in 2016, the NRA visited the state and had its members contact state legislators to compel Deal to pass the bill. In 2017, Governor Deal signed Georgia's campus carry bill into law (Gould-Sheinin, 2016; NRA-ILA, n.d.). It must be noted that Deal denied that the NRA forced him to enact the legislation. Deal countered that the addition of "sensitive places" to the previously vetoed bill led him to sign the new bill into law (Hagen, 2017).

In addition, Cradit (2017) implied that the National Rifle Association's (NRA) funded Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act (Dickey Amendment) (1997) is a possible reason for

the scarcity of studies on campus carry in the U.S. The law which originated in the state of Arkansas was authored by former Republican U.S. Representative Jay Dickey in 1996 (Cradit, 2017). The Dickey Amendment (1997) banned the use of federal funds for any planned gun control research by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Recent changes to the Dickey Amendment (1997) disproved Cradit's (2017) arguments. Jaschik (2017) explained that after the Las Vegas mass shooting in 2017 scholars and researchers from the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the American Anthropological Association, and the American Sociological Association called for a federal revision of the Dickey Amendment. The goal of the proposed revision was to allow the CDC to conduct research into mass shootings (Jaschik, 2017).

Jaschik (2017) further remarked that the efforts of Democrats to amend the law after the Sandy Hook Elementary School and Pulse Nightclub shootings proved futile. Eventually, President Barack Obama, through Congress, dispersed funds to sponsor gun-related research by the CDC and the NIH in 2013. At the time, Republicans in Congress considered this a violation of the provisions under the Dickey Amendment. The CDC refrained from following President Obama's directive while the NIH started a brief research program which ended in 2017 (Jaschik, 2017).

According to Brown (2018) the Republican-controlled Congress eventually passed an omnibus spending bill in 2018 with diffident gun-control provisions. Under the new law, states must conduct extensive criminal background checks before issuing gun permits. Moreover, they are compelled to submit this information to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) monitored by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). Another provision in

the law funds school safety programs and modifies the Dickey Amendment to allow the CDC to conduct research on the causes of gun violence (Brown, 2018).

John Lott Jr.

In his seminal work "More Guns, Less Crime" researcher John Lott purported that violent crimes are avertible if the number of concealed carry permit holders are increased through the passage of right to carry laws (Lott, 1998; Lott, 2010). Recently, John Lott's research methods and findings were brought into question by authors such as Durlauf et al. (2016) and Webster et al. (2016). A common flaw in Lott's work was the absence of significant evidence showing increases in gun ownership or reductions in crime over the period of the study. The FBI also countered Lott's arguments that rural areas were more violence prone than urban ones. Additionally, a finding which showed that gun ownership increased property crimes was overlooked by Lott in his call for more guns (Black & Nagin, 1998; Duwe et al., 2002).

In recent times, John Lott extended his gun rights advocacy views to the campus carry phenomenon. Lott (2017) reasoned that allowing guns on college campuses prevents campus crimes and assures one's personal safety and that of others on campus (Lott, 2017; Murty et al., 2016). Furthermore, Lott (2017) argued against the campus carry fears which emanated in Kansas and Texas and stated that concealed carry permit holders are law-abiding citizens. Except for a few incidents of accidental discharge, Lott (2017) posited that guns on campus were effective in deterring crime.

In general, campus carry advocates believe that college campuses which prohibit the possession of guns are in violation of the Second Amendment (Birnbaum, 2013; Cramer, 2014; Goral, 2012; Lott, 2000; Patten et al., 2012; Spitzer, 2015). They also argue that campus

constituents cannot depend on the police to deter crime on campus (Spitzer, 2015). The next sections will illuminate the arguments of the opponents of the campus carry phenomenon.

Major Campus Carry Opponents

Campus carry opponents reason that college students should not be given guns since they engage in high-risk behaviors such as binge drinking and drug abuse while some may suffer from mental health issues (Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, 2016; Siebel, 2008). Gun theft, accidental shootings (Siebel, 2008; Smalley, 2008), overreactions to campus safety issues (Lewis, 2011), and police officers' misidentification of non-active shooters (Hosking, 2014) are additional reasons cited for the prohibition of guns on college campuses. Opponents of campus carry also argue that campus carry policies destabilize the security of marginalized groups on college campuses (Bouffard et al., 2012; Fennell, 2009; Webster et al., 2016). The major campus carry detractors include Students for Gun Free Schools (SGFS), the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, professional higher education organizations, university faculty, students, and staff.

Students for Gun Free Schools (SGFS)

The chief antagonists against Campus Carry laws include the national group Students for Gun Free Schools (SGFS, n.d.). The organization which boasts over 12,000 members was founded by Andrew Goddard whose son is a survivor of the Virginia Tech massacre (Payne, 2012). Students for Gun Free Schools oppose efforts by groups such as the SCCC and the NRA which force legislation that allows guns on college campuses (Payne, 2012; SGFS, n.d.). Since the Virginia Tech shootings, SGFS was successful in stymieing campus carry legislation (Payne, 2012). The SGFS is of the opinion that colleges and universities are learning sanctuaries that would become unsafe when concealed guns are allowed on campus.

The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence

The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence is the oldest grassroots advocate for stronger gun control laws in the U.S. (Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, 2016; Steidley & Colen, 2017). Regarded as the antithesis to the NRA; the Brady Campaign began as the National Council to Control Handguns in 1974 and was renamed as Handgun Control, Inc. in the 1980s (History of the Brady Campaign, n.d.; Steidley & Colen, 2017). After the failed assassination of U.S. President Ronald Reagan in 1981 and the subsequent wounding of his Press Secretary, Jim Brady, Congress passed a key federal gun control legislation known as the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (1993). The bill was backed by NRA member Ronald Regan and Handgun Control, Inc. Both the Bill and organization were named after Jim Brady (Rothman, 2015; Steidley & Colen, 2017).

At present, the organization supports political candidates and legislative policies which promote the enactment of gun control laws (Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, 2016). The Brady Campaign opposes campus carry legislation out of fear that violent crimes will increase on campus. The organization's members presumed that college students binge drink, live in close proximity, and when guns are added to the mix there may be an increase in deadly violence on campus (Smalley, 2008).

Professional Higher Education Organizations

Student affairs organizations such as the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and Student Affairs in Higher Education Consortium, (SAHEC) also issued a joint statement against Campus Carry laws (Statement against Concealed Weapon Carry on University Campuses, 2011). Another joint statement was released by the National Intramural-Recreation Sports Association (NIRSA), the National Association for Campus

Activities (NACA), the Association of Student Conduct Administration (ASCA), and the Association of College and University Housing Officers (ACUHO-I). The statement outlined that allowing guns on campus threatens the campus environment and may negatively affect the attainment of the institutions' mission and goals (Ortega-Feerick, 2017).

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) also opposed the legalization of guns on campus. The organization had the signatures of over 90 colleges and universities across 24 states affixed to a resolution seeking to keep campuses free of guns. The groups concluded the statement by asking that state governments respect the rights of the administrators of HEIs to protect their constituents (Ortega-Feerick, 2017).

University Faculty

There is also fear among some faculty that the sanctity of academic freedom relished by faculty and students would be under threat if guns were allowed on campus (Arrigo & Acheson, 2016; Baker & Boland, 2011; Cobb, 2014; Cradit, 2017; Drew, 2017; Flaherty, 2017). Three faculty members at the University of Texas at Austin brought an injunction against the state of Texas and the Board of Regents of the University of Texas to block the Campus Carry law passed in that state in 2016 (Jaschik, 2016). The faculty members — Jennifer Lynn Glass, Lisa Moore, and Mia Carter — outlined that the Campus Carry law infringed on their First Amendment rights which guarantees their academic freedom (Jaschik, 2016; Watkins, 2016).

The faculty members also sought the right to ban guns in their classroom (Jaschik, 2016; Watkins, 2016). The injunction the University of Texas at Austin faculty members brought before the courts was denied by Federal Judge Lee Yeakel. Judge Yeakel ruled that academic freedom was not an absolute right granted to faculty (Jaschik, 2016).

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the Gifford's Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence and the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence issued a joint statement in November 20, 2017, indicating their support for the actions and arguments of the University of Texas at Austin faculty members (Reichman, 2017). The group argued that the presence of guns on campus has a chilling effect on the classroom interactions, faculty-student relationships, and the choice of content to be covered in courses. The group concluded that guns on campus force faculty to censor their academic content and protected speech, change their pedagogical strategies, and also removes their right to exclude guns from their classrooms (Reichman, 2017).

The findings from empirical studies also implied that faculty members fear that campus carry laws project a chilling effect on academic freedom. Flaherty (2017) reported that the issue of academic freedom was the most antipathetic argument against campus carry in Texas among a sample of 1,333 faculty members at a large Southern University in the state. Findings from the preliminary study presented at the AERA (2017) conference showed that 50% of those surveyed suggested that campus carry policies would negatively impact their approach to teaching controversial or sensitive topics and 30% said it would not (Flaherty, 2017).

Thirty-one percent of those surveyed said they would change the way they teach emotionally charged and controversial topics, 53% shared that they would not change how they teach these topics, and 15% were unsure if they would change their approach (Flaherty, 2017). When asked if they would remove controversial or sensitive topics from their courses 58% said they would not do so, 23% said they would, and 18% were unsure. As it relates to "toning down" their regular methods to teaching controversial or sensitive topics 46% said they would probably not do so, 40 % said they would, and 14% were unsure (Flaherty, 2017).

In like fashion, Cradit (2017) carried out a qualitative study among a purposively sampled group of 13 faculty members at a higher education institution in Texas. Cradit (2017) attempted to explain the impacts of the state's new campus carry policies on the faculty members' reaction to teaching, research, and other routine faculty tasks. Findings from the study indicated that campus carry policies influenced changes in the participants teaching, faculty-student collaboration, and decision-making. Faculty members in the study inferred that the law impeded what they were willing to say in class (Cradit, 2017). Moreover, in a qualitative study among 12 faculty members at Pittsburg State University, Drew (2017) reported that from the semi-structured interviews conducted, faculty members expressed concerns about academic freedom and only two faculty members in the sample admitted that they would not change the way they teach sensitive topics.

Cobb (2014) shared that in 2012, 300 college and university presidents penned an open letter declaring that allowing guns on campus would make colleges less safe. Within two months the letter was brought to Washington, D.C. to deliver the message to federal legislators. This transpired during the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities annual conference where the organization's members voiced their support for the contents of the letter. The organizations' members also felt that challenging campus carry legislation was very important in the fight against guns on campus (Cobb, 2014).

Students and Staff

Students and staff also expressed concerns about how Campus Carry laws impact academic freedom. Cobb (2014) used a qualitative case study at a Mid-Pacific University (MPU) to determine campus constituents' perceptions of campus carry. The purposefully sampled group of four students, six faculty members/instructors, and five student affairs practitioners thought

that guns on campus "would inhibit an environment of free exchange of ideas and concepts, create a heightened feeling among campus constituents, and could impact the faculty, staff, or student evaluation process" (Cobb, 2014, p. 137). Campus security directors in Hosking's (2014) study also reasoned that the academic freedom enjoyed by faculty and students would be hindered by the presence of guns on campus. Campus security directors maintained that students and faculty would be afraid to express their opinions in the classroom and this may create a negative classroom climate (Hosking, 2014).

Finally, the lobbying efforts of campus carry opponents and proponents secured victories for both groups. However, the enactment of explicit campus carry laws in ten states is the most salient victory to the purpose of this study. A brief description of each state's campus carry legislation is outlined below.

States with Campus Carry Laws

Campus carry proponents lobbied state lawmakers and college administrators to support bills that legalize guns on campus. To date, 16 states tossed out campus carry bills while ten enacted such laws (Morse et al., 2016; Sanfilippo, 2017; Wiseman, 2011). Seventeen states banned guns on their college campuses and 23 left the decision up to the institutions. The states with campus carry laws which allow all constituents with concealed carry permits to take guns on campus are Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Mississippi, Oregon, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin. In Tennessee, only faculty and staff can be armed on campus (NCSL, 2017). At this juncture, I will give a brief description of campus carry legislation in the ten states that permit all qualified stakeholders to carry guns on campus.

Arkansas

Prior to Arkansas' Governor Asa Hutchinson, signing Act 562 into law in 2017, Act 226 from 2013 allowed faculty at the state's colleges and universities to carry concealed guns on campus (Armed Campuses, n.d.). The law permitted schools to opt out of its provisions on an annual basis. For four consecutive years since its enactment, every single 2 and 4-year college in the Arkansas exercised their right to opt out (Armed Campuses, n.d.; Kingkade, 2013; Lyon, 2015; Oreskes, 2017). In 2015, the State Legislature enacted Act 1078 which allowed individuals with a concealed permit to lock their guns in their cars in public parking lots and decks on college campuses (Armed Campuses, n.d.). According to Lyon (2015) House Bill 1077 which later morphed into Act 562 amended the opt-out provision in the 2013 law for Arkansas colleges and universities.

As previously mentioned, Arkansas' Governor Asa Hutchinson signed Act 562 into law in 2017, thereby giving persons over the age of 21, who completed eight hours of enhanced firearms training, the right to carry guns on college campuses (Winn, 2017b). Act 562 was set to be in effect in September 2017. However, on April 4, 2017, Arkansas Act 859 was passed to prohibit gun possession at athletic events, at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), and in university areas where children are present (Winn, 2017b).

Act 859 came about as a result of pushback from the Southeastern Conference (SEC) commissioner Greg Sankey (Ewing, 2017). Sankey's argument that allowing guns at sporting events could negatively affect intercollegiate sports at the state's flagship university swayed the opinion and vote of Rep. Douglas House. House presumed that the University of Arkansas and other Arkansas universities may be at risk of being kicked out of the SEC and other conferences (Ewing, 2017).

The revised bill stipulated that universities that wish to ban guns in stadiums and designate these spaces as sensitive areas must apply for an annual waiver from the Arkansas State Police (Ewing, 2017). The bill also specified that the universities set up their own security measures at sporting facilities but failed to explain how these measures would be funded. The University of Arkansas System provided guidance to the colleges and gave them the impetus to develop campus gun policies based on the provisions outlined in the law (Winn, 2017b). In response, the institution selected for this study followed the rule of law and restricted the storage of guns in housing and gun possession at athletic events.

Since the enactment of Arkansas' campus carry law there has been limited passive protests in the state. For example, Tamijani (2017) reported that students at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville protested against the law in the Arkansas Union Mall one day before the law went into effect. The students who identified as members of the Northwest Arkansas Progressives opined that the law was unjust and did not take students' opinion into account before enactment (Tamijani, 2017). The protest drew about 520 students who peacefully held up signs and handed out flyers in objection to the law (Tamijani, 2017).

Colorado

Guns were allowed on college campuses in Colorado since the 1970s, but the University of Colorado (CU) executed a divergent policy which pushed the state to pass the Colorado Concealed Carry Act in 2003 (Kopel, 2015). The law reversed CU's policy, but guns were still banned on campus. In 2010, SCCC brought a case against the University of Colorado's Board of Regents to force the university to follow the 2003 law (Kopel, 2015). The Colorado Court of Appeals eventually agreed that CU's ban, in fact, violated the 2003 law. An appeal in Colorado's Supreme Court in 2010 resulted in the appellate court's decision being upheld in 2012. As a

result, Colorado became the first state to pass campus carry laws allowing persons over 21 years of age to take guns on college campuses; except in areas regulated by institutional gun policies (Biemiller, 2012; Kopel, 2015; Millard & Forman, 2014).

Kopel (2015) stated that a bill was introduced in 2013 to outlaw campus carry on all college campuses. In a testimony to the Senate State Affairs Committee, rape survivor Amanda Collins shared that she was raped in a parking garage at a campus police station at the University of Nevada at Reno (Kopel, 2015). Collins had a Nevada defensive handgun license and said that if the University had not banned licensed guns on campus, the rape could have been prevented. During the proceedings Senator Evie Hudak told Collins that statistics indicate that had she been carrying the gun it would have been taken from her (Kopel, 2015).

Collins outlined to her that her gun would not have been taken since the rapist had his own and she would have used hers to defend herself (Kopel, 2015). Senator Hudak resigned after it was discovered that the statistics quoted were false and that the Amanda Collins' rapist, raped two other victims, killing one (Kopel, 2015). Kopel (2015) purported that the Colorado campus carry experience shows that legal permit holders did not engage in unlawful aggression. There was one incident where a staff at CU's dental school accidentally fired her gun; an incident for which she was fired (Kopel, 2015).

Georgia

Governor Nathan Deal of Georgia who previously vetoed Campus Carry House Bill (HB) 859 in 2016, signed HB 280 in 2017 which gave persons 21 years and over the right to carry handguns on the state's college campuses once they had a license (Baskin, 2016; Grinberg, 2016). The new law allows guns in classrooms and recreation centers and all campus areas except on-campus student housing, sporting facilities, childcare facilities, and offices

(Touchberry, 2017). Guns can even be brought to tailgating events outside sporting facilities under the law (Stirgus & Prabhu, 2018). The law does not apply to private HEIs in Georgia (Stirgus, 2017).

HB 280 was supported by USG Chancellor Steve Wrigley who said that the law struck the right balance in creating a safe campus environment (Stirgus, 2017). In reaction to Georgia's campus carry law, six veteran professors in the state sought a court injunction to block the enactment of the law (Stirgus, 2017). The group of professors who taught at various University System of Georgia (USG) institutions filed their complaint in Fulton County Superior Court against Gov. Nathan Deal and Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr in 2017. The professors felt campus carry would threaten their academic freedom, increase student suicides, and create safety hazards if guns are accidentally discharged on campus (Stirgus, 2017). The remarks Governor Deal made when he vetoed Campus Carry House Bill (HB) 859 and those made to legislative committee by USG Chancellor Steve Wrigley were the arguments used by the professors in their lawsuits (Stirgus, 2017).

Stirgus and Prabhu (2018) said that since Georgia's Campus Carry law went into effect eight incidents where individuals brought guns into unauthorized locations were reported by 22 colleges in Georgia's Technical College System. At the University of Georgia 15 violations of the law were reported. Some of these incidents involved students leaving their guns in their vehicles in areas where guns were prohibited (Stirgus & Prabhu, 2018).

Idaho

In 2014, State Bill (SB) 1254 was enacted in Idaho, allowing individuals over 21 years of age and in possession of an Idaho issued enhanced concealed carry permit to take handguns on college campuses. Residence halls, sporting events, and other areas specified by institutions are

gun-free zones under the law. Idaho's State Board of Education instructed institutions to follow the Campus Carry law (Tyson, 2014; Zalneraitis, 2014).

College and university presidents in Idaho initially opposed the campus carry laws but the fuss has since faded (Smith, 2016). A legal memo was unveiled by the University of Idaho faculty union, outlining several ways faculty members should respond to the state's campus carry bill. The legal memo had recommendations ranging from the filing of lawsuits that challenge the constitutionality of the bill to professors taking guns into the classroom to demonstrate the farcicality of the law (Tyson, 2014). Smith (2016) revealed that in September 2014 a professor at Idaho State University who had his gun in his pocket accidentally shot himself.

Kansas

Subsequent to passing its concealed carry law in 2013, Kansas Governor Sam Brownback signed HB 2578 in 2015 allowing anyone 21 years or older to possess a concealed weapon in public places without a permit or having completed advanced training. The law was met with protests from campus leaders at the state's colleges and universities but attempts to challenge the law were blocked in the Kansas State Legislature causing some professors to resign from their posts in protest (Cagle, 2017; Carpenter, 2015; Spies, 2017).

The enactment of campus carry laws in the state of Kansas saw its fair share of opposition. Professor Kevin Willmott at the University of Kansas feared that college campuses in the state would become warzones (Lott, 2017). As such, he wore a helmet and body armor throughout the academic year to indicate that students may fire their guns at any time on campus. In addition, Willmott's colleague, associate professor, Jacob Dorman resigned from the University of Kansas in protest of the law. Dorman was hired in another tenured position in a

state without campus carry laws. He claimed that arming students with guns would not suppress shooting incidents on campus (Lott, 2017).

In 2017, tenured Communications professor at Wichita State University Deborah Ballard-Reisch also chose to resign in protest of the campus carry laws in Kansas. She felt the states campus carry laws put the health and safety of the university's constituents at risk (Chasmar, 2017). According to Boese (2017) a group of protesters including 40 faculty and students engaged in an anti-campus carry protest on Wescoe Beach, Kansas. The group known as Faculty for a Safer Campus stated that their main reasons for protesting the law were violence against LGBT+ individuals, threats to mental health, and threats to academic freedom. The intended outcome of the protest was to encourage the legislators in Topeka and campus administrators to prolong the campus carry debate before the law was implemented (Boese, 2017).

Exactly two weeks after the campus carry law went into effect in Kansas a gun was found in a bathroom at Wichita State University. The .40-caliber handgun was discovered in a second-floor restroom located on Jabara Hall (Finger, 2017). This raised questions about irresponsible gun ownership among constituents at the university because the gun belonged to an employee at university. It was returned to the individual by campus police. A similar incident occurred at the University of Kansas (Williams & Porter, 2017). Williams and Porter (2017) reported that two weeks after the state's campus carry law was enacted a .38 caliber handgun was found in a fourth-floor bathroom in Wescoe Hall. The gun was reported stolen. It is not a criminal offense to leave a gun unattended under the law.

Mississippi

In 2011, Mississippi passed concealed carry laws which allowed individuals 21 years and over with an enhanced concealed carry permit to take guns on college campuses, but colleges were permitted to restrict gun possession to designated public areas (Burnett, 2012; Grasgreen, 2011; Hawkins, 2016). In 2018, HB1083 passed the state Senate and when enacted would reduce college campus restrictions. The law is currently being challenged by the Southeastern Conference (SEC) since it would allow guns in athletic events (Kirshner, 2018).

Oregon

The Oregon Court of Appeals instructed the Oregon University System in 2011 to allow persons with concealed weapon permits to take guns on college campuses but also ruled that colleges could designate where guns were permitted. As a result, Oregon's colleges have varied designations of gun free zones (Graves, 2011; Keyes, 2017; Richardson, 2012). Oregon's Umpqua Community College bans guns on campus, but the law does not make the college a gun free zone, hence many speculate that campus carry did not deter the 2015 mass shooting at the college since two persons in the vicinity were armed (Hammond, 2015; Keyes, 2017).

Texas

In Texas, the state's campus carry law took effect on August 1, 2016, allowing individuals 21 and over with a concealed carry permit to take guns on college campuses. Institutions are allowed to regulate gun free zones but are prohibited from holistically banning guns on campus. Every two years, colleges must report these gun free zones to the state government (Aguilar, 2015; McCuistion & Dorn, 2015; Volokh, 2016). The law was constitutionally challenged in court by faculty at the University of Texas at Austin (Watkins,

2016). The court rejected the case and held that the state and the Board of Regents of the university had the legal right to allow guns on campus.

There were also notable protests on college campuses opposing the legislation (Benning, 2016; Ward & Adams, 2016). Apart from the previously mentioned protests and lawsuits, Lott (2017) purported that San Antonio College Professor Charles K. Smith wore body armor on campus to oppose campus carry. In addition, Herskovitz (2016) reported that a protest titled "Cocks not Glocks" was led by hundreds of students at the University of Texas at Austin in opposition to Texas' Campus Carry law. The protesters carried dildos of all sizes to campus to challenge, as they called it "absurdity with absurdity" (Herskovitz, 2016; Smother, 2016).

The campus carry law in Texas was brought into question in 2017 when a student at Texas Tech University shot and killed a police officer (Roll, 2017). The perpetrator of the crime was 19-year-old student, Hollis Daniel. Daniel was under the legal age to carry a gun on campus and did not have a concealed permit. The officer was killed when reports about Daniel's erratic behavior on the campus dorm was reported to campus police. Daniel pulled a gun and shot the officer while being interrogated in the campus police station (Roll, 2017).

Utah

Interestingly, the University of Utah prohibited concealed guns on their campus, notwithstanding state law permitting campus carry since 1995. In 2004, Utah passed laws preventing universities from banning guns on campus and since 2006 remains the only state to impose explicit campus carry laws at public colleges. Today, students at state colleges carry concealed handguns on campus but not in hearing rooms and must declare them to their roommates on university residence halls (NCSL, 2017). According to Hurst (2014), college campuses in Utah remained safe since the enactment of campus carry laws.

Wisconsin

Senate Bill 93 was passed in Wisconsin in 2011 allowing concealed carry on college campuses. The law gives universities permission to designate areas where guns are not allowed as long as there is adequate explicit signage (Anderson, 2016; Kelderman, 2011; Saxena, 2015). Saxena (2015) conveyed that in 2015 the NRA supported a campus carry bill in the Wisconsin state legislature, similar to Utah's, which would reduce gun free zones on campuses and specifically name colleges campuses as public areas where guns are allowed. Predictably, university administrators and students in the state opposed the bill (Saxena, 2015).

In sum, ten states enacted legislation allowing all qualified campus constituents to carry guns on campus and one state allows only faculty and staff this privilege. The laws vary across states, and colleges are challenged to create policies to protect their constituents' safety and Second Amendment rights. As we speak, numerous challenges have been brought against states e.g., Florida and Minnesota, to either repeal campus carry laws or enact legislation where none exists. I will now review empirical studies reporting campus constituents' perceptions and attitudes towards the legalization of guns on college campuses.

Campus Constituents' Perception of Campus Carry

Despite the vociferous debates in state legislatures and the media regarding the legalization of concealed firearms on college campuses, few studies reported campus constituents' perceptions of and attitudes concerning the phenomenon (Cramer, 2014; Wood, 2014). Literature gauging campus constituents' perceptions of and attitudes towards campus carry were as diverse in terms of the demographic characteristics of the constituents studied, as they were in terms of methods, contexts, samples, findings, and geographic locations. Campus constituents whose perceptions of campus carry were sought included campus security directors

(Hosking, 2014), university presidents and vice presidents (Franz, 2017; Ortega-Feerick, 2017; Price et al., 2016; Price at al., 2014), and faculty (Bennett et al., 2012; Cradit, 2017; Dahl et al., 2016; Drew, 2017; Flaherty, 2017; Thompson et al., 2012).

Some studies explored staff, student, and faculty perceptions of campus carry (De Angelis et al., 2017; Kyle et al., 2017; Cobb, 2014). Research focusing on students' perceptions of the phenomenon was completed by numerous researchers (Abrams, 2015; Anderson et al., 2015; Bouffard et al., 2012; Cavanaugh et al., 2012; Deboer, 2018; Jang et al., 2014; Lewis et al., 2016; Murty et al., 2016; Patten et al., 2012; Patten et al., 2013; Spratt, 2015; Thompson et al., 2013; Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018; Watt et al., 2018; Wright, 2014). Of note, only Watt et al.'s (2018) study isolated international students as a campus demographic. The key perceptions of the aforementioned campus constituents are presented below.

College Administrators and Security Directors Perceptions and Attitudes

Support for Guns on Campus

Ortega-Feerick (2017) interviewed 10 college administrators at four public community colleges in South Texas to determine how they executed Texas' Campus Carry law on their campuses. "A few participants revealed that they supported campus carry law and did not feel it was a big concern" (Ortega-Feerick, 2017, p. 72). Price et al. (2014) quantitatively studied a national sample of 414 university presidents to determine their perceptions and attitudes towards legalized campus carry. They found that 58% of presidents had conflicting opinions on whether or not they supported people carrying guns on campus. Presidents who were Republicans, owned two or more guns, and grew up in homes with guns were more inclined to support guns on campus (Price et al., 2014).

Opposition to Guns on Campus

College administrators were more opposed to campus carry than they were supportive (Ortega-Feerick, 2017; Price et al., 2016; Price et al., 2014). Price et al. (2014) hinted that a majority of the presidents (95%) in their study were not supportive of students, faculty, and visitors taking guns on campus. In a similar study, Price et al. (2016) quantitatively measured the responses from a national sample of 39 university presidents at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) about their perceptions and attitudes towards campus carry. The findings of the study revealed that 97.4% of these presidents were not supportive of guns on campus.

In their study, Ortega-Feerick (2017) also reported that some administrators were not supportive of guns on campus, even though they supported the Second Amendment right to bear arms. A few administrators in Ortega-Feerick's (2017) study did not support campus carry because they had children studying on campus. In addition, campus security directors did not support campus carry and thought that prohibiting concealed guns on campus was an effective way to improve campus security (Hosking, 2014).

Likelihood to Carry Guns on Campus

The likelihood of university administrators to carry guns on campus was not outlined in any of the studies reviewed. However, as it relates to other campus constituents' likelihood to carry, Price et al. (2016) said that 59% of presidents in their study thought that 10% - 20% of students would carry guns and 56.4% estimated that the same quantity of faculty would act similarly. Ironically, Price et al. (2016) also offered that these presidents' perceived faculty (97.4%) and students (94.9%) would feel unsafe on campus if faculty, students, and visitors carried guns on campus. Expectedly, Price et al. (2014) ascertained that 81% of presidents in their study would feel unsafe with guns on campus.

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of having Guns on Campus

Presidents in Price et al.'s (2014) study perceived that the disadvantages of campus carry far outweighed the advantages. A small number of presidents in Price et al.'s (2016) study supported the idea that persons would feel safer with guns on campus (10.3%) and persons would not be threatened by others (7.7%). The administrators studied by Ortega-Feerick (2017) only supported the crime deterrence benefit of having guns on campus. Correspondingly, campus security directors indicated that if gun owners were properly trained it could have a positive effect on campus safety (Hosking, 2014). Price et al. (2014) established that male and Republican college presidents were more likely to appreciate the advantages of having guns on campus. However, presidents were concerned that the disadvantages of campus carry such as mistakenly identifying and shooting active shooters (91%), accidental shootings while deterring crime (91%), and accidental discharge (89%) would place campus constituents at risk (Price et al., 2014). Higher rates of campus homicides (76%) along with increased security cost and diversion of resources (72%) were also disadvantages of campus carry identified by presidents (Price et al., 2014).

Franz (2017) stated that 42% of the participants in their study claimed that legalized guns on campus generated fear, angst, and cautiousness among persons within the campus community. Unsurprisingly then, the disadvantages reported by administrators in Ortega-Feerick's (2017) study included the negative psychological impact of witnessing an active shooting incident, difficulty identifying the aggressor in an active shooting situation, and the heavy financial and human resource burden associated with developing campus carry policies. Increased tuition brought on by the costs associated with campus carry policy development and

the inability to identify the aggressor in an active shooting incident were the perceived disadvantages of campus carry among campus security directors (Hosking, 2014).

Females, Independents, Democrats, and non-gun owners were more likely to support the disadvantages of having guns on campus (Price et al., 2014). Administrators suggested that adequate firearms training (Franz, 2017; Hosking, 2014; Ortega-Feerick, 2017; Price et al., 2016), periodic practice at a firing range (Price et al., 2016), educating campus constituents about Campus Carry laws, investing in security cameras, and improving lighting and emergency management systems (Franz, 2017) would mitigate the perceived disadvantages of campus carry. Faculty on some U.S. college campuses also expressed concerns about the campus carry phenomenon.

Faculty Perceptions and Attitudes

Support for Guns on Campus

Bennet et al. (2012) conducted a survey among 251 faculty members to determine their views about the increases in places on campus where guns are allowed. One hundred and forty-five faculty members returned the survey for a response rate of 58%. As it relates to faculty support for campus carry, Bennet et al. (2012) discovered that only 17% of faculty members were in favor of the legalization of guns on campus.

Flaherty (2017) posited that Business professors were more supportive of campus carry than professors in other disciplines among the sample in their study. According to Thompson et al. (2012) faculty members who were more likely to support concealed carry were Republicans, those who owned two or more firearms, and those who grew up with a firearm in their homes. Faculty who were concerned about being a victim of crime on campus, and faculty who were not

confident that their local police could protect them from crimes on campus were also more likely to support campus carry.

Opposition to Guns on Campus

Faculty showed more opposition than support campus carry (Bennett et al., 2012; Dahl et al., 2016; Flaherty, 2017; Thompson et al., 2012). Perceptions among 146 faculty members at a state university in Southern Georgia were measured by Bennett et al. (2012) and it was determined that 72% of respondents opposed the legalization of guns on college campuses. Ninety-four percent of respondents in Thompson et al.'s (2012) study, and 70% in Flaherty's (2017) work also opposed the legalization of guns on college campuses. Dahl et al. (2016) also established that the majority of community college faculty members in their study opposed campus carry. Bennett et al. (2012) communicated that non-gun owners and Democrats were most likely to oppose campus carry, while Flaherty (2017) conveyed that women and Asians shared similar sentiments.

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of having Guns on Campus

The perceived advantages of campus carry were not supported by faculty in Thompson et al.'s (2012) study. Faculty did not think carrying a gun would make them feel safer (94%) or that they would not be bothered by people if they carried a gun (92%). The faculty members who were more likely to accept that there were advantages to carrying guns on campus were those who were Republicans, males, owners of two or more guns, and those concerned about becoming crime victims. Those who grew up in a home with guns and felt the police could not prevent crimes on campus also perceived that carrying guns on campus had its advantages (Thompson et al., 2012).

Faculty members in Thompson et al.'s (2012) study unanimously supported the disadvantages of carrying guns on campus, but 82% did not believe guns taken on campus may be stolen. Faculty members who did not own a gun and grew up in homes without guns supported the disadvantages of campus carry. Similarly, Democrats and Independents, Asians, females, and faculty members who were confident in the crime prevention strategies of the police on campus were more likely to perceive disadvantages with carrying guns on campus (Thompson et al., 2012).

Thompson et al. (2012) also indicated that a majority of faculty members (92%) would not obtain a permit to carry a gun on campus and 97% would not carry a gun if campus carry were legalized. Congruently, 93% of faculty said they would feel unsafe on campus if guns were allowed. Finally, Faculty members were of the opinion that firearms' training was necessary before guns were allowed on campus (Dahl et al., 2016; Drew, 2017; Thompson et al., 2012).

Ninety-six percent of faculty in Thompson et al.'s (2012) study held that the completion of a firearms training course, training at a firing range (85%), and minimum liability insurance (89%) should be established preconditions to receiving a permit to carry guns on campus. Participants in Drew's (2017) study further outlined that education and policy development are critical preconditions before a person is given a permit to carry guns on campus. Students' perceptions of the campus carry phenomenon were as varied as those of college administrators, security officers and faculty. A summary of their perceptions is presented below.

Students' Perceptions and Attitudes

Support for Guns on Campus

Similar to faculty, presidents, and security directors there was limited support for the legalization of guns on college campuses among students (Jang et al., 2014; Lewis et al., 2016;

Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018). However, Wright (2014) reported significant support for concealed weapons on campus in their study. Student support for campus carry was 32.4% in Jang et al.'s (2014) work. Males in Deboer's (2018) work were also more likely to support students, faculty, and staff carrying handguns on campus. Females were less likely to support colleges and universities allowing students to carry handguns on campus because they felt crimes would increase. Non-LGBT students were also more likely to support, students, faculty, and staff carrying handguns on campus (Deboer, 2018).

In Verrecchia and Hendrix's (2018) study which used SurveyMonkey to gather data and share findings on 1,126 undergraduate students' perceptions of campus carry at two Mid-Atlantic HEIs, 47.5% of respondents supported campus carry. In another study, Wright (2014) quantitatively determined whether levels of cognitive coping were determinants of support for concealed weapons on campus. Three cognitive coping strategies were measured, *defensive pessimism*, fear, and responsibility. Wright (2014) used a convenience sample of 169 students at a private liberal arts college in Virginia to collect the data for the study. Defensive pessimism was measured using the 17-item defensive pessimism questionnaire (Norem, 2002), fear was measured using the17-item fear questionnaire (Antony et al., 2001), and responsibility was measured using the 26-item responsibility attitude scale (Antony et al., 2001).

Support for campus carry was recorded among 77.5% of respondents in the study, while 22.5% did not support concealed weapons on campus. It was determined from Wright's (2014) study that of the three variables, fear was more strongly related to students who supported or opposed concealed weapons on campus. Wright (2014) reported that 55.4% of students fell between the slightly avoid and markedly avoid public spaces as it relates to allowing concealed

weapons on campus. Defensive pessimism and responsibility were not significant predictors of student support for concealed weapons on campus.

On that same note, Lewis et al. (2016) measured the attitudes of 419 students at a Midwestern university about carrying guns on campus and discovered that 57 % of students communicated that only professors should be allowed to do so. Students who were more likely to support qualified students and faculty members carrying concealed guns on campus were Republicans and those who owned one or more guns (Thompson et al., 2013; Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018). Caucasians and males were also likely to support guns on campus (Jang et al., 2012; Thompson et al., 2013; Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018). Likewise, those concerned about their safety on campus (Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018), along with those who were victims of crimes on campus and those who grew up in a home with guns (Thompson et al., 2013) also supported campus carry. Incongruously, Lewis et al. (2016) construed that females were more likely to support professors carrying guns on campus than males.

Opposition to Guns on Campus

Students also signified that they opposed the idea of qualified persons carrying guns on campus. In Georgia, Murty et al. (2016) surveyed 137 students at a Historically Black College and University campus to ascertain their attitudes towards Georgia's Campus Carry law and deduced that 77% of students did not want guns on campus. Moreover, in studies by Verrecchia Hendrix (2018) and Jang et al. (2014) student opposition to campus carry was 52.5% and 49.9% respectively. Students who did not own a gun and those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds were most likely to disagree with legalizing guns on campus (Jang et al., 2012).

Presence of Concealed Permit Holders

There were concealed carry permit holders among students on college campuses (Bouffard et al., 2012; Cavanaugh et al., 2012; Murty et al., 2016; Spratt, 2015). Cavanaugh et al. (2012) said that a range of 10% to 82% of students in their study were concealed carry permit holders across the buildings from which their sample was drawn. Cavanaugh et al. (2012) also found that at least one legally concealed gun was in any given classroom across the buildings in their study. Students in Bouffard et al.'s (2012) Texan sample were more likely to have a concealed carry permit and Spratt (2015) acknowledged that 12% of the students in their study were concealed carry permit holders. Thirty-one percent of participants in Murty et al.'s (2016) study owned a gun and had a permit to carry it but would not carry the gun to campus if campus carry laws were passed.

Likelihood to Obtain a Permit and Carry a Gun

Conversely, there was diversity in the likelihood of students obtaining a permit and carrying a gun on campus if campus carry was legalized (Abrams, 2015; Bouffard et al., 2012; Cavanaugh et al., 2012; Deboer, 2018; Murty et al., 2016; Spratt, 2015; Thompson et al., 2013). Abrams (2015) used a nonprobability sample of 234 students to report on the weapon carriage tendencies among students at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale and learned that 30% of students said they would carry a gun on campus if it were legal.

Bouffard et al. (2012) explained that 37% of students in their study said they would obtain a permit and legally carry a gun on campus. Students in Texas (42%) were more likely to seek a license and carry compared to (25%) in Washington (Bouffard et al., 2012). Cavanaugh et al. (2012) derived from their study that more than three-quarters of the classes surveyed had at least one student who expressed the likelihood to obtain a permit and carry a gun.

In contrast, 72% percent of students in Spratt's (2015) study said they would not obtain a permit and carry a gun on campus if it was made legal and Thompson et al. (2013) reported that 78% of students in their study would not obtain a permit if campus carry was legal and 100% of that number said they would not carry a gun on campus. Even more convincingly, Murty et al. (2016) attested to the fact that 95.7% of students in their study did not have a permit and 100% of this number had no intention of getting one to carry guns on campus.

Deboer (2018) deduced that LGBT students were less likely to carry a gun on campus with the enactment of campus carry laws in Texas. They were also more likely to support the notion that persons should possess a valid permit to carry a concealed handgun. Moreover, LGBT students were more likely to think, students, faculty, and staff carrying guns on campus would generate fear campus-wide (Deboer, 2018).

The student demographics that are more likely to obtain a permit and carry a gun included Republicans, Whites, males, those concerned about campus violence, and those with perceived, and prior campus victimization (Bouffard et al., 2012; Deboer, 2018; Jang et al., 2012; Spratt, 2015). Permit holders (Bouffard et al., 2012; Spratt, 2015), Criminal Justice majors (53%), students with previous military and law enforcement experience, and those with little confidence in the police (Bouffard et al., 2012) were also more likely to obtain a permit and carry guns on campus. Students with friends who carried guns and those who had parents who owned guns were also more likely to obtain and carry (Jang et al., 2012). Abrams (2015) and Spratt (2015) specified that men (5.647 times) and (38%), respectively, were more likely to legally carry a gun on campus than women. Gun owners were also 3.165 times more likely to carry (Abrams, 2015).

In terms of student classification (academic rank), freshmen (23%) were less likely to legally carry a gun on campus than sophomores (26%), juniors (34%), and seniors (35%), (Spratt, 2015). Peculiarly, Abrams (2015) found that Whites (76%) were less likely to carry guns on campus than non-whites. Additionally, Spratt (2015) recapitulated that students who demonstrated higher levels of gun ownership, students living far distances off campus, and older students exhibited a higher likelihood of legally carrying a gun on campus. Twenty-one percent of students who did not have permits were not inclined to legally carry guns on campus. Binge drinkers also tended to take guns on campus (Spratt, 2015).

Anderson et al. (2015) reported the relationship between drinking behavior and weapon carriage among 54, 582 students (predominantly Criminal Justice majors) selected from a national dataset and highlighted that binge drinkers were more likely to take a gun on campus than non-binge drinkers. Additionally, high-risk drinkers who felt unsafe on campus were 2.4 times more likely to carry guns than those who felt safe. Low-risk drinkers who felt unsafe on campus were 1.4 times more likely to carry a gun than those who felt safe and non-drinkers who felt unsafe on campus were also 1.7 times more likely to carry guns than those who felt safe (Anderson et al., 2015).

Perception of Safety with Legal Guns on Campus

Students' perception of safety with legalized guns on campus was also common across studies (Deboer, 2018; Spratt, 2015; Thompson et al., 2013; Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018). Nine percent of respondents said they would feel safe on campus if students carried legal guns, 21% said faculty and staff, and 5% visitors (Spratt, 2015). Moreover, in Spratt's (2015) study, 55% of respondents said they would feel unsafe with visitors carrying legal guns on campus, compared

to students (32%), and faculty and staff (14%). Fifty-six percent of respondents said neither them nor their friends would feel safer carrying a gun on campus (Spratt, 2015).

Thompson et al. (2013) explained that 79% of the respondents in their study hinted that most students would not feel unsafe if students, faculty, and visitors carried guns on campus. Whites, Conservatives, students concerned about campus safety, and students who own or have parents who own guns were more likely to feel safe on campus if they could carry guns (Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018). LGBT students in Deboer's (2018) work were concerned that there would be an increase in the number of victims of crime with guns on campus.

Interestingly, males and gun owners thought they would be unsafe on campus if students carried legal guns (Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018). Forty percent of students said they would feel unsafe if faculty carried guns on campus (Spratt, 2015) and 53% of the respondents in Verrecchia and Hendrix's (2018) work would not feel safe with guns on campus. Furthermore, Murty et al. (2016) conveyed that the majority of students in their study felt unsafe on campus after the enactment of campus carry.

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of having Guns on Campus

Students also shared their perceived advantages and disadvantages of campus carry (Murty et al., 2016; Spratt, 2015; Thompson et al., 2013). As it relates to advantages Spratt (2015) and Thompson et al. (2013) reported that students assumed that if they carried a gun people would not bother them and they could protect themselves. Sixty-seven percent of respondents thought that carrying a gun would help them protect themselves (Spratt, 2015). Males, gun owners, Republicans, and Independents, and those who binge drank in the last 30 days were more likely to support the advantages of carrying guns on campus (Thompson et al., 2013).

On the other hand, in Thompson et al.'s (2013) study 78% of respondents did not think guns had the advantage of making them feel safe on campus and 66% did not think people would bother them less if they had a gun on campus. Students who thought that they could be mistakenly identified and shot in an attempt to quell an active shooter situation (74%), fear of accidental shootings (53%), and increased homicide rates (60%) were all disadvantages supported by students in Spratt's (2015) study. However, 47% of students did not support the disadvantage of increased suicides (Spratt, 2015) and despite unanimous support for the disadvantages of campus carry 32% of respondents did not support the disadvantage of a gun being stolen on campus (Thompson et al., 2013).

Students who feared becoming victims of crime and did not own or had a gun in the home growing up were more likely to perceive disadvantages with carrying guns on campus (Thompson et al., 2013). Difficulty controlling illegal guns (75%) and increases in violent crimes (56.9%) were disadvantages communicated by Murty et al. (2016). Students (82.5%) rejected the presumed disadvantage that campus carry laws targeted minoritized students (Murty et al., 2016). Lastly, Thompson et al. (2013) reiterated that students thought passing a gun training course (96%), periodic training at firing ranges (89%), and proof of insurance should be prerequisites to obtaining a permit and being allowed to carry guns on campus.

Marginalized Student Groups

The perceptions of campus carry among marginalized students were presented in Watt et al.'s (2018) study. In the study, Watt et al. (2018) explored "how individuals with marginalized identities, including racial, religious, sexual orientation, and citizenship status, expect to be impacted" (p.127) by campus carry policies. Sixteen doctoral students were purposefully sampled from marginalized populations pursuing studies in the social sciences, humanities, and

natural sciences. The sample was selected from a broader research sample of 24 respondents drawn from an emailed recruited population of 264 research graduate students. The response rate in the study was 11%. Nine participants in the study self-identified as racial or ethnic minorities, two were religious minorities, five identified as members of LGBTQ+, and six participants said they were international students.

Findings suggested that marginalized students thought that campus carry policies would irrevocably "degrade university spaces and academic rigor" (p. 130). Overall, 15 students expected campus carry policies to make them more vulnerable to violence aimed at marginalized groups. "The effects of this perceived insecurity manifested differently among the participants, ranging from changing their interpersonal relationships, to isolating themselves, or withdrawing from their academic programs" (Watt et al., 2018, p. 128). The sample shared that the presence of guns in the campus environment could place anyone at risk.

What's more, the participation rates of marginalized groups in campus activity were perceived to likely reduce with the implementation of campus carry policies (Watt et al., 2018). Watt et al. (2018) singled out the response of one international Latina student who conveyed that campus carry policies substantially changed the academic environment for international students and recounted the international student's perception of campus carry verbatim "I think this law transforms that space and makes it a little more dangerous, even if only symbolically" (p. 129).

The marginalized groups in the sample also felt that they would be violently targeted at higher rates in a campus carry environment. The students shared that being in an environment with fewer minoritized groups would increase their chances of being victims of hate crimes. Some of the students felt that tangible physical violence will be meted out to them in areas on campus where their minoritized status is unwelcomed. The LGBTQ+ community in Watt et al.'s

(2018) study believed they would become possible targets of gun violence. These students indicated they would disassociate themselves from campus activities as a survival strategy (Watt et al., 2018).

Studies with Combined Stakeholders- Perceptions and Attitudes

An important, yet often overlooked campus constituent, staff, was combined with faculty in a 1,170-member random sample by De Angelis et al. (2017). De Angelis et al. (2017) attempted to determine if the perceived fear of workplace violence and/or trust in police and local government predict support for guns on campus. The sample was selected from a large university in the Western U.S. Kyle et al. (2017) also surveyed a combined random sample of 990 faculty and staff at a large rural public Midwestern university to ascertain the level of support students, faculty, and staff have for the campus safety policies and procedures at the institution.

In another study, Cobb (2014) conducted qualitative research using four students, six faculty members, and five student affairs practitioners at a Mid Pacific University to explore how they make meaning of campus carry. Patten et al. (2012) also quantified the responses of students, faculty, staff, and administrators at California State University's, Chico campus (Chico State) and Chadron College in Chadron, Nebraska to determine if they wanted qualified persons carrying guns on campus. The participants in the study at Chico State included 1,484 students, faculty, staff, and administrators (a 27% response rate) and at Chadron College 580 students, faculty, staff, and administrators participated (a 46% response rate). Likewise, Patten et al. (2013) used data collected from a survey of 794 female students, faculty, and staff at California State University, Chico campus (Chico State) to measure women's attitudes towards concealed carry on campus.

Support for Guns on Campus

The significant findings in support of campus carry across these studies included the fact that Caucasians and males were more likely to support guns on campus (Kyle et al., 2017). Conservatives were also more likely to support qualified individuals carrying guns on campus (De Angelis et al., 2017; Patten et al. 2012). Likewise, respondents who distrusted the police, knew someone who carried a gun, and carried a gun themselves supported campus carry (Kyle et al., 2017). Respondents who distrusted the federal government, attended religious services frequently, victims of crime (Cobb, 2014; De Angelis et al., 2017), and classified staff (De Angelis et al., 2017) were also more likely to support guns on campus. Respondents in support of campus carry asserted their Second Amendment right and mentioned that they had a natural right to protect themselves (Cobb, 2014).

Opposition to Guns on Campus

Students, faculty, and staff in Kyle et al.'s (2017) study were generally opposed to guns on campus. Kyle et al. (2017) indicated that faculty and staff (83.1%) compared to 62.9% of students opposed students carrying guns on campus. Students (47.69%) compared to 62.93% favorability among faculty and staff opposed faculty and staff carrying guns on campus. Patten et al. (2012) revealed that (73 %) of the participants at both campuses in their study opposed guns on campus, with Chico State participants more likely to oppose than those at Chadron College. Cobb (2014) maintained that although participants in their study opposed guns on campus, they acknowledged the constitutional right to self-defense but were still uncomfortable with guns on campus. Supporters and detractors suggested that the Second Amendment rights of some individuals should be restricted as it relates to campus carry (Cobb, 2014). Whites and non-whites (80%), women (85%), and gun owners (71%) did not support guns on campus (Patten et

al., 2012). Patten et al. (2013) also found that women (82%) especially women living on campus did not want qualified individuals carrying guns on campus.

Respondents who engaged in protective measures were less supportive of policies that allow faculty, staff, and students to carry guns on campus (Kyle et al., 2017). Faculty, non-faculty professional staff, older respondents, females, respondents with higher education levels, respondents who thought that campus violence was increasing, and those who worked and studied at the university longer were also more likely to oppose guns on campus (De Angelis et al., 2017). Both gun owners and non-gun owners in Patten et al.'s (2013) study did not support qualified individuals carrying guns on campus. Expectedly, De Angelis et al. (2017) reported that participants who said they felt unsafe on campus were also unsupportive of campus carry.

Perception of Safety with Legal Guns on Campus

Patten et al. (2012) measured the perception of safety among respondents in their study and ascertained that they did not feel safe or felt safe with guns on campus. In addition, 70% of participants did not feel safer with guns on campus, while 72% did not think faculty, students, and staff who carried guns on campus promote a greater sense of safety. Whites (77%), non-whites (85%), and women (83% and 85%, respectively) were more apt to feel unsafe on campus (Patten et al., 2012; Patten et al., 2013).

Conservatives and firearm owners (67%) did not feel safe with guns on campus, while 82% of gun owners did not think that guns made campuses safe (Patten et al., 2012). The constitutional right to carry a gun was a reason to do so among the sample in Cobb's (2014) study. Self-defense was a common motive among those who do not carry and those who may elect to carry (Cobb, 2014). In terms of likelihood to carry, Kyle et al. (2017) suggested that students and faculty who feared disorder among campus constituents, feared crime, prioritized

self-preservation, and older faculty members indicated a greater proclivity to carry guns on campus. Decisively, participants in Cobb's (2014) study maintained that more guns on campus would not make them safer.

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of having Guns on Campus

In terms of the advantages and disadvantages of campus carry, self-defense, crime deterrence, and the creation of an equalizing factor which allows others to protect themselves were perceived advantages among participants in Cobb's (2014) study. Patten et al. (2012) found that men were more likely to see the benefits of guns on campus. Some of the perceived disadvantages of campus carry include misidentification of aggressors during active shootings, accidental discharge, and increases in gun-related crimes (Cobb, 2014). Moreover, the risks of campus constituents engaging in alcohol abuse, partying, and drug use while being allowed to carry guns on campus were also disadvantages of concern to respondents (Cobb, 2014). The lethality of having a gun, mental health problems among constituents, and increased threats to campus constituents were also perceived disadvantages of allowing guns on campus (Cobb, 2014). To mitigate these disadvantages, participants recommended improvements in the permit process to ensure that those who carry guns on campus were law-abiding citizens who carried to defend themselves (Cobb, 2014).

Additional Key Findings

Flaherty (2017) asserted that the influencers of campus carry opinions among constituents included grandparents, parents, siblings, and extended family members. In the wider society, mass shootings in the national context emitted mixed views of campus carry (Cobb, 2014; De Angelis et al., 2017). Cobb (2014) also advanced that the campus carry policy at the Mid Pacific University did not influence constituents' decision to work or attend the institution,

but two participants said the policy was the reason they opted to teach and study there. In terms of cultural influences, participants opined that individuals raised around guns considered them an important part of their culture (Cobb, 2014).

Respondents in Cobb's (2014) study said that the Mid Pacific University provided storage for firearms on campus but lacked special training that would promote safety among those electing to carry guns on campus. Supporters of campus carry wanted their constitutional rights supported by the university and also expected the university to adhere to state law. Opponents of campus carry wanted more campus-specific training and conflict resolution programs to increase their awareness of the policy with hopes that it would ease their minds on the issue (Cobb, 2014). These opponents were also of the opinion that the university was neutral on the campus carry issue and wanted one general policy which governed all areas on campus (Cobb, 2014).

Faculty, staff, and students advocated for the consideration and protection of constituents' rights, the use of research, new student orientation, and inclusivity in the campus carry implementation process (Cobb, 2014). Respondents also suggested that universities establish holistic campus carry policy development processes, with safe places, where all constituents have an equal input in the process (Cobb, 2014; Franz, 2017; Ortega-Feerick, 2017). Most campus leaders said their campus carry policy development process was inclusive of faculty, staff, students, and community members while 58% said their policies were developed to meet the needs of a wide cross-section of constituents (Franz, 2017). In addition, 67% of leaders in Franz's (2017) study said that their campus carry policy implementation process exceeded one year, which was longer than the period for other institutional policies.

Summary of Literature on Campus Carry

In sum, it is clear from the empirical studies reviewed that campus carry is not supported by the larger cross-section of campus constituents. In the literature, Caucasians, males, Republicans, gun owners, friends of gun owners, and permit holders were significantly more likely to support campus carry. Notably, there is a demand from faculty and administrators for more inclusivity and research in campus carry policy implementation.

Gaps in Literature

Generalizability of data, socially desirable responses, low response rates, small sample sizes, and non-sampling errors were other predominant limitations in these campus carry related studies. The following are specific limitations reported in the studies focusing on campus constituents' perception of the campus carry phenomenon. Franz (2017) proffered that it was difficult getting campus administrators to commit to being interviewed for at least an hour. The national debate on campus carry may have also impacted the sentiments shared during the interview. Franz (2017) conceded that the generalizability of the study's findings may be an issue because there was a perceived intersection of personal beliefs and values which conflicted with state mandates and campus constituents' values.

Hosking (2014) purported that open carry along with the presence of larger concealed guns on Wyoming public community college campuses and the impact they would have on campus safety was not a consideration in the study. The community college campuses were all located in rural areas, and this affected the external validity of the findings (Hosking, 2014). Ortega-Feerick (2017) admitted that the findings in the study were limited to personal biases and idiosyncrasies due to exposure to the campus carry law in place at the time of the study.

In their study, Price et al. (2014) alluded to a low response rate and the monothematic nature of the questionnaire possibly inveigling some college presidents to view the issue and respond in a unique way. Furthermore, the survey did not list equal amounts of advantages and disadvantages which may have prescribed biased responses. The study was cross-sectional and failed to survey all universities which also affected external validity (Price et al., 2014). Price et al. (2016) reported similar limitations to Price et al. (2014) except that their study targeted HBCU presidents whose responses cannot be generalized to all HBCU campuses nor national college and universities.

In the faculty-based studies Drew (2017) and Flaherty (2017) did not outline any possible issues with external validity. However, Bennett et al. (2012) postulated that their study lacked variables measuring the political ideology of respondents, although faculty perception of campus carry was based on their political identity. The findings in Cradit's (2017) study were not generalizable because of its qualitative nature and the fact that only 13 faculty members were sampled. In their study, Dahl et al. (2016) complained that the faculty members who were sampled were unreliable, and this may have contributed to a lower-than-expected response rate.

Thompson et al. (2012) reported that the majority of the responses to most of the questions on their survey trended in the same direction. This limited their ability to conduct multivariate analysis controlling for some variables in the study. Internal validity was threatened by the perceived dishonesty of the participants' responses. However, Thompson et al. (2012) thought this threat was countered by the fact that the survey was anonymous and only group data was reported. Similar to Price et al.'s (2014) study, the monothematic nature of the survey in this study threatened internal validity. Moreover, the study was not geographical generalizable

because it was cross-sectional and only sampled faculty from five Great Lake states (Thompson et al., 2012).

There were also significant limitations reported by some of the authors of the studies which explored students' perception of campus carry. Murty et al. (2016) and Watt et al. (2018) did not explicitly describe the limitations of their studies. However, the cross-sectional nature of some studies may have generated socially desirable answers about students' perceptions and behaviors towards guns on campus (Abrams, 2015; Lewis et al., 2016; Spratt, 2015; Thompson et al., 2013)**.** Furthermore, some researchers did not employ a non-probability sampling technique and only conducted their studies on one college campus, which meant their findings were only generalizable to the sample population of their studies (Abrams, 2015; Deboer, 2018; Jang et al., 2015; Spratt, 2015; Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018; Wright, 2014). Deboer (2018) also pointed out that a small sample size and the location of the institution used in their study limited the generalizability of findings. The geographic generalizability of the findings in Thompson et al.'s (2013) study was limited since only students from five Great Lakes states made up the sampling frame.

Meanwhile, Anderson et al. (2015) argued that the conclusions in their study were weakened because the binge drinkers in the sample who drank 6-9 times were only 3.4% of the total respondents and high-risk drinkers only accounted for 0.5% of those surveyed. Bouffard et al. (2012) stated that their sample was not representative of the students at the Texas and Washington campuses. Furthermore, Criminal Justice majors in the study may not have been accurately represented on both campuses (Bouffard et al., 2012). Cavanaugh et al. (2012) postulated that undergraduate students from all academic buildings were not sampled in their

study due to resource limitations. As such, the study's findings cannot be generalized to other states or college campuses (Cavanaugh et al., 2012).

Lewis et al. (2016) and Verrechia and Hendrix (2018) found that the number of ethnically diverse groups that took part in their studies were small. Caucasians were overwhelmingly represented in both samples. The response rate in Verrechia and Hendrix's (2018) study was also low, and women dominated the sample. These limitations posed a threat to the internal validity of the studies (Lewis et al., 2016; Verrechia & Hendrix's, 2018)). Lastly, Wright (2014) held that the institution where their study was conducted was within a one-hour drive of Virginia Tech where the deadliest campus shooting occurred. Guns rights debates also inundated the national media and may have influenced the respondents' answers in the study (Wright, 2014). It was assumed that the sample came from rural areas where gun ownership was commonplace (Wright, 2014).

In the studies with combined samples, Cobb (2014) stated that the small sample size that constituted their study rendered the findings statistically ungeneralizable. External validity in De Angelis et al.'s (2017) study was affected by a perceived non-response bias created by increased debates on the campus carry issue. The studies by De Angelis et al. (2017) and Kyle et al. (2017) were cross-sectional and were both carried out on a single university campus. This limited the generalizability of the findings since the attitudes of campus stakeholders may vary geographically (De Angelis et al., 2017; Kyle et al., 2017). The institution in De Angelis et al.'s (2017) study implemented their campus carry policy during the time of the research and this may have impacted how the respondents answered the questions on the survey.

There was additional non-representativeness of ethnicity within some samples (Jang et al., 2014; Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018). Further research on gun and safety training and

comparative studies among 4-year and 2-year institutions were recommended by Dahl et al. (2016). Studies conducted after policy implementation (De Angelis et al., 2017) and those with non-geographic inclusivity (Jang et al., 2014) were other limitations within these studies.

In their studies, Patten et al. (2012) and Patten et al. (2013) also found that the findings were ungeneralizable because the samples in the studies were small. In addition, the studies were not conducted in states that already had campus carry laws. To close, Patten et al. (2013) added that two violent incidents transpired on the California State University, Chico campus during the time of their study and this would render it impossible to replicate their study.

Once more, the literature lacked substantial inclusion or isolation of the perceptions of international students regarding campus carry. It is obvious that the other campus constituents in the empirical studies on campus carry had diverse perspectives on the issue. It is imperative that at this point I review the literature pertinent to international student experiences on U.S. college campuses. This will also clarify my rationale for attempting to include this group of U.S. college campus constituents in the campus carry debate and allow me to demonstrate why the exclusion of their perspectives from the campus carry discourse might be to the detriment of U.S. colleges and universities, and possibly the students themselves.

International Students' Experiences on U.S. College Campuses

The omission of international students' opinions and experiences about campus carry mandated a review of the literature which reports the overall campus experience of these students in the U.S. Examining the literature on the current campus climate for international students in this study facilitates the detection of any perceived changes in the campus environment for international students when the empirical data is collected and analyzed. In addition, potential

resolutions to the negative social changes campus carry policies may bring to the campus environment can be elicited.

The use of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) in this study requires an identification of the elements within the campus environment that influence the experiences of international students. A review of the extant literature on international students' experiences offers insights into the identities of these elements. In short, the existing literature on the campus experiences of international students facilitated an accurate analysis of international students' perceptions of and experiences with the campus carry implementation at SU.

International Student Enrolment

The colleges and universities in the U.S. continue to attract international students despite the concerns expressed by other campus constituents regarding campus carry. According to Gold (2016), the U.S. is the world's top destination for international students. Buoyed by globalization, technological advancements, and increased global travel, international student enrolment on U.S. college campuses steadily increased over the last decade (Campbell, 2012; Casey, 2009; Glass, 2012). Moreover, international student enrolments in the U.S. are expected to surpass 8-10 billion in 2020 (Phakiti et al., 2013). These students often pay out of state tuition and as such many U.S. universities partner with international institutions to aggressively recruit them in large numbers. International students mostly travel from the major feeder countries of China, India, and South Korea (Barg, 2013; Buck Sutton & Obst, 2012; Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016; Griner & Sobol, 2014; Institute of International Education, 2015).

As temporary sojourners in the U.S., international students predominantly attend colleges in California, New York, Florida, Texas, and Pennsylvania (Gudykunst, 2005; Hegarty, 2014). Despite the growth in enrolment and the benefits international students bring to U.S. college

campuses, Zhang and Goodson (2011) decried the limited quantities of studies that focus on "how these students perceive their own experiences in transition to U.S. higher education" (p. 176). Moreover, even though international students are an integral part of U.S. college campuses there are limited diverse studies focusing on their experiences in the college environment (Lee, 2014; Ortiz & Fang, 2015; Valdez, 2015). This is of concern since international students choose to study at U.S. HEIs because of several perceived benefits to doing so.

Reasons for Studying in the U.S.

Notwithstanding issues such as campus carry, international students perceive numerous benefits to studying in the U.S. Understandably, colleges and universities in the U.S. are attractive to international students because they are thought to deliver better quality education via a larger number of colleges and programs. U.S. Colleges and universities are also attractive because they are welcoming to international students and often offer competitive scholarships (Choudaha, 2016; Geary, 2016; Jennings, 2017; Leong, 2015). International students also believe that U.S. colleges offer opportunities to learn a new language, create better job prospects, present greater opportunities to conduct high-quality research, and offer a greater chance of success in life (Choudaha, 2016; Geary, 2016; Jennings, 2017; Leong, 2015).

Campbell (2015) and Will (2016) established that international students choose to study in the U.S. because there was a better academic environment, academic freedom was abundant, and more academic resources were available. International students also specified that they could choose their field of study in the U.S. The students also stated that parental pressure informed their decision to enroll in U.S. colleges and universities (Campbell, 2015; Will, 2016).

Gold (2016) and Lee and Rice (2007) supported the findings from Campbell's (2015) and Will's (2016) studies by stating that international students voluntarily undertake the challenging

and expensive venture of studying in the U.S. because of the perceived benefits of doing so. Many of these students leave their cultures, endure a rigorous visa application process, and often challenge themselves to learn a second language because of the perceived prestige and reputation of U.S. colleges and universities (Gold, 2016; Lee & Rice, 2007). Lee and Rice (2007) further conveyed that the diversity of U.S. colleges attract international students who want to explore new cultures, while Van Vaught and Westerheijden (2010) confirmed that international students are also attracted to the ranking of U.S. universities.

In another study, Alfattal (2016) used a transcendental phenomenological approach among a sample of 12 undergraduate international students to compare the lived experiences of these students with their needs reported in the extant literature. The study attempted to decipher if international students' dimension of needs which include program, place, promotion, price, process, physical facilities, and people are commensurate with their exposure to international education in the U.S. Findings from the study conveyed that international students expected all the P dimensions to be better at U.S. institutions than those in their home countries (Alfattal, 2016). Alfattal (2016) expressed that the study participants expected that the program offerings in the U.S. would qualify them for improved employment opportunities and international education experiences. Participants were appreciative of the engagement opportunities offered on campus although they thought the information about these activities was difficult to find (Alfattal, 2016).

In sum, international students perceive that U.S. HEIs are more competitive than those in their home countries in terms of programs, place, promotion, price, process, physical facilities, and people. These perceived benefits of American higher education inveigle international students to study in the U.S. and nudge U.S. college campuses to aggressively recruit them to

their campuses. However, the benefits derived from international student enrolment in the U.S. are of a reciprocal nature. In fact, U.S. colleges and universities also gain significant benefits by enrolling international students.

Benefits of International Student Enrolment at U.S. HEIs

The benefits international students bring to U.S. colleges and universities may wane in the campus carry environment. In the grand scheme of things, international students bring a magnitude of social, academic, cultural, and economic enhancements to U.S. colleges and universities (Altbach & Knight, 2007). These benefits include academic and social depth in the form of diverse global views, scholarly research, and scientific discoveries (Knox et al., 2013; Kumi-Yeboah, 2014; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013). In addition, Altbach (2016) advanced that international students enrich campus diversification and strengthen the human capital and knowledge economies in host countries. Improvements in campus diversification, human capital, and knowledge creation fortify the prestige of U.S. HEIs (Yao, 2014).

Furthermore, many U.S. HEIs perceive increase international enrolments, education, and exchange as an imperative to building global competency and understanding on campus, especially among domestic students (Liu, 2011; Yao, 2014; Yao, 2016). Luo and Jamieson-Drake (2013) purported that the diverse viewpoints, beliefs, and attitudes possessed by international students encourage the diversification of the curriculum and classroom debates at their host institutions (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Lee & Rice, 2007; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013; Pandit, 2007; Ramos et al., 2016). Eventually, this diversification enhances the internationalization goals of colleges and universities (Gold, 2016; Pandit, 2007; Williams & Johnson, 2011; Zhao et al., 2005).

Korobova and Starobin (2015) and Mamiseishvili (2012) agreed that international students expose domestic students to the globalized workforce, varied perspectives, cultural practices, and beliefs. This fosters critical thinking and challenges stereotypes by encouraging students on campus to communicate with those they perceive to be different (Geary, 2016; Hurtado, 2007; Korobova & Starobin, 2015; Simmons, 2011). These are skills needed in today's marketplace (Korobova & Starobin, 2015). Exposure to diversity on college campuses also helps to develop subsequent generations of leaders and builds the reputation of these institutions (Korobova & Starobin, 2015; Perry et al., 2017).

International students create opportunities for strategic alliances between their home countries and colleges with those in foreign host countries (Altbach, 2016; Gold, 2016). Many international students also opt to remain in the U.S. ad infinitum by applying for visas which allow them temporary or indefinite immigration status (Gold, 2016). For clarity, "upon graduation, between 70 and 96% of foreign-born students earning a Ph.D. stay on to work in the U.S. for at least five years" (Gold, 2016, p. 523).

Chellaraj et al. (2008) stated that international students mostly enroll in graduate programs in the U.S. which increases their chances of acquiring sponsored employment. Those students who are heavily involved in high-level research and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields often fill a shortfall in engineers, scientists, and mathematicians which contribute significantly to the growth of the U.S. economy (Gold, 2016). According to Gold (2016) educated graduates who are foreign born are more likely to engage in STEM entrepreneurship than U.S. born graduates. In addition, when international students choose to make the U.S. their home, it generates additional opportunities for them to help U.S.-based private industrial interests establish strategic alliances with businesses in their home

countries. As such the U.S. government and private industrial interests encourage the retention of international students in the U.S. (Gold, 2016).

Clearly, U.S. HEIs gain a strategic competitive advantage when they enroll international students (Yao, 2014). Hegarty (2014) echoed this point by stating that "Academically, international students are a vital component of research universities. Indeed, they are considered highly important to U.S. innovation" (p. 4). Moreover, international students contribute significantly to the personality of these institutions (Hegarty, 2014). This "personality" that international students bring to U.S. college campuses encompasses international reputation building, enhancement of multi-cultural proficiency, and global competencies among faculty, staff, and students (Lee & Rice, 2007; Pandit, 2007; Zhao et al., 2005). International students have higher completion rates, which is not surprising since those who lived and studied in other countries bring an abundance of intellectual competencies and resources to U.S. college campuses (Curtin et al., 2013; Hegarty, 2014; Lee, 2016; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013; Marginson et al., 2010).

Finally, the perceived benefits of international student enrolment in the U.S. affect all campus constituents whether socially, politically, academically, or economically. However, as international students traverse the U.S. higher education landscape a number of issues such as acculturative stress, violence, and discrimination affect the way they persist and engage on U.S. college campuses (Fischer, 2013; Korobova & Starobin, 2015; Yan & Berliner, 2013). Perceptibly, the legalization of guns on campus will present new anxieties which international students will face as they study and seek to study in the U.S. These present and potentially divergent campus climates force international students to adapt in order to persist in the U.S.

Campus Climate for International Students

The campus climate for international students is worth exploring in light of the development of campus carry policies. Besides, the fact that few studies focused on the interactions that take place between international students and other campus constituents means that the corollary created by the campus carry phenomenon must be reconnoitered in this study. Agreeably, knowledge of armed students on college campuses may or may not be an issue for international students. However, it could alter the campus climate for this demographic either way. Understanding the shift in climate is integral to answering the research questions in this study.

Firstly, a colleges' campus climate is described as "the cumulative attitudes, behaviors, and standards of employees and students concerning access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential" (Rankin, 2005, p. 17). The campus climate of an institution determines the level of inclusion and participation of all campus constituents (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Rankin, 2005). Higher education institutions in the U.S. aim to maintain a positive campus climate for all stakeholders. However, diverse ethnicities, cultures, viewpoints, and biological characteristics often usurp efforts to maintain a positive campus climate. Most importantly, however, is the fact that campus climate is a major factor in student persistence and success, especially students from minoritized backgrounds, in this case international students (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Umbach & Kuh, 2006).

International students alter the campus climate of U.S. HEIs since they introduce a new culture into one which they are often unfamiliar (Burkholder, 2013). According to Daim et al. (2012) and Rizq (2015) international students often lack the cultural knowledge of their host countries, and this often creates barriers when they attempt to interact in the new campus setting.

For example, Burkholder (2013) deduced from a phenomenological study that Turkish students had difficulties interacting with people from diverse backgrounds. Language, cultural dissimilarities, and academic stressors prevented the students from assimilating into the American culture. Burkholder (2013) employed semi-structured interviews to extract these findings from six full-time, Turkish, graduate students.

Intuitively, cultural shifts from home to host country force international students to devise ways of assimilating into the host culture and campus environment to fully engage socially and academically (Wang et al., 2012; Yao, 2014). International students must navigate a dubious campus climate that may be receptive of or hostile to the cultural differences that accompany them into the campus and classroom environments. As such, cultural adaptation, and adjustment to the climate of the U.S. college environment becomes even more arduous for international students. Due to the social problems consistent with settling into a new culture, international students sometimes suffer academically on U.S. college campuses (Yan & Pei, 2018). Yan and Pei (2018) also advanced that although international students come to the U.S. confident and more academically prepared than domestic students, they struggle to study in an unfamiliar culture and education system.

International students' experiences on U.S. college and university campuses are unique and diverse, but more often than not these students experience similar acculturation and academic challenges. By the same token, Schulte and Choudaha (2014) and Yan and Pei (2018) agree that international students face unique challenges as they pursue their degrees. Despite being a heterogeneous group, students from various cultures have similar problems adjusting to the American culture and education system.

Difficulties living in a new country, grappling with unfamiliar learning, and teaching practices, and navigating a country in which English is the first language (English is often their second language) are a few of the realities international students must come to terms with in the U.S. (Zhou & Zhang, 2014). To make matters worse, issues such as finding suitable accommodation, acquiring community acceptance, paying bills, working on campus, visa issues, and financial problems makes cultural adjustment in the U.S. difficult for international students (Gold, 2016; Jang, 2010; Telbis et al., 2014; Yan & David, 2011). Despite the propensity for international students to persist academically, these challenges often increase the attrition rate among this student subgroup (Zhou & Zhang, 2014).

In all fairness, although international students encounter unique, stressful conditions on U.S. college campuses, Chalungsooth and Schneller (2011) maintained that stressful situations are experienced by all students. These circumstances become more complex for international students because of their foreign status which often blurs the transition process for them in U.S. (Yao, 2014). Yildirim (2012) clarified Yao's (2014) point by stating that international students are often unfamiliar with the culture of the U.S. and the individualistic nature of Americans often conflict with the students 'collectivistic cultures. Perry et al. (2017) added that the economic and governmental differences in international students' host countries conflict with those of their home countries since not all countries have capitalism and democracy at the core of their political processes.

Another factor obfuscating the transition from home to host country is the fact international students are among the underrepresented and minoritized groups on U.S. college campuses (Schmitt et al., 2003; Yao, 2014). This minoritized status is compounded by the fact that they are exposed to a different culture, education system, and language (Campbell, 2012;

Schmitt et al., 2003). The stress international students endure while trying to learn a new way of life creates nerve-racking conditions for them on U.S. college campuses (Campbell, 2012), especially within their first year of study (Bowman, 2011). To be specific, the most difficult period of transition and assimilation for international students in the U.S. is the first six months to a year. Sadly, some international students complete their program of study in the U.S. without making meaningful friendships because of the psychological scars developed during this period (Bowman, 2011; Yan & David, 2011).

It is therefore likely that in the coming years, international students will demand that U.S. universities in states with campus carry demonstrate that their campuses are peaceful and receptive to them. While campus crime statistics are easily retrieved under the Cleary Act (1990); international students and their parents will desire further reassurance that no harm will come to them on college campuses. In fact, Alfattal (2016) indicated that the sample in their study desired the addition of an eighth P to the existing seven marketing dimensions, referred to as *Peace*. Alfattal (2016) surmised that Peace includes "all aspects of an educational campus that provide students with welcoming, safe, peaceful, study-oriented, and socially inclusive experiences" (p. 929).

Further analysis by Alfattal (2016) revealed that the participants in the study searched for safe and peaceful experiences when they studied overseas but believed that "their experiences could be enhanced if their campus had invested more in promoting its safety of environment, or Peace" (p. 927). Furthermore, the participants complained that they dreaded participating in non-university activities due to the closure of university facilities at night and late evening (Alfattal, 2016). One participant conveyed that international students had more anxiety on campus due to their ethnic identity and religious beliefs which they fear may not be tolerated (Alfattal, 2016).

Feelings of isolation and loneliness were also equated to the need for "Peace" by students in the study. As such the participants commented that their campus needed to provide areas that catered to their emotional, motivational, social, and sense-of-security needs (Alfattal, 2016).

In sum, the campus climate for international students is characterized by an interconnected and intersecting array of social, political, and cultural incongruities which arise when these students leave their home countries and cultures to study in the U.S. Once they arrive on U.S. college campuses and encounter these differences, the preconceived notions that they have about studying in the U. S. become secondary to the need to assimilate and adapt to their new environments (Yao, 2014). In the next section of this study, I explained the specific factors which affect the campus climate for international students and expound on the strategies which can be used to help them cope with the challenges they encounter on U.S. college campuses.

Factors Affecting the Campus Climate for International Students

It is not farfetched to infer that international students on U.S. college campuses who are affected by socio-cultural issues such as language barriers, acculturative stress, loneliness, and discrimination will find it even more challenging in an environment where concealed guns are present. Actually, these issues provided the stimulus which created the previously described campus climate for international students in U.S. higher education (Berry, 1997; Hong & Jianqiang, 2013; Sherry et al., 2010; Yakunina et al., 2013; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). While these variables denote a negative campus climate for international students, the literature presented in the next paragraphs will show how positive outcomes can be achieved when students are able to overcome these socio-cultural barriers. However, the opening arguments in the ensuing discussion expounded on the nature and impact of acculturative stress, loneliness, and discrimination on international students in the U.S.

The adjustment factors that affect the acculturation and assimilation of international students in the U.S. higher education system create a myriad of psychological issues for these students (Berry, 1997; Sherry et al., 2010; Yakunina et al., 2013). Loneliness or the need for a sense of belonging was common among international students on U.S. college campuses (Alfattal, 2016; Contreras-Aguirre & Gonzalez, 2017; Glass et al., 2015; Glass & Westmont-Campbell, 2014; Kwadzo, 2014; Longerbeam et al., 2013; George Mwangi, 2016; Stebleton et al., 2017; Yao 2016). International students are also negatively affected when they experience acculturative stress on U.S. college campuses (Jin & Wang, 2018; Kumi-Yeboah, 2014; Leong, 2015; Mahmood & Burke, 2018; Ra, 2016; Ra &Trusty, 2017; Wang et al., 2012; Will, 2016; Yan & Berliner, 2013). Moreover, international students also experienced discrimination on U.S. college campuses (Perry et al., 2017; Will, 2016; Yan & Pei, 2018; Zhou & Cole, 2017).

The literature available and presented in this section focuses predominantly on the experiences of Asian international students. This is not surprising since this group constitutes the largest share of the international student body in the U.S. (IIE, 2018). International students in the U.S. come from mixt cultural backgrounds and as such studies which represent each cultural group are needed. While this study may not address this gap in the literature, it is indicative of my decision to avoid geographically or ethnically segregating the sample for the study to gather diverse cultural and ethnic views on the campus carry phenomenon.

Acculturative Stress

As international students transition, integrate, and assimilate into their host institution's culture they are usually affected by acculturative stress, and this may be heightened with the implementation of campus carry policies. Acculturative stressors are produced when international students go through the process of acculturation. Acculturation encompasses the

"cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members" (Berry, 2005, p. 698). Berry (2006) outlined that in adapting to a new culture, individuals often use several techniques including assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization. When international students experience problems in applying any of the aforementioned techniques during the acculturation process, they encounter acculturative stress (Furnham, 2004; Li & Gasser, 2005).

Acculturative stress is a form of stress in which the "stressors are identified as having their source in the process of acculturation" (Berry et al., 1987, p. 492). Acculturative stress challenges international students when they grapple with various stressors before and after transitioning into the U.S. higher education environment (Berry, 1997). Maladaptive perfectionism, duration of exposure to the host culture, English language competency, gender-based stressors, and the social support international students require dictate the outcomes of the acculturative process (Berry, 1990; Berry, 1997; Berry, 2005; Nasirudeen et al., 2014).

In the process of their sojourn international students bring their culture into the U.S. higher education system (Berry, 1997). As they encounter the new culture a process of reciprocity occurs between their culture and the host culture. Berry (1997) describes this reciprocity as contact and participation. In some instances, international students retain their home culture and avoid adapting their host's culture, Berry (1997) called this process cultural maintenance.

International students who practice cultural maintenance are more inclined to experience acculturative stress and are affected by more acculturative stressors. In turn, these acculturative stressors hinder the integration or assimilation processes international students must undergo on U.S. college campuses (Furnham, 2004). The acculturative stressors which most often affect

international students include “macrosocial influences e.g., legal constraints, discrimination, degree of tolerance for diversity, academic pressure; an individual’s background e.g., worldview, cultural distance from U.S. culture; and individual factors e.g., age, gender, English language proficiency, coping skills, and personality” (Aponte & Johnson, 2000, p. 3).

Empirical evidence of the presence and impact of the acculturative stressors listed by Aponte and Johnson (2000) was abundant in the extant literature. For example, Leong (2015) interviewed 11 international students and compared their experiences at a single U.S. university. Findings from the study revealed that Eastern and Western cultural differences in terms of social interactions and classroom power distance affected the way international students interact with their professors and classmates on campus.

In Will’s (2016) study, cultural microaggressions from Americans and limited knowledge of the American culture stifled the social relationships international students had on campus. Likewise, Yan and Berliner (2013) interviewed 18 Chinese international students at a large, Southwestern public university, in the U.S. to explain the most stressful aspects of their personal and social lives. Yan and Berliner (2013) exposed that acculturative stress was significantly higher among this student demographic and reported that job opportunities, marital problems, culture shock, maladaptive practices, visa problems, and immigration concerns were the major acculturative stressors affecting the students in the sample.

Similarly, Contreras-Aguirre and Gonzalez (2017) interviewed six international students at a Southern University to ascertain how graduate, female, international students coped with the difficulties associated with course content requirements and socializing with other international students. Findings from the study revealed that while studying in the U.S., the women struggled with responding when being asked their opinions on issues by their Professors or when they had

group assignments to complete (Contreras-Aguirre & Gonzalez, 2017). This practice was not a part of the education system in their home countries and as such became an obstacle, they had to overcome to adapt and succeed in the U.S. Will (2016) reported similar findings agreeing that Chinese international students had difficulties participating in class activities. This issue arose because it was not a common practice in their culture to articulate deeper thoughts during class discussions and because of their English language deficiency (Contreras-Aguirre & Gonzalez, 2017; Will, 2016).

The six participants in Contreras-Aguirre and Gonzalez's (2017) study had positive feelings and an open mind to the new experiences in the U.S. However, there were mixed feelings among the sample about making the right decision to study in the U.S. This was complicated by individual struggles with low self-esteem which created doubt in their academic abilities. Contreras-Aguirre and Gonzalez (2017) said that the participants had varied views on the role that culture played in how they interacted on campus. Some participants further acknowledged the communication barriers created by cultural differences while others felt that these differences ought not to be, since humans can connect through empathy and emotions (Contreras-Aguirre & Gonzalez, 2017).

Acculturative stress is encountered immediately when international students begin their sojourn in the U.S. This was deduced from a study by Kumi-Yeboah (2014) who investigated the factors that influence the transformative learning experiences of 30 graduate international students from Africa (20 males and 10 females). The study was conducted using a modified version of King's (1998) Learning Activities Survey (LAS) questionnaire accompanied by a sequential explanatory mixed methods approach. The first phase was quantitative and used all 30 students and 12 students agreed to participate in the qualitative aspect of the study (Kumi-

Yeboah, 2014). The study's participants were selected using stratified random sampling. Domiciliation for more than two years in the U.S., age group, gender, country of origin, and program of study served as the criteria for stratification (Kumi-Yeboah, 2014).

Other findings in the study suggested that almost 21% of the African students experienced a period of disorienting dilemma when they arrived in the U.S. (Kumi-Yeboah, 2014). Exposure to new cultures, cultural practices, learning styles, teaching styles, and socialization with classmates forced 15.3% of the participants to go through a period of self-examination to figure out how they would adapt to the new environment (Kumi-Yeboah, 2014). Learning and social experiences afforded the participants (7.6%) the ability to critically analyze the disorienting dilemmas they experienced. On the other hand, participation in class discussions, cultural acceptance, and learning to speak and write English boosted the participants' self-confidence over time. The African students' transformative learning experiences evolved based on the development of self and inner awareness separated from their previous experiences and assumptions (Kumi-Yeboah, 2014).

It is important for me to illuminate that a significant negative relationship exists between acculturative stress and sociocultural adaptation. Mahmood and Burke (2018) analyzed the levels of acculturative stress and sociocultural adaptation among 413 of 880 international students at two campuses of a large, 4-year, public, Southcentral, U.S. college. A quantitative descriptive approach incorporating the Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students (ASSIS) and a revised version of Wilson's (2012) Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) was used to collect data. Results from the study indicated an inverse relationship between acculturative stress and sociocultural adaptation. This means that as sociocultural adaptation increased acculturative stress decreased (Mahmood & Burke, 2018). In addition, Mahmood and Burke (2018)

interpreted that “students with greater competency in interpersonal communication, academic/work performance, personal interests and community involvement, ecological adaptation, and language proficiency usually experience lower levels of acculturative stress” (p. 297).

Additional findings indicate that in terms of gender, male international students had higher levels of acculturative stress, while female international students had slightly higher means of sociocultural adaption (Mahmood & Burke, 2018). Traditional international students (18-22) had slightly higher levels of acculturative stress than non-traditional international students (ages 24 or older). Graduate students had slightly higher levels of socio-cultural adaptation on the subscales of academic performance, work performance, ecological adaptation, and language proficiency (Mahmood & Burke, 2018). For undergraduate students, slightly higher levels of socio-cultural adaptation were measured on the subscales of personal interest and community involvement (Mahmood & Burke, 2018).

International students with preconceived notions about the culture of the United States experience acculturative stress when the reality deviates from their presumptions. Poulakis et al. (2017) studied eight Greek international students at a Predominantly White University (PWI) in the Midwest to describe their acculturative experiences on U.S. college campuses. Results from the study showed that the students in the sample had few expectations of the U.S., but some said that the media’s portrayal of the country, especially in the movies, informed their discernment about the U.S. Not only that, but some students did not think that U.S. was different from Europe and eventually found out that there were stark differences when they began their sojourn (Poulakis et al., 2017).

All participants revealed that upon their arrival to the U.S. they observed and were amazed at the number of diverse ethnic groups within the country. Their amazement was fueled by the fact that they had mistaken that the U.S. was like Europe in terms of diversity (Poulakis et al., 2017). The students who described their post sojourn perceptions in greater detail often noted "how there are various types of people, religions, cultures, customs, and regional differences in the United States" (Poulakis et al., 2017, p. 212).

This created culture shock for some of the Greek students who consistently compared the social norms of the U.S. with those of their home country. They shared that the United States' culture was more structured than that of Greece in terms of punctuality and work ethic (Poulakis et al., 2017). Sources of acculturative stress for the students in the study included physical isolation from family and the difficulties of a variety of tasks associated with daily living in the U.S. such as taking care of their household. Furthermore, financial problems such as tuition cost, assuming a minoritized status in the U.S., and the fast pace of living in the U.S. created acculturative stress for the participants in the study (Poulakis et al., 2017). Poulakis et al. (2017) surmised that these factors ultimately affected how the Greek students adapted to life on campus.

Contrariwise, some international students do not experience significant acculturative stress during their transition into U.S. higher education. He and Hutson (2018) conducted a study using a convergent mixed methods approach among 61 first year Chinese international students at a mid-sized Southeastern public university. The aim of the study was to decipher the areas in which they needed support as they transitioned into U.S. higher education. Quantitative data was collected in the students' first year of study using He et al.'s (2014) Appreciative Advising Inventory, while qualitative data was collected using individual and focus group interviews at the end of each semester (He & Hutson, 2018).

Some of the participants in He and Hutson's (2018) study reported that they did not experience any uneasiness during their transition into the U.S. except those who had difficulties with food and transportation. Furthermore, the participants in the study did not have challenges collaborating with other international students and enjoyed making friends with other cultures (He & Hutson, 2018). The Chinese students engaged with the local communities in several different ways including attending local churches and used this as a way of learning more about local cultures (He & Hutson, 2018).

In another contradictory study, Wang et al. (2012) found that acculturative stress differed across the Chinese students they sampled. In fact, most Chinese students in the study did not experience severe levels of psychological distress during the initial phase of their transition to the U.S. Sixty-five percent of the students said they experienced minimal fluctuations in the psychological distress they experienced directly before and after they transitioned cross-culturally into the U.S. (Wang et al., 2012). Moreover, less than a quarter of the students in the study experienced psychological distress. Results also showed that the Chinese students' levels of psychological distress were higher prior to them traveling and studying in the U.S. but dissipated shortly into their first semester (Wang et al., 2012).

Thus, psychological distress was perceived to be pre-existent and less likely related to the cross-cultural transition for those students with consistently higher levels of psychological distress (Wang et al., 2012). Wang et al. (2012) drew these findings from a quantitative study among a random sample of 507 Chinese international students. The purpose of the study was to find out the distinctive acculturative adjustment patterns of new international students across the first 3 semesters while they studied in the U.S. (Wang et al., 2012).

However, within the same study, Wang et al. (2012) isolated a group of students who experienced culture shock. These students had higher levels of acculturative stress in the first year of their studies; however, this level of stress started to decrease in their third year. The students who experienced culture shock received higher levels of support from other Chinese students during their first year and by the third year had the most balanced array of social support. Almost half of this support came from other international and domestic students (Wang et al., 2012).

As international students transition into the U.S. higher education system acculturative stress creates adaptive barriers. Acculturative stress most often occurs when international students experiences the host culture. However, it is not unusual for anticipatory psychological anxieties about leaving their home countries and cultures to trigger fear among this student demographic (Wang et al., 2012). For example, international students who speak English as a second language often anticipate difficulties adapting in countries where English is the first language (Telbis et al., 2014). These difficulties result in the development of language barriers between international students and members of their host culture (Telbis et al., 2014). Language barriers often prevent international students from achieving a sense of belonging on campus.

Language Barriers

International students' experiences with the campus carry phenomenon may also be affected by the language barriers that exist between them and domestic campus constituents. A lack of confidence in the use of the English language affects how international students communicate and adjust to different pedagogical methods (Kim, 2011; Kuo, 2011; Mann et al., 2010; Telbis et al., 2014). Their ability to listen and understand content and conversations

during academic and social interactions also affects their willingness to communicate with classmates and professors (Kim, 2011; Kuo, 2011; Mann et al., 2010; Telbis et al., 2014).

In addition, international students who speak English as a second language find it hard to form meaningful relationships with their domestic peers and professors and struggle to meet writing standards for the courses they undertake (Kim, 2012; Rienties et al., 2012; Russell et al., 2010; Sherry et al., 2010; Sue & Rawlings, 2013; Telbis et al., 2014; Terui, 2012). In essence, language barriers limit the ability of international students to adapt to their host's culture (Telbis et al., 2014)

Quantitative empirical data from Telbis et al. (2014) inferred that deficiencies in the use of the English language may be the most significant challenge international students' encounter in the U.S. In their study, Telbis et al. (2014) surveyed a population of 957 international students attending a U.S. university to examine "how community acceptance, language ability, academic ability, and financial stability are associated with students' academic success" (p. 333). Of the 957 students surveyed, 152 (16% response rate) students responded to the electronically administered survey.

Other results from the study suggested that those students with high confidence in their English language ability had high confidence in completing their studies (Telbis et al., 2014). The reverse held true for those who had low English language ability. Language confidence had the strongest impact on academic ability since students with high levels of confidence in their academic ability were highly confident in completing their studies (Telbis et al., 2014). Additionally, Telbis et al. (2014) revealed that language confidence was a major socialization issue for international students.

International students who were less comfortable with the English language had more challenges adapting socio-culturally and experienced higher levels of acculturative stress (Mahmood & Burke, 2018). In Mahmood and Burke's (2018) work findings speaking to the sample's comfort with the English language indicate that 22% of the participants were not comfortable or somewhat comfortable. In addition, 39% were comfortable and another 39% very comfortable and extremely comfortable. Those international students who were comfortable and very comfortable with their use of the English language did not encounter significant language barriers on campus (Mahmood & Burke, 2018).

Language barriers limit international students' ability to make friends with domestic students. Gareis (2012) deduced that 40% of students within a sample of 454 non-native English-speaking international students did not have meaningful relationships with domestic students. This issue arose because of the language barrier which exists between both groups of students (Gareis, 2012). Gareis (2012) examined how international students' home countries and the host regions in which they study affected their friendship experiences in the U.S. Quantitative data was collected at universities in the metropolitan Northeast, the non-metropolitan Northeast, and the non-metropolitan Southeast (Gareis, 2012).

Gareis (2012) further deduced that language barriers prevented international students from transitioning effectively into U.S. college environments. Like Mahmood and Burke (2018) and Telbis et al. (2014), Gareis (2012) proffered that language barriers usually create learning challenges for non-native English-speaking international students. Even more, English language proficiency is a major acculturative stress for international students especially those who experience culture shock on campus (Gareis, 2012; Leong, 2015; Poulakis et al., 2017).

International students, particularly Asian students, face difficulties participating in oral presentations and understanding lectures which add to the acculturative stress they experience while transitioning into the campus environment (Gareis, 2012; Roy, 2013; Telbis et al., 2014). East Asian international students faced the toughest challenge forming relationships with domestic students in the regions sampled (Gareis, 2012). Gareis (2012) attributed this to poor communication between both groups of students.

East Asians, especially those from China, South Korea, and Japan are more concerned about their ability to speak English. These students were also worried about others being able to understand what they were saying and learning American jargons than students from other parts of the world (Perry et al., 2017). Language and culture were positively correlated, likewise language and friendships. The Chinese students in He and Hutson's (2018) study shared that English language proficiency was a major barrier for them in daily communications and academic writing. Learning the structure of academic writing at U.S. institutions was a problem for these students because the expectations were different in their home countries (He & Hutson, 2018).

It is palpable from the studies conducted by Gareis (2012); He and Hutson (2018); and Telbis et al. (2014) that the challenges with speaking and using the English language were more pronounced among Asian international students. International students from some English-speaking countries do not experience language barriers to the same degree as Asian international students. For example, Leong (2015) proffered that students from European countries that are familiar with the U.S. culture and the English language are not usually exposed to the challenges created by language barriers on U.S. college campuses. Likewise, Zhou and Cole (2017) posited

that speaking English as a second language is not associated with overall satisfaction with campus experiences among international students.

Contreras-Aguirre and Gonzalez (2017) explained that the participants in their study who were taught in English in their home countries did not face challenges living in the U.S. and studying in an American college. However, those participants who were taught in another language other than English, experienced language barriers transitioning in the U.S. This is an issue that is complicated by the curriculum and structure of courses (Contreras-Aguirre & Gonzalez, 2017). When international students struggle to overcome language barriers, they also tussle with attaining a sense of belonging (Yao, 2016).

Sense of Belonging

Achieving a sense of belonging on U.S. college campuses is a challenge for international students and the presence of concealed guns on campus may further force these students into isolation. According to Hurtado and Carter (1997), a sense of belonging is critical in the assimilation process for international students. Achieving a sense of belonging helps international students identify with the other members of the campus community and contributes to the way they interact and learn in social settings (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). International students expect that the institutions of which they are a part will be supportive of their efforts to grow and thrive socially on campus (Korobova & Starobin, 2015).

By definition, a sense of belonging in higher education, is the way an individual's cognitive and affective processes helps them to identify with the campus community (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). On the positive side this creates "a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships" (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 497). In this regard, the need for a sense of belonging becomes a motivating

force for individuals who strive to connect with the "in groups" on campus while acknowledging their status in the "out-group" (Yao, 2014). In other words, "one component of connecting oneself with the fabric of surrounding people, places, and things is a sense of belonging" (Hagerty, et al., 1992, p. 173).

The need for a sense of belonging is often triggered by homesickness and depression (Kwadzo, 2014). To reach this conclusion, Kwadzo (2014) interviewed 20 international students at a Northeastern University to explore their experiences with studying and working at the institution. Other findings conveyed by Kwadzo (2014) indicated that homesickness and depression were consequences of international students' unfamiliarity with the campus environment. This in turn affects their ability to attain a sense of belonging on campus (Kwadzo, 2014; Will, 2012). In another study, Campbell (2015) discovered that the sample of international doctoral students felt homesick because they were isolated from their families and culture. These students yearned for a sense of belonging on campus to ease this homesickness. In addition, Campbell (2015) found that married international students had more hectic lives which made them more susceptible to homesickness. Still, both the married and unmarried groups in the study strived to achieve a sense of belonging in their host country (Campbell, 2015).

Conversely, Black international students encounter more diverse challenges when they attempt to secure a sense of belonging on U.S. college campuses (George Mwangi, 2016). This conclusion was drawn after George Mwangi (2016) interviewed 12 Black international students studying at an HBCU. A qualitative case study was used to determine their sense of belonging and the factors which influenced this sense of belonging at the institution.

Additional findings from George Mwangi's (2016) study suggested that Black international students were less engaged in campus activities because they were committed to

excelling academically. George Mwangi (2016) inferred that the students thought these activities were a distraction from their academic goals. More importantly, George Mwangi (2016) gathered that the sense of belonging sought and achieved by Black international students was defined by challenges and improvements based on their self-identity, the campus environment, and their interactions on campus. Moreover, a lack of engagement, disparate racial identities, and negative stereotypes about African American students impeded the students' efforts to achieve a sense of belonging on campus. As such, Black international students usually seek out other foreign-born students to interact with and avoided relationships with African American students (George Mwangi, 2016).

A greater sense of belonging on U.S. college campuses creates a positive campus climate for international students (Glass et al., 2015; Leong, 2015). Besides, to achieve a sense of belonging on campus, international students seek amicable relationships with both domestic students and their professors (Glass et al., 2015). Glass et al. (2015) proffered that a negative campus environment is created when international students have negative experiences with their peers and professors. In support, Thomas (2014) purported that a student's sense of belonging on campus is achieved through positive interactions with peers and faculty inside and outside of classroom settings. When this sense of belonging is acquired international students become engaged in fruitful social interactions (Thomas, 2014).

Interactions with domestic campus constituents provide the support international students need on and off campus to build their academic and social tenacity (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Strayhorn 2012). However, domestic students must be open to diversity. A campus environment that is open to diversity facilitates interactions between international students and domestic students. The interaction between both groups helps

international students acquire a sense of belonging (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

When international students find domestic friends, who are open to the diversity they bring to the college campus; they experience an increase in their sense of belonging and become more attached to the institution (Leong, 2015). Moreover, an achieved sense of belonging is critical to international students' academic persistence and social engagement. As previously mentioned, this is usually developed through better relationships with their professors and domestic classmates (Glass et al., 2015; Glass & Westmont-Campbell, 2014; Leong, 2015; Longerbeam et al., 2013; Poulakis et al., 2017). In other words, peer and institutional support which caters to the welfare of international students are most effective when there is genuine psychological concern for the well-being of these students (Reis et al., 2000).

Longerbeam et al. (2013) surveyed 361 students across five U.S. and six Chinese universities to ascertain how student and faculty interactions influenced campus climate. Peer and faculty interactions were determined to be factors that influence a positive climate for participants in the study. Longerbeam et al. (2013) also emphasized that peer interaction had a stronger influence on the campus climate than interaction with professors.

However, when faculty and peer support is offered to international students there must be intentionality behind these efforts in helping international students achieve a sense of belonging (Korobova & Starobin, 2015; Yao, 2014). In a study focusing on international students' achieving a sense of belonging while living on campus, Yao (2016) interviewed 21 first-year Chinese students (six men and 15 women) at a Midwestern university who resided in on-campus residence halls. The study also offered insights into the Chinese international students' perceptions of peer interactions within the residential community on campus.

Yao (2016) found that most of the participants in the study who had American roommates had a low sense of belonging on their residence hall. Furthermore, the international students who had domestic roommates experienced discomfort in their rooms after the initial anticipation and excitement of sharing a room with an American wore off and cultural differences started to create discomfort for both groups (Yao, 2016). Yao (2016) deduced that domestic students had no genuine intent of making friends with international students. This eventually made the roommate relationship tense and unfriendly.

International students are not only denied a sense of belonging on residence halls. In fact, Longerbeam et al. (2013) revealed that more than half the sample in their study thought U.S. students had no interest in socializing with them. Likewise, Contreras-Aguirre and Gonzalez (2017) reported that as it relates to sense of belonging, study participants felt American students had their own groups and it was difficult getting accepted into those groups. Some participants also shared that when students are enrolled in different programs, whether they are from the same country, bonding with each other is difficult (Contreras-Aguirre & Gonzalez, 2017).

As it relates to faculty interactions, Glass et al. (2015) interviewed a sample of 40 graduate and undergraduate international students at two major research universities. Much like Campbell (2015) and Longerbeam et al. (2013), Glass et al. (2015) determined that the campus climate for international students was positively affected by interactions with culturally competent professors in inclusive classroom settings. Glass et al. (2015) underscored the importance of multicultural competence among faculty in helping international students achieve a sense of belonging on U.S. college campuses. By the same token, Knox et al. (2013) researched the advising experiences of "ten international students from at least seven different U.S. based doctoral programs in counseling psychology" (p. 48) and found that the participants

did not receive the expected emotional and social support they anticipated from their advisors. Only those advisors who previously worked with international students were thought to be supportive by the participants in the study (Knox et al., 2013).

In another study reporting similar findings as Knox et al. (2013), Stebleton et al. (2017) conducted a multi-institutional, qualitative examination of the relationship 103 foreign-born, undergraduate, immigrant students had with faculty members and student affairs professionals at three urban institutions. Interviews were carried out over a three-year period in the Western, Pacific Northwestern, and Midwestern regions of the U.S. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1977) was used as the guiding theoretical framework to analyze the intricacies of the relationships that Stebleton et al. (2017) scrutinized.

After analyzing the data, Stebleton et al. (2017) posited that "immigrant students encountered injustices, meaning they experienced implicit and explicit racial and cultural biases in their campus interactions" (p. 364). The injustices the students faced were enacted by faculty and student affairs practitioners on campus. These injustices affected their sense of belonging; an issue compounded by additional biases encountered outside the classroom. Stebleton et al. (2017) postulated that the students developed uncertainty about their legitimacy on campus due to the challenges associated with navigating the system and experiencing injustices. In addition, they desired relationships with faculty and student affairs practitioners who understood their diverse experiences and backgrounds and felt this would validate their presence on campus (Stebleton et al., 2017). Stebleton et al. (2017) deciphered that the actors and events at the exosystem and macrosystem levels in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1977) were the most impactful for the participants in the study.

International students find it easier to communicate and engage with individuals from their own countries and cultures (Korobova & Starobin, 2015; Yao, 2016). Considering this, Yao (2016) surmised that the Chinese students in her study who had Chinese roommates had a greater sense of belonging, although this did not extend beyond the confines of their rooms. The students who had Chinese roommates felt it was easier for them to live with someone who shared the same culture and language as them.

Expectedly, most of the participants who wanted to be comfortable in their rooms decided to live with a Chinese roommate by the second year of their study (Yao, 2016). Yao (2016) also found that of the 21 students in the study only 6 decided to live on-campus in their second year. The other 15 moved off –campus to live in proximity with other Chinese students. This indicated that for the 15 students who chose to live off-campus the residence halls did not provide a comfortable living space (Yao, 2016).

Additionally, Campbell (2015) conveyed that international students were slow to integrate with the rest of the campus. Delayed integration was more common among the campus' large Asian international student population who opted to socialize with one another (Campbell, 2015). Moreover, the participants in Campbell's (2015) study engaged in limited interactions outside the classroom and some participants found a sense of belonging in the cultural, religious, and academic groups on campus that were populated with their compatriots. This provided a sense of community for the students but isolated them from other campus constituents which affected their sense of belonging (Campbell, 2015).

Yan and Pei (2018) like Campbell (2015) and Yao (2016) also deciphered that international students often achieve a sense of belonging among their countrymen. Yan and Pei (2018) interviewed 12 international students pursuing studies in the U.S. to examine their

perceptions of the negative and difficult experiences they encounter on campus. The qualitative phenomenological study was conducted at a Midwestern university using a combination of purposeful and snowball sampling. The participants in the study demonstrated a strong motivation and willingness to find a sense of belonging on campus. However, the relationships with individuals in their host countries constantly changed (Yan & Pei, 2018).

A sense of belonging was achieved from interactions with people and groups from their home countries, similar ethnic groups, and other international students. The students in the study felt powerless, helpless, and fearful when they attempted to integrate into the host culture (Yan & Pei, 2018). In essence, international students are often in pursuit of a sense of belonging and when they fail to find it, they become anxious, hostile, depressed, and often anti-social (Glass et al., 2015; Hagerty et al., 1992; Kim, 2012). On the contrary, Hwang (2015) explained that Asian international students had varied cross-cultural experiences on college campuses, and this was dependent on their region of origin.

Patron (2014) posited that international students form friendships with their countrymen because it is difficult for them to question and change elements of their culture to adapt to life in the U.S. Furthermore, social support on college campuses does not always make it easier for them to let go of their cultural reservations to form meaningful and supportive friendships (Patron, 2014). Additionally, Zhao et al. (2005) surmised that homesickness is a major psychological stressor for international students. As such international students find it hard to develop friendships with their domestic peers. International students experience a deep sense of loss when their family lives are disrupted because of them traveling away from home (Moores & Popadiuk, 2011). This is complicated by their unfamiliarity with the academic demands of U.S. higher education (Zhang & Goodson, 2011; Zhang et al., 2011).

To be fair, although international students have difficulties making friends on campus, domestic students are receptive of them and the diversity they bring to campus (Will, 2016). Furthermore, domestic students accept the increasing presence of Chinese students on college campuses and think it adds to campus diversity (Will, 2016). Other perceived benefits of having international students on campus included, helping other students developing an international perspective, creating more opportunities, and increasing classroom competition. Some of the American students expressed that it was difficult to adjust to the accents of the international students, but also felt domestic students needed to be patient to overcome the challenge (Will, 2016).

International students' need for a sense of belonging on college campuses is achieved when their domestic hosts accept them and the diversity, they bring to U.S. higher education (Yao, 2014). Difficulties with language, finding social support, and shedding maladaptive practices restrict the degree to which this sense of belonging is realized by international students. This sense of belonging is not always forthcoming and is sometimes hindered by discrimination (Yan & Pei, 2018).

Discrimination

The discrimination experienced by international students on college campuses is at risk of increasing with the implementation of campus carry policies. Identity-based aggressions related to race, ethnicity, cultural, and social practices have been reported by international students in the U.S. (Jackson et al., 2013; Kim, 2012). Perry et al. (2017) added that these racial issues and differences result in international students facing discrimination on and off college campuses.

Empirically, Yan and Pei (2018) posited that the international students in their study experienced abject discrimination and bias. This discrimination was perpetrated by individuals in the campus and local community. The discrimination the students in the study faced was even reflected in their academic pursuits. The participants in the study who were classified as poor English speakers were more likely to get a failing grade on assignments (Yan & Pei, 2018). Discrimination on and off U.S. college campuses is a major threat to the persistence of international students and the longer they study in the U.S. the more likely it is they will experience discrimination (Moores & Popadiuk, 2011; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007; Zhang & Goodson, 2011).

Yao (2014) argued that the discrimination faced by international students, particularly Asian students, is a direct result of campus constituents and local community members subjecting them to *othering*. Johnson et al. (2004) defined othering as "a process that identifies those that are thought to be different from oneself or the mainstream, and it can reinforce and reproduce positions of domination and subordination" (p. 253). The process of othering involves creating in groups and out groups and makes the transition into U.S. higher education settings difficult for international students. Tensions are created when the obvious differences between the in-group and the out-group collide (Yao, 2014).

To combat this discrimination Yao et al. (2018) suggested that studies gauging international student experiences should use an approach which incorporates critical race theory. Discrimination on college campuses is usually based on race relations. International students especially those of color are subject to othering by the dominant race on campus (Yao et al., 2018). In the U.S., Caucasians make up the dominant race and Yao et al. (2018) argued that this

must be considered when discussing and attempting to improve the experiences of international students.

Additionally, Yao et al. (2018) surmised that although critical race theory was not developed for higher education or to study the experiences of international students, the model was applied to the study of other groups such as Asian Americans and Latinos. The theory is therefore perceived as applicable to the experiences of international students due to the minoritized status of these students (Yao et al., 2018). To reduce discrimination, Yao et al. (2018) recommended that universities recognized that international students are racially minoritized. Becoming familiar with this racialized status means that these institutions can include international students in their programming and support services for those students who are racially marginalized (Yao et al., 2018).

While this study focuses on the experiences of international students in the U.S.; the central aim is to explore the campus carry phenomenon. As such, Yao et al.'s (2018) recommendation to include critical race theory will not be applied to this study. Additionally, the use of a critical lens is not a part of the qualitative approach of the research design. Future studies of a similar nature may however create research designs which factor in the tenets of critical race theory.

That aside, the Chinese participants in Will's (2016) study reported experiencing cultural microaggressions perpetrated by Americans. These microaggressions limited international students' knowledge of the American culture and stifled the social relationships international students had on campus. Some participants felt Americans positioned themselves with prevailed and superior attitudes which created a rift between them and their American classmates. The participants in the study also thought the Americans had little to no interest in getting to know

them unless they had some interest in learning Chinese (Will, 2016). This issue identified in Will's (2016) work manifests itself as selective discrimination. Selective discrimination occurs when an interest in one ethnicity reduces the likelihood of that group experiencing discrimination (Will, 2016; Zhou & Cole, 2017).

In further explaining selective discrimination, Zhou and Cole (2017) posited that White international and domestic students had less frequent negative cross-racial experiences. On the other hand, non-white students had more frequent positive and negative cross-racial experiences. These findings were extracted from a study conducted by Zhou and Cole (2017) which compared the involvement in college life among 191 international and 409 American students. Zhou and Cole (2017) examined the data from the Freshmen Survey (TFS) and College Senior Survey (CSS) administered at the University of California, Los Angeles to reach their conclusion. The international students in the study were drawn from 37 U.S. institutions and the domestic students attended 79 institutions.

Additional findings from the study indicated that even though international students had more frequent negative and positive cross-racial interactions than American students, they had more frequent positive cross-racial experiences with domestic students. Black students reported more negative cross-racial experiences than both Whites and Latinos/as (Zhou & Cole, 2017). Justifiably, Perry et al. (2017) found that international students from non-White regions expressed greater concerns about discrimination than those from White regions. As such, American students and faculty members must be cognizant of the way their actions towards international students are perceived so that they avoid demonstrating indifference to this segment of the student population (Yan & David, 2011).

International Students' Coping Mechanisms

The coping mechanisms international students currently employ to mitigate the effects of acculturative stress, loneliness, language barriers, and discrimination may have to be realigned to factor in the possible impacts of the campus carry phenomenon. Coping refers to a series of "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/ or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141). International students often develop personal coping mechanisms to alleviate the impacts of these external and internal demands on their campus experiences so that they are able complete their studies in the U.S. (Yan & David, 2011). These coping mechanisms include developing mental toughness, seeking social support on and off-campus, and employing other unique coping strategies.

Mental Toughness

Jin and Wang (2018) posited that mental toughness significantly mediated the paths from attachment anxiety (homesickness) to both psychological distress (acculturative stress) and life satisfaction for international students. This finding was deduced from a quantitative study among 217 international students at a large Southwestern University. Jin and Wang (2018) attempted to explain the "relationships of adult attachment, mental toughness (MT), and psychological well-being of international students" (p. 59). Additional findings from Jin and Wang's (2018) work suggest that students with higher attachment anxiety possessed lower levels of mental toughness which is associated with more psychological distress.

A lack of mental toughness established the negative effects of attachment anxiety on the low life satisfaction experienced by the students in the study (Jin & Wang, 2018). In other words, mental tenacity assists international students in coping with the cross-cultural loneliness they

face on campus. International students irregularly seek mental health and counseling services and quite often their mental toughness is what alleviates the stress they encounter via cross-cultural interactions (Jin & Wang, 2018; Poulakis et al., 2017).

In fact, according to Poulakis et al. (2017) international students underutilized campus counseling services. Those who were open to the idea of seeking counseling did so only if the problem was serious (Poulakis et al., 2017). Moreover, male international students were less likely than female international students to use these services.

Conversely, male international students were more likely to use counseling services than domestic male students (Hwang et al., 2014). This was proven by Hwang et al. (2014) when they quantitatively examined the utilization of counseling services at a Midwestern University by international students over a five-year period. Data was collected from the 2005-2010 records of the standardized intake questionnaire completed by 834 international students who used the university's counseling center (Hwang et al., 2014).

Social Support

Hwang et al. (2014) also inferred that international students preferred to approach faculty and staff as the most likely referral sources for assistance, a finding supported by Poulakis et al. (2017). International students who seek and receive more social support experience less acculturative stress (Ra, 2016; Renner et al., 2012). Compelling evidence of this was reported by Ra and Trusty (2017) who quantitatively investigated "the effects of social support and coping on acculturation and acculturative stress of international students" (p. 276). The participants in the study were 232 Asian international students drawn from colleges across 23 U.S. states (Ra & Trusty, 2017).

Findings from the study indicated that students with lower levels of acculturative stress and higher levels of psychosocial well-being demonstrated greater levels of coping and social support (Ra & Trusty, 2017). Social supported partially mediated the effects of acculturation on acculturative stress among the East Asian students in the study. The participants in the study who had negative experiences with acculturative stress were more inclined to seek social support and developed coping strategies to alleviate the problem (Ra & Trusty, 2017).

In addition, Wang et al. (2012) also found that social support helped to reduce acculturative stress among the Chinese students in their study. Students in the study who were better acculturated had "higher self-esteem, more positive problem-solving appraisal, and lower maladaptive perfectionism at pre-arrival" (Wang et al., 2012, p. 432). Students who adjusted better in the first semester of their study had a balanced array of social support, but less support from other Chinese students (Wang et al., 2012).

On the other hand, the participants in Kwadzo's (2014) study coped with the acculturative stress they experienced and the pressures of studying and working by using leisure and non-leisure activities such as shopping and cooking. Similarly, He and Hutson (2018) outlined that bonding relationships were formed among international students through cooking and shopping. Some international students resort to seeking support from their family and friends in their home countries to cope with acculturative stress.

In agreement, Kwadzo (2014) stated that many international students received support from their loved ones in their home country. Congruently, the Greek international students Poulakis et al. (2017) sampled had strong, positive, and available familial and peer networks to help them adjust to the culture of the U.S. This helped them cope with the acculturative stress

they experienced on campus. However, some students independently solved problems without any specific assistance (Poulakis et al., 2017).

Social support also helped international students cope with language barriers they experience on U.S. college campuses. Hong and Jianqiang (2014) and Yao (2016) inferred that to learn the English language, the participants in their study made friends with English speaking Americans, participated in social activities, and expanded their social networking. In fact, two participants in Yao's (2016) study specifically said that having a shared language and partaking in the American culture would assist them in achieving a sense of belonging in their residential communities. All the respondents thought that American students would help them transition into the campus and residential communities (Yao, 2016).

The Chinese students in He and Hutson's (2018) work also quoted network and community as a strength they possessed because of being acculturated. The students expressed that they enjoyed working with others from different cultures in completing academic tasks, while living in residence halls. He and Hutson (2018) found that living in residence halls with other international and domestic students and participating in common activities on campus also gave participants the opportunity to learn more about other cultures. Yao's (2016) findings counter that of He and Hutson (2018) because many Chinese international students in Yao's (2016) study had difficulties sharing residential space with their domestic peers because of cultural differences.

Leong (2015) established that the social support students find among faculty and staff on campus usually helps them cope with acculturative stress. This social support also helps them achieve their need for a sense of belonging (Leong, 2015). In their study, Stebleton et al. (2017) emphasized that immigrant students who experienced positive relationships and are supported by

faculty and student affairs practitioners thought it validated their presence on campus. But poor interactions with faculty and student affairs practitioners invalidated their presence in the college environment. The students also said they achieved a sense of belonging, empowerment, and connection to the campus when they developed relationships on a personal level with faculty and student affairs practitioners (Stebleton et al., 2017).

Baba and Hosoda (2014) and Yan and David (2011) agreed with the findings by Jin and Wang (2018) and Poulakis et al. (2017). However, Baba and Hosoda (2014) and Yan and David (2011) posited that Americans may be unaware that they ought to reach out to international students and ensure that they are engaged in activities that can help integrate them into the U.S. culture. This ignorance is partially due to the individualistic nature of Americans which international students may not understand (Yan & David, 2011). When international students are shunned by Americans, they use virtual social support such as FaceTime, Facebook, or Skype to connect with and get support from their family and friends in their home countries. International students remain reliant on virtual social support until they are assimilated into the U.S. culture (Hwang, 2015).

Unique Strategies

The commitment and motivation to complete their programs of study allowed Chinese international students to form meaningful relationships which helped to mediate the acculturative stress they experienced on campus (He & Hutson, 2018). Glass et al. (2015) discovered similar findings among the sample in their study. Watching and listening to English-based TV programs, films and series, and the news helped international students to learn the English language (Hong & Jianqiang, 2014). Those international students who linguistically struggled in class took notes and used reading to make up for their listening and speaking deficiencies. This resulted in them

developing cognitive competence with the English language which translated into improvements in their social skills and learning autonomy. This facilitated their assimilation into the learning environment (Hong & Jianqiang, 2014).

To cope with discrimination, international students may internalize the negative experiences they encounter on campus. Yan and Pei (2018) said that to cope with the discrimination international students' face, there was a tendency among participants in their study to blame themselves and some even tried to defend the attitudes of Americans in these negative circumstances. Based on the arguments in the preceding paragraphs, international students create and seek numerous ways of coping with the challenges they face on college campuses. The coping mechanism employed is dependent on their exposure to acculturative stress, loneliness, language barriers, and discrimination. Nonetheless, there must be some level of institutional support in place to help this diverse student subgroup adapt to life in the U.S. and on campus, especially with the advent of the campus carry phenomenon.

Support Structures for International Students

The structured programs and support services offered to international students on U.S. college campuses will need to incorporate solutions to emergent issues associated with the campus carry phenomenon. These programs and services are usually helpful in satisfying the on-campus needs of international students (Glass & Westmont-Campbell, 2014; Moores & Popadiuk, 2011; Roberts & Dunworth, 2012; Yakunina et al., 2011). In fact, the immigrant students in Stebleton et al.'s (2017) study valued the role student support services played in helping them navigate the system on campus. It was via these efforts that the students were able to fully interact with faculty and student affairs staff.

However, Leong (2015) argued for the development of more student affairs programs beyond immigration services on U.S. college campuses to help international students adjust to college life and the American culture. Wang et al. (2012) also determined that when students have a balanced array of social support services, they transition smoother cross-culturally and had a better campus experience. In addition, Campbell (2015) declared that international student involvement in student activities helps them adjust more easily in college.

Student support services must be intentionally and collaboratively designed to meet the needs of international students (Yao & George Mwangi, 2017). Korobova (2012) purported that institutional support services combined with student-faculty interaction, quality of relationships, and supportive campus environments help international students achieve academic success. Additionally, Korobova and Starobin (2015) opined that international student satisfaction and success on college campuses is achievable when administrators provide a supportive environment in which the quality of relationships, institutional emphasis, high levels of academic challenge, and high levels of student-faculty interaction are offered to international students. "Specialized workshops, individualized counseling, online tools, and mentoring and pairing programs are among other strategies that should be designed, implemented, and offered, to international students" (Korobova & Starobin, 2015, p. 83). According to George Mwangi (2016) "It is important for higher education practitioners to be intentional in providing opportunities for foreign-born Black students and native-born Black students to interact with and learn from one another" (p. 1032). Kumi-Yeboah (2014) also made this recommendation in their study.

As it relates to quality of relationships, Campbell (2015) suggested that "there is a need for all institutional stakeholders to be culturally responsive" (p. 1296). To do this, Mahmood and

Burke (2018) determined that intentionally learning about the effects of socio-cultural adaptation and acculturative stress on international students can help higher education professionals provide the support services needed to help these students transition into the host country's culture. In the context of doctoral programs, academic departments should encourage means by which faculty members and supervising professors learn about students' cultural differences (Mahmood & Burke, 2018). Campbell (2015) and Ra (2016) opined that this may include communicating with international students' offices to learn about the backgrounds of international students, using diverse teaching methods and content in the classroom, and establishing faculty-student mentorship programs to help bridge the cultural gap between faculty and students.

Cho and Lee (2016) and Kumi-Yeboa (2014) agreed with Korobova and Starobin's (2015) and Campbell's (2016) recommendations that diverse student development activities, programming, and support should be provided for international students. Ra and Trusty (2017) supported the arguments of Cho and Lee (2016) and Mahmood and Burke (2018) by stating that higher education professionals should increase their multicultural awareness and competence so that they can contribute to the successful adjustment of international students on campus. Hegarty (2014) further added that "a high level of interaction with international students is required to promote retention and an overall positive learning experience" (p. 228). In fact, increasing internationalization on college campuses helps to reduce feelings of alienation that international students experience daily (Hegarty, 2014).

To further encourage the acculturation of international students on campus, Campbell (2015) recommended that international student offices help these students adapt via family programs. Ra and Trusty (2017) recommended that this be achieved by an intentional effort by the international student affairs administrators on campus collaborating with the locals to build a

community that is receptive and friendly to international students. One such activity is having an American family adopt an international student or university administrators providing family housing (Campbell, 2015).

Institutions should also create university programs and seminars that cultivate relationships between domestic and international students (Cho & Lee, 2016; Hegarty, 2014; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013; Yan & Pei, 2018; Zhou, 2017). The seminars should be offered in each semester or yearlong for both groups of students "to foster both international and domestic students' mutual understanding and to enhance their communication" (Yan & Pei, 2018, p. 469). Yao (2016) went further and emphasized that internationalization programs could be extended to encompass a joint orientation of international and domestic students about living on campus. These programs must be offered campus-wide with all departments engaging in a collaborative effort that welcomes and prepares international students for life on campus residence halls (Yao, 2016).

Lastly, to help international students cope with the challenges they face on campus the students themselves, their professors, peers, and college administrators must play a collaborative role in helping them adjust. Student affairs professionals and administrators are positioned to help international students' transition, adjust, and make sense of the U.S. college environment (Baba & Hosoda, 2014; Glass et al., 2013; Stebleton et al., 2017; Yao & George Mwangi, 2017). However, additional support services will be needed to assist this diverse, growing, and underserved demographic on U.S. college campuses (Baba & Hosoda, 2014; Geary, 2016).

Emergent Challenges Regarding International Students and Campus Safety

Additional challenges to the experiences of international students on U.S. college campuses have been generated in recent times. Key among them is the need for increased safety

and protection from campus violence (Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood, 2017; Watt et al., 2018). Both Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood (2017) and Watt et al. (2018) posited that xenophobia, racism, and religious discrimination have become prevalent on college campuses. For example, there was the "Unite the Right" rally on the University of Virginia campus on August 11, 2017 (Blake, 2017). Actions like this place international students at risk of being physically harmed (Watt et al., 2018).

Emergent and anticipated personal, religious, and discriminatory actions because of the U.S. government's recent immigration and campus carry policies are probable sources of these threats (Watt et al., 2018). The recent election and the imposition of a travel ban by the Trump administration increased the visibility of antagonistic behavior towards marginalized and underrepresented students on college campuses (Watt et al., 2018). A 16-member sample of marginalized students including six international students "expressed great disappointment over the election of President Trump and reported feeling uneasy and concerned over the growing violence and tension in their community" (Watt et al., 2018, p. 127). For one, campus carry policies under the Trump administration increases the likelihood of deadly violence in the classroom which other marginalized students risk to persist, academically (Watt et al., 2018).

Jennings (2017) postulated that because of the posture of the Trump administration, the future enrolment of international students may reduce. Clark (2018) illuminated that guidance counselors and recruitment officers from institutions around the world gathered at the International Association for College Admission Counseling Conference at Tulane University in 2018. At the conference, the guidance counselors shared their concerns about issues such as campus safety, gun violence, immigration policies, and job placement in the U.S. These issues were communicated to them by international students and their parents.

Clark (2018) said that the International Association for College Admission Counseling Conference attracted 1,400 college and high school admission officials and counselors from over 100 nations. Seventy-three colleges across the U.S. were surveyed by the group to find out how on and off campus safety, immigration policies, and post-graduation employment impacted international student enrolment (Clark, 2018). The counselors (57%) reported a decrease in international student applicants during the 2017-2018 school year. Students from Africa and the Middle East (78%) and South and Central America (75%) recorded the greatest decline in applicants. European applicants decreased by 59 percent and Chinese applicants decreased by 53 percent (Clark, 2018).

Moreover, the immigration policies of the Trump administration also created uneasiness among international students (Clark, 2018). International students on college campuses are becoming easy targets for hate crimes due to the tone of the Trump administration's travel ban and its negative perception of immigrants (Baran, 2017; Blumenstyk, 2017; Blumenstyk et al., 2017; Glass, 2017). Potential threats of violence that international students may experience on U.S. college campuses are of importance to this study because if these threats bear fruit under the campus carry policies their safety and security may be at peril.

Summary of the Literature on International Student Experiences

In sum, the cross-cultural experiences of international students on U.S. college campuses are affected by acculturative stress, loneliness, language barriers, and discrimination. International students had varied experiences with these cross-cultural adjustment factors based on their ethnicity, institutional type, geographic region of origin, and interaction with campus constituents. For some students, these barriers limited their engagement, persistence, and acclimatization on U.S. college campuses. Social support, mental toughness, and institutional

support are coping mechanisms international students use to overcome these cross-cultural barriers they encounter on U.S. college campuses.

Gaps in the Literature on International Student Experiences

Like the literature on the perceptions of campus carry, there are numerous reported limitations in the studies on international student experiences. Limitations inherent in these studies included the use of only one college campus from which small samples were selected (Campbell, 2015; Hwang et al., 2014; Kwadzo, 2014; Mahmood & Burke, 2018; Poulakis et al., 2017). Distinctively, Zhou (2017) reported that the institutional size in their study varied considerably.

In some studies, the respondents spoke English as a second language, and this may have affected the way questions were interpreted and answered (Campbell, 2015; Mahmood & Burke, 2018; Yan & Pei, 2018; Yao, 2016). Ra and Trusty (2017) underscored the view that the use of self-reported instruments may have elicited biased responses from participants. Similarly, Jin and Wang (2018) criticized the cross-sectional nature of their study and felt social desirability and personal biases in the responses from the self-administered surveys were limitations in their study (Jin & Wang, 2018).

Other limitations reported included threats to internal validity due to the sampling methods used (Wang et al., 2012) and selectivity in sampling based on ethnicity (Poulakis et al., 2017; Ra & Trusty, 2017; Wang et al., 2012; Yan & Pei, 2018; Yao, 2016; Zhou, 2017). Low response rates were reported by Perry et al. (2017) and Alfattal (2016) had to change their research agenda to a grounded theory approach due to the emergence of the Peace theme. Campbell (2015) confirmed that experiences, as measured in the study, were sexualized by some

female participants. The students in the studies by Campbell (2015) and Zhou (2017) provided limited information about how their backgrounds influenced their decision to study in the U.S.

For Hwang et al. (2014), the full utilization of counseling service for the year 2009/10 was incomplete which limited the generalizability of their findings. Mahmood and Burke (2018) revealed that inferences based on nationality were difficult since the international students in their sample were from diverse cultural backgrounds while Poulakis et al. (2017) explained that the findings in their study were based on the interpretations of a team of researchers and this limited its generalizability. Ra and Trusty (2017) concluded that their study was conducted at the beginning of the semester, but acculturative stress, acculturation, coping, and social support may vary over the academic year. Lastly, Yan and Pei (2018) conveyed that some participants distrusted the interviewers at the start of their study and Yao (2016) hinted that the participants in the study were only interviewed at one point in time.

Future Directions

In the previous section, the impacts of numerous factors in the campus environment which affect the ability of international students to acclimatize and acculturate while they study in the U.S. were discussed. As a result, in this current study, I determined the role these factors in the wider societal and immediate campus environment play in shaping international students' perceptions of the campus carry phenomenon. I utilized Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) to achieve this goal, since this theoretical framework allowed me to extract the environmental factors and their influence on SU's international students' perception of the phenomenon. The research methodology is explained in the next section of this study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Purpose and Research Questions

This study used a descriptive phenomenological inquiry to explore the perceptions and attitudes of international students regarding the campus carry phenomenon at SU using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993). The research questions for this study are exploratory in nature and were designed to elucidate international students' voices on the campus carry issue. Additionally, the questions were designed to elicit narrative data from the study participants so that I was able to use Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) to explain their experiences in the campus carry environment at SU. The research questions that guided the intended study were:

1. How has the implementation of the campus carry policy at SU impacted international students' experiences at the institution?
2. How has the implementation of campus carry policies at SU influenced international students' perceptions of the social ecology of the institution?
3. How did SU formally include international students in the on-campus campus carry policy discussion and implementation?

The exploratory nature of question one offered the study's participants the opportunity to share their personal narratives about how the campus carry policy at the institution impacted them. As such, the study added their voices to those in support of or against the issue. Research question two determined whether the implementation of campus carry policies at the SU influenced international students' views of the social environment and climate on campus. This question specifically sought answers through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993). It probed the phenomenon's impact on international students' perceptions of their

campus experiences and the role various factors in their immediate and distant environment play in forming their perceptions of the issue.

Renn and Arnold (2003) highlighted that within the context domain of Bronfenbrenner's PPCT model, the factors intrinsic to the mesosystem and the exosystem might affect a traditional-age college students' campus experience. This study probed the participants' social interactions with the campus community during the data collection phase. This was done to determine the influence of the factors in the mesosystem and the exosystem on their perception of the campus carry phenomenon. The interview questions supporting research question one elicited this data. The micro, meso, and exosystems are the closest to the college students in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) and the factors therein are possibly the most influential (Renn & Arnold, 2003).

The level of academic and co-curricular involvement of the sample of international students in this study and their interaction with some of the factors in the meso and exo-systems, which influenced their perception of campus carry, included those identified by Renn and Arnold (2003). Renn and Arnold (2003) posited that the people and "each of these situations provides physical, social, and symbolic features that promote or inhibit increasingly complex interactions between students and their environments" (p. 270). Therefore, the perceived impacts and influences of the campus carry phenomenon is influenced by the participants' interactions with the members of the campus environment. Interview question one asked about the social campus experiences of the study's participants and the sources from which they got information about the campus carry phenomenon. The roles and influences of these sources were highlighted by the participants in this study.

Research question three ascertained from the participants in the study and the literature reviewed, the ways in which international students could be included in the campus carry implementation process at the SU. The goal was to recommend strategies that the SU could use to involve international students in campus carry policy implementation so that administrators can mitigate the perceived impacts the phenomenon will have on these students. The level of interest in the involvement of international students during the implementation of the law is solely geared at finding out how they were informed about the provisions of the law, its application or lack thereof to them, and how SU addressed their concerns about the policy. The answer to this question was deduced from the strategies illuminated in the extant literature and based on the responses from participants in the study. The interview questions supporting research question three probed the perceived inclusion of the study participants in the campus carry discourse on campus.

Research Design

The Interactive Model of Research Design

The research design for this study incorporated elements of the Interactive Model of Research Design (Maxwell, 2012). Maxwell (1941) developed the model as a graphical tool that qualitative researchers use to show the relationships among each component of their research design. There is a symbiotic interaction among the various elements of qualitative studies which involves a back-and-forth process where the studies goals, theories, questions, methods, and validity influence one another (Maxwell, 2012). The interconnectedness and interactivity among a qualitative study's methodological components in one model, facilitates clarity about the processes used to collect and analyze qualitative data (Maxwell, 2013). The Interactive Model of Research Design applied in this study is presented in Figure 2.

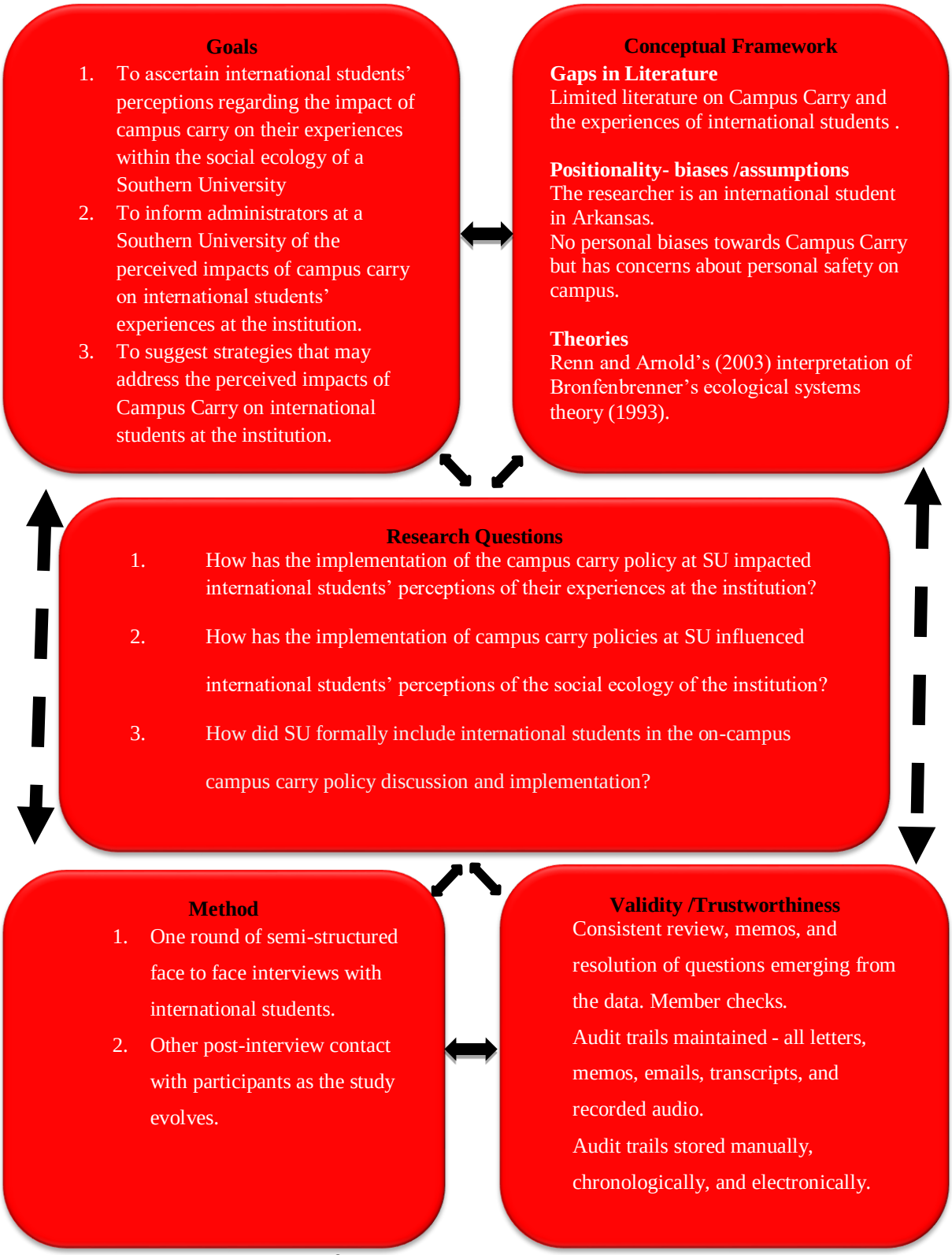

Figure 2. *The Interactive Model of Research Design*

Qualitative Research

I chose a qualitative descriptive phenomenological research design for this inquiry which probed international students' perceptions regarding the campus carry phenomenon at SU. Qualitative research provides rich data via naturalistic inquiry within naturalistic settings (Crotty, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Marshall, 1996; Maxwell, 2012). These settings help the researcher comprehend the phenomenon being studied from a humanistic perspective (Crotty, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Marshall, 1996; Maxwell, 2012). In naturalistic settings, people construct meanings of their interactions with a person, event, or phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). The techniques used in qualitative research usually gather comprehensive data on the introspections and interactions of study participants with a social or cultural phenomenon. This is done to explicate the meaning they make of that phenomenon (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). Qualitative research is often employed by researchers who want to explore social phenomena through the collection, categorization, and interpretation of participants' stories and experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Kuper et al. (2008) opined that the idiosyncratic perspectives of the participants and the researcher in qualitative research support the social constructivist philosophical position of the process. This allows for better understanding of the data collected.

Social Constructivism

According to Creswell (2014) researchers who engage in phenomenological inquiry often approach their studies from a social constructivist perspective. This is done to give participants the opportunity to share how they make meaning of and react to social phenomena in their environment (Patton, 2002). The philosophical assumption of social constructivism is that there are differences in the constructed meanings individuals make of their experiences or interactions

with a social phenomenon (Crotty, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln et al., 2011; Maxwell, 2012; Merriam, 2009).

The pundits of social constructivism proffer that the meaning individuals make of their interaction with a social phenomenon are subjective (Cavana et al., 2001; Maxwell, 2012; Neuman, 2011). As such, an individual's perception of an experience is defined by the time of the exposure to a phenomenon and the context in which they experience the phenomenon (Crotty, 1998; Lincoln et al., 2011; Maxwell, 2012). Moreover, due to the subjective nature of individual experiences, social constructivists conclude that multiple realities exist among individuals who are exposed to comparable social phenomena (Crotty, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln et al., 2011; Maxwell, 2012; Merriam, 2009).

Social constructivism was dialogically employed in the interview process so that the international students and I were reciprocally involved in a meaning-making process. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) opined that social constructivism assumes that there is relativist ontology; implying that there are multiple realities. In addition, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) posited that within the constructivist paradigm there is a subjectivist epistemology where the knower and the respondents co-construct meanings. There is also a naturalistic set of practical methods that researchers can employ to co-create this meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Conversing about the campus carry phenomenon at the SU using open ended questions via semi-structured interviews facilitated the application of social constructivism in the research process. By using this approach, participants are afforded an opportunity to speak openly and express their experiences with the campus carry phenomenon (Patton, 2015; Percy et al., 2015; Roulston, 2014). Creswell (2013) opined that using a social constructivist approach in a

dialogical meaning-making format offers me the opportunity to decipher findings from participants' narrative to answer the questions in this study.

Justification for Selecting a Qualitative Approach

The complexities of the characteristics of a phenomenon and the constructed meanings participants in a qualitative study make of their interactions with these features are the core reason researchers engage in qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Schwandt, 2007). Qualitative research offers deeper insight into or clarifies quantitative data. It also allows for the inclusion of the participants' real-life experiences in data analysis and reflects on the participants' self-concept and identities throughout the research process (Crotty, 1998; Maxwell, 2012; Merriam, 2009).

Qualitative research is inductive in nature and generates conclusions that explain the phenomenon related to the intended purpose of the study based on the themes emerging from the data (Crotty, 1998; Kuper et al., 2008; Marshall, 1996; Maxwell, 2012; Merriam, 2009; Peshkin, 1993). To interpret and explain the phenomenon being studied, qualitative researchers explore social and cultural phenomena in context by using inductive strategies such as interviews, ethnography, document reviews, and observations (Creswell, 2015; Merriam, 2009). Furthermore, qualitative research focuses on the voices of participants and shirks the convergence around a researcher's opinion about a phenomenon during the research process (Crotty, 1998). For clarity, the participants' views (emic perspectives) are prioritized over the researcher's views (etic perspectives) on the issue under investigation, although the researcher is the main data collection and analysis tool in the research process (Crotty, 1998; Maxwell, 2012; Merriam, 2009).

These positive characteristics of qualitative research justified my decision to use this research method to explore international students' perceptions of the campus carry phenomenon at SU. Using qualitative research in configuring this study's phenomenological approach allowed me to collect in-depth narrative data about the inimitable ways international students perceive the implementation of the campus carry policy at the institution. Approaching the study from a qualitative standpoint also gave me the opportunity to probe and gain insight into the responses of the study's participants as they developed knowledge of the realities associated with the implementation of campus carry at SU. Furthermore, the participants' perceptions of and the meaning they make of their experience with the campus carry phenomenon provided insight into the answers to the study's research questions. Lastly, this study is exploratory in nature and added international students' voices to the campus carry debate at SU as such, the use of a descriptive phenomenological approach is justified.

Phenomenology

The lived experiences of individuals who have endured similar events are usually investigated using phenomenological research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Lichtman, 2006; Patton, 2015; Percy et al., 2015). Phenomenology aims to understand the human experience and assumes that the natural disposition of people is to interpret the meaning of events in their environment (Patton, 2015; van Manen, 1997). Since phenomenology explains the underlying human aspects of a phenomenon, it empowers the researcher to extrapolate rich and thick narrative data that expose human emotions and responses to these events in their environment (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Patton, 2015).

Lincoln and Guba (2000) posited that in studies which gather narrative data, researchers must employ questioning and probing techniques that pull enough detail about a phenomenon

from the participants in the study. I used one round of semi-structured interviews to gather the rich data needed from the participants in this study. In-depth probing was done during the interview process to give the study participants an opportunity to share extensive details about their perception of the campus carry phenomenon. According to Lincoln and Guba (2000), qualitative data must be rich and give an account for the opinion of the participants as it relates to the context of the phenomenon under investigation.

Phenomenological research is driven by inquisitiveness and asks that participants are willing to share their lived experiences with the researcher to appease this curiosity (Patton, 2015; van Manen, 1997). As such, a descriptive phenomenological inquiry was most suitable for this study since it examined the meanings international students at the SU derived from their lived experiences and perceptions of the campus carry phenomenon. Once this research technique was applied, rich and thick narrative data was collected, which was used to answer the predetermined research questions in this study.

Descriptive phenomenology was developed by Edmund Husserl who intimated that phenomenological research should reflect individuals' experiences, consciousness, or awareness, of an event (Reiners, 2012). Descriptive phenomenology aims to record an individual's recollection of an experience accurately and precisely (Detmer, 2013). Descriptive phenomenology gives research participants the opportunity to share deep, reflective, and complex narratives about the phenomenon being investigated (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002). Narrative data collection in descriptive phenomenological studies explicates the details of events that occur in people's lives (Patton, 2002). Consequently, the goal of the researcher in descriptive phenomenological studies which collect narrative descriptions, is to motivate the study participants to share their story about how their culture informs the meaning they make

from their experiences with a phenomenon (Czarniawska-Joerges, 2004; Patton, 2015). For this study, the participants' descriptive narratives of their experience with the campus carry phenomenon at the SU was collected orally via digitally recorded semi-structured interviews and brief handwritten notes.

Researcher's Role

The scant inclusion of international students' perspectives in the empirical literature I reviewed about the campus carry phenomenon stimulated my interest as an international student to initiate their inclusion into the extant literature. As a graduate student who is interested in improving the administration of student affairs, I also found this area of research professionally and academically fascinating. Furthermore, undertaking this study which used student development theory as a theoretical framework allowed me to apply concepts learned in the classroom in a non-abstract way.

Positionality

My own personal biases as an international student and non-binary assumptions regarding the phenomenon are essential components of the conceptual framework for this study. Moreover, my prior knowledge from an exploration of the literature and personal experience as a student in Arkansas (the state of study) are also embedded in the study's conceptual framework. My biases were factored into the study's research design and reflected on as the study evolved. In the ensuing paragraphs, I expound on the research rigor I applied to this study to facilitate the trustworthiness and credibility of its findings.

Rigor in Qualitative Research

Research rigor in qualitative research speaks to the qualitative methods that are used to establish trustworthiness (Merriam, 2009). To facilitate trustworthiness in qualitative research,

Lincoln and Guba (1985) postulated that credibility in the research process is a key factor that must be established by the researcher. Merriam (2009) outlined that qualitative researchers use the concept of credibility to speak to the quantitative equivalent of internal validity in a study. Credibility in qualitative research attempts to match the findings of a study with the reality of the phenomenon under investigation (Cohen & Crabtree, 2008). The data in qualitative research may be perceived as dependable, credible, and transferable if trustworthiness is maintained throughout the research process (Cohen & Crabtree, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Merriam (2009) proffered that the strategies that can build trustworthiness of qualitative data include, member checks, audit trails, reflexivity, and bracketing. Qualitative researchers employ these strategies during the research process to facilitate the credibility of the data collected from study participants (Malterud, 2001; Merriam, 2009; Nobel & Smith, 2015). I will be able to acknowledge my personal biases during the research process via the member checks, audit trails, reflexivity, and bracketing used throughout the study. Using these strategies also facilitates my attempts to maintain the credibility of the data collected. By using these strategies, I would be evoking my epoche (Moustakas, 1994). Explanations of the epoche, member checks, reflexivity, bracketing, and audit trails in this study are explained in the subsequent sections.

Member Checks

To accredit for the previously described research rigor and trustworthiness in this study, I consistently reviewed and resolved questions emerging from the data. I used member checks throughout the research process, to facilitate the validity of the findings from the study (Angen, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morse, 1994; Sandelowski, 1993). Merriam (2009) described member checking as the researcher arranging for the study's participants to review and evaluate the data collected in qualitative studies. Commonly referred to as respondent authentication,

member checks are the most effective way of facilitating credibility in a study's findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Member checks were carried out as required after the interview and during data analysis in the study. Transcribed data was sent to participants for clarification after the interview allowing them to add information or correct errors in the data. Memos used during the data analysis process that identified codes in the data, sought clarification about responses on the transcripts, and encouraged member checks also added to the rigor of the study and enhanced the trustworthiness of the findings (Saldana, 2015).

Audit Trails

Audit trails are used by a qualitative researcher to maintain a detailed log of the data collection process and record the reason behind the decisions made during the study (Merriam, 2009). Sandelowski (1986) posited that audit trails are tools which facilitate others understanding how researchers arrive at the conclusions they do in a study. Readers are offered an opportunity to critique the credibility of a qualitative study when audit trails are used (Sandelowski, 1986).

Audit trails were maintained and included all letters, memos, emails, transcripts, and recorded audio. The audit trails were stored chronologically, electronically, and manually, for review. As I read through and reflected on the data collected, I engaged in peer debriefings with my dissertation committee members to strengthen the trustworthiness of the data collected (Spall, 1998). Merriam (2009) explained that peer debriefings are simply consultations with experts. The members of my dissertation committee are all higher education experts, with at least one acknowledged as an author of studies involving international students. The development of the study's purpose, goals, and research questions also benefitted from the debriefings I had with my committee chair.

Epoche

In descriptive phenomenological research, the researcher's assumptions of the phenomenon and participants in the study must be addressed to acknowledge biases during the data collection process (Creswell, 2014). Moustakas (1994) posits that this can be achieved by using a technique known as the *epoche*. The epoche is "a way of looking and being, an unfettered stance" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85). The epoche suggests that while consciously reflecting on my personal views of the campus carry issue as an international student enrolled in the state selected for the study, I assume little to no knowledge of the phenomenon being researched. Using the epoche allowed me to highlight the lived experiences of the participants in the study based on their narratives. It also enabled me to not rely too much on my own personal knowledge and experience to extract data during the data collection process. By consciously setting aside my biases, I bracketed my preconceptions of the campus carry phenomenon to avoid influencing the responses from participants in the study. Crotty (1998) described bracketing as a strategy used in phenomenological research that requires researchers putting aside their personal beliefs and knowledge about a phenomenon before and during the research process. According to Moustakas (1994) only then will I be able to paint an unprejudiced picture of international students' experiences with the phenomenon.

However, Moustakas (1994, p. 90) warned that this goal is "rarely perfectly achieved" and can only be realized with practice. This is a limitation I overcame by engaging in dialogical engagement with non-study participants throughout the research process. By practicing dialogical engagement, I deciphered where my approach may influence the responses of the study's participants. In addition, mutually trustworthy, respectful, and cooperative relationships were maintained with participants throughout the study (Patton, 2002). This encouraged rapport

with the participants and their active engagement in the study. This approach facilitated the collection of more meaningful narrative data, while acknowledging potential biases in the research process (Patton, 2002).

Reflexivity

Patton (2002) recommended that as a researcher I acknowledge my own personal biases based on my experiences with the campus carry phenomenon. I maintained awareness of the social, cultural, political, and linguistic perspectives that may affect the way the data for the study was collected and analyzed. I engaged in a process of reflexivity throughout the research process. Doing this enabled me to reflect on my influence and the power relationships between me and the study participants throughout the data collection process (Patton, 2002; Roulston, 2010).

According to Patton (2002) practicing reflexivity allowed me to integrate my own perceptions of the campus carry phenomenon into the research procedure while reporting the varied perspectives of the participants during the research process. In other words, engaging in reflexivity complements the epoche of the study. A computer-based reflective journal was created and maintained throughout the research process to validate the authenticity of the data I collected in the field. The journal expressed my "reflections, ideas, commentaries, and memos throughout the research process" (Roulston, 2014, p. 121).

According to Ortlipp (2008) reflective practice via a reflective journal "aims to make visible to the reader the constructed nature of research outcomes" (p. 695). Mruck and Breuer (2003) opined that reflective journals also illuminate the constructions that develop based on the choices and decisions the researcher engages in during the research process. Maintaining a reflective journal throughout the research process facilitated reflexivity since I examined my

personal presumptions and objectivities to clarify to the reader my personal convictions and subjectivities (Ortlipp, 2008).

Bracketing

I used audio recorded field notes to describe my role in and observations of the research settings and participants. This was done to bracket my biases and assumptions and facilitate reflexivity during the research process (Patton, 2002; Pyrczak & Bruce, 2011; Roulston, 2014; Walls, 2011). These notes also included my personal judgments of the process and my insights into the attitudes of the study's participants. The field notes are substantially detailed descriptions that distinguished my observations and interpretations of the participants' physical and verbal cues from the spoken narrative throughout the research process.

Setting and Population

To keep the institution's identity confidential, specific referencing and detailed site description will be avoided. The study was conducted at SU in the state of Arkansas. The institution opened its doors over 50 years ago and offers more than 150 programs of study. SU attracts students from within the state, contiguous states, and other countries. International student enrolment exceeds 1300 students at the institution, and they are predominantly from Asia (IIE, 2018). Of that number over 700 were graduate international students who were eligible to participate in this study. Only 20 graduate international students who were studying at SU during the campus carry discussion and policy enactment were selected for this study. Campus carry policy discourse under Arkansas' Campus Carry law grew with fervor on the college's campus in September 2017. A full implementation of the policy was planned for September 2018 (Ewing, 2017; Jarvi, 2017).

Sample Selection

A nonprobability sampling method was employed to select a sample for the proposed study. Nonprobability sampling and narrative data collection procedures are synonymous with the design of descriptive phenomenological studies which gather narrative data to answer the study's research questions (Patton, 2002; Suri, 2011). According to Creswell (2014) nonprobability sampling involves selecting research participants using nonrandom methods. This sampling technique does not give each member of the population an equal chance to participate in the study (Patton, 2002). The decision to use a nonprobability sampling technique for the current study was based on the research method, research questions, goals, phenomenon being studied, and the current magnitude of literature surrounding the topic (Patton, 2002).

Homogenous Purposeful Sampling

Homogenous purposeful sampling or judgment sampling was the sampling technique applied in selecting the sample for the study. When using this technique, the researcher predetermines the distinctive characteristics of the participants needed for the study. Then based on the participants' possession of these unique qualities, their availability, and the purpose of the study, they are asked to volunteer in the research process (Bernard, 2002; Lee-Jen Wu et al., 2014; Spradley, 1979). The homogenous nature of the sample is determined by the researcher's stated purpose in the study (Ilker et al., 2016).

Purposeful sampling is not random in nature and helps in selecting well-informed and proficient individuals in the sample (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Lee-Jen Wu et al., 2014). Purposeful sampling facilitates a situation where the selected participants provide the rich data needed to answer the research questions in the study (Patton, 2002; Welman & Kruger, 1999). A noted weakness of purposeful sampling is that it limits generalizability. However, its ability to

pull cases that can provide an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon counters this anomaly (Patton, 2002). The goal of purposive sampling is to find people that can provide the information needed for the study (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007).

Sample Size

Glaser and Straus (1967) posited that in qualitative studies the concept of saturation must be used to achieve an appropriate sample size. Saturation is the technique used by researchers to enable the collection of enough quality data to answer their study's research questions (Glaser & Straus, 1967). To achieve saturation, descriptive phenomenological studies are usually conducted using a sample size of ten to 15 participants (Patton, 2002; Welman & Kruger, 1999). In this study, homogenous purposeful sampling was used to recruit 20 graduate international students (homogeneity) from the population of 600 at SU to provide the data needed to answer the research questions. These 20 students were recruited to facilitate saturation so that sufficient data could be collected for analysis. Of the desired 20, only 15 students volunteered to participate in the study. They were selected using their country of origin, current class level, period of enrolment at SU (latest spring 2018), and immigration status, however this criteria was not used for data analysis. The reason I selected students from different nationalities was to facilitate the collection of diverse perspectives about campus carry at SU.

Fourteen students were studying at the university during the initial enactment of the 2017 campus carry law and one enrolled in the summer of 2018 when the amended law was implemented by the university. Graduate international students who are under F-1 and/or J-1 visa status were selected for this study. First year international students were excluded from the sample since they would not be able to provide the data needed to answer the research questions. The director of international education at SU was asked to be the gatekeeper so that I could

access the target population. The gatekeeper assisted me with the email solicitation of the desired sample size from the target population. I asked for a list of the emails of international students who fit the attributes of the desired sample. However, because I could not be allowed to access the international student database, the director of international education disseminated the recruitment email (Appendix B) on my behalf in the latter part of the spring 2019 semester. The email outlined the purpose of the study. The international students to whom the email was sent were asked to express their interest to me via a return email. Once the students needed for the study indicated an interest to participate, they were emailed a demographic data sheet (Appendix C) and a Qualtrics link to a consent form (Appendix D) and to complete. The participants responded to the recruitment email in June and July 2019.

Unit of Analysis

Units of analysis are "the units, cases, or parts of social life that are under consideration. Units of analysis are important to developing concepts, empirically measuring or observing concepts, and using data analyses" (Neuman, 2011, p. 69). By identifying the unit of analysis in this study, I brought the main entity being studied to the forefront of the data collection and analysis processes (Babbie, 2012). Therefore, in this study the units of analysis are graduate international students at SU. Pinpointing graduate international students at SU as my units of analysis means the campus carry phenomenon can be empirically investigated from their perspective and findings from the study can only be applied to that subsection of the student population when the data is analyzed (Babbie, 2012; Cavana et al., 2001; Neuman, 2011).

Data Collection

To complement the descriptive phenomenological design of the study, the data collection method involved one round of semi-structured interviews that took place in place in spring

summer 2019. Semi-structured interviews are often used in qualitative studies when the researcher has a specific purpose in mind (Kumar, 2001). The interviews were conducted like a narrative inquiry which produced detailed descriptions of the campus carry phenomenon from the perspectives of the participants in the study (Patton, 2015; Percy et al., 2015; Roulston, 2014).

Semi-structured Interviews

Conducting semi-structured interviews allowed me to have structure in the data collection process and allowed me the flexibility to probe responses from the participants (Crotty, 1998; Gill et al., 2008; Kyale & Brinkman, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Maxwell, 2012). Dearnley (2005) stated that participants are encouraged to relate their experiences to open-ended questions and their responses will then generate the rich data needed to answer the research questions. Participants also elicit unexpected data that can further clarify the meaning they make of a phenomenon. This can yield information that is important to the study but was not considered prior to the research being conducted (Myers & Newman, 2007; Polit & Beck, 2017).

There are numerous weaknesses associated with semi-structured interviews (Adams, 2010; Creswell, 2015; Crotty, 1998; Schatz, 2012). One such weakness is the possibility of the researcher and the interviewee losing emotional control during the interview (Creswell, 2015). Creswell (2015) recommended that researchers conduct pilot tests of their interview sessions to determine where gaps in their approach exist and try to fix them. Pilot tests were conducted in this study and there were no questions which were particularly sensitive or caused emotional responses.

Another common weakness is that misleading responses may be elicited from interviewees (Crotty, 1998; Schatz, 2012). Moreover, poor probing techniques by the researcher

might affect the quality of the data collected (Adams, 2010; Creswell, 2015; Crotty, 1998; Schatz, 2012). To overcome these weaknesses, Gomm (2004) suggested that the researcher clarifies the purpose and goals of the study at the very beginning to avoid pitfalls in the process.

The participants in this study were made aware of the purpose of the study at recruitment and during the interview process to allow them to respond to the questions in the manner expected. The recruitment letter which was sent to the potential participants in this study outlined the purpose of the study. In addition, at the beginning of each interview the participants were reminded of the intended outcome of the study. Familiarizing the study participants with the purpose and intended goal of the study helped me solicit only the data that is important to the study. This was dependent on the likelihood that only the participants who are familiar with the phenomenon may opt to take part in the study. While this created some bias in the data collected, the closeness of the participants to the phenomenon is integral in extracting the data needed to answer the research questions. Despite the aforementioned limitations, using semi-structured interviews allowed me to prompt and probe participants to get more meaningful responses and provide a structure for my descriptive phenomenological study (Creswell, 2015; Crotty, 1998; Gill et al., 2008; Maxwell, 2012). It is for these reasons I used semi-structured interviews in this study.

Upon attaining approval from SU's Institutional Review Board (IRB), I collected sufficient data to answer the research questions in my study. I used one phase of semi-structured interviews in this study. The participants were contacted at the end of the spring 2019 semester and the interviews were conducted face to face in the summer of 2019, after the proposal passed IRB. According to Opdenakker (2006) face to face interviews allows for flexibility in the research process and the building of rapport between the researcher and the study participants.

The method also allows for the creation of a good ambiance while the interview is being conducted. This may lead to the extraction of more meaningful data (Opdenakker, 2006).

I contacted the participants via email and sent them the transcripts to clarify any incorrectly transcribed content, while reviewing and analyzing the data. I engaged in this step because Merriam (2009) advised that researchers should engage in member checks with their study's participants to facilitate credibility of the study's findings. I sent the participants copies of the transcripts, with open-ended questions seeking clarity about any ambiguous data on the transcripts even though the data was clear and consistent across transcripts. The email was used to probe questions that emerged as I transcribed and coded the data from the interviews. They were asked to respond with any corrections they wanted made on the instrument within five days. Only three participants replied to the email outside of the five-day window and they had no issues with the transcribed data.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are important in qualitative studies since these studies are intrusive on the lives of study participants (Punch, 2014). In qualitative studies, the researcher is responsible for ensuring ethical practices are maintained throughout the entire process (Neuman, 2011). To maintain ethical standards in this study, I initiated contact with the IRB at SU and sought approval to conduct this study. I adhered to all the ethical guidelines set forth by SU's IRB during the research process. The informed consent form (Appendix E) I created was sent to SU's IRB for approval before any contact was made with the study participants. Additional details about ethical practices are provided in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

Collection of Demographic Data

The specific demographic data for each international student participant was collected using a demographic data sheet (Appendix C). When the students selected for the study confirmed interest, an email with a link to a demographic data sheet (Appendix C) was sent for them to complete via Qualtrics. The sheet did not have items that could easily identify the students except for their country of citizenship. Some participants requested that I replaced the name of their home countries to further facilitate their anonymity. I used the geographic location instead of the name of their countries in the study, to honor this request.

The demographic data sheet gathered information about the participants' age, gender, first language, race, tenure at the SU, classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate), and their exposure to gun use and gun violence. The questions were open-ended so that the participants were able to record responses which accurately describe their demographic traits. This information assisted me during the analysis process to explain the sample's views of the campus carry phenomenon at the institution.

Additionally, the students were asked to indicate their preferred pseudonym on the demographic data sheet. To keep track of the participants' real names and pseudonyms, country of origin, age, gender, and tenure at the SU, all demographic data was recorded on a separate list and cross-referenced with the participants before the interviews are recorded. The real names of the participants, when used accidentally, were deleted from the transcripts of the interviews, and replaced with their preferred pseudonyms to de-identify them on transcription sheets. The pseudonyms of some participants were changed to honor their requests for anonymity during the interview process.

The participants' confidentiality was concealed throughout the research process to maintain ethical standards (Creswell, 2015; de Laine, 2000). The demographic data sheets were numerically named and stored electronically on my password protected laptop, which was locked in a manually secured (lock and key) computer desk in my home for ease of reference during the data analysis process.

Instrumentation

Semi-structured interviews warrant the design of an interview protocol (Pope & Mays, 2000). Interview protocols are seen as the ideal instrument to guide the data collection process in phenomenological studies (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Doody & Noonan, 2013). In addition, five to ten questions related to the purpose of a study are usually developed to collect the relevant data in qualitative studies (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). An interview protocol with 11 open-ended items (Appendix E) based exclusively on the study's theoretical framework, purpose, and research questions was designed and used to initiate the process of data collection. Dialogic engagement and a pilot test of the interview protocol was conducted with a panel of international students at the site of the study.

Pilot Testing

The pilot test in this study orientated me to the planned research process while I became more engaged with international students' views of the campus carry phenomenon. Three participants who met the selection criteria for the sample in the actual study were conveniently chosen from the international students' body at SU. The participants were interviewed one on one via WhatsApp call. This is dissimilar to how the actual study was conducted because I had to relocate to my home country at that time. During the pilot test, the participants assisted me in identifying questions that may be misunderstood during the actual study and offer advice on how

to make the questions more understandable. The students in the pilot group were not eligible to participate in the actual study. Teijlingen and Hundley (2002) proffered that including the pilot study participants in the main study is not good research practice. The reason given by Teijlingen and Hundley (2002) is that the pilot study participants are already exposed to questions in the study and their responses may vary significantly from those who were not exposed.

The pilot test was conducted via WhatsApp which offered limited disruptions during the process. Like the plans for the actual interview, the pilot test was digitally recorded using two operational cell phones. General notes on nuances such as non-verbal responses and the way in which questions are asked was manually collected during the process. This was done to build my competence using the recording equipment during the interview process. In addition, I listened to my verbal reactions and probing during the interview process and made the necessary corrections for the actual study. By conducting a pilot test, the researcher can develop their skills in conducting interviews, build interpersonal skills, and fortify their competence with the qualitative data collecting method selected for this study (Sin, 2005). Prior to conducting the pilot test and the interviews, the participants were given an informed consent form to complete, which outlined to them that their participation is voluntary and can be self-terminated at any time during the study (Sin, 2005).

Face to Face Interviews

The face-to-face semi-structured interviews with each participant was digitally recorded using two operational cell phones and did not exceed one hour. The interviews were conducted in a reserved private room in the library and student technology center at SU, which facilitated limited disruptions during the process. Doody and Noonan (2013) indicated that interviews are usually conducted at a time and place convenient to the participant, and is also free from

interruptions, such as a private reserved classrooms on campus. Even though the face-to-face interviews were digitally recorded, general notes were taken as a backup just in case there were errors with the digital recordings. These notes facilitated accurate transcription during the data analysis process (Arksey & Knight, 1999).

Two android cell phones with digital audio recording capabilities were used to record the interviews. Both cell phones did not have active service and were fully charged so that there were no technological interruptions during the interview process (Easton et al., 2000). After the initial interviews, all recorded data was transcribed. Data analysis often begins with the compilation and transcription of audio recorded interviews in the data collection process (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The Rev.com software is an online, computer-based software which has the capacity to transcribe data. I uploaded the digital audio of the interviews with the participants, into the software for it to be transcribed.

I then initiated the previously mentioned member checking process. The participants were emailed transcripts of their responses and given an opportunity to clarify any errors detected in the transcriptions. They were asked to email me the corrections to the errors they detected in the transcriptions within five days via email. Feedback was not received via email after the five days, and I proceeded with the data analysis process as described in the next sections.

Narrative Data Analysis in Phenomenological Studies

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) explained that narrative analysis is interpretive by nature since it examines the ways in which study participants express their stories during narrative inquiry. In this method of analysis, the researcher is attempting to determine if the study participants' stories are coherent as it relates to the phenomenon under investigation (Clandinin

& Connelly, 2000). Study participants are thought to selectively include specific details in their narrated stories and researchers in turn must decipher characters, themes, place, and tensions in these stories. Researchers who use narrative analysis attempt to ascertain how the participants' stories are interlinked and identify the themes in the narratives that are similar or different across stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative analysis was used in this study to determine the major characters and themes in the stories of the international students at SU. The data analysis process is outlined below.

At the end of the interviews, I safely stored the collected data so that it was protected from external interference and could be accessed for analysis later. Direct and indirect information that could be used to identify the participants in the study was kept to a minimum during the interview process. Direct information in this study includes participants' real names, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers. Indirect identifiers include country of origin, institutional, and program affiliations (MacLean et al., 2004). Prior to the interviews, I created individual lists with the real names and pseudonyms of each participant using the information returned on the demographic data sheets. These lists and the demographic data sheets were locked away in a desk drawer in my home until it was time to conduct the interviews. Before each interview I asked the participants to verify the information on the list with their demographic data and pseudonym.

During each interview I addressed the participants using their pseudonyms. I also avoided asking demographic questions during the interviews since this may be used to identify the participants in the study. At the end of interviews, I transcribed the data via Rev.com, extracted the transcripts, and then masked identifying information in each transcript in Microsoft Word. All digitally recorded data were labeled using the participants' preferred pseudonym, the date,

and the time of the interview (e.g., Ya Ling- 03/08/18- 11 a.m.). This code was also used on all transcripts.

Data Analysis Procedure

I manually reviewed and transcribed all the recorded interviews using the Rev.com software. Personally, transcribing the recordings facilitated me staying connected with the data (Davidson, 2009). The field notes I collected during each interview were compared to the transcribed data to check that I accurately transcribed the recordings. These transcriptions were stored on my password protected laptop and safely locked away at home in my desk drawer with a secure lock. I was the only person with access to the transcripts. Before starting the data analysis process, the transcripts were exported into Microsoft Word to make it easier to read, edit, and to facilitate the coding process.

The qualitative data analysis process often involves the coding process where codes are identified in the data collected. Creswell (2014) defined coding as the process of searching for consistent or recursive patterns in data. The process of coding groups items in the transcribed data which are similar and extrapolates data which differs across transcripts (Creswell, 2014).

To begin the coding process, I opted to use holistic coding. Holistic codes are used to capture the whole picture in narrative analysis and are the preparatory coding strategy before other methods of coding are applied (Saldana, 2015). Holistic coding was done to identify the similarities in the data collected in terms of phrasing, explanation of stories, and use of vocabulary.

During holistic coding, I recursively read the transcripts and highlighted the similar and varied narratives and patterns on them in Microsoft Word. I then used the comments tab in Microsoft Word to manually add codes to the highlighted text. The field notes taken during the

interview process and my entries in the reflexive journal were reviewed at this stage to facilitate accurate interpretation of codes. I then used Microsoft Visual Basics to export the highlighted text and the comments with the codes from the transcripts into a different document in Microsoft Word in the form of a table.

Memos created and labeled using the comments tool in Microsoft Word were used to remind me of emergent themes and facilitate a rigorous audit trail throughout the data analysis process. Member checks were carried out at this phase of the process to facilitate participants' reviewing the transcripts to identify any omissions in the transcribed data. I emailed the participants a copy of the transcripts for them to review and share any updates or changes they wanted to make to the data. These changes were not returned within five days. I resumed holistically coding the data on the transcripts.

In addition to holistic coding, I also applied pattern coding, which helped me to determine the bigger themes across the interviews. Pattern codes are good complementary codes for holistic codes during the analysis process (Miles et al., 2014). Miles and Huberman (1994) outlined that:

> Pattern coding are explanatory or inferential codes, ones that identify an emergent theme, configuration, or explanation. They pull together a lot of material into a more meaningful and parsimonious unit of analysis. They are a sort of meta-code. Pattern Coding is a way of grouping those summaries into a smaller number of sets, themes, or constructs (p. 69).

I used pattern coding as the secondary coding strategy in the analysis process. I recoded the data to look for smaller more specific themes within the holistic codes. For clarity, repetitive characters, themes, and scenes in the stories of the participants were coded using pattern coding. Axial coding of the pattern codes with the holistic codes were also be used in the data analysis process to link the participants' stories to the major themes emerging from the data. Charmaz (2006) opined that axial coding creates subcategories which define the features, qualities, and

dimensions of each category of code. Charmaz (2006) also proffered that, axial codes tell the researcher "if, when, how, and why something happens" (p. 60) in the stories of the participants. The axial and pattern codes were categorized in Microsoft Word, extracted, and then compared to the holistic codes.

To complement the axial coding technique, I incorporated In Vivo coding to capture the smaller specific details the participants shared in their stories. In Vivo codes are codes in the form of quips, normal verbal sounds, full statements, or verbal outbursts in the participants own voice which facilitates researchers being able to share the story the way the narrator intended without contrasting their views on the issue under investigation (Crotty, 1998; Maxwell, 2012). The In Vivo codes may be a perfect way to summarize the experiences of the participants in the study if they are applicable across all transcripts (Miles et al., 2014). The In Vivo codes were highlighted in the word document and extracted using Microsoft Visual Basics. The In Vivo codes were matched to the holistic and pattern codes in the extracted Microsoft Word document. The themes pulled from the holistic and pattern codes along with the In Vivo codes were used to relate the participants' stories when I reported the findings of the study.

After carefully reviewing the codes and themes emerging from the transcribed data, I began interpreting the data. The goal of interpreting the data is to answer the studies research questions. The findings for the study were reported using the emergent themes in the data to relate international students' experiences with the campus carry phenomenon.

Limitations

One limitation of this study included the interview producing ungeneralizable data because of the small sizes used in these studies. However, the goal of qualitative research is to provide a rich detailed description of the participants' experiences and not to generalize them to

the larger population (Maxwell, 2012). Two participants in the study opted out before the interview process and delayed the study. These individuals were replaced by resending the study invite to additional international students who fit the criteria for the sample. My biases and prejudices may have been communicated consciously or subconsciously due to the ontological nature of the interview process. Communicating my biases may have resulted in the participants giving misleading responses to the questions I asked. My use of reflexivity during the research process allowed me to control this drawback.

This chapter outlined the use of a descriptive phenomenological approach to collect data from 15 purposefully sampled international students at SU to answer the research questions in the study. To facilitate credibility of the study's findings, member checks, audit trails, bracketing, reflexivity, and my epoche were applied to this study. The data was collected using one round of semi-structured interviews and analyzed using narrative data analysis. The external validity of the study's findings was constrained primarily by its qualitative design and small sample size.

Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this descriptive phenomenological inquiry was to explore the perceptions and attitudes of international students regarding the campus carry phenomenon at a Southern University using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993). This chapter outlines the results of the study based on the following research questions:

1. How has the implementation of the campus carry policy at SU impacted international students' experiences at the institution?
2. How has the implementation of campus carry policies at SU influenced international students' perceptions of the social ecology of the institution?
3. How did SU formally include international students in the on-campus campus carry policy discussion and implementation?

The participants in the study included 15 international students which comprised 11 females and four males. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants to answer the research questions. Two participants were from a Central American country, 2 from Southeast Asia, and there was one each from countries in Central Africa, the Eastern Caribbean, Central Asia, South Central Asia, Northeast Asia, Southwest Asia, South America, Northwest South America, Western South America, Central Europe, and Northern Europe. A detailed participant profile is presented in Table 1.

A 13-question interview schedule was subdivided based on the research questions of the study. This allowed me to collect sufficient data to answer the study's research questions. A total of 15 individual interviews were conducted, recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to present the data required to complete this dissertation. The data collected was manually coded using holistic, pattern, and axial coding to identify the key themes emerging from the data. The emergent

themes were viewed through the lens of Renn and Arnold's (2003) interpretation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993).

Table 1 : *Participants' Demographic Profile (n=15)*

Preferred pseudonym	Gender	Location of country of Origin	Tenure at SU	Class level	Awareness of campus carry implementation
Alexa	Female	Eastern Caribbean	7 years	Graduate	Yes
Rana	Female	Central Asia	2 years	Graduate	Yes
Jade Jean	Female	South Central Asia	7 years	Graduate	Yes
Nana	Female	Northeast Asia	2 years	Graduate	No
Matt	Male	South America	1 year and 6 months	Graduate	Yes
Ana	Female	Northwestern South America	4 years	Graduate	Yes
Malika	Female	Southwest Asia	2 years	Graduate	Yes
Park**	Male	Central America	4 years	Graduate	Yes
Seena**	Female	Central Europe	2 years	Graduate	Yes
Andrea	Female	Western South America	3 years	Graduate	Yes
Emiljia	Female	Northern Europe	3 years	Graduate	Yes
George	Male	Central Africa	2 years	Graduate	Yes
Joy	Female	Southeast Asia	4 years	Graduate	Yes
Maria	Female	Central America	5 years	Graduate	No
Sham	Male	Southeast Asia	5 years	Graduate	No

Note. * = Awareness of campus carry implementation refers to the participants' knowledge of campus carry Acts 562 and 859 being executed on SU's campus.
Note. ** =Pseudonym changed to facilitate anonymity.

Emergent Themes

Semi structured interviews allowed me to isolate frequently recurring themes across transcripts during the data analysis process. Using Microsoft Word Visual Basics, I analyzed each transcript and extracted four major themes and 11 sub-themes to provide clarity on the

international students' experience with campus carry at SU. The key themes and supporting sub themes are highlighted in Table 2. The findings in this chapter are reported in the sequence of the research questions with the respective themes and subthemes under each question used as the main headings and guide to understand the findings.

Table 2: *Themes and Sub-themes related to each Research Question*

Research Questions	Themes	Sub-themes
RQ1. How has the implementation of the campus carry policy at SU impacted international students' experiences at the institution?	• International Students' U.S. College Experience	• Reason for Studying at SU • International Students' Perception of SU's Campus
	• International Students' Integration on Campus	• International Students' Integration on SU's Campus • International Students' Social Experiences on SU's Campus
	• International Students' Experience with Campus Carry	• International Students' Awareness of Campus Carry • International Students' Perception of Campus Carry • Gun Culture in International Students' Home Country • International Students' Personal Gun Ownership

Table 2 cont'd

Research Questions	Themes	Sub-themes
RQ2. How has the implementation of campus carry policies at SU influenced international students' perceptions of the social ecology of the institution?	Discernments about Campus Carry Implementation at SU	• Impacts of Campus Carry Implementation on International Students at SU • Strategies to Mitigate the Impacts of Campus Carry Implementation on International Students at SU
RQ3. How did SU formally include international students in the on-campus campus carry policy discussion and implementation?	• Inclusion in Campus Carry Implementation at SU	• Engagement of International Students in Campus Carry Debate and Enactment at SU

Research Question One

Research question one sought to clarify the impacts campus carry implementation had on the experiences of international students at SU. The sub questions related to research question one amassed information on the general experiences of international students at SU and how those experiences were impacted by the university's implementation of campus carry. Three major themes emerged from the data collected to answer research question one. The themes were international students' U.S. college experience, international students' integration on campus, and international students' experience with campus carry.

Research Question Two

This question assessed the study's participants' opinions about the way campus carry changed the social ecology for international students at SU. One major theme was deciphered

from the data collected and this theme generated two sub themes. International students' discernments about campus carry was the main theme. The impacts of campus carry implementation on international students at SU and strategies to mitigate the impacts of campus carry implementation on international students at SU were the sub themes identified in data.

Research Question Three

The involvement of international students in the on-campus campus carry policy discussion and implementation at SU was explored to answer research question three. The main theme identified in the data illuminated the inclusion of international students in the campus carry implementation process.

The specific findings for each theme and subtheme are delineated in the ensuing sections.

International Students' U.S. College Experience

Under this theme, the participants' explicated their experiences at SU. The associated sub themes which were identified in the data were international students' reason for studying at SU and international students' perception of SU's campus. As it relates to their reasons for studying at SU, the participants illuminated financial benefits, scholarships, friendships, and the curriculum as reasons why they chose to study at the university. For the most part, the participants found SU's campus environment pleasant and supportive of their development.

Reason for Studying at SU

Choosing to attend SU as opposed to any other higher education institution in the U.S. is of importance to this study because it will help to illuminate the potential impacts campus carry may have on international students studying at the university. Factors such as tax breaks, scholarships, the curriculum, and a desire to be close to host families were among the reasons given for attending SU. Moreover, the participants in the study expressed that their desire to

attend SU was piqued by the infrastructure of the campus, academic advisors, and personal relationships.

Apart from Alexa who declined to share her reasons for attending SU, Andrea, Emiljia, Malika, Maria, and Rana all decided to attend SU because of the scholarships they received to study in the U.S. Andrea, Emiljia, and Rana stated their decision to attend SU was determined by their scholarship organization. Malika also pointed out that she had a scholarship which funded her studies at SU. When probed, she elaborated on the fact that the scholarship assists with her tuition, insurance, and a monthly stipend.

Academic advisors and professors also featured prominently among the reasons the participants chose to attend SU. Matts and Park's advisors invited them to study at the university. Additionally, Park was motivated to attend SU because the university offered the type of research that appealed to him. Personal relationships also played a role in the participants' decision to attend SU. Host families, friends of their family, platonic friends, and spouses made SU attractive to some of the study's participants. George desired to be close to his host family and that was his primary reason for selecting SU. Nana opted to attend SU to remain close to her fiancé, now husband. She revealed that to maintain her immigration status after getting engaged, she had to remain enrolled as student in the U.S. Nana:

> So, my husband…. he knew that he was going to come here for his master's and Ph.D. degree. So, since we got engaged and we wanted to stay together and staying as a student would be the only legal way to stay in the States, so I just decided to continue studying in SU.

The decision to attend SU was motivated by numerous factors among the participants in the study. Scholarship programs and organizations, affordability, friends, and family all played an integral role in making SU the institution of choice. Despite the role of these diverse factors in

helping the participants select SU to study, their consistent positive opinions of the campus were recursive throughout the interviews.

International Students' Perception of SU's Campus

In general, the sentiments shared by the participants about SU's campus were positive. However, there were also mixed perceptions among some participants about the campus environment at SU. Several participants shared that they felt ignored by their classmates and experienced homesickness and cultural insensitivity. The general perception of the campus was that it offered a sense of belonging, was welcoming, diverse, friendly, safe, engaging, and clean. Some participants illuminated SU's strong support for the international student community, faculty inclusivity, and the helpfulness of people on the campus. Ana emphasized that it has been good studying at SU, despite feeling homesick. She spoke about the diversity of the campus but explained that political correctness seemed widespread on campus.

Andrea felt that the campus environment at SU was lovely. She detailed SU's efforts to build an international family on campus and emphasized the sense of belonging provided by the registered student organization (RSO) associated with her scholarship. For Emiljia, the strong, supportive international community and faculty at SU, left her with a positive assessment of the institution. While the welcoming atmosphere on SU's campus was among other perceptions of the campus shared by Joy. She conveyed that her experience at SU was very good and rewarding. Joy illuminated the rigorousness of the academic schedule at SU and held that the department to which she is attached is preparing her for future careers in her field. Joy shared her views about the hospitality of the campus environment at SU:

> I think in general; I feel people here are very welcoming to internationals. They try to help them. And especially my close friends, and I feel they really genuinely love you and care about you.

Despite these positive experiences, Joy also detailed the microaggressions meted out to international students on campus. She relayed that some persons on campus are not sensitive to the various cultures present at SU. Language barriers often create misunderstandings among international students, their domestic peers, and their professors. Notwithstanding this anomaly, Joy still felt SU's campus was safe and friendly. When asked what it was like walking around campus, Joy responded, "Going to places on campus…my impressions are, they are generally very nice people. And I think they're really friendly. I don't really feel threatened by anybody or in any way. I never really felt that."

Malika also had mixed feelings about SU. She stated that she was engaged by her professors and appreciated the fact that they were knowledgeable about their students. However, her classmates alienated her, and she found it hard to communicate with and get accepted by them. Jade Jean underscored that the experience at SU for international students is good and appreciated the diversity that the campus offers. Jade Jean not only found the campus environment at SU welcoming, but also asserted that she did not experience any form of aggression on campus.

Matt's sentiments about SU's campus were generally positive. He reflected on the campus being welcoming and open to international students. In Nana's case, the safety of SU's campus was foremost among her impressions of the campus. She justified her reason for perceiving SU's campus to be safe:

> When I was in different university for my undergrad, it was a very small state university. And it was in a very small college city, college town almost. Yeah. So, it was really small and also there are lots of poorer people living in a certain area. Especially the people of color. And I have heard so many stories of getting robbed or getting yelled or discrimination and all this stuff. I personally didn't experience anything.

Like Matt, Nana found that the support for international students was intentional at SU. She explained that the people on the campus were open-minded. The positive views of the campus environment at SU expressed by the participants in the study reflected a welcoming, inclusive, enjoyable, and aesthetically satisfying space for international students at the university. The availability of resources, infrastructure, and diversity offered on campus were also among the perceived positive factors on SU's campus. However, some participants had distasteful perceptions of SU's campus which included cultural microaggressions, exclusion in the classroom, and difficulty bonding with domestic students. These mixed perceptions of SU's campus was also reflected in the participants' efforts to integrate on campus.

International Students' Integration on Campus

The next major theme reflected the ease with which the participants integrated on campus. Campus integration may influence their perception of campus carry. Three subthemes dominated the data collected, international students' integration on SU's campus, international students' general social experiences, and socializing on-campus. Across all three themes, the participants' experiences were generally pleasant with few assimilatory challenges experienced by a few among them. The participants' social experiences were limited by the time they had available as graduate students.

International Students' Integration on SU's Campus

Most of the participants had positive experiences integrating on campus. Emiljia, George, Jade Jean, Maria, Matt, Nana, Park, Rana, Seena, and Sham all expressed that it was easy for them to integrate on campus, albeit to varying degrees. Joy and Malika had mixed experiences integrating, while Alexa, Ana, and Andrea illuminated the challenges they encountered because of language barriers.

Alexa communicated that in the beginning, her use of English was poor, and this made communication difficult. It was problematic for her to communicate with others. She also shared that as her English improved her communication skills became better and she was able to make friends. Alexa explained "Well in the beginning it was actually very hard, but it was my side. My English was very bad at that time. But when my English progressed, my friendship and communication and integration with the campus progressed too."

To cope, she enrolled in SU's language support program. Like Alexa, Ana emphasized that integrating on campus was hard because of the language barriers she encountered. She practiced speaking English with her lab partners, who were accommodating, and this assisted her in getting comfortable with speaking the language. In Andrea's case, anxieties about her ability to use the English language forced her to abstain from integrating on campus. Andrea coped by interacting with the members of a campus RSO which helped her overcome the language barrier.

While Alexa, Ana, and Andrea struggled with settling in on campus due to language barriers, Emiljia, Jade Jean, and Maria revealed that it was very easy for them to integrate. Emiljia proffered that the support she received from advisors, her orientation program, past recipients of her scholarship, and the international students' office made integrating on campus uncomplicated. When asked about the ease with which she integrated, Emiljia stated:

> I think very easy. Just because I had really good advising. I had great support during orientation. I had really great support from [redacted] scholars that were already here before me and other international students and the [redacted] office….

George found support within his academic department as he integrated on campus. In George's opinion the individuals in his department were great listeners and very helpful. He explained that persons were also polite outside the department. To George, his academic department offered a sense of belonging.

Joy and Malika had mixed experiences integrating on campus. Joy shared that she was excited about coming back to campus after leaving for several years. However, it became difficult for her to handle being a full-time PhD student because of the magnitude of academic work she had to do. She acknowledged that her professors helped her to assimilate on campus. Malika also had difficulties assimilating on campus in the beginning, but as she familiarized herself with campus facilities, it helped her engage more regularly. Malika clarified:

> So, at first it was not that easy. But then I ... actually, I got to know different places in campus, like [redacted], like yoga classes in [redacted], and different part of the campus that you can spend your time there. Yeah, I think it really helped me to engage more with people.

Nana and Rana were not as focused on campus integration as the participants in the study. Both said they did not have challenges but paid the process of assimilation limited attention. Finding housing and transportation and learning how to pay bills complicated the integration process for Rana. Nana's integration experience was limited to the international students' community on campus.

The participants in the study shared that they had mixed experiences integrating on campus. For the majority, assimilating into SU's environment was seamless, while for others, early challenges associated with language barriers, reacclimatizing to campus, and familial demands restricted their ability to integrate early or at all. Professors, RSO members, the international student office, academic departments, and advisors contributed to helping the participants in the study assimilate on campus. Assimilative aid was also available via language support programs, orientation programs, past scholarship recipients, and campus staff. After the integration phase, the participants were asked to talk about their social experiences on campus. The next section details their recollection.

International Students' Social Experiences on SU's Campus

Understanding the international students' social experiences at SU may elucidate their reaction to the legalization of guns on campus. It may also clarify their attempts at campus integration. In general, the participants asserted that their level of socializing at SU was limited, even though some participants made numerous friends. Save for Alexa, Joy, Park, and Sham, all other participants shared that their level of socializing on campus was unsatisfactory.

The participants who socialized to a limited extent illuminated that they usually socialize with RSO members, friends from their own culture, classmates, roommates, house mates, other international students, within their academic departments, and students at the international students' office. Alexa explained that she rarely socialized beyond her classmates, especially those in her seminar class with whom she has maintained a cordial relationship. She focused mainly on research and teaching and that reduced the time she had to participate in activities on campus.

Ana mostly socialized with her classmates whether in person or virtually. She participated in few activities on campus and specified that whenever she visited campus it was for class or to eat. She would also go to the library and the tuition office on occasions; that was the limit to her socializing on campus. In the initial phases of her sojourn at SU, Andrea mostly interacted with international students and also made friends with two domestic students.

For George, it was difficult socializing in his first year. He did not have anyone to interact with and struggled with the transition from being a teacher to attending college. After his first year, he began interacting more, especially with persons from his ethnic group. George detailed his experience:

> I got to say, the first year was hard mainly because … I just didn't have that much in terms of social life, because it was a big transition from working…. but... the first year it's been nicer with me interacting with... Most of my friends [redacted] friends … there's a lot of students from [redacted] in the area. So that's nice, it's nice to always have people from the same culture and interact with them, have conversation about things that you miss about your home country.

Academic related work limited George's opportunity to socialize. He was asked if he participated in the activities hosted by the international students' office, and he admitted that he did not. George presumed that the events hosted by the international students' office was mostly suited for undergraduate students. Meanwhile, at the beginning of her studies at SU, Jade Jean mostly interacted with students from her country. Grocery shopping, exercising at the campus recreational facility, playing sports, and watching movies were among the activities she shared with the group. Additionally, they offered academic support to each other, taught each other how to acquire campus jobs, and often went on road trips. As time progressed Jade Jean's social group evolved and she currently socializes with a diverse group of individuals.

Joy revealed that socializing at SU was fun and she enjoyed the diversity that existed among the international student population on the college's campus. She made numerous friends from other countries and normally socialized with a few friends from campus and those who lived in her prior residence. Joy's level of interaction on campus became inconsistent but she was involved in arranging cultural activities for students from her country. Joy shared:

> People I normally socialize with on campus. I think my friends, one or two friends from other countries, sometimes we go to events together. And I used to live in a house that's very close to campus. I hang out a lot with people living in this house, different residents... feel like I hang out a lot with [redacted] scholars and students, and sometimes with my friends from other countries, one or two friends …Yeah.

Malika was the only international student in her academic department and found it hard to make friends. She believed that her accent made it difficult for domestic students to understand her and this limited her socializing with them. Malika eventually settled into a group

of two domestic students and three international students via a program hosted by the international students' office. This made it easier for her to socialize and it became easier for her to make other friends via a different program hosted by the international students' office.

Matt explained that socializing on campus was difficult at the onset of his studies at SU due to a language barrier between him and other students. Thus, his attempts at socializing was limited to a few individuals in his lab since those individuals helped him learn and speak the English language. He intimated that he had less personal contact with domestic students. Matt's social experiences are limited and concentrated within the group of international students from his country, but he found diverse ways of socializing with domestic students and campus staff.

For Park, making friends and socializing at SU was hard in the beginning. He found support among international students who were on the same scholarship program and those in the international students' office. These relationships made Park feel welcomed on campus and opened avenues through which he could meet new friends. Sham declared that socializing at SU was quite easy and he socialized extensively. He detailed how his friendship circle grew from his academic department to include members of religious RSOs.

The participants in the study conveyed that they had mostly positive experiences while socializing on SU's campus. Scholarship RSOs, other RSOs, and departmental orientation and social activities were the main avenues through which the participants made friends. Activities described as social experiences, included, shopping, watching movies, international student office events, campus student affairs events, and religious based activities. The participants also revealed that for the most part, they socialized with other international students, many within their own ethnic groups. Those who socialized with domestic campus constituents did so with students in their classes and staff they met through services offered on campus, the international

student office, and their scholarship RSOs. The next section of this chapter will report the findings related to the participants' awareness and perception of campus carry at SU.

International Students' Experience with Campus Carry

The second phase of the interviews sought to discern the study's participants' personal knowledge about the campus carry phenomenon at SU. The purpose of collecting this data was to ascertain how their knowledge of the phenomenon reconciled with the impacts it exerted on their social experiences at the institution. Furthermore, questions were asked to establish the link between their perception of campus carry, cultural experiences, prior socialization with guns, and knowledge of the U.S.'s gun laws. International students' awareness of campus carry, perception of campus carry, gun culture in home country, and personal gun ownership were the key sub themes detected in the data collected.

International Students' Awareness of Campus Carry

The participants in the study were asked to explain how they learned about the implementation of campus carry at SU. They found out about the implementation via formal and informal channels. While some participants learned about the phenomenon via one channel others learned via both medium. Among the formal means of awareness were teaching assistantship (TA) training, emails from the University Chancellor, emails from campus RSOs, class discussions, professors, and academic advisors. The informal channels included departmental coworkers, classmates, spouses, campus friends, campus notices, active shooter literature, and social media. One participant became aware of campus carry implementation at SU during the recruitment phase of this study.

Joy, Malika, and Matt learned about the implementation of campus carry at SU via both formal and informal channels. On the contrary, Nana was unaware of the phenomenon until she

was invited to be a part of this study. Alexa, Ana, Emiljia, Maria, and Park learned about campus carry via formal sources. Those participants who attained awareness via informal means included Andrea, George, Jade Jean, Rana, Seena, and Sham. Alexa said she heard about campus carry at one of her TA meetings approximately three years before this study. She expressed that she engaged in active shooter training in the meeting. Alexa illuminated how she became aware of campus carry:

> They were talking about it in one of the meetings with TA's…. I … remember they were saying they were going to train on us of what to do if there were, kind of what had happened with the gun situation... We did get trained for that, I think three or two years ago, I still don't remember...and then in that same conversation, they were talking about the possibility that guns will be allowed and they want us to give our perspective. We did talk about that for a couple minutes and that's it. That was the first and final conversation about it. Then a couple months later, actually a year later, I think. Then it was approved.

Alexa further explained that she was not retrained immediately before the law was passed although she was informed that the campus carry law was likely to pass in her TA training. She outlined that the specific information about the law she gained was limited and she was only made aware of the need to have a special license to carry a gun on campus. Alexa used Google and eNews to gain more information about campus carry. Neither of the two mediums clarified information about the policy and her academic department made no attempts at providing clarification. When probed about whether she spoke to professors or friends in her department about campus carry, Alexa replied:

> I did talk about it, but it was a joke in that time. Because when I went, I told one of my boss and I told, can I actually carry, like a joke, can I actually carry a gun even though my pants would not hold a big gun or something like that. It was as a joke, and he just laughed. But other than that, no.

Alexa was also asked about the specific information she learned about campus carry at SU and she replied, "I only know that it's allowed, you can carry it with a special permit, and I think I'm not clear, that the campus is notified, the university police for a special something. But

other than that, that's it." Alexa reiterated the fact that her department trained her for the likelihood of campus carry being implemented but stopped as soon as the law was enacted at SU.

Ana was also formally informed about campus implementation at SU. She became aware of campus carry implementation via the university's newspaper, departmental communication, and emails from the Chancellor. She did not participate in any activity to sensitize her about the phenomenon. Ana remarked:

> We received several emails from the university, the [redacted], the Chancellor also sends several emails. Departmental communication as well. Secretary sent emails from the department. It's like a department liaison and they send the email to everybody. I haven't participated in any activity related to campus carry. I just know the emails... I know they have something like active shooter training, but I never been in one of those.

Ana had additional discussions about the issue with her advisor and lab mates. Ana described the discussions she had about campus carry:

> Yeah... with some students and my advisor… when we received those emails, we kind of like, "Hey, this happened on campus or at least it's going to happen." and we kind of like discuss about it…It was like informal it's allowed so we shouldn't be scared, just be careful. Not everybody would be carrying a gun, but it's allowed. She didn't give her opinion or anything on the matter. For me, it's weird, just the concept of thinking about someone having guns in a space like university. So, we were like, "Okay, I understand." I'm in a different country with a different culture.

Ana told me that her advisor did not share her opinion about the phenomenon. Like Alexa, Ana had limited basic knowledge about SU's campus carry policy. Prior to the approval of the law Ana learned that guns were permitted but carriers needed a special permit. Ana concluded that she was ill informed about SU's campus carry law.

Emiljia recalled hearing about campus carry in a teaching assistant mentorship program. She expressed some level of doubt about an email from the Chancellor being a source of the information but was sure that she learned about it in TA training. Emiljia was asked about the specific information she received from the TA training, she responded, "That it exists. Now

students can carry guns on campus. I haven't really thought much about it after that orientation … so I don't remember any specifics. Just that it exists." Like, Alexa and Ana, Emiljia demonstrated limited basic knowledge of the specific details in SU's campus carry laws.

Maria recalled hearing about campus carry in an email from the Chancellor, but she did not fully understand the content of the email. Maria also remembered seeing signs on campus prohibiting gun possession. Beyond the email, she did not participate in any formal training or engaged in formal information sessions which provided more information about the phenomenon. Maria was asked to share the specific knowledge she knew about the law, and she explained:

> What I think I know is anybody can have one gun. I guess it should be you, you need to register it, I guess. Should be something legal, not like I will buy a gun, and I will carry it. Nobody knows that I have it. Something like that, that's what I think. I don't know if that's what it is.

Matt received an email from the university's Chancellor explaining the move towards the approval of campus carry. He had no other discussion prior to that email and did not read anything about the law during the period of implementation. Matt had limited knowledge of the law. He did not know who could carry guns or the rules associated with campus carry. Furthermore, he could not recall being informed when the law came into effect. Matt spoke with a staff member at SU who was supportive of campus carry and expressed that he and the staff member shared similar sentiments about the phenomenon:

> When I received this email, I talked to my friend [redacted], which the one that works here, in [redacted]. I said "Wow, dude, do you know that this going to happen?" he said "Yeah, yeah [redacted]". This is something that we both agree, so me and [redacted] kind of agree on this, that this is something that I think is positive.

Park also learned about campus carry via an email sent by SU's Chancellor. In addition, he read about the law and had contacts on the city council who kept him inform. Although he did

not participate in any activity hosted by SU to educate him about campus carry, Park had extensive knowledge of the law. He outlined what he knew of the law:

> It was approved for people to have guns on campus… I learned that they just need eight hours for training in order to get their license to have concealed weapons on campus. At the time… I was a TA at the SU, so I had to be aware of what was happening. If you have students that they have guns, you need to tell them well, it shouldn't be visible. It cannot be visible to the other students and me. I think I read a couple of the requirements, like for example in which areas of campus you could have a concealed weapon and in which areas of campus you couldn't. I think at the time that I was reading that, they were putting together the training process to get the permit.

I attributed his extensive knowledge of the law to him telling me that he read about it and maintained contact with his friend on the city council. Park was asked if he had conversations with anyone at SU about campus carry when he learned about the law. He explained that he spoke with one of his lab coordinators about the issue and then read social media posts by his friends about campus carry. The conversation with his lab coordinator centered on how uncomfortable international students were with the idea of campus carry. Park established that the persons with whom he spoke about campus carry were worried about the mental condition of licensees. Another concern raised, was the need for guns on campus. Park surmised that with good training and education the concerns shared with him may be assuaged.

Andrea, George, Jade Jean, Rana, Seena, and Sham learned about the implementation of campus carry at SU through informal means. Andrea's boyfriend, who is a domestic SU alumnus, informed her about campus carry. She conveyed that her boyfriend warned her to be careful after telling her about the likelihood of campus carry being implemented. Andrea did not participate in any campus carry information sessions or training hosted by SU and vaguely remembered reading emails about the phenomenon. In terms of knowledge of the law, Andrea established that she had limited knowledge and did not intentionally seek additional information:

> All I know is that students are allowed to carry weapons on campus. What type of weapons? I'm not entirely sure maybe, just as long as they can legally have a gun, I think that they can just bring it on campus. That's all I know; I did not inform myself further.

To prevent herself from being too worried about guns on campus, Andrea avoided reading too much about the law. She communicated that the fact that she had not seen a gun on campus reinforced her desire not to intentionally research the issue. Even though others have seen guns on campus, Andrea had not, and this helped her to cope with the potential fear associated with campus carry.

George's roommate informed him about the possibility of guns being legal on campus. George said he was not concerned about the issue at the time because some individuals already carried guns in the U.S., and he did not feel threatened. George also knew limited information about the law. He recalled what his friend told him about campus carry, "Well, he said that the guns, that they have accepted people to carry guns, students or teachers, faculty. Yeah, that's essentially what he said about."

George felt that his roommate only wanted his opinion on the issue at the time and that was probably why limited information was shared. A teaching assistant training session did not provide additional information about campus carry for George. The training occurred two years prior to this study and within one year of SU implementing campus carry. George expounded:

> When I did my TA, that was two years ago, I don't think that was covered. Yeah, I don't recall that, I doubt we even had a conversation on what to do if they had a lockdown, but not sure I know you're supposed to call 911 as soon as we can, but I don't think things like those were discussed at all. But that was two years ago when I did my TA training.

One of Jade Jean's professors sought her perspective on campus carry implementation and this was how she learned about the phenomenon. She also mentioned seeing posted signs on campus informing her of the law. Jade Jean shared that she did not participate in any activity

hosted by SU which informed her about campus carry. She revealed how she became aware of campus carry implementation:

> Well, someone at work came up to me, who is actually from [redacted] and visits here as a visiting professor, and he came and asked me, "Oh, what do you think about this, letting people have guns on-campus?" I just gave a diplomatic smile because I didn't want to take a side. That's when I knew that okay, so this is getting this real. Also, they put up the signs outside all the buildings about carrying... I think it says like carrying guns is prohibited, or something like that, in this building, especially at my work building ... I think this was 2017 or something, I'm not even sure when.

Jade Jean gave the following response when I asked if her professor communicated his opinion about campus carry at SU:

> Yes. He was telling me about how he feels about it. He was saying that he is comfortable if certain type of people own guns, who are trained to use them, either through their experiences in hunting animals or something else and people who have good coordination that he wouldn't mind if some people had it. But he is, overall, very uncomfortable about students owning guns. Yeah.

She did not convey her opinion of the law to her professor and knew only basic information about the law. Jade Jean received theoretical active shooter training at her campus job which also exposed her to information about campus carry. She told me what she knew about the campus carry law at SU:

> … I know that students are allowed to carry a gun if they're certified to do so or something like that. It has to be concealed, so no one should be able to see it. I think faculty also are allowed... I'm not sure, actually. I think it's any student or faculty or staff that are certified to carry a gun can carry a gun, but it has to be concealed. I think that's all I know about it.

Classroom discussions among domestic students exposed Rana to the implementation of campus carry at SU. By listening intently to the conversations of her classmates, Rana deciphered that campus carry was about to be implemented on SU's campus. She did not participate in any formal training session to sensitize her about the policy. Rana recalled the debate in her class:

> Okay. I was in [redacted], right? I was taking [redacted] class... It was my first semester; American students are speaking super-fast... but I could understand that they're discussing guns. Carrying guns. And I thought, "It must be somewhere back in history, like many, many years ago." But I was not expecting it to be a current issue now. By the end of the discussion, I understood that it would be soon legalized or legalize already, that students or people can carry guns on campus. And I said, "What? There'll be guns on campus soon?" That's how I learned.

Rana explained that she was surprised her classmates supported campus carry especially those who worked at SU. When I asked if she had discussions with anyone about the phenomenon, she said that she was a part of the conversation with her classmates:

> Yes. I was also discussing, I was telling about [redacted], how it happens in my country. ... I was shocked actually that the ordinary people like me, who is not in police or security service will be allowed to carry guns even though its concealed.

Rana was not close to the individuals with whom she had the discussion but highlighted the arguments they told her in support of and against campus carry. Rana gained sufficient knowledge of the law from the class discussions:

> ... I learned that it … is already legal but there would be some policies to be implemented on campus and soon it would be done. I guess, it was implemented in early-January, early 2018? … Before that they were doing a transition to that. I learned that only eight hours of training would be enough…for concealed carry. Anyone can carry a gun once they got a license. But they do not have to show it to public. If they show it, you can report it to police department.

Seena sought information about campus carry on the internet. She intentionally read about campus carry because she was interested in learning how the law worked. Seena described how she learned about campus carry, "On the internet. I intentionally read it. Because I was wondering how it works. Because here the laws are different than in my country..." Like the other participants, Seena did not participate in any activity hosted by SU which would inform her about campus carry. She only overheard conversations about the law. Seena also had basic knowledge of the campus carry policy. She illuminated the information she obtained from her research:

> I learned that person needs to get special permission to carry the gun and make some sort of training. But actually, person can carry but it has to be hidden… and the person cannot leave it everywhere or in a locker, but only in … car or a special safety places. And basically, you can even carry in classroom and other facilities until it's hidden and not showed to public.

Seena indicated that campus carry was discussed during some of her classes. She did not intentionally ask questions about the phenomenon during class but recalled one professor sharing their opinion. The professor was explaining campus carry from the perspective of a professional in Seena's field of study. The views of the individuals in Seena's class were mixed on the issue. Seena explained their perspectives:

> I don't remember very well, but I know that few students said that in their country they don't have guns and there are no special conditions. I think some students think it's necessary to have guns and some not, so it was more divided discussion.

Sham initially heard about campus carry on the internet. He did not intentional seek out the information but saw it in popups and messages he came across while surfing the web. He then had discussions with his friends who shared their views about the phenomenon. Sham described how he learnt about campus carry, "Initially I heard about it through the Internet. I heard a little bit about that and also discussions that we had among students as well. Yeah. Basically, through the Internet and then through friends." He did not participate in any activity hosted by SU to sensitize him about campus carry.

Even though he discussed the issue and read information on the internet, Sham still possessed limited basic knowledge about campus carry and knew nothing of the law. He shared what he knew, "I was just made aware that this is happening and then mainly the debate was there whether this is good or not. So, yeah, I mean, roughly that's all I came across." He spoke to his friends, who were from his country, about the issue and explicated their perception of the phenomenon:

> Again, mixed answers I would say, but the majority was with the view of being against it the campus carry policy. I mean, mainly, but they felt, and mainly what I feel the safety of the university is quite fine now. And the police officers and everything. They do an amazing job… having the ability to carry guns independent of the university might be used as a means to harm others mainly. You can't just restrict who to carry. So, having that in the wrong hands might definitely be an issue.

Sham's friends had mixed views of campus carry. He illuminated that most of them opposed guns on campus. These individuals shared his views, that guns in the wrong hands could cause issues on SU's campus.

Joy and Malika became aware of campus carry via both formal and informal channels. Joy learned about campus carry via emails and discussions in her office. She summarized the details of the active shooter literature distributed in her office and then spoke about her American colleagues expressing fear about guns on campus. Joy stated how she became aware of campus carry:

> I think through some emails that they sent out to all the students. Yeah, and also in my office, they give us action plans for shooting on campus, what should you do, different steps that you can take…and some conversations between colleagues, American colleagues. I remember one time they were talking about it. He was just saying he wasn't happy about that. He felt threatened as a teacher, if that does happen, they would have nowhere to turn, or something like that. I think that's the time when I started thinking, it does sound a little dangerous ...They were expressing their concerns over this new policy. I was working in my office while they were chatting. I think I kind of joined their conversation. I guess when they were talking about it, I was like, "Yeah, I agree. I feel the same way." I had some fear about that, to be honest. …… sometimes going into the classroom, I was thinking, if some student takes out a gun and starts shooting, I don't know what to do. And I guess that's kind of a fear inside me, but I just never really thought through about it, I guess.

Joy communicated that information related to campus carry was not shared in her department. In addition, she learned nothing about the law from the discussions which took place. As such, she had no knowledge about the details of the campus carry law. Joy communicated what she knew about the law:

> … The only thing I know is, people have been having a lot of debates and arguments over gun carrying, no matter where, or even allowing people purchase guns... That's pretty much all I know. I don't really know much about university, gun use. Yeah, I don't recall any news that I've read about university gun shooting events, or tragedies. But I've heard a lot from public schools in U.S.

In Malika's case information about campus carry was communicated to her via campus RSO emails and seeing peaceful protests on campus. Malika:

> I think I kept receiving a lot of emails from different people and different organizations on campus, especially RSOs, and they wanted us to step forward and do something. I cannot remember how many emails I received, but it was a lot. Also, I think I've people on campus having signs, or trying to talk to people about gun policy and stuff like that. I think it was two years ago. I … can remember there were people talking, trying to talk to other students and describing or explaining what's happening.

She mentioned that a professor in her academic department complained about the university failing to stop the policy from being implemented. Like other participants in the study, Malika had limited knowledge of the law. When asked what she knew about the law, she responded, "I think I only know that it's allowed on campus now. They're allowed to carry it without sealing. Yeah, I think it's the only thing that I know. I don't know if they are allowed to shoot or not."

Nana was unaware of the implementation of campus carry at SU. She became cognizant after seeing the recruitment email for this study. Nana admitted, "Actually, I didn't know about it until you posted the letter of your research. I was not aware that it's legalized in Arkansas." She did not participate in activities which briefed her about campus carry. She possessed limited knowledge of the law since she learned about the phenomenon from this study. Nana responded when asked what she knew about the law:

> Well, after you taught us about this research, I actually researched it online. Of the Chancellor's letter about gun carry on campus, it's been legalized. And if you don't feel safe you have to contact certain different men and … all this stuff. So, I know that it has to be sealed. Like you cannot show it to people. And you also have to have certain training or something like that. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Except for Park and Rana, all the participants in the study demonstrated limited knowledge of the campus carry laws at SU. The email from SU's Chancellor appeared to be the key medium used to sensitize the participants about the law. Teaching assistantship active shooter training literature and discussions with classmates, lab mates, SU staff, and professors also provided an avenue for some participants to learn and share their views about the phenomenon. Notably, some participants intentionally sought information about the law, while others avoided reading further because of fear. Another common sentiment among the participants was that SU did not provide any formal sources of sensitization beyond the email sent by the Chancellor. Having examined the means through which international students became aware of SU's campus carry law, the next section of this chapter will explore their perceptions of the phenomenon.

International Students' Perception of Campus Carry

Understanding the participants' perception of campus carry will illuminate their on-campus experience with the phenomenon. Most participants were unsupportive of campus carry. Only Matt and Park revealed that they supported the legalization of guns on campus. Among the reasons given by the participants who supported the phenomenon were the benefits of extensive training for gun owners and the possession of weapons by civilians who may be able to stop crimes.

Those who did not support campus carry, cited confidence in the university police, guns being unnecessary, fear, confusion, and cultural reasons. Other concerns articulated by those who were opposed to campus carry included guns endangering the lives of campus constituents, the occurrence of serious crimes, and fear of students having guns. Alexa was unsupportive of

campus carry. She believed that the police at the university were efficient in doing their jobs and as such implementing SU's campus carry law was unnecessary. Alexa remarked:

> I think our police in SU… I am talking about the police at the SU… I had an accident one time, and they were here in a couple minutes. One time I wasn't feeling safe, and they were here in minutes too. They are very efficient in every way. I think that if someone just called in, they would come here in minutes. And they are walking all the time...I don't see the point; they are so vigilant here.

Alexa elaborated on the fact that she trusted the police officers at SU, and this was fortified by her experience with their responsiveness to issues over the years. She declared that it was inexcusable for anyone to carry a gun on campus and maintained her unsupportive stance against campus carry. In addition, her opinion did not change between the time she learned of campus carry and the time of the interview.

Ana's perception of campus carry was strongly influenced by the culture of violence in her home country. Guns are restricted back home, and this made Ana think that there is no point in carrying a gun on SU's campus. The implementation of campus carry at SU was scary for her. This fear was compounded by her lacking confidence in the training process that must be completed before people can carry guns on campus. Ana elucidated her apprehensions about the phenomenon:

> I come from a country that is violent enough and nobody is allowed to carry guns unless you're a police officer or like a bodyguard... And if you have a gun, you got it illegally. So, for me, the notion of someone having a gun legally on the place I go to study was like, "Okay, that's unreal for me." For me, it was kind of scary, because I don't know, who decides who is apt to carry a gun? … for me it was just scary because this should be an environment where you should feel safe, not the need of carry a gun. I mean, I never seen anybody with a gun on campus apart from the police officer, like the campus police, but just like students in general here are very young. Since I'm not informed, I'm not sure how can they or can they not get a gun?

Since the implementation of campus carry at SU, Ana's opinion has not changed about the policy. She assumed that guns were allowed because people thought the campus was unsafe.

Ana said she could not think of any other reason why campus carry was being implemented at SU. The implementation of campus carry at SU also made Andrea fearful and confused. It elevated her concerns for her safety, and she could not comprehend the need for individuals carrying guns on campus. As such, Andrea avoided public spaces because she thought that shootings in those areas may increase because of the implementation of campus carry. Andrea stated that regular arguments may escalate into shooting incidents and that was the main reason for her fear of campus carry. Andrea stated:

> I was scared. Kind of confused … because I did not understand how is it, they would allow people to carry the guns on campus. And then, just concern for everybody's safety. … I try not to go to the library ... one of the reasons why I avoid the library is because I'm always so afraid of shootings going on and I feel like, okay this is the perfect place for a shooting going on.

Andrea's opinion changed after the implementation of campus carry at SU. She indicated that she had not seen a gun on campus since the implementation of the policy. This allowed her to be less concerned about the phenomenon, but she did not feel safer on campus. Also unsupportive of campus carry implementation at SU, Emiljia was troubled when she heard guns were allowed on campus. She described her reaction to the news:

> I was like, "What the heck? My students can bring their guns in my classroom. That's not cool." So yeah, I'm very against guns so that wasn't great, but then I thought, "Well, I really don't think my students who are undergrads are going to be bringing guns into my class anyway." It wasn't really something for me to worry about much, but I didn't support it and I don't support it and I'm not happy about it.

She explained that there were no guns in her home country and as such she did not see the need for guns on campus. Emiljia also communicated that her culture influenced her perception of campus carry. This was her response when asked about the extent to which her culture impacted her views of campus carry:

> I guess a lot because if you come from a place where something doesn't exist and there's no need for it and you go to a place where there seems to be like a lot of need for it, then you're like, well I don't know.

There was no change in Emiljia's views of campus carry after its implementation at SU. Furthermore, she did not think a lot about the policy since its implementation, given that there were no shooting incidents on campus. Emiljia conveyed that she would rather a guns-free campus and said she feared guns because they can kill.

Initially, George was unsupportive of campus carry when it was implemented. He cited the risks and dangers it imposed on the academic environment as justifications for his original stance on the phenomenon. George believed that infuriated teachers and students with guns could compromise the safety of the classroom environment. George shared his reaction to campus carry:

> My initial reaction is I did not like that, I thought that sometimes me having to teach a class that sometimes I see students who get really angry, and I'm afraid if one of those students had a gun, they could be pushed into using it... Also, the other thing is…when I was teaching, I had colleagues who I'd see really angry, someone who is talking to a student in an angry voice because they haven't done things they were supposed to do. I'm like, that anger can result into something different. But maybe, that's exaggerating, but I just think It might be possible, who knows.

He described his reaction when he heard guns were going to be allowed on campus:

> When I heard it… the first thing that came into my mind was at that time, just do not put the policy in effect. I just thought that it was endangering the campus community, because I just don't think that guns are safe.

George thought that campus carry would endanger the campus constituents on SU's campus and hoped it would not have been implemented. George's unsupportive attitude towards campus carry shifted overtime and he became indifferent about the phenomenon. While he was unaware of the exact period the policy was implemented, George said that he does not view campus carry as a major issue but still perceived possible dangers when individuals carry guns

on campus. When asked if his perception of campus carry was influenced by the gun culture in his home country, George replied:

> Yeah, I think it's influenced by that. Yeah, for sure. I think that if I was raised in the U.S. probably grew up in a family where I practice hunting and I go to a shooting range and guns are part of my hobby, I ... think my take on campus carry would probably be different.

George's perception of campus was influenced by the gun culture in his home country.

Jade Jean abhorred the implementation of campus carry at SU and conveyed that she believed legalizing guns on campus was dangerous. She cited the likelihood of friendly fires and other non-defensive shootings occurring as reasons for considering campus carry as dangerous. Having perceived SU's campus as safe, Jade Jean was sad when she learned that the university would be allowing guns on campus. She responded to my question asking how she felt when she learned guns were allowed on campus:

> I did not feel good about it. I just feel like it's dangerous. It's like it could result in friendly fires, it could result in so many other things beyond defense. I just felt scared. I felt ... sad that it should come to this because I perceive my place of study as safe. There should be no need for having guns around at all. I can see why some people would want to have that as a measure of defense… but just knowing that people might have a gun on them, if I have that knowledge, it would just keep me at a distance from them.

Jade Jean explained that the presence of guns made her uncomfortable, especially if she was able to see the gun. Concealed carry relieved her anxieties about guns in her vicinity and allowed her to have normal interactions on campus. Despite her limited knowledge of the law, Jade Jean believed only people who are formally trained should own guns. She did not think that civilians should be allowed to carry guns. The justification for her opinion was imbued in her religious beliefs which denounced extreme violence. Jade Jean shared her opinion of campus carry at SU:

> I don't think we should have it, but that is based off of very, very limited knowledge. I don't think anyone besides people who are formally trained to do a job that requires you to have a gun should have a gun, in general … I just think civilians should not own a gun

> at all. My reasons for that is because God wanted us to resolve things without violence… I don't like the fact that people have guns on-campus. I think we should much rather have more cops, who have guns, to defend civilians instead… I personally don't feel civilians should have guns.

Jade Jean would prefer more police officers with guns on campus than civilians. The probability of misuse due to anger, sleepwalking, drunkenness, and small fights were the rationalizations for her not supporting other campus constituents carrying guns to campus. Mental illness and relationship issues resulting in friendly fires also informed Jade Jean's perception of campus carry. Jade Jean asserted that she felt safe on SU's campus although guns were allowed. However, she also thought that campus carry made campus unsafe for all students. Her opinion of campus carry remained the same after implementation.

Joy did not support campus carry. She communicated that she felt threatened when she heard guns were allowed on campus and believed that guns on campus would pose an immediate danger to all campus constituents. The fact that as an international student she may not be able to defend herself, lead Joy to think that campus carry implementation at SU is a scary occurrence. Despite being informed about how to protect herself in the classroom, Joy opined that if the shooter is in her proximity, it increases the personal danger associated with the phenomenon. Joy shared her perception of campus carry:

> ... Personally, I really don't think that should be allowed, because what if somebody has a bad day, and become irresponsible for their choices, for their actions, which happens, especially among young college students… it will put a lot of innocent people's lives in danger… I'm not happy about that policy, especially as a TA, I feel threatened. I just think, you never know who has a gun hiding underneath their clothes or in their pockets... if they do have a bad day ... there is a possibility that person can … just take out the gun and shoot at you instead of trying to solve the problem in another way…I don't carry a gun, I can't shoot back, or I can't shoot back to protect other people. So, when that happens, I don't really know. They told us different things we can do, but what if that person is right among you? That would be very scary.

There was no change in Joy's opinion after the implementation of campus carry at SU. In fact, she was adamant that she would always think guns must not be allowed on campus.

For Malika, the implementation of campus carry at SU invoked fear. She illuminated the fact that she felt scared especially with mass shootings occurring at schools in neighboring states. Guns are not allowed in her country, and this informed the apprehension she had knowing guns would be allowed on SU's campus. Malika related how she felt about campus carry implementation at SU:

> Actually, it was so scary. Especially because I think something happened in one of the near states in a high school that someone killed 13 students. So, it makes me so scared …. I don't think there's any reason for people to carry gun on campus because if you have a weapon, it means that you can shoot it..….. It makes me feel so unsafe and un-secure because I think it may happen sometimes in our class, someone just ... take out their gun and just shoot us.

Malika's opinion about the phenomenon did not change after implementation. She realized that domestic students supported guns on campus after speaking with her classmates about campus carry. All international students with whom she spoke about the phenomenon were unsupportive. Malika communicated her personal views of campus carry:

> I think at first, it's stupid. Why should people bring gun in the class? … If you feel unsafe, there is other ways to solve that problem. You can talk with the police. Or even if you feel unsafe, just call 911. So, you shouldn't do anything by yourself if that's why you bring gun.

Like, George and Joy, Malika said that guns posed a threat to the classroom environment and the space was not created for students to carry guns. She believed that if a person felt unsafe on campus there were formal mechanisms in place to help mitigate the fear. Malika proffered that more guns on campus made SU's campus unsafe. Likewise, Maria initially felt concerned and afraid when she learned that guns were being allowed on SU's campus. The possibility of

mass shootings occurring were also of concern to her. I asked her views of campus carry and she replied:

> I think kind of concerned. Maybe afraid. You don't know, you could be just somewhere crowded, and then somebody can just take it out, and you cannot defend yourself, you don't know what to do. You don't know what intentions that person can have.

In Maria's opinion, guns made campus and classrooms unsafe because accidental or intentional shootings may harm those in the space. She was worried about the individuals who carried guns on campus and their reasons for doing so. Maria justified her unsupportive view of the issue:

> I think less guns is better ... At the same time, I feel like why to bring that option to campus? To student to have a gun. And then you're giving me the permission to have this gun, and then do whatever I want with it. I think it's bringing the problem to campus. That's my opinion ... I will be scared … As I said, an accident can happen, somewhere, or somebody just want to say "Hey, I have a gun, I'm powerful, and I'm just joking with the gun", and then poof. Something like that. I don't know.

Matt supported campus carry and believed people should be allowed to carry guns on campus. When asked his views about the legalization of guns on campus, Matt replied, "That my personal opinion about carry on campus is that people should be allowed to." He expressed that he would carry a gun on campus if he could afford one. The probability that legal gun owners could prevent crimes was one of the reasons he gave for supporting campus carry:

> Yeah. I really don't feel insecure, or nothing, or in danger. This is of course a result of my personal opinions about that, right. I think that the only way to stop a bad person doing bad things, is to have a good person with the same amount of power, to counteract it, and when it comes to a person, to like a mass shooting for example, that guy had guns, you need a good guy with a gun to stop it.

Matt surmised that guns do not kill people, instead people are responsible for killing people. In his opinion, police officers are not able to protect citizens all the time and as such citizens should be responsible for their own security. In Matt's eyes, campus carry ensures

personal security. Matt also supports guns on campus because there is a restriction on guns in his home country which he perceived as the reason for an increase in crimes there:

> I come from a country that we are not allowed to have guns, and we have one of the highest mortality rates in the world … and I see how bad this policy is, how much pain it causes to the society in the long term.... That's why I think the role of guns is to promote equality and safety. That's my point of view about all the gun discussion.

Matt rationalized that gun ownership boosted the safety of its owner. Like Matt, Park supported the implementation of campus carry at SU. He explained that his opinion changed, after being initially unsupportive because of safety concerns. Park's opinion changed because like Matt, he deciphered that a well-trained person with a gun may be able to save lives if shootings occur and would be able to safely use their guns. He explained that it was after an argument with his closest friend that his opinion of campus carry changed:

> Well at the beginning I was really against it, but then suddenly from an argument that I had with one of my closest friends about it, I thought it probably is not that bad. I mean if the person is well trained, if the person doesn't have any mental problem, if the plan for training these people is really good, why should I be worried about it? ... I'm not so much against it as far as there is a training process and a security check up of the person that's going to use it, who's going to have a gun on campus.

He sensed that there were positive outcomes associated with campus carry. Park expressed why his opinion about campus carry changed:

> Because, yeah, probably you don't need a gun to be on a campus, but if there is a security issue that someone that is well trained, that knows how to use a gun, that might save lives, you know in a positive setting, why not? If there is an issue on campus and there is someone that can actually prevent that issue happening, why not? I wasn't thinking on that sense of like someone actually preventing people to be hurt. Like if you have someone that is trying to steal someone from a girl on campus and he has a knife, for example, and you can avoid that situation with a gun by hurting the other person in the leg, I guess, why not? That kind of issue can happen everywhere.

Park illuminated that he would never get a gun because he feared losing it. However, he did not mind another trained person being allowed to use one. He felt that civilians should be

exposed to the same level of training as security personnel. When asked if he currently supports guns on campus, Park answered:

> That was a tricky question. I support it, just if the people that are going to have guns go through a really, really well training and they have been screened for criminal issues or mental disorders. I won't support it if that people are like crazy, not crazy because that's really subjective and general term, but when a person has a mental disorder that doesn't allow the person to make a rational decision or when a person has criminal, have had criminal activities in the past related to robbery with guns or, you know like, killing or murdering someone.

Park supported campus carry as long people were adequately trained to use guns. He opined that faculty and students should go through the same level of training before they can carry guns on campus.

Nana had mixed feelings about the legalization of guns on campus. A prior experience at another Southern university, located in an unsafe neighborhood allowed her to understand the need for campus carry. However, Nana believed that concealed campus carry created anxiety among students who may be worried that someone in their proximity is armed. She was not scared to be on campus but remained aware of the possibility that a gun related incident may occur there. She intimated that the gun culture in her home country impacted her views of campus carry:

> Because in [redacted], we do not have gun. We are not allowed to have any guns. And ... I didn't grow up seeing guns. And I still kind of get scared if I ever see a gun ... So, it definitely made me feel … not really scared to be on campus, but just put myself to be more aware that something could happen.

Nana justified her reason for not supporting campus carry:

> I feel like well; I mean campus is the place where you study... I mean that's an academic place. So, I feel like if that person is feeling threatened…. there should be some kind of help for that person... I mean I just really never understand the reason, necessity of doing it, like carrying guns on campus... I just never think of a situation that could happen on campus that you are threatened that you need to have a gun to protect yourself.

Nana could not fathom the need for allowing guns on campus because she perceived SU's campus as a safe space. Conversely, Nana believed that guns made college campuses unsafe. She conveyed that guns will only put campus constituents in danger, despite the reason for which they are used on campus. She communicated that people who carry guns on campus assumed some level of power. I asked her to explain if the fact that international students cannot not carry guns on campus meant they were powerless, Nana replied:

> I think so, yeah. Because there is always a sense of being outsider in this country. And I mean it's the same ... we don't have anything to say about it, because we are the ones who decided to come. They didn't make us come. Yeah.

Nana speculated that the welfare of international students was secondary to SU's administrators implementing campus carry policies. International students were perceived as outsiders on campus and the cultural disparities between them and Americans complicated this reality.

The implementation of campus carry at SU left Rana feeling scared and she felt the enactment of the law was terrible. She assumed that campus carry legally opened a door to campus violence. She avoided bringing her children to campus and said that she would continue to do so if campus carry is allowed.

Rana remained unsupportive after the implementation of campus carry at SU. She thought the period allotted for training was not enough, campus carry would increase campus violence, and guns should not be brought into public spaces by civilians. I then asked her opinion of the legalization of guns on campus, she answered, "I think it's terrible." When asked if campus carry made campuses less safe, she failed to justify the reason why students or other campus constituents would want to carry guns on campus. As such she remained unsupportive of SU's campus carry policy.

Seena felt afraid when she learned that guns were permitted on SU's campus. She said she was not pleased about guns being allowed on campus because people with mental disorders may have access to them. Her key concern was the probability that a person issued a permit to carry guns may develop a mental health problem in the future and engage in campus shootings. Seena explained that there were no guns in her home country, and this was the reason for her fear of campus carry. Seena expressed why she was afraid:

> Because here everyone can have a gun. It's easy access and ... some people I think so they have some mental disorders, and they shouldn't have a gun. And as I said, in my country we don't have guns at all, so that's why I'm afraid, because in my country I have never think about this ... I'm not convinced if carrying the guns, more guns on campus really brings more safety ... because I think so guns are easy to use to hurt people... and for me as a person who I am, I do not have any protection aids, and especially when someone has a gun you have no possibility to escape or fight … And on campus... I'm not just convinced because people might be, how to say, easily change their moods and not every person can control its aggression or violence, and as I said, pull the trigger, it's very easy to do it to hurt people because it doesn't demand any direct, how to say, direct connection with the victim.

Additionally, Seena was not convinced that more guns on campus increased campus safety. Media portrayals of mass shootings on school and college campuses also influenced her perception of campus carry. This resulted in her avoiding crowded public spaces. The fact that she may not be able to defend herself against someone with a gun was a concern to Seena. She was unaware of cases where civilians with legal guns were able to stop active shooters. In her assessment, police officers and soldiers usually resolve these problems. As such, Seena questioned the reason civilians should legally own guns. Seena's exposure to guns in her home country influenced her opinion of campus carry. Furthermore, she was not convinced that guns were needed on campus because there is a possibility that guns may increase campus violence.

Sham said he was fearful when he learned persons could carry guns on campus. He stated that he was personally against campus carry and did not see the need for SU to implement the

policy. In Sham's opinion, the police and security officers at SU can safeguard the campus. Sham shared his reaction when he learned that persons were going to be allowed to carry concealed guns on campus:

> So, I too felt a bit scared… I too I'm against of it... because I don't feel it's necessary to have a campus carry policy. If the main objective of the policy is to safeguard the safety of something, then I believe the police and the campus security is doing a great job.

Sham cited campus shootings in the U.S. as his reason for being unsupportive of campus carry at SU. He thought that campus carry may result in active shootings occurring on campus. Sham's opinions had not changed since the implementation of the law.

In sum, most of the participants in the study did not support the implementation of campus carry at SU. Only two participants openly supported the policy while one expressed indifference about it. The probability that civilians may defuse active shooting incidences and the perceived negative experiences associated with living in a non-gun culture informed the opinions of those in favor of the policy. Among the motivators for the unsupportive attitude towards campus carry was fear for personal safety and that of other campus constituents. The negative perception of the phenomenon was also informed by the participants' exposure to the gun culture in their home countries. As such, questions were asked during the interviews to assess the gun culture in the participants' home countries, their proclivity to own guns, and familial knowledge of the U.S. gun culture.

Gun Culture in International Students' Home Countries

Clarity about the gun culture which exists in the participants' home countries is crucial in shedding light on their perception of campus carry. Most participants expressed that their country did not have a gun culture. Alexa, Maria, Park, and Sham explicitly stated that their countries have a gun culture and civilian gun ownership was legal. The participants affirmed that

the ease with which Americans can acquire a gun is in stark contrast to the restrictive processes in their home countries. Alexa highlighted that in her home country guns were legal and accessible. She explained that permits are usually granted after a psychological test of all prospective owners is completed. Alexa stated that the gun culture back home is similar to that of the U.S. In her country, universities are a part of university cities, and the government banned the possession of gun in those spaces.

Alexa conveyed that gun ownership is not discussed among the citizens back home. Since she did not discuss guns in her country, Alexa never understood the furor surrounding gun ownership until she came to the U.S. Alexa conveyed that back home, she thought only police officers had the right to carry guns. She also said that in her country, shootings were not as common as in the U.S. Alexa compared the U.S. gun culture with that of her country:

> It's very interesting. I never knew how interesting it could be until I arrived here. In my country, I always think if you are a police, you carry a gun. If you are not a police, then you do not need one. It is just money and maintenance that you don't need to pay. And there is not too much shooting, like when you go outside and shoot deer and things, hunting. There is no hunting in my country at all.

Alexa explained her personal views about the U.S. gun culture compared to that of her home country. She tried to reconcile the possibility of gun ownership making her country safe, by intimating that gun ownership may be a reason why she perceived the U.S. to be safe. She indicated that her culture is getting dangerous and surmised that the U.S. is very safe compared to her home country.

Due to an internal war in Ana's home country, guns were illegal and inaccessible to civilians. In fact, only law enforcement officers and bodyguards carried guns. She lamented that her country was dangerous and gun ownership among civilians could result in shooting incidents. Ana talked about the gun culture back home, "I wouldn't say there is a gun culture in my country

because [redacted] has been at war, internal war for a long time... Even though ... it was a violent country. You don't carry a gun because it's dangerous..." When compared to the U.S., the gun culture in Ana's country involves illegal gun ownership and crime. Ana's views of guns and campus carry remained unsupportive, but she explained that because of her culture, she can understand the point of view of those in support of the phenomenon. When asked if her culture informed her opinion of campus carry, Ana replied, "I think so."

Guns are also illegal and inaccessible for civilians in Andrea's country. In comparing the U.S. gun culture to that in her home country, Andrea elucidated that unlike in the U.S., citizens back home cannot buy and own guns. Security officers, police officers, and soldiers were the only ones allowed to carry guns. Andrea expounded on the gun culture in home country:

> It's not allowed for a citizen to own a gun, it's illegal. The only people who are allowed to have guns are either soldiers, cops, or anyone who works in security itself. I wouldn't say that regular citizens do not have guns but it's illegal for them to have them..…….. you're not allowed to carry a gun back in [redacted].

Andrea affirmed that her culture may have informed her perception of campus carry and why she was unsupportive of campus carry. When asked if her culture informed her views, she replied:

> I believe so, most likely. I guess that since I have lived my whole life just thinking that carrying a gun is illegal and it's not safe for yourself... I think that I just align with it in the sense that if it's someone who's trained and has a gun, that's okay. What I mean trained is like, actual training, like a soldier or cop someone who actually works on that. That if it's just a regular person with no such training, I feel like they should not have a gun.

Emiljia also informed me that there was no gun culture in her home country. Only persons in the army, police officers, and hunters carried guns. She further explained that hunters go through a rigorous process to get gun permits. The gun culture in the U.S. is completely different from that which exists back home. Emiljia highlighted the difference between the countries' gun culture:

> We have no guns back home and they have lots of them here and they feel like they really need them here. We never have those conversations back home because we've never needed guns or had guns. So, I don't know. It's been... So, it's difficult to understand why they do here.

Emiljia asserted that the people in her home country did not see the need for guns. As such, she questioned the fascination with guns in the U.S. On the other hand, a genocide in George's country outlawed the ownership of guns by civilians. He said people do not think about guns back home. In his opinion, his country is safer without civilians owning guns. George surmised that the major difference between the gun culture in his country and the U.S. is that there is no gun culture in his native land. George illuminated the gun culture in his home country:

> Not allowed.... no one was allowed to carry your own guns ... I think it's safer that way because the cases of gun violence are rare, I even don't hear about them. You can have people, hear cases of someone exploded a grenade somewhere in the capital city but never hear cases of someone who has shot another person... I want to say we just don't have a gun culture at all. Because we are not supposed to carry guns, we're not supposed to own guns.

In Jade Jean's home country guns are illegal and cannot be accessed by civilians. She mentioned that only police officers can legally own and carry guns. The major difference between gun ownership in Jade Jean's country and the U.S. is that Americans can purchase guns after registering and getting a permit. Jade Jean intimated that gun ownership is tracked and controlled in the U.S.

Joy expressed that there is tight control on gun ownership by the government in her homeland. Ownership and use of guns by civilians in her native country is a punishable offense. Only the military can carry government issued guns. Public tragedies in her country are usually non-gun related. Joy told me about the gun culture back home:

> I come from [redacted], the [redacted] just has very, very tight control on a lot of things, especially guns. If you are found to own guns, create guns in any way, use guns in any

> way, it's a very, very serious criminal behavior... As individuals, you were never allowed to buy guns or have guns, not even use guns, some drug dealers or criminals do, but if you want to follow the rules of the laws, you're not supposed to.

Gun ownership in Malika's homeland is illegal for civilians. Only security and police officers can own guns and she was not exposed to guns back home. Malika described the gun culture in her home country, "Actually, we don't have any. I mean, it's not legal to carry gun. Ordinary people cannot have gun, like personal gun, with their self, or any kind of weapon. Yeah, I think only police and security may have gun." Malika's views about campus carry was influenced by the gun culture in her home country.

Matt told me that guns were illegal and inaccessible to civilians in his homeland. He attributed the frequency of serious crimes back home to the restrictive gun laws put in place by the government. Matt stated, "I come from a country that we are not allowed to have guns, and we have one of the highest mortality rates in the world." The government in Matt's country did not honor the results of a national referendum on gun ownership and bought guns from the country's citizens to reduce private gun ownership. In his view, this resulted in more criminals owning guns since they opted not to sell theirs to the government. Matt argued that aside from criminals, only the police owned guns in his country. He asserted that a new government is currently reviewing the gun laws in his homeland, and he is supportive of that move. Matt then compared the gun culture in the U.S. to that which exists in his home country:

> Ooh, it's very different. From here, what I see... you having some minimum requirements, you can buy a gun easily... It's not a bureaucratic process, it's fast, easy. In [redacted], it is not forbidden by the law, but it's forbidden in practical terms. For example, in [redacted], before you had to justify your need for a gun. This would go to a police officer, and he would judge you if you really need a gun or not. ……. Right now, it's forbidden. Only specific people can carry a gun in [redacted], so now only cops have guns, and of course criminal people, so it's not allowed.

Matt reiterated that guns were illegal on college campuses in his homeland and the process to access one is bureaucratic. Matt believed that people should have a right to possess a gun and indicated that the people in his country were deceived when their desire to own guns was vetoed by the government.

Contrarily, Maria said that guns were accessible in her country. She explained that guns had to be registered and civilians do not practice carrying guns. Maria expressed that she knew one individual back home who owned a gun and the individual had to register the weapon. She implied that a lot of criminals have guns, but they are usually penalized by the authorities if they do not register it. Maria talked about the gun culture in her homeland:

> I think you have to register the gun. I don't think people carry guns like that, that much. I remember one person that had a gun that I knew, but that person, I think they have register it… I think a lot of bad people have it. If they find you with one gun, then you're in trouble. Like if the police find you with a gun.

Maria was unclear about the process and conditions under which individuals back home can own guns. She insinuated that U.S. citizens own guns for fun but civilians in her home country owned guns to engage in crime or to protect themselves:

> I feel in my country if you have a gun it's because you want to do something with it, you want to rob someplace, you want to kill somebody, or simply you are a bad person, and something is going on and then you have it because you have to protect yourself. I feel here it's more for fun. You have a gun, just, I have a gun. That's what I feel, I don't know.

Park, who is from the same country as Maria, also stated that back home country guns were legal and available to civilians. However, guns are illegal on college campuses although there have been instances of gun possession at some institutions. Families do not own guns and guns are usually owned by police officers and criminals. Park emphasized that U.S. citizens used guns for hunting and taught their children to use it, while back home, guns are used a lot by criminals. Park illuminated the criminal culture in his home country, "Well, it's terrible. It is

terrible. Every day you see different cases of people being murdered by criminals that they just want to take money or possessions of these people. It's terrible." This criminality informed his initial unsupportive feelings about the campus carry policy implemented at SU.

Nana came from a nonviolent culture. Her country does not have a military, but guns are legally accessible to hunters. Guns are illegal for street gangs and only police officers can legally own one. Nana informed me of the gun culture back home:

> So, unless you're going to hunting and you cannot have a gun. And also, to be the hunter, you have to pass certain tests and all this stuff. And other than that, only police officers, or those people would have guns. But at the same time, we also have ... street gang ... they definitely do have guns... So, it's not that it doesn't exist in [redacted]. But definitely we don't ... we never worry about who would have a gun, who would shoot at me, or anything like that.

In comparing the United States' gun culture to that of her home country, Nana explained that back home guns are just for police officers. She thought that Americans loved guns since gun ownership exuded a level of power and authority. Nana asserted that the gun friendly culture which exists in the U.S. does not thrive in her native country.

In Rana's country, gun ownership is extremely restricted. Only hunters, shepherds and police officers carry guns. Rana stipulated that civilians cannot access a gun back home and they are encouraged to seek the help of the police if they feel unsafe. Rana told me about the gun culture in her country:

> … it's very restricted. You have to be a hunter. Sometimes you have to... hunt… or… be a shepherd, living in a desert with your sheep and then you use it to protect your animals and yourself against wild animals... Other than that, if you're not a police officer, if you're not in security service, you cannot have a gun. In [redacted]...if you need protection, you go to police. They will provide you protection. They would send someone and protect you. That's not a reason to have a gun.

In Rana's opinion the main difference between the gun culture in the U.S. and her home country is the fact that Americans own numerous guns. She reiterated that her culture does not

encourage gun ownership by civilians, and this likely informed her views about campus carry at SU. Similarly, Seena stated that her country does not have a gun culture or guns in general. She only knew one person who had a gas gun and that was not a real gun in her opinion. Seena described the gun culture in her country:

> We don't have any gun culture. We don't have guns. Some people just, some few I would say, I just knew one person from all my friends or family who have a gun and it's just gas gun, so it's not even, you know, and that's it.

Seena inferred that U.S. citizens asserted their right and freedom to own guns, but this was not the case back home. In fact, they do not have guns. She explained that her home country's experience in the World War II informed the gun culture there. Seena surmised that Americans are very serious about gun ownership and demand more guns whenever shooting incidences occur in the country.

In Sham's homeland, there are legal ways through which citizens can own a gun, however there is no gun culture in the country. Similar to the other participants who do not have a gun culture in their country, Sham expressed that apart from the security forces and the military, no one else uses guns back home. However, he indicated that his views may have been impacted by his culture, but predominantly, the gun related crimes reported in the media.

Most participants were from cultures where guns were not legal or accessible by civilians. In some cases, the government restricted access and those who could access guns had to undergo a rigorous licensing process. Alexa, Maria, Sham, and Park's culture allowed citizens to legally own guns, however people owned guns either for personal protection, to secure assets, or to engage in criminal activities. Some participants' culture informed their perception of campus carry. For others, such as Sham, the portrayal of shootings in the media informed their views of the phenomenon.

International Students' Personal Gun Ownership

The participants in the study were asked whether they owned guns in their home countries to deduce how their perception of campus carry was impacted by their socialization with guns. None of the participants were gun owners in their home country. Only Matt indicated that he would own a gun in the U.S. if he was allowed to get a permit. Among the reasons given by the participants for not owning guns were fear of it being stolen, personal injury, injuring others, accidental shootings, and not having use for the gun.

Alexa is a non-gun owner and indicated that if she felt threatened back home, she would consider acquiring a gun in her country. Alexa remarked:

> If it's really what people are saying that my country is getting more dangerous every time, then I would think about it. But not from my understanding right now. I heard that it's getting a little bit dangerous, but it's still in specific areas, not in every place. I can just get a house in a good place. And that way I don't even have to carry that gun.

She said she had no need to own a gun in the U.S. since where she lives is not dangerous. Alexa commented when asked if she would own a gun in the U.S.:

> No, no need. I have to be in a place that it's very dangerous for me to carry and a gun, and here there are very few places like that. Most of the time it's when you want to save a lot of money in apartment but who wants to do that because then the apartment looks horrible.

Ana explained that she is not a gun owner because only criminals get guns back home. In terms of her proclivity to own a gun in the U.S., Ana shared that she is not likely to own one because she did not see the need for a gun, and she would not like to have a gun. Meanwhile, Andrea was a not a gun owner in her home country because she dreaded hurting herself while learning how to use it. Additionally, she feared hurting someone or taking their life. Andrea would not own a gun in the U.S. for the same reasons.

Emiljia does not own a gun back home because she has no need for one. When asked, Emiljia specified that she would not own a gun in the U.S. for fear of it being stolen, accidentally hurting someone, and anxiety knowing she has the gun. George did not own a gun in his home country because it was illegal, and he would not own one even if it were legal. He would not own a gun in the U.S. because he has no use for it. Similarly, Jade Jean does not own a gun back home because she does not want to, it is not allowed, and she does not think owning one was right. She asserted that she would not own a gun in the U.S.

For Joy, not possessing a gun back home meant a reduced likelihood of her becoming a criminal and going to jail. Furthermore, it was not possible to own a gun in her country. She would not own a gun in the U.S. because she felt unsafe around guns and feared accidental shootings which she associated with personal gun ownership. Joy underscored why she would not own a gun in the U.S.:

> Like I said, I just feel unsafe with the presence of a gun, no matter for what purpose. Even if you buy it to just protect your family, say if you have to stay at home in the night by yourself and you're afraid somebody is going to break in, even with that purpose I don't know, I feel unsafe. I'm afraid somebody is going to use that accidentally. Because that happens. I read it from the news. Sometimes the father would show the gun to the kid, and the gun accidentally goes off the far end and kills family members.

Malika did not own a gun because she did not think guns were needed and perceived that it was dangerous having guns around. She would not own a gun in the U.S. because she feared using the gun to hurt someone. Maria also told me that she did not own a gun in her home country, or the U.S. She expressed that she had never used a gun before but had the curiosity to visit a shooting range to learn. Beyond going to the shooting range, she had no interest in gun ownership.

Matt did not own a gun back home because it was difficult and near impossible to get one. However, he said he would go through the licensing process so that he could acquire a gun

in his home country. On the other hand, Matt told me that he would own a gun in the U.S. if it was permitted. He felt that lack of money restricted his ability to do so, and he does not know if he is legally permitted to own a gun in the U.S. I asked him why he would own a gun in the U.S., and he replied:

> Why would I? Because there are, I think two aspects. One from the individual and the other one from the society. From the individual point of view... I think firstly we should take care of ourselves, because in some situations of course the police is here to do that, but in some cases, they are not there. In some situations, you will just be alone, in a dangerous situation. In that case, having a gun could literally save your life. On the other, in the broader view, a society that has guns is less prone to be abused by their government or other governments. For example, we never know what's going to happen with politics. Maybe then a crazy guy wins the election and starts to promote some kind of injustice. That's the role of the society to take care of the society itself against a corrupt government or a bad government. If I'm not mistaken, I'm hoping not, but if I'm not mistaken, I heard, or I read somewhere that before everything bad that happens to the Jews during the Second World War, there was a policy to take the guns out of the Jews. They weren't armed, they couldn't do anything.

Matt inferred that from an individual point of view, people should have guns to protect themselves. He also proffered that from a societal point of view, if an elected government wants to create human rights infractions, people in the society should be able to own guns to protect themselves from the government.

Nana is a non-gun owner back home because it is restricted by her government. She would not own a gun in the U.S. because she believed that they were created to kill people. Park had no need to own guns and he would not own one in the U.S. because there were less lethal ways of defending himself. Park stressed why he would not own a gun in the U.S.:

> Not really if I have never needed it. Again, there are other ways to actually defend yourself. I have a taser, so if someone tries to whatever, I'm going to electrocute that person. I think with a taser, you are not able to kill a person. With a gun, you can. Which is, at the same time, I was arguing with one my friends the other day about it too, because we were talking about yeah you can kill a person with a gun, but you can also kill a person with a car. Which is like, I guess a double standard.

Rana is also a non-gun owner and would not own one in the U.S. She perceived a risk of having a gun at home around her children and as such would not acquire one in the U.S. Seena is also non-gun owner and would never own a gun back home. Moreover, Seena would not own a gun in the U.S. because of the risk of not carrying it properly and losing it to someone else. Likewise, Sham is not a gun owner back home and would not own one in the U.S. because he does not see the necessity of having a gun.

The findings related to gun socialization indicated none of the participants owned guns and only Matt expressed any interest of owning one in the U.S. Fear of misuse, loss, access by children, and personal fear of guns and the harm guns could create informed the participants reluctance to own guns in the U.S. On the other hand, restrictions in their home countries, personal dislike for guns, and apathy towards ownership dictated the participants' non-ownership of guns in their home countries. Personal protective reasons informed Matt's desire to own guns in the U.S. Of note, Alexa indicated that she would own a gun in her home country if she felt imperiled.

In general, the findings related to research question one suggested that the participants' reasons for studying at SU were motivated by scholarship programs and organizations, affordability, friends, and family. Most participants felt SU's campus was welcoming, inclusive, enjoyable, and aesthetically satisfying. The availability of resources, infrastructure, and diversity were the strengths of SU's environment. The university's weaknesses included cultural microaggressions, exclusion in the classroom, and difficulty bonding with domestic students on campus.

Integrating on campus was a mixed experience among the participants. On one hand, assimilating onto SU's campus was easy for most of them. Professors, RSO members, the

international student office, academic departments, advisors, language support programs, orientation programs, past scholarship recipients, campus staff, campus facilities, and events contributed to the participants' ease of assimilation on SU's campus. However, the challenges experienced by some participants in the study hampered their perception of how easily they integrated on campus. The issues they encountered included language barriers, reacclimatizing to campus, and familial demands. The participants reported mostly positive experiences while socializing on campus. They typically socialized with other international students especially those within their ethnic groups.

Most participants possessed limited knowledge of SU's campus carry laws. Knowledge of the law was gained through both formal and informal means. Among the formal media, an email from SU's Chancellor seemed to be the most common way the participants learned about campus carry. As it relates to support for campus carry, most participants in the study did not support its implementation with only two participants expressing support for guns on campus. Fear for personal safety and that of other campus constituents was the key reason for the participants not being in support of the phenomenon.

Regarding gun socialization, a significant number of the participants hinted that their perception of campus carry was influenced by the gun culture in their home countries. Moreover, most participants did not own guns or would not own one if given the opportunity in the U.S. Research question two sought to ascertain the impact campus carry implementation at SU had on the social ecology of the institution. The findings related to this research question are discussed in the next section.

International Students' Discernments about Campus Carry Implementation at SU

Research question two explored the participants' perceptions of the impacts of campus carry implementation on international students at SU. Furthermore, it sought to discern likely strategies that SU could use to mitigate the impacts of campus carry on international students at the institution. Two subthemes emerged from the data collected to answer this question. The first theme was the impacts of campus carry implementation on international students at SU and the other theme outlined possible strategies that may lessen the impacts of campus carry implementation on international students at the university.

Impacts of Campus Carry Implementation on International Students at SU

The participants were asked three main questions to ascertain data about the impacts of campus carry on international students. They were first asked to describe how the legalization of guns on campus changed the way international students participated in campus activities and then I asked them to broadly explain the impacts campus carry had on international students at the university. Finally, I asked them to tell me how campus carry implementation at SU directly impacted their interaction on campus.

Possible Impacts of Campus Carry on International Students' Participation in Campus Activities. The participants in the study shared mixed reactions about the possible impacts of campus carry implementation on international students' participation in campus activities. George, Malika, Maria, Matt, and Nana were not cognizant of campus carry's influence on international students' participation in campus activities. Alexa, Andrea, Emiljia, Jade Jean, Joy, Rana, and Seena did not perceive or observe any possible impacts. While Ana, Park, and Sham asserted that the legalization of guns on campus likely impacted how international students participated in campus events. Ana believed that campus carry

implementation at SU did not change how international students engaged on campus. However, she felt it increased their awareness of their environment and their anxiety while traversing campus. She assumed that like her, some international students are from non-gun cultures, and this may determine how campus carry influences their involvement on campus.

Park believed that the implementation of SU's campus carry policy may affect the way international students from conservative cultures interact on campus. He surmised that they would not be comfortable in crowds knowing that a gun could be revealed at any time. Park explained:

> I guess for some people it might. I have friends from really conservative cultures that probably, I guess, they won't feel comfortable being in a crowd in which you know that someone can, from one moment to another, take out a gun.

In Sham's opinion, a student coming from a country that does not have a gun culture would experience some level of fear knowing that campus carry was implemented at SU. However, he thinks this fear would not prevent them engaging in campus activities, but it may change how they participated. Sham:

> ….. for a student who is coming from a culture that that does not have a gun culture ……there is definitely a fear for that. I don't think that that's a big issue in, in participating in activities, but it would just be something in back in your head, just running and whenever you hear something…. you feel like that's something to think about. I wouldn't say it has a huge change in perspective. The only impact that I would say, would be in terms of emotional well-being, fear, that's it.

Malika did not detect any changes in the behavior of the international students on campus when SU's campus carry policy was enacted. However, she said that the absence of gun related incidents on campus could be the reason for her observation. Malika answered whether campus carry impacted the level of participation of international students on campus, "No, I don't think so. I don't think it has changed. Because I think it was just ... I think there is nothing happened yet, so no one is scared yet. That's why. I think that's why." Additionally, Malika said her

friends never shared that they would change how they engaged on campus because of campus carry.

Maria was oblivious to how campus carry implementation at SU changed the level of participation in campus events among international students. But she conceded that one friend shared that international students may be concerned about campus carry. Contrarily, Alexa surmised that campus carry implementation would not prevent international students who normally engage in numerous activities from doing so. Additionally, she inferred that campus carry would not affect how international students participate on campus because SU's campus carry law stipulated that guns must be concealed. I asked her if she thought international students would continue to participate in campus activities in light of campus carry and Alexa answered, "I don't think so. Because I don't know who has it. Again, ignorance is bliss. That information will not gain or decrease how I feel."

Andrea told me that she did not observe any noticeable impacts of campus carry on international students' participation in campus events, but she wondered if, like her, they avoided public spaces such as the library out of fear of active shooters. Similarly, Emiljia did not think campus carry affected campus participation among international students and did not observe any changes among her friends. She remarked that the international students she knew still participated in campus activities after the implementation of campus carry. Emiljia presumed that the presence of guns on campus increased the likelihood of campus shootings.

Seena did not perceive any changes to the level of participation in campus events among international students due to the implementation of campus carry. She intimated that many international students were unaware of campus carry at SU. In Seena's opinion, knowledge that

American citizens can already carry guns negate international students' concerns about the legalization of guns on campus. She commented:

> I'm not sure it's changed anything because I think so many students, they are not very aware of it and how it works, and because already everyone in United States basically can carry the guns, so passing this for, like, extend this for campus it's not a huge difference I guess.

The participants in the study expressed varied views about how international students engaged in campus activities after campus carry was enacted at SU. Some participants were unaware of the impacts experienced by the general international student population and could only speak from their point of view. Others who were unaware cited the absence of gun related incidents, their continued participation in campus events despite campus carry, and friends who were not affected by campus carry as reasons why they were not knowledgeable of any changes in campus involvement among international students.

Those who did not think campus carry influenced international students' campus participation alluded to the fact that SU's campus carry law stipulated that guns must be concealed. Concealed carry reduced the probable influence of campus carry on international student involvement on campus. Among the other reasons why the participants did not perceive any influence of campus carry on international students' participation were firsthand observation of international students participating in campus activities after SU's campus carry policy was enacted. Some participants felt that guns were already on campus and did not affect how international students engaged. The key concern among those who believed campus carry impacted the way international students interacted on campus was that many were from moderate gun cultures and campus carry instilled fear in them.

General impacts of campus carry on international students at SU. The data related to the general impacts of campus carry on international students showed that most participants

believed the implementation of campus carry would affect international students at SU. Some participants surmised that there were impacts such as worry, concern, fear, barriers between domestic gun owners and international students, and reluctance to engage in campus activities. Even though she perceived that campus carry may impact internationals students, Emiljia was uncertain of any specific impact.

George, Jade Jean, Nana, and Seena were ignorant of the effects of campus carry on international students, while Matt and Rana did not think campus carry affected international students at all. Alexa opined that new international students at SU would become impressed with the fact that guns are allowed on campus and may choose to inform themselves about the policy. Beyond that, Alexa did not see any other likely impacts of campus carry.

Ana surmised that the legalization of guns on campus may create a barrier between international and domestic students since unlike domestic students, international students would not be allowed to carry a gun on campus. She explained that while domestic students could carry a gun and feel safe, international students would be denied that privilege. Unclear about whether international students could legally carry guns on campus, Ana inferred that if an international student felt unsafe and could not carry a gun, while domestic students are allowed to do so, that may indicate a level of bias in favor of domestic students. Ana:

> I think for us it kind of also creates a barrier because I don't... think an international student can get a gun, even a permit to carry one because we are not citizens. So, that might be part of my misconception or … me not being informed on how you get a permit or what are the conditions for it. I think it impacts because based on my assumption, I think it creates a barrier in between, you can carry a gun to feel safe, but I cannot, even if I don't feel safe...

Worry and concern about the legalization of guns on campus among the international students at SU was the main impacts identified by Andrea. She was afraid that international students who experienced assault or discrimination on campus may be significantly affected

knowing aggressors may have guns. Andrea said that for international students at SU, campus was perceived as a safe place, and she does not know if that level of perceived safety was eroded by campus carry. Andrea elucidated:

> The thing is that, in my case, besides getting concerned about this, I don't think that it had impacted me in some other ways. I do wonder, again, this is just speaking from my opinion broadly, if people from other countries that receive a little bit more racist comments or abuse... they may be scared of just walking down campus and having a racist abuse or something. I doubt that someone will use a gun for that, but I mean, if other people who have gone through these abuses, if they would be concerned about now people having guns on campus. I feel like we always felt like campus was our safe place like our sanctuary where we could just go study and not worry about whatever is going on outside the world. And now, I don't know if that's the same. For most of the part, I think it is. I just still think that campus is safe but, I guess that I don't think it's that safe as it used to be before the legalization of guns.

Malika, Maria, and Sham all believed that the implementation of the campus carry policy at SU possibly generated fear among the international students on campus. In Malika's opinion prospective international students may choose not to attend SU because they think the campus is unsafe. She was unsure of the likely effects of campus carry on international students already enrolled at SU, but she perceived that they would be more cautious and avoid crowds. Malika addressed the likely impacts of campus carry on SU's international students:

> I'm not sure. Maybe they just, they want to be more cautious, like going home early, or trying to be somewhere on campus that there's more people. But before that, maybe they could spend more time at the campus, and not having to go home early or stuff like that.

Malika asserted that other than fear she could not think of any other impact associated with campus carry that would affect international students. Like Andrea, Malika deduced that campus carry made campus unsafe for international students at SU. For Maria, the enactment of SU's campus carry policy would make international students worry that they may be harmed if a gun owner discharged their weapon around them. Maria perceived that international students may become stressed knowing guns are on campus, avoid campus, limit their time on campus,

and avoid large crowds. Maria communicated the likely impacts campus carry had on international students at SU:

> I guess to be afraid. Because they know that maybe something can happen, since we are that far away from our families, maybe to lose your life... I think it depends on their culture. For example, in my country, as I said, what are the concerns to use gun. I don't know what happen in other countries. If they carry guns maybe that's normal for them. If not, then there is something that is not good. Somebody could be stressed about it, and then it will allow that person to concentrate, or they don't want to come to campus, just for class and then go home. It will limit their stays on campus maybe. Or with crowded events or something.

Sham also conveyed that campus carry implementation at SU would inspire fear among international students at the university. He said the fact that any domestic student may have a gun scares them. Sham clarified that open carry would make him more scared and that could be the same reaction among international students. Joy opined that campus carry would make international students who already felt unsafe, feel more threatened. She clarified that international students who experience discrimination due to their ethnicity and or religion would feel more imperiled:

> I think it would probably make a lot of people who already feel unsafe even more threatened. If they come from a certain religion or country that already not welcomed by people here, or the media, whatever, they probably would feel even more dangerous now. I don't know. I'm just guessing because I haven't talked to any of them about that. At least I personally don't feel more threatened or more unsafe due to this policy.

Park reaffirmed that some international students may have been reluctant to participate in campus activities when campus carry was enacted at SU. He stated he was impacted in that regard but was unsure of any changes to the campus environment for international students at the university. However, he explained that some of his friends may be uncomfortable seeing a gun even if it is the campus police that is armed. Park continued to detail how the campus environment may be affected for international students at SU:

> The environment itself … I don't really know. I have not seen … concealed guns you are not supposed to show them in public, but I might think of some of my friends, actually with police officers on campus... I even had an experience one time being in the gym… and then a police officer come in and it's like, oh God, something is going to happen. Someone has a gun that I can see. It's there in a really closed space, so if I felt that way, my friends probably felt the same way.

Among the participants who were uncertain of the impacts of campus carry on international students at SU, Emiljia expressed, with ambiguity, the likelihood that international students from non-gun cultures may become anxious because of campus carry. Emiljia replied to my question about the impact of campus carry on international students:

> ... I don't think it's had any kind impact so far, except that it's made them more nervous if they're like me and they come from a place where there's no guns. Other than that, I don't know if it's had an impact that could be measured or something, beyond how people feel. Because I don't think that … people go to places less or avoid social events or something like that, I don't think so.

George stated that he could not express how campus carry impacted other international students because he never focused on the impact it had on them. He was only concerned about the personal impacts the phenomenon had on him and could only speak from that point of view. Like George, Jade Jean also explained that she could not speak to the impacts of campus carry on the other international students enrolled on SU's campus. However, Jade Jean perceived that prospective students may choose not to study at SU because of its campus carry policy:

> I think if this is the case with all U.S. universities, then I don't think it affects students because we still want the education. But I guess when students are choosing to go to a university, if there's a campus that doesn't allow guns that would be more preferable to one that does.

Matt and Rana did not identify any impacts campus carry imposed on international students. In Matt's opinion, campus carry did not impact international students and it did not matter if it did. I asked him the reason for his response, and he countered:

> I would love to turn the question. Why should that matter? Firstly, because you don't even know if you're around of people carrying or not. Even that you know, I don't see

> anything bad about that. I feel totally fine with that. If I had to choose being in a classroom full of students with guns, and without guns, I would choose to be in the people with guns.

Matt asserted that because of the concealed carry stipulation in SU's campus carry policy, international students would not know if guns were in their vicinity, as such they would not be affected. Matt expressed that campus carry made him feel safer on campus. Rana did not think campus carry affected international students at SU.

The participants' perception of the general impacts of campus carry on international students at SU were diverse. The presumed general effects of campus carry among SU's international student population included worry and fear. A few participants surmised that among the other effects of campus carry were campus shootings, international students avoiding crowds, increased risks of discrimination, and the erosion of international students' perception of SU's campus as a safe space. Stress about guns being legal on campus and fear after seeing a gun were additional impacts illuminated by the participants.

Participants who were unsure about the impacts of campus carry on international students did not contemplate the impacts of the phenomenon on the general international student body. Those participants who were not cognizant of the general impacts of campus carry said they never heard international students talking about campus carry, could only speak of personal impacts on them, and had limited knowledge of the law to assess its impact. Those participants who asserted that campus carry did not affect international students affirmed that SU's concealed carry rule meant that international students would not know when guns are in their vicinity and as a result were unaffected.

Personal Impacts of Campus Carry on the Study Participants' Interaction on Campus. Only Andrea, George, Joy, Malika, Matt, and Seena declared that campus carry

implementation at SU impacted them personally. All other participants expressed that they were not affected by the phenomenon. Andrea illuminated that since SU implemented its campus carry policy, she avoided public spaces such as the library when she is studying on campus. She explained that campus carry did not impact her in any other way. Andrea was asked if she had safety concerns in the other public spaces other than those where she studied and why, she replied, "No, I guess I don't. I guess because when I'm studying, I'm by myself, I'm alone and when I go these events, I'm with a group, I'm with my friends. So, I feel a little bit better about it." For Andrea, being alone in a public space emitted fear.

George felt threatened as a TA when SU implemented its campus carry policy. He implied that the enactment of SU's campus carry law resulted in him marking easier and being nicer to students who he perceived may get angry. George lamented that guns made the classroom environment unsafe and there is the likelihood that students who were not pleased with their grades may decide to shoot a teacher. George remarked:

> But again, that's one of those things I was telling you that people can act out of reason, there's really no reason to kill someone. I mean, someone not passing you for a class or not giving you the grade that you feel like you deserve is not a good enough reason to shoot someone. So, and that's one of the dangers of allowing people to carry guns.

I asked him if campus carry made him fearful as a TA, George agreed:

> Exactly. Exactly. Makes you in a sense be like, I hate to use the analogy, like one of those airplane attendants … trying to gauge who could be someone who misbehave or who's coming in with bad behavior... It makes you want to be that kind of vigilant so that you know someone might not be in a good mood or something, that kind of thing. Just a very … unfortunate situation to be in because I guess it changes the way you behave as a person.

For Joy, the uncertainty about who may be carrying a gun on campus meant she tried not to irritate or provoke people. She said campus carry made her more suspicious of individuals on campus. Joy told me how campus carry changed the way she interacted on campus:

> I guess yes, I guess. You meet different people. Sometimes you feel like maybe, you never know what other people will do or react to different situations. So, I think I just try my best to be as kind, as nice to whoever I meet, try not to irritate people, or provoke them, in a way, because if somebody does get really mad or angry, you don't know what they will do next.

She emphasized how campus carry changed the campus environment for her:

> I guess in some moments it did. It just makes me more suspicious of people. I think in general; it didn't affect how I decide if I want to go to something or not. If it's something I really want to go to, I'm going. But sometimes I will look around and just walk on campus, I will look around and thinking, some of them might have guns. So that definitely make me trust people less and more suspicious of people around me, especially strangers. So yes, I guess in that sense, I think the campus environment did change a little bit for me.

SU's campus carry policy changed the campus environment for Joy, albeit diminutively. Campus carry caused Malika to spend less time on campus at night and when most students are not present. However, she told me she was ok with guns in the classroom. Matt said campus carry made him feel safer on campus. Matt told me how campus carry affected him:

> … as I said I feel safer. Usually, here is already a very safe place compared to the place I am from. Even before that I feel very, very, very safe here. Is like a very nice place. When I know this, when I got to know that it was allowed, I feel even safer. I feel totally fine.

Among those participants who were not affected by SU's campus carry policy, Alexa intimated that campus carry had no personal effect on her. Alexa explained that campus carry does not affect her because guns are concealed on campus. She asserted that if she were exposed to open carry, she would be affected by SU's campus carry laws. Like Alexa, Ana did not identify any personal impacts caused by campus carry because guns were concealed on SU's campus. Ana also explained that she understood the U.S. Southern gun culture and the purposes for which guns are acquired. Ana stated whether campus carry affected her:

> I don't think that has affected me at all. Because I'm just aware that, as I've been here so long, especially here in the South, that's a culture of like not just to carry a gun to campus because they don't feel safe but because they use it for hunting and tournaments and that

> kind of thing. But if I see a gun on campus and someone I never seen before, I would think that's not student, something bad is going to happen.

Based on the gun culture in her country, Ana believed that open carry would impact her more than concealed carry.

Emiljia was not affected by campus carry at SU but often worry about students who were stressed during finals week and may be armed. Jade Jean could not tell who owned or carried a gun on campus, as such she was unaffected by SU's campus carry policy. Concealed carry also made it easier for Maria to adapt to campus carry and as such it had no impact on her. Maria said seeing a gun would affect her perception of the person with the gun. Maria outlined how campus carry affected her:

> As I said right now it's okay because nothing had happened. I haven't seen a gun. I don't know if one of my classmates has a gun, or if my professors has a gun. Maybe if for example if I see my advisor having a gun in his office, I won't feel comfortable there, because why you need that gun? Or if I go to talk with a professor and I see a gun, if you disagree with his opinion or her opinion, then what they will shoot you? You have maybe something that is not going on in the other persons head, but why do you have a gun there?

The implementation of SU's campus carry policy did not impact Nana. In her opinion, people were immune to hearing about guns and crime. She felt she would not know or would not be able to do anything if a campus shooting occurred. Nana intimated that if she became concerned about her safety, she would avoid events on campus. She detailed why she was unaffected:

> Because … I kind of feel like we're just too used to seeing, hearing about guns, and so many crimes and all this stuff. And when it happens, it happens. If something ever, like bad thing, happens and you can't really do anything of people who has guns or carrying guns already. And since it's legalized to carry it, if I really, really want to be safe, I might not just go to any [redacted] events or any events on campus. But that's going to take away of opportunities for me to have good experience on campus.

Park expressed that campus carry did not affect how he interacted on campus and Rana's limited contact with domestic students meant campus carry did not impact how she interacted on

campus. Sham also reported that SU's campus carry policy had no personal impact on him. It did not change the way he interacted on campus; however, he frequently thinks about guns being legally allowed on campus. Sham explained that if there was an active shooting incident on campus it would change his level of campus engagement. I asked him to clarify if the dearth of active shooting incidences at SU informed his view of the impact campus carry had on him, he replied, "Yes, but if there was an active shooting close by, that would definitely trigger things, that would change the dynamics." Sham said that if the dynamics changed, he would become more fearful of SU's campus environment.

Only a few participants were affected by the implementation of SU's campus carry laws. The participants who were impacted said that they avoided public places and avoided being alone in public spaces on campus because they were scared in these areas. Feeling threatened on campus and in the classroom, George and Joy resorted to being more polite and friendly with domestic students. Worry about the presence of guns on campus was also common among the many effects of campus carry shared by the participants. Matt communicated that campus carry made him feel safer on campus. The concealed carry provision in SU's campus carry policy was the major reason given by the participants who said they were not affected by campus carry. The absence of shooting incidents, insensitivity to news of gun crimes, and limited interaction with domestic students were also cited as reasons why some participants were not personally impacted by campus carry.

Knowledge of the impacts of campus carry at SU was important in understanding how the phenomenon changed the campus environment for international students. The participants in the study shared how campus carry affected international students' participation on campus, in general, and their personal interaction at SU. While a significant number of impacts were not

identified, I sought the participants' views about the mitigation strategies SU used to mollify the impacts of its campus carry policy on international students. Additionally, I attempted to ascertain possible strategies that SU could use to ease the effects of campus carry on this student group. The findings are illuminated in the next section of this study.

Efforts to Mitigate the Impacts of Campus Carry on International Students

The next theme emerging from the data which gauged international students' discernments about campus carry implementation at SU, identified the ways in which SU assisted international students in acclimatizing to campus carry and respond to the potential impacts it may have on them. Two sub themes emerged from the data collected. The first subtheme focused on the participants' knowledge of the mitigation strategies SU implemented to help international students adapt to the changes in the campus environment after the implementation of campus carry. The other subtheme revealed possible strategies, suggested by the participants, that SU could use to help international students adjust to the legalization of guns on campus.

Participants' Awareness of the Campus Carry Mitigation Strategies Implemented by SU

As it relates to knowledge about SU's campus carry mitigation strategies, most participants stated that they were unaware. Only Park provided data implying he had limited knowledge of these strategies. Alexa stated that SU's efforts to alleviate the impacts of campus carry on international students was not visible or experienced by her. She felt that while this could have been an oversight for the general student population, it should not have been for teaching assistants. This information was needed so that the TAs could support the students they teach. Alexa felt the head of the TA department should lead activities to help TAs adjust to the reality of guns on campus.

Ana told me she had no idea what the university was doing to help international students deal with campus carry. Ana attempted to recall SU's mitigation strategies:

> I mean to be honest; I haven't read any emails in a while or the Newswire about conceal carry on campus. So, I'm not personally, maybe just I omit, or I just skip the email, but I have no idea what the university is doing. I know they are doing active shooter training. I don't know if they mentioned concealed carry on those trainings. The only thing I know about concealed carry or like a training come from emails. Everything comes from emails.

Although Ana was aware of active shooter training sessions for all students on campus, she never participated and did not know the format of these sessions. Andrea was not informed by SU about the administration's plans to help international students overcome challenges presented by campus carry. She opined that SU should implement mitigation measures because the gun culture in the home countries of international students vary. In Andrea's opinion, implementing mitigation strategies at SU would make international students feel safer on campus. Andrea justified the reason for her stance:

> …. since the gun culture in the U.S. is so different from many of other countries. For example, in my country you cannot legally own a gun unless - no, because even for hunting, hunting is pretty much illegal in my country. I understand why guns are legal here and I try to comply with it. I guess I'm not really against all type of guns like, if it's for hunting I feel like everything is okay, a rifle everything. But, if it's like a pistol or something automatic I just feel like that belongs to the military and not to regular people. But yeah, think that they should somehow make us feel safe again on campus.

Emiljia was not personally familiar with the activities used by SU to mollify the likely impacts of campus carry on its international student population. Emiljia evaded saying that the university did not create any policies to ease campus carry's impacts but asserted that she was never invited to or participated in any event designed for that purpose. Emiljia illuminated her thoughts on SU's efforts to minimize the impacts of campus carry:

> On international students specifically, I don't know... I don't want to say the university is not doing anything, but I mean I've never been reached by any kind of like email addressed to international students, I think, about this law. I've never been to any kind of

> event and I'm not sure if I've heard of any kind of event that's aimed at raising like awareness or explaining how it works or something like that, specifically for international students especially…

George was not cognizant of any measures used by SU to alleviate any possible impact campus carry imposed on international students. Asked if SU needed to implement any programs to help international students acclimatize to campus carry, George responded:

> I don't know. For now, I want to say no, I think they should... If it was possible, they should allow them to have guns and then it will be up to them to decide, I want to buy one, or I don't want to buy one. But I suspect whoever that's in charge USCIS or the Homeland Security, whoever that's in charge, I suspect the answer will always be no, because internationals don't have the same, they don't share the same privilege as U.S. citizens. So, I suspect the answer will... To them carrying guns will come out to be no, a complete no.

George opined that if it was possible, international students should be allowed to carry guns on SU's campus. I asked him why, and he answered:

> Because I feel like if everyone over here is carrying guns, they are saying they're carrying guns just to protect themselves if anything happens, I feel like they deserve the right to protect themselves as well. Because if someone were to attack you with a gun and you want to defend yourself and you can use a gun, so if you had one you can... Now you are not defenseless, now you have the leverage to defend yourself. It's not like you don't have the tools that you need. Yeah, my take is based on being fair and being equal. I don't think it's fair that other people can carry guns, but internationals can't.

George believed that international students should be given the right to carry guns on campus so that they may, if desired, protect themselves.

Jade Jean asserted that she was ignorant of any techniques SU used to help international students deal with campus carry. Joy expressed that SU was doing a poor job helping international students acclimatize to the environment the enactment of its campus carry policy created. She was not given any information about any measure they employed to help international students adapt. Joy told me her opinion of SU's efforts:

> I still think they're doing a poor job. I still haven't got really more information regarding that. I haven't heard anything further about that either.

Joy recalled that she was poorly informed and inadequately trained by SU to deal with the implementation of campus carry. Malika did not witness any efforts by SU to help assuage the probable impacts of campus carry on international students. She said no one reached out to her nor did she see anything on campus which spoke specifically to international students and campus carry. Malika stated her opinion of SU's efforts to mitigate campus carry, "Oh, I haven't seen any efforts about that. No one reached out, and also, I haven't seen anything on campus specifically about gun and international students."

Maria could not recall the actions taken by SU to lessen the impacts of campus carry on international students. Maria told me her opinion of SU's efforts to help international students deal with the impacts of campus carry "I feel nothing because I haven't heard about that since that email that I remember. I don't know what they have been doing. I don't know. Matt also failed to describe the mitigation efforts employed by SU to help international students adapt to the changes brought on by campus carry. He only recalled the email he received from the Chancellor, Matt remarked "Actually, after I first heard that stuff, the news on the email, I never ever heard anything else about that, I think." Nana was unable to recall any tactic SU used to help international students grapple with the impacts of campus carry. When asked to share her knowledge of SU's mitigation programs, she replied:

> I don't know. I don't think so. What they have done. Nothing. I don't know. It could be like ... I'm just saying I, I mean it could be dangerous not telling international students, because just like I said it could harm recruitment or it could harm more travel. Of like informing parents or more inquiry from parents or, you know.

Nana surmised that SU did not execute any campus carry mitigation strategies because informing international students could harm SU's future recruitment of those students. Rana was not cognizant of SU's efforts to ease the impacts of campus carry on international students. When I asked her if she was aware of any related activities, she replied "No, I don't know."

Seena explained that she was unaware of any training or courses used by SU to mollify the impacts caused by campus carry. Sham told me that SU may have implemented campus carry mitigation programs for international students. However, he intimated that he was unaware of them since campus carry was not an issue when he started at SU. Sham:

> That, I'm not sure because after at the point when I arrived this was not a topic. Okay. So now maybe the university is actively involved in educating the incoming international students. It just when I came it was not a topic.

Finally, even though Park did not state what SU was doing specifically, he intimated that the university needed to do more to reduce the impacts of campus carry on international students. Park gave his opinion of SU's current efforts to help international students deal with campus carry:

> I think we need more of that. Because if you asked, and I took you know the little honor of doing it, I was getting my friends that are internationals to know about it, some of them didn't know anything about it. Some of them knew, but really like superficial stuff, like me probably. Because you are actually so busy with school that you don't pay attention sometimes, that kind of things. So, it might be possible that there's more ... there's the need of more knowledge on the international community, I guess. Or more involvement of us as international students as well. Because I guess like if you have the knowledge, you are able to make decisions and to give your opinion about it, because it's something that concerns everybody that are domestic or international and also staff, it concerns everybody. Because we are in the same public space as in which another person with a gun will be, so if it's my life what is going to be in risk, I think the person has the right to actually express their opinion.

Park said that from his personal interaction with some international students, SU needed to ensure they were more informed about campus carry. He posited that if international students were more aware of the phenomenon, then they could give their opinion about it. Furthermore, without additional knowledge, their lives may be at risk with more guns on campus, and as such they should be afforded the ability to express their views on the issue.

The data revealed that most participants were unaware of the strategies SU used to help international students adjust to its implementation of campus carry. Even though Park alluded to

SU implementing some mitigation program he was unable to adequately describe those programs. Park recommended that SU do more to help international students adapt to the legalization of guns on campus.

The participants were asked to recommend strategies that SU could use to help international students cope with campus carry. Their opinions are outlined in the next section.

Recommended Strategies to help International Students adjust to the Legalization of Guns on SU's Campus

The participants recommended several ways in which SU could mollify the effects of campus carry on international students. The key strategy recommended by the participants was the provision of more information about the law. Alexa suggested that SU disseminate campus carry information in the university's internal newspaper. She maintained that SU's faculty should lead a program to inform international students about campus carry:

> Well, a couple of things that grad students, we do every time, which is read the [redacted] and the other one is that we only have to check in with someone in faculty. Someone has to take charge enough that you have to check in. Either of those ways you can talk with the whole group.

Alexa also recommended that the lawyers employed by SU are tasked with distributing campus carry information. Alexa suggested that the lawyers host small group information sessions and accommodate face to face discussions with international students about campus carry. Alexa expounded:

> Now who are the persons that could give the best information about it? We are talking about the person that has read the law as it is. That means we are talking about the lawyers [redacted], [redacted], all those people. Then if the reason is that information is not clear, then maybe the problem is that the person that is giving the information is still unclear. That means it's better to go to the source than to walk around as a circle in a bubble.

Ana felt that SU must provide more information about the reason for its campus carry policy. Ana noted, “I think for us it’s more about understanding the law or what it means to carry a gun, and why they arrived at that conclusion, like why they decide to do it.” She intimated that the international students’ office should host sessions which explain campus carry. Ana outlined the strategies she thinks SU should employ to inform international students about campus carry:

> I mean, I don’t know about like just go to the international office and have like sessions and say like... Explain. I'm not sure if they did it, they might have done it in general with all the students. Like explain what a concealed carry is, what is not, when can you get a permit, who’s allowed, like those kinds of details. If they did it or not, that would be on me. There should be more information on the walls that people can read.

Like Ana, Andrea postulated that SU should provide more information about the reasons why campus carry was implemented. Cultural differences and knowledge of the U.S. gun culture should be information shared to allay any fears international students harbor about campus carry. Andrea also recommended that SU carry out group counselling programs for international students who are affected by the phenomenon.

Emiljia proffered that SU execute forums for international students to discuss campus carry. She stated that information about the international students’ perception of the phenomenon could then be shared across campus. George recommended that the administrators at SU host training sessions like those used for Title IX training to inform international students about campus carry.

A mass or special orientation hosted by SU’s administrators was the strategy recommended by Jade Jean to help lessen the impacts of campus carry on international students. She believed that international students should be made aware of the law so that they understand the campus environment in which they exist. Jade Jean asserted that all international students should be educated about campus carry by an individual with authority on the subject matter.

Like Ana and Andrea, Joy reinforced that SU must provide more information about campus carry to international students. She conveyed that the origin and reason for the enactment of the law should be clearly communicated. Like George, Joy implied that SU needed to organize a training session to better prepare international students to deal with campus carry. In Malika's view, the best strategy to mitigate the impacts of campus carry was also the provision of more information about the law. Malika outlined that SU needed to supply precautionary information to international students. She recommended that this information be sent via email, workshops, lectures, or presentations. Malika outlined the following mollification strategies:

> I think at first, they should provide more information about this law, so then we know how it works. Also, they may provide some solution for a time that we saw anyone with gun. What should we do if we saw them, or if we think they are going to use their weapon? Or stuff like that. They can email us information, or do something in Union, like table of information, or presentation, or maybe workshop, or lectures and stuff like that.

Maria made similar recommendations as Malika and felt international students should be provided with more information and clarity about the policy. Maria reasoned that this clarification be done using panel discussions, presentations, and during orientation. Although he did not identify any negative effects of campus carry, Matt believed that more information must be shared in the form of signage. Matt:

> Just put some signs. "We have guns here". With a sign it would be a very easy way. For example, in [redacted], we still have the signs saying that you cannot carry a gun, but that they are probably not right anymore. That's a pretty easy way to see if a place has or has not guns. If we have signs saying that you cannot carry, you should have a sign saying that you can carry. This be a very easy way.

He also opined that the entire campus community should be provided with more information about the law. Nana also believed that more information about the law would be a plausible strategy to mitigate the impacts of campus carry on international students. While she did not suggest any medium via which the information should be supplied, Nana advised that

information about support services in case guns are seen on campus must be provided to international students. Park perceived that dialogue about the phenomenon could help SU address the concerns international students have about the law. He also intimated that a workshop would be a good medium to have this dialogue where more information about the law will be provided to international students.

Rana did not think any strategy used by SU would be effective in helping international students adapt to campus carry. She declared that more information was needed but it would be to no avail. In her judgment, international students will learn about campus carry through the channels already in existence. Rana contended:

> Even if you make them aware, it's not going to change anything. I mean, it is necessary, but it will not change anything. They will learn, even if you do not inform them, they will learn from the [redacted], for example. I learned from... some letters from the Chancellor, if the international students are reading a [redacted], which I think they should, they will learn about concealed carry. This is a way of informing. But not from [redacted] or from the advisors that we are going to have guns on campus, like be careful. Not that kind of thing. Even if you are informed, the international students, it's not going to change their attitude on this campus.

In direct contrast to Alexa, Rana outlined that the campus newspaper was already providing information about campus carry to international students. She did not think any effort by the international student office or advisors would be necessary since it would not change the attitudes about campus carry among the international students at SU. Like Jade Jean and Park, Seena proffered that talks during orientation will provide information that may help international students grapple with campus carry. Details of the law and precautionary information should be provided to international students by someone who is knowledgeable about the law.

Seena felt training was important and the information could be imparted via this medium. I asked her who should lead these activities and she replied, "I think someone who knows exactly the laws and can answer the questions… probably with someone who is professional, not

to make false understanding or false facts." Sham also expressed that international students should be educated about campus carry during orientation and regular sessions so that they may deal with the verities of the policy. He felt that knowledge of the law would reduce the culture shock they experience if guns are revealed to them. Sham also suggested the use of brochures at information booths and front desks across campus to disseminate information about campus carry. Sham stated:

> Oh, how do I say? Information booths I think should also be more equipped with these topics. And I know I'm in, there are front desks in the [redacted] and other places with, information related to, university stuff and I'm not sure whether they already have, but they can also always put a brochure or something that talks about this.

He said that the international students' office could also provide leaflets to students and have their staff talk to them about campus carry. Sham indorsed student leaders being tasked with distributing information about campus carry to international students.

The education of international students about campus carry was the main mitigation strategy proffered by the study's participants. Additionally, they recommended that the information is shared using the campus newspaper, dialogue, faculty lead sensitization programs, sessions hosted by lawyers employed by SU, and activities executed by the international student office. Forums, training sessions, mass and special orientation sessions, panel discussions, presentations, and information booths are also techniques SU could use to inform international students about campus carry.

In sum, the data presented in this section indicated that campus carry influenced the international students' perception of the social ecology at SU. The impacts of campus carry on international students' involvement and engagement on campus were diverse. In general, worry, fear, and potential discrimination were the overall changes campus carry imposed on SU's social ecology. Despite the diversity of views, only fear and culture shock were viewed as viable

influences on campus involvement. Most of the participants in the study said they were not affected by SU's campus carry laws.

Those impacted avoided public places and being alone on campus out of fear that they may be harmed, and some participants ensured they were friendlier to domestic students. For the most part, the participants in the study were unaware of any mollification techniques used by SU to help international students grapple with the impacts of campus carry. In their opinion, SU needed to provide supports services and more information to international students so that they may counter the negative effects of campus carry. The final section of this chapter reports the findings which detail the inclusion of international students in the discussion and implementation of campus carry at SU.

Engagement of International Students in Campus Carry Debate and Enactment at SU

Gauging the involvement of international students in the discourse and implementation of campus carry at SU may clarify the extent to which the phenomenon altered the campus environment for this student group. The findings from the study revealed that participants were not cognizant of the participation of SU's international student body in discussing campus carry during the process towards implementation. Furthermore, the participants expressed that they were also unaware of SU's deliberate attempts to include international students in the campus carry discourse and implementation process. Each participant asserted that SU failed to canvass their opinion of the phenomenon before its enactment.

Alexa's opinion was not sought when SU implemented its campus carry policy. Alexa recalled:

> I don't remember talking with anyone or doing nothing about it. I don't think that they ever... but maybe they didn't hear mine. Again, I am not very integrated enough. But I imagine that a lot of people have the same perspective. Even if I didn't hear myself, they should have heard someone with a similar opinion.

Similarly, Ana said no one reached out to engage her in conversations about campus carry:

> No, personally, nobody reached out to me to ask me about it. I'm not aware of it, but again that might be because I just sometimes don't read the email or since I've read the first one and the second one, then they say they passed so concealed carry is allowed on campus. I can't remember. I don't even remember when this first started, but I can't remember.

Andrea could not recall anyone seeking her opinion on the issue. She affirmed her nescience of the input of international students in campus carry implementation at SU. Andrea:

> Not at all. As long as I'm aware, any group or anyone said anything about it. The group that I'm more familiar and engaged with, [redacted] and I don't think we, I can't remember if I was part of the group at the time that this was happening but, we did not discuss about it … I never really received any notice or talk to international students. Were there any of those at all? Because I never heard of those.
> Emiljia was never asked her views about campus carry and failed to recall any campus

carry implementation initiative that included international students. Joy said SU did a poor job engaging international students in the campus carry enactment process. She could not recall hearing her international friends lauding SU's efforts to include them in the decision-making process. Joy emphasized that the opinions of international students should have been considered by SU:

> I think they did a poor job. I don't ever hear my international friends saying, "I was included, my opinion was valued. Somebody asked me about how I feel." I just never heard such thing, myself included. We were just told what to do. We never were asked how do we feel about it. No. When I was informed, the policy was already I guess effective. I don't know how much they can do in that process. I don't know if it's a policy issue by the government, or the policy actually decided by all the universities. I don't know. So, if it's issued by the federal government or something, or the state government, I guess they just have to go by it. If the university is the one who decide that, and then they do not inform the students or ask opinion from students, I think that will be a little unfair, kind of. So, I don't know who issued this policy. I don't think we have any impact or any influence on that. I was never even informed. I don't know if somebody else was. Like I said, maybe because I don't participate in enough campus events, so I don't really know, but I don't think my friend circle or I myself was included in any of that.

George could not state definitively if international students' feedback was sought during campus carry implementation at SU. He argued that international students were prohibited from owning guns and therefore their views would not have been considered:

> I don't think I know the exact answer to that question, but my guess would probably be no, just because I might be naive on this, I don't think international students are allowed to buy guns or even to carry guns when they are in the U.S., but I might be naive on this. But in that regard, I don't think they will... If that's the case, then I don't think the international students would have been considered if they can't.

Moreover, George admitted that he was unaware of any international student being involved in the campus carry enactment process and affirmed that he was not a part of its implementation at SU. Jade Jean said she did not know if her opinion was solicited when campus carry was being implemented at SU. Similarly, she was not cognizant of any input from international students in the implementation process and could not recall international students at SU being involved in any campus carry discussions.

Like George and Jade Jean, Malika was unaware of the solicitation of international students' opinions in the campus carry implementation process and stated that they may have been excluded because they cannot legally own a gun. Malika remarked "I don't know if they include us or not. I'm not sure. Because I don't know even if we can legally have a gun or not, so maybe that's why." She said SU never facilitated the engagement of international students in the enactment of its campus carry policy and her opinion was not invited by anyone.

Maria was not knowledgeable about the inclusion of international students in the enactment of SU's campus carry policy. She also said that international students were not engaged in any discussions about campus carry prior to its implementation. Matt was also oblivious to any efforts seeking the input of international students. He was also asked to describe the level of input international students had in the implementation of campus carry at SU. Matt stated:

> I don't know. Probably not much, I don't know. Well as I told you I never participate in any debate or anything, I just find out. I don't know if that happen because when I join the university, maybe this happen before I join, but I'm not aware of.

Matt was ignorant of the input of international students and said he was not asked how he felt about campus carry. Nana was also unaware of SU's implementation of campus carry and any input that international students provided when campus carry was being implemented. She learned about it when she was invited to be a part of this study. She was not cognizant of any international student being involved in the campus carry implementation process. Nana:

> I mean I was not aware of it, so I don't know how many of international students are actually aware of it. And this conversation never comes up during our orientation or anything like that. I mean I have never heard of any student talking about guns or asking of me about guns. So, I don't know. I really don't think people are aware, especially international students, are aware of it.

Nana emphasized that she did not know if SU tried to get international students involved in the discourse about campus carry. Park was ignorant of the input of international students in the on-campus discussions about campus carry. When asked on multiple occasions if SU allowed international students to engage in the campus carry policy debate on campus, Park reiterated "I have no idea. I haven't read anything about it, so I don't know. I have no idea of that aspect. There might be, there probably was, but I have no idea." Park also stated that his opinion on the issue was not canvassed by the administrators at SU.

Similarly, Rana was ignorant of the inclusion of international students in the campus carry implementation process. Rana was not cognizant of any efforts by SU to poll the opinions of international students about the implementation of campus carry at the university. Likewise, Rana could not recall if SU sought her opinion about the phenomenon. When asked if international students' perceptions of the phenomenon were surveyed by SU, Rana answered:

> No. They did not... I don't remember anyone doing that officially. But I have talked to my friends about campus carry and they all found it crazy. When I talk to International students about campus carry in the library, when we were having a break. The talk was like, "Guns are legal on this campus?" They've all found it crazy. They were against it. I don't remember any International students doing something officially. Like, to show their protest against it. Even if they did, I don't think it would change anything. Because we're

> International students. I don't think the International students will have a lot of power to influence American campuses.

Seena failed to state how international students were involved in the campus carry implementation process at SU. Seena said that the discussions she had with her professor about the involvement of international students in the campus carry debate on campus were philosophical. She claimed that international students could not influence changes to SU's campus carry laws and should respect the law and be more informed about it. Seena commented "… I think so like as international student we cannot change or influence decisions which are made by government if that makes sense. So, we should respect the laws but probably we might be more informed about it." Seena's views about the implementation of campus carry at SU was not solicited.

Sham said that he was not sure if international students are aware of the policy because he rarely encountered discussions about it. He implied that international students were not included in the campus carry implementation process at SU. Sham was not aware of the input of international students in campus carry discourse and implementation process. He was asked if his input was solicited and he replied "No, uh I mean, there might've been sessions, it's just I haven't." Sham conveyed that he was unaware of any session SU executed to help international students voice their opinion on campus carry. He was unsure about whether SU engaged international students in the campus carry debate and implementation. While he surmised that this may be done for new students, he advocated for the inclusion of enrolled international students on SU's campus in sensitization programs.

In short, the participants in the study lacked knowledge of SU's attempts to canvas the opinions of international students during the campus carry implementation process. SU also failed to engage its international students in sensitization programs during the implementation

phase. On a personal level, the participants reported that were excluded from the discourse and process towards the implementation to campus carry at SU.

Chapter Summary

The chapter presented the results of the study which indicated that information about campus carry was communicated to the participants via formal and informal channels. An email from the Chancellor was the key formal medium of transmission. Most participants in the study were not aware of the details of SU's campus carry policy and only two participants supported the implementation of campus carry at the university. Fear for personal safety and that of other campus constituents was the key reason why campus carry was not supported. The gun culture in the home countries of some participants informed their perception of the phenomenon and only three participants affirmed that campus carry changed international students' level of participation on campus. The participants could not communicate any strategy SU used to mollify the impacts of campus carry. They also failed to express how SU involved them in the campus carry discourse and implementation process. To mitigate the impacts of campus carry, most participants recommended that SU use various channels to provide more information to them about the policy.

Chapter five will comprehensively and critically analyze the findings related to the research questions and main themes in the study. Renn and Arnold's (2003) interpretation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) will be applied to isolate the roles of the factors in the participants' environment that informed their opinions of campus carry. The chapter will also outline a conclusion and implications for practice and research.

Chapter 5

Discussion, Conclusion, and Implications for Practice

This descriptive phenomenological study explored international students' perceptions of campus carry policy enactment at a Southern University. Renn and Arnold's (2003) reconceptualization of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) is the theoretical lens through which the main findings of the study will be discussed. The following research questions guided this study:

1. How has the implementation of the campus carry policy at SU impacted international students' perceptions of their experiences at the institution?
2. How has the implementation of campus carry policies at SU influenced international students' perceptions of the social ecology of the institution?
3. How did SU formally include international students in the on-campus campus carry policy discussion and implementation?

To answer these research questions, one round of semi-structured interviews was conducted with 15 graduate international students at SU. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed using Rev.com. The data was manually coded using Microsoft Word and Microsoft Visual Basics to extract pattern, holistic, and axial codes. I used narrative analysis to evaluate the data collected from the study's participants. Using the emergent themes from the participants' narratives, I presented detailed findings and numerous quotes from the study's participants which elucidated the themes which emerged from their stories in the previous chapter.

Key Findings

In the preceding chapter, the data indicated that the study's participants became cognizant of SU's campus carry enactment process via formal and informal channels. Chief among the formal

channels was an email from the university's Chancellor. Support for campus carry implementation at SU was only proffered by two participants and most participants were ignorant of the law. Those participants who opposed the implementation of campus carry, mostly cited threats to personal safety as the main reason not to support the phenomenon. Of note, the gun culture in the participants' home countries significantly informed their perception of campus carry, even among those who supported the phenomenon.

Further analysis of the study's findings disclosed that most participants were not personally affected by campus carry implementation at SU. Likewise, most of the participants intimated that campus carry did not change their level of participation in campus activities or the social ecology at SU. The minority who professed that campus carry impacted the way they participated on campus, fearfully avoided public areas on campus, felt threatened and in one case, felt safer. The participants were unable to describe the efforts used by SU to mitigate the impacts of campus carry among international students and/or involve them in the policy implementation process. As it relates to their current engagement in discussions about the phenomenon, most participants were not engaged.

In this chapter, I illuminate my understanding of the key findings that emerged from the data and appositely reference the extant literature on the phenomenon and international students in the U.S. The discussion is written sequentially based on each research question. The main theme in each research question guides the discussion. These themes include the impacts of campus carry on international students' experiences at SU, international students' perceptions of the effects of campus carry on SU's social ecology, and SU's formal inclusion of international students in campus carry implementation. A detailed conclusion and implications for practice and research will be presented at the end of this chapter.

Impacts of Campus Carry on International Students' Experiences at SU

An accurate interpretation of the changes to the experiences of the study's participants at SU, warrants a review of their experiences in general to decipher the nuances brought about by campus carry. Evaluating the campus climate for international students is critical in this case, since it determines their levels of participation and inclusion on campus (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Rankin, 2005). The persistence, retention, and success of international students is fostered by U.S. colleges and universities that offer a positive campus environment (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Umbach & Kuh, 2006). For some participants in the study, SU's international student office is intentional in its efforts to include them in campus life. In fact, most participants had a positive experience integrating on campus with support from their advisors, classmates, and the staff at SU. Professors, RSO members, academic departments, language support programs, orientation programs, past scholarship recipients, campus facilities, and events also helped the participants assimilate on campus. The experiences of the participants can be situated within Rankin's (2005) campus climate definition, since their integration on SU's campus encompassed interfacing with an amalgamation of attitudes, behaviors, activities, and individuals at the institution.

The individuals with whom international students interact on college campuses during the transition and integration phase often inform their experiences on campus. The effects of administrative policies such as campus carry can be communicated during this period, and this may be the point at which international students are able to effectively assess the pros and cons of the law. During the orientation process, international students formally and informally interact with a diverse set of campus constituents who may be able to outline to them the intricate details of the law and clarify misconceptions they may have about SU's policy. Campus carry

orientation may allow international students to comfortably learn about the law and the way it relates to them. This may not be a universal approach for all international students since some will experience microaggressions while assimilating on campus and may shun any opportunity to integrate beyond their initial interactions.

In this study for example, some participants communicated that they tolerated cultural microaggressions on SU's campus. Language barriers, reacclimating to campus, and familial demands, restricted their ability to integrate on SU's campus. In the extant literature, there were similar experiences among other international students in the U.S. (Gold, 2016; Hwang, 2015; Jang, 2010; Telbis et al., 2014; Yan & David, 2011). Authors such as Wang et al. (2012) and Yao (2014) expressed that international students go through a cultural shift when they enroll on U.S. college campuses and as such are forced to acclimatize to a new host culture and environment. Often, this culture is not receptive of them, and domestic campus constituents can make life on campus difficult for international students (Hwang, 2015; Schulte & Choudaha, 2014; Yan & Pei, 2018; Zhou & Zhang, 2014). None of the participants in this study recalled suffering any instances of discrimination at SU. However, Andrea and Joy intimated that other international students undergo discrimination on campus, an issue which may be conflated with the advent of campus carry. Campus carry related violence against international students results in increased fear and hypervigilance among this campus demographic (Baker & Boland, 2011; Birnbaum, 2013).

Exposure to microaggressions from domestic students, faculty, and staff affects the way international students acclimatize to U.S. college and university campuses. Specifically, the enactment of campus carry laws creates strained relationships between international students and their domestic counterparts on campus. The intersection between these microaggressions and the

perceived dangers of campus carry may psychologically thwart the process of initiation and result in international students subsequently opposing the phenomenon. U.S. college and universities, in this case SU, will therefore have to ensure that as they continue to execute their campus carry policy implementation, multicultural and diversity training becomes mandatory for all domestic staff and students. Not only that, but strict penalties will also have to be enforced against individuals who express bigotry or xenophobia towards international students. In turn, SU must educate international students about the penalties that will be meted out to individuals who discriminate against them. This information can be provided in orientation sessions, syllabi, the campus newspaper, campus RSOs, and programs hosted by the international student office and the campus' multicultural center. The organizers of these programs will need to consistently research and garner the experiences of international students, so that they can assess how the intersectionality between the effects of the phenomenon and the microaggressions they encounter on campus impact their sojourn at the university.

An understanding of the general experiences of international students on campus and their views of the phenomenon will clarify the likely impacts campus carry had on their campus experiences. This is important because U.S. college and university campuses have diverse populations with similar varied experiences and perspectives on issues such as campus carry. As previously established, there is a dearth of literature on international students' attitudes towards campus carry. Only one study by Watt et al. (2018) illuminated the perceptions and attitudes of six graduate international students towards campus carry. While this scarcity in associated campus carry studies reduced the extent to which the findings in this section are discussed in relation to the current literature, subtle contrasts were made about international students' support and opposition to campus carry.

In Watt et al.'s (2018) study, international students were identified as marginalized, inferring that they were considered "others" on U.S. college campuses. "Othering" is a term coined by Johnson et al. (2004), which implies that international students are perceived as an out group on the campuses of U.S. higher education institutions. As an unnaturalized out-group, the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution does not apply to international students, and gun possession by this group of campus constituents is therefore illegal in the U.S. (Behnejad, 2015; Woodhouse, 2018). As a result, their concerns about the law would be inconsequential in the campus carry legislative process. However, their views should not be taken at face value by administrators and state legislators because international students add significant value to U.S. college and university campuses. Cross cultural education and diversity training on college campuses are enhanced with the presence and input of international students. If campus carry policies result in a reduction in international student enrolment, the cross-cultural educational benefits domestic faculty, staff, and students receive from them will dwindle over time. SU's administrators, though not lawmakers, would have to advocate on behalf of international students in state legislatures and share their views about campus related gun laws. State lawmakers may be brought to campus and allowed to engage in informational sessions with international students so that both groups may hear each other's views on the issue. While I do not perceive that this will significantly change the state's campus carry law, it opens the door for minor adjustments in SU's policy which may reduce the level of opposition to the law among international students.

As it relates to race, except for Emilijia and Matt who identified as Caucasian, all other participants were like those in the marginalized groups in Watt et al.'s (2018) study. However, Emilijia and Matt's race does not mean they are allowed to carry guns, nor does it remove the legal restrictions that prevent international students from carrying guns on campus. These

findings are useful to SU's administrators because they require the execution of more inclusive policy decisions regarding campus carry. Again, while it may be argued that state legislators may not prioritize the concerns of international students while developing laws for U.S. citizens, the findings can indicate to them the need to ensure that any future amendments to campus carry legislation consider the diverse population on U.S. college campuses and their perspectives about the law. This must be factored into the law reform process. The "othered" status of international students compared to their domestic counterparts supports the inclusion of their views in the development of campus carry policies.

The concept of "othering" is situated among the challenges brought on by the phenomenon when domestic students are armed on campus, but international students cannot legally do the same. It must be noted that all the participants in this study, except Matt and Park, said that they would not own a gun in the U.S. if they were legally allowed to do so. In the campus carry studies conducted among domestic students, Bouffard et al. (2012) discovered a reduced likelihood to carry among those in their study. However, there was a strong propensity to gain a permit and carry a gun on campus among the respondents in some studies (Cavanaugh et al., 2012; Murty et al., 2016; Spratt, 2015; Thompson et al., 2013).

A comparable finding among domestic students which came out of this study was that the men in this study were more likely to support and carry a gun on campus. White males are the most likely campus demographic to carry a gun (Bouffard et al., 2012; Deboer, 2018; Jang et al., 2012; Spratt, 2015). In this study, Matt fits that profile and was the participant who expressed the strongest likelihood to carry a gun on campus if he could legally obtain one. All females in the study opposed campus carry and said that they would not carry a gun if they could legally do so. White males and their propensity to support campus carry was replete within the literature, so it

would lend that Matt would support the phenomenon. However, his status as an international student was not consistent with the domestic White male sample in the previously mentioned studies and such as his perspective opened a window for further exploration among international students who similarly identify. In short, Matt's views as a White male international student may reflect the need to explore the views of other White male international students to determine if they share the same level of support for campus carry. Matt was the only White male in this study, as such his point of view does not reflect the population of international students who identify as White. Furthermore, Matt's country's gun culture may be different from that of other White male international students.

Aside from Matt's level of support, the unsupportive stance of all the female participants also reflected the findings in previous studies (Deboer, 2018; Jang et al., 2012; Thompson et al., 2013; Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018). Not only that, but there is a need to understand why males are more supportive of campus carry. In the literature reviewed for this study, male students surpassed female students in terms of their support for campus carry in studies carried out using domestic samples and this support was attributed to other variables such as political dispensation and race. This study did not evaluate the participants' responses in that light and as such future studies which focus on international students' perception of campus carry, should not only report on cultural factors and their status as nonimmigrants, but question the role gender and race play in their perception of the phenomenon. These studies must be conducted by the international student office staff at institutions such as SU where campus carry is implemented. This will allow campus administrators to assess the needs of international students, current and prospective, and put in place the student support programs and activities needed to sensitize and inform international students about the reasons for the policy.

As non-citizens, the international students in the study are not allowed to and would not carry a gun on campus. This complicates their "othered" status since fear of physical harm can impact their on-campus experiences and may result in them illegally acquiring and using guns. It is therefore important that adequate information about campus carry laws is shared with international students to allay their fears and inform them of the restrictions of the law in relation to their nonimmigrant status. In fact, Behnejad (2015) proffered that adequate information about campus carry laws must be shared with international students so that they do not breach the laws and policies executed by states and institutions where these laws are implemented.

It was necessary to know what the participants knew about SU's campus carry laws. The findings indicated that most participants had limited knowledge about the law, save for Park and Rana, who learned about the policy from local officials and during a class discussion, respectively. Of the two, Park was the only one who had extensive knowledge of SU's campus carry law and this allowed him to give a more balanced account of the reasons he supported the policy. This finding indicated that SU's campus carry policy was not adequately communicated to the participants in the study. Even Matt who supported the policy was unaware of its provisions and did not know if he was able to own a gun in the U.S. Although the other participants did not support the phenomenon and hinted that they would not own guns in the U.S., intentional campus carry programs aimed at ensuring that international students know about the law and the way it affects them, is critical. Ignorance of the policy could result in illegal acquisition and use of guns by international students at SU.

To remain safe and decipher instances where the law is breached, international students need to be informed of the details of SU's campus carry policy. SU must disseminate information about its campus carry policy in a more targeted and efficient way, because despite the sample size, the

number of participants with limited knowledge about the university's campus carry policy is cause for concern. For international students, lack of knowledge of SU's campus carry policy means that they would not be aware of the breach if they witnessed a domestic student breaking the law or they may be inveigled to carry guns on campus.

Higher education institutions with campus carry policies must ensure campus constituents can easily access information about the law. SU's administrators must motivate professors, international student services' staff, and campus RSO's to incorporate campus carry sensitization activities in their programming so that international students are able to acclimatize to the environment created by the policy. The more knowledge international students have about the law, the less likely it is that they will be affected psychologically.

Rana indicated that classroom discussions can be used to provide information about the law. An informed professor could aid international students who may be uncomfortable with the policy. Alexa mentioned the use of the campus newspaper to inform international students and felt that SU could share campus carry information via email, which is the way they disseminate the campus newspaper. This strategy may be applied by SU and the daily paper may give information about their campus carry policy while sharing knowledge about the gun culture in the various home countries of their international student population.

Programs to inform international students could also be led by local government officials on SU's campus. The administrators at the university must facilitate activities of this nature with individuals that have extensive knowledge of the law so that they can impart detailed information to campus constituents. Park informally acquired extensive knowledge about the law from a city official, formal programs at SU facilitated by similar individuals may have similar results. Institutions such as SU also ensure that international students engage in mandatory Title IX

training. A similar training using the same face to face and virtual methods can be used to teach international students about campus carry.

Campus carry information was communicated to the participants via formal and informal means. SU formally communicated information to the participants about the law via an email from the Chancellor, TA training, class discussions, professors, and academic advisors. Within the context of this discussion, the informal channels usually provide avenues that create licentious spaces for international students to discuss issues such as campus carry. The participants relayed that they had informal discussions about the phenomenon with their coworkers, classmates, domestic spouses, campus friends, and on social media. Nana became aware of the implementation of the policy during the recruitment phase of this study. Even with the diverse channels of communication, most participants demonstrated limited knowledge of SU's campus carry law. This finding further supports the view that there is a need for SU's administrators to intentionally target and inform international students about the law.

The key formal channel through which information about the law was shared did not provide adequate details to inform the participants about its provisions and limitations. Even more, a significant number of informal channels were used by the participants to learn about the law, and while they also failed to provide information about the policy, it suggests that it is not only international students who are poorly informed about the law but sufficient information about the law is not being shared in general. If SU's administrators expect buy-in into the campus carry policy, they must employ a concerted and intentional effort using all available media and channels to supply the details of the law to international students and all other campus constituents. Any activity which SU uses to sensitize international students about the law will

make the policy implementation process inclusive of the disposition of those students in relation to other campus constituents.

With limited knowledge of the details embedded in the law and the likelihood not to carry, most of the participants in this study did not support the implementation of campus carry at SU. Similar findings were abundant in the literature related to domestic campus constituents' perception of campus carry (Abrams, 2015; Anderson et al., 2015; Bouffard et al., 2012; Cavanaugh et al., 2012; Deboer, 2018; Jang et al., 2014; Lewis et al., 2016; Murty et al., 2016; Patten et al., 2013; Patten et al., 2012; Spratt, 2015; Thompson et al., 2013; Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018; Watt et al., 2018). However, these findings differed from those in Wright's (2014) study which also reported results gathered from domestic students. Based on the participants' limited knowledge of the law and the perceived weaknesses in the channels via which they garnered the little they knew; this finding was not surprising. In fact, if SU had provided sufficient information about the policy which clarified the reason for its implementation, I believe the participants' views about the policy would have been more varied. While there are no studies which support this stance, Park's and George's statements which indicated that after they gained knowledge about the law, it changed their unsupportive views, lends credit to my assumption.

Furthermore, Park and Matt were the only males, and participants in this study who supported campus carry. Reflecting on the findings in Watt et al.'s (2018) study, Park who identified as Latino, should not have been supportive of campus carry because of the perceived dangers of the policy. Park alluded to this during the interviews but informed me that after he learned about the law and gain insight about its provision, he changed his mind. Lack of information about the policy seemed to trigger the unsupportive stance of the participants. This

relationship must be measured in a future quantitative study to determine the relationship between knowledge of campus carry laws and its impact on international student support for the policy. Lack of knowledge may have also informed the participants' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of the phenomenon, and future studies could also assess this assumption.

The perceived disadvantages associated with the enactment of SU's campus carry policy included guns being unnecessary, fear for personal safety and the safety of other campus constituents, and accidental shooting of legal carriers by the police. Moreover, guns endangering the lives of campus constituents, the occurrence of serious crimes, and fear of students having guns were other unsupportive attitudes disclosed by the participants. Similar drawbacks were raised by the participants in the literature (Baker & Boland, 2011; Birnbaum, 2013; Murty et al., 2016; Spratt, 2015; Thompson et al., 2013). Additionally, the marginalized groups, including international students in Watt et al.'s (2018) study insinuated that campus carry increases violence against them. Andrea and Joy raised this concern during the interview and surmised that campus carry may lead to increased discrimination against international students. Like most participants in this study, those in Watt et al.'s (2018) study felt campus carry made campuses more dangerous.

Contrarily, Matt and Park shared that SU's campus carry law could be advantageous to the institution and like the participants in Spratt's (2015) and Thompson et al.'s (2013) studies, felt guns on campus helped individuals protect themselves. It is important to note that the advantages and disadvantages purported by the participants in this study are informed by the gun culture in their home countries. The sentiments were shared by those participants who communicated negative views about the law and even Matt who supported the policy. With all

participants from countries without a gun culture like that in the U.S., it was expected that most of them would not support the implementation of campus carry at SU.

These findings are extremely critical in understanding the need to provide more information about the policy and the need to implement programs that not only inform but offer cross cultural sensitization about campus carry at SU. The participants' perspectives illuminated their concerns for safety and possible discrimination, which previous studies also highlighted among domestic students and other marginalized groups, respectively (Deboer, 2018; Spratt, 2015; Thompson et al., 2013; Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018; Watt et al., 2018; Wright, 2014). Furthermore, the gun culture in their home countries clearly informed several negatives they associated with the law. This suggests that there is a need for multicultural programs that will offer effective campus carry training and sensitization to all campus constituents.

These multicultural programs will inform SU's administrators about the way campus carry is perceived by international students. In turn, international students will develop an understanding of the reasons behind the law and the strategies implemented to assure their safety and eventually reduce fear. I suggest that SU's administrators implement a campus carry sensitization program through its multicultural center, incorporate the talents of the staff in the international students' office, and host several campus events which offer opportunities for international students to learn about its campus carry policy and how it affects them. By doing this, the negative perceptions of campus carry may dissipate among the participants, and they will become more tolerant of the policy while accepting the provisions its offers to domestic students. Domestic students, staff, and faculty must be encouraged to be a part of these sensitization sessions so that they may hear the concerns of international students and understand

the level of responsibility they will be expected to exert to reduce the psychological and physical impacts of campus carry at SU.

The impacts of the enactment of campus carry on the participants' involvement in campus activities did not fully reflect their perception of the phenomenon. Only Andrea, George, Joy, Malika, Matt, and Seena expressed that campus carry impacted their interactions on campus. The other participants in the study were not impacted by SU's implementation of campus carry. In contrast to the existing literature, only one Latina international student in Watt et al.'s (2018) study shared that campus carry changed the campus environment for international students and the other marginalized students expressed that university spaces and academic rigor would be denigrated. Most of the participants, including the international students, suspected that campus carry policies would expose them to violence. Among the participants, fear for personal safety on campus and in the classroom because of the increased presence of guns characterized their perceived impacts of the phenomenon. The participants' concerns about their safety were comparable to those expressed by the marginalized students in Watt et al.'s (2018) study. The presence of guns on college campuses create fear among all campus constituents (Baker & Boland, 2011; Birnbaum, 2013). Even among domestic students, there was fear that more guns on campus would make college campuses unsafe (Spratt, 2015; Murty et al., 2016; Thompson et al., 2013; Verrecchia & Hendrix, 2018).

Wright (2014) also found that fear was strongly related to the reasons why students support or oppose campus carry. The same was true for this study because Matt, who supported campus carry, said the enactment of the law at SU gave him a sense of safety on campus. In his summation, if a person with ill intentions brings a gun to campus, the presence of armed campus constituents reduces the likelihood of him being harmed. Matt went on to explain the dangers of

living in his home country where gun ownership is restricted and the increase in crime which came about as result. Within his estimation, campus carry removes that danger from SU's campus, reduces fear among campus constituents, allows individuals to protect themselves, and makes the campus safer. In their study, Spratt (2015) said that most respondents felt guns would help them protect themselves, a sentiment Matt shared throughout the interview.

International students traditionally perceived U.S. college campuses to be safe and want colleges to focus more on promoting safety or peace in their advertising to them (Alfattal, 2016). In this study, Matt explicitly stated that the implementation of campus carry laws at SU provided a level of safety not found in his home country and that was his reason for supporting the phenomenon. In his opinion, more guns on campus would make the campus environment safe, and as such, he is not negatively affected by the implementation of the law.

The minimal impact of SU's campus carry policy on the participants in the study makes their perceived negative views of the phenomenon ambiguous. The data suggest that for the most part, the participants were unaware of the impacts of policy, yet they associated its implementation with numerous negative implications. It is therefore incumbent on SU to offer mandatory campus carry training during international student orientation to assess their preconceived notions about the phenomenon. SU can then inform international students about the safety provisions in their policy and garner additional recommendations from the students about how their concerns can be addressed in the policy. During these sessions, SU may be better able to predict the resistance that would come from the international student body and address them, so that their assimilatory experiences are not hindered by fear.

In applying Renn and Arnold's (2003) work to the participants' knowledge of SU's campus carry policy, I reflected on the participants' interactive experiences with players in the

microsystem, the meaning making proximal processes in mesosystem, and the interplay of these two systems with the exo and macrosystems. This exchange between the four contexts constitutes Renn and Arnold's (2003) explanation of proximal processes and Bronfenbrenner's (1993) argument that proximal processes include relationships that are delineated across the context domains. The macrosystem in this study incorporates the actions of state government in ensuring that SU enacted the campus carry laws passed in the state's legislature. Macro level influencers triggered the policy implementation by SU in the exosystem and the developmentally instigative characteristics to support or oppose the law among international students. Student relationships and interactions in the microsystem and their meaning making processes in the mesosystem motivated their reactions to the implementation of the phenomenon. For example, Park learned significant details about SU's campus carry law from a player in the macrosystem He had subsequent knowledge of SU's enactment of the policy in the exosystem, and interactions with other campus constituents in the microsystem informed his eventual support for the law in the mesosystem. Bronfenbrenner (1993) postulated that the macro system impacts all other systems in the context domain.

Aside from Park's situation, the findings also revealed that despite discussions about the policy between the other participants and the players in the microsystem, they still had limited knowledge about the law. It is therefore not strange, that the selective responsivity of most participants was to be unsupportive of campus carry and proffer negative reasons for their stance. SU's attempts at the exosystemic level to inform international students of the phenomenon did not contribute much to their knowledge of the law. Matts and Park's selective responsivity in supporting the phenomenon was informed by the relationships they had with players in the

microsystem and macrosystem, respectively. These relationships allowed both participants to give clear reasons for their supportive position on the phenomenon.

The participants' proclivity to carry a gun on campus is also embedded in the proximal processes among the micro, meso, exo and macro systems. The laws surrounding campus carry and the 2nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution restricted the participants' likelihood to carry a gun on campus. Under U.S. law, international students cannot legally own guns and as such campus carry regulations would not apply to them. This macro level reality formed the selective responsivity of some participants to not carry guns on campus because of the related legal ramifications. For example, Matt made it clear that had the law allowed him to legally carry a gun, he would obtain a permit and carry one on SU's campus. The participants' selective responsivity to the campus carry phenomenon is informed by their developmentally instigative trait such as their "othered" status as international students, which prevents from them owning and carrying guns in the U.S. All participants knew they could not legally carry guns and only one confirmed that he would likely carry one on campus if permitted.

Cultural expectations in the macrosystem also significantly impacted the participants' support for SU's campus carry law. The proximal processes, in the participants' micro-, meso-, exo, and macrosystems molded their developmentally instigative traits and selective responsivity to the macro level gun laws in the U.S. and SU's policy allowing guns on campus. Thus, it was easy for them to justify their opposition and support for the phenomenon based on the gun culture in their home countries. When these cultural expectations, are juxtaposed among the on-campus micro, meso, and exosystem campus carry realities they encounter at SU, the participants relied on the experiences from their home countries to make meaning of SU's need for its campus carry law.

To close, the answer to research question one is that campus carry implementation at SU did not impact most participants' experience on campus. Among those affected, the only major changes the enactment of the law brought about was the avoidance of public spaces out of fear for personal safety and concerns for the safety of others. Renn and Arnold's (2003) work illuminated the role of the players in participants' microsystem and the proximal processes in exo, meso, and macro systems in forming their perceptions of the impact of the phenomenon. SU's campus carry policy and its restrictions in the exosystem also influenced the participants' overarching experience with the phenomenon. While this question looked specifically at the experiences of the study's participants, a broader examination of their perception of the impacts of campus carry on the social ecology for international students at SU must be undertaken. Research question two addressed this deficiency and the related findings are detailed in the next section.

International Students' Perceptions of the Effects of Campus Carry on SU's Social Ecology

Campus carry enactment at U.S. colleges and universities impacts the social ecology for international students at these institutions. In the literature, there is a paucity of empirical studies which explore the experiences of international students in the U.S. college campus environment (Lee, 2014; Ortiz & Fang, 2015; Valdez, 2015). SU's campus environment was described as welcoming, inclusive, enjoyable, peaceful, and an aesthetically satisfying space by most participants. However, Nana hinted that the peace international students enjoy on SU's campus may be disrupted by campus carry. Her assumption is not farfetched because Alfattal (2016) posited that peace includes the elements of the campus which provides international students with a safe, inclusive, nonviolent, and genial campus experience.

Furthermore, Clark (2018) and Watt et al. (2018) posited that with the new policies of the Trump administration and the enactment of campus carry laws, many international students may be subjected to deadly violence in the classroom. In fact, there is increased need for safety and protection on U.S. college campuses considering the recent immigration policies of the Trump administration (Baran, 2017; Blumenstyk, 2017; Blumenstyk et al., 2017; Glass, 2017; Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood, 2017). In retrospect, Alfattal's (2016) argument that international students desire peace on U.S. college campuses is well founded, but the extent to which campus carry may affect this peace was not explored sufficiently in the extant literature. In protracting this discussion, it is worthwhile to reflect on the value international students add to U.S. college campuses and why the provision of the peace they desire must be an imperative.

International students desire a safe campus environment, and deservedly so, because they contribute significantly to the sustenance of U.S. higher education institutions. The value of international students to U.S. higher education is expressed in the cultural diversity and intellectual competencies they bring to U.S. college campuses (Curtin et al., 2013; Hegarty, 2014; Lee, 2016; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013; Marginson et al., 2010). International students enrich U.S. colleges and universities by enhancing the campus ecology of these institutions when they provide opportunities for domestic students, professors, and locals to learn a new culture and develop global cultural competencies (Lee & Rice, 2007; Pandit, 2007; Zhao et al., 2005).

To successfully add value to these institutions, international students must be provided avenues through which they can socialize with their domestic counterparts, locals, and university faculty and staff. Longerbeam et al. (2013) hinted that peer and faculty support influenced the campus climate for international students and peer interactions create a safer campus climate for international students on campus. When they are given the opportunity to socialize and coexist

amicably with other campus constituents, international students develop a greater appreciation for campus life. Their campus experiences are more diverse, and they build awareness of social phenomena such as campus carry and their likely impacts on the social ecology of college campuses. The social experiences of the international students in this study which were mentioned in chapter 4 would therefore inform their views of the impacts or changes campus carry caused on the campus ecology at SU.

It must be noted that most participants were unaware of how campus carry affected the international student population and could only speak from their personal experiences. The participants were first asked to describe how SU's campus carry policy changed the way international students engaged on campus. Most participants expressed that they were unaware of any vicissitudes in campus engagement among international students as a direct consequence of campus carry. As an illustration, Alexa, Andrea, Emiljia, George, Jade Jean, Joy, Malika, Maria, Matt, Nana, Rana, and Seena said that they did not observe any differences in the campus environment for international students or any changes in how they participated on campus. These findings were attributed to the fact the participants were ignorant of any gun related incidents at SU since the implementation of campus carry. Furthermore, most participants continued to engage in campus activities after the enactment of the law and did not notice any changes among their friends. On the contrary, Ana, Park, and Sham perceived that campus carry dictated how international students engaged on campus, and thus changed the social ecology for them.

Secondly, the participants were questioned about the general impacts of campus carry on international students at SU. Paradoxically, some participants surmised that campus carry affected international students even though they did not observe any changes in their engagement on campus. Emiljia, George, Jade Jean, Nana, and Seena were the only participants who shared

consistent ignorance of the impacts of campus carry, while Matt and Rana could not recall any impacts of the phenomenon. Worry, fear, othering of international students, and a reluctance to engage in campus activities were some of the likely impacts cited by the participants. These findings were consistent with the likely impacts of the phenomenon reported in the literature.

In fact, Watt et al. (2018) related that campus carry implementation created fear for personal safety among marginalized students resulting in them isolating themselves, abandoning interpersonal relationships, and possibly withdrawing from college. Guns on campus put all campus constituents at risk including international students (Baker & Boland, 2011; Birnbaum, 2013; Watt et al., 2018). Thus, international students may choose to disassociate themselves and avoid participating in campus activities and fear being violently targeted and harmed due to their marginalized status (Watt et al., 2018). Moreover, Alfattal (2016) reported that international students expressed anxiety about their ethnicities and religions subjecting them to campus violence.

Although the participants did not seem to be significantly affected by campus carry, they pointed out that the policy had negative effects on international students in general. These findings intimated that while there was not an obvious change to SU's social ecology for international students, there is a perceived one, which SU must prioritize. I attributed these sentiments to the participants' misconceptions about the law on one hand, while on the other, how their perceived ambiguities about the law limited their understanding of its impacts and obscured any impacts that they may have encountered or witnessed. If international students are expected to detect the impacts of campus carry, they must be exposed to the expected threats brought on by the policy and the systems SU have in place to manage instances where the policy is breached. Not only that, but a space is also needed where international students can report any

campus carry related aggression they experience, and these occurrences must be made known to all other international students so that they can identify them if they recur.

It is not prudent for SU's administrators to ignore the impacts the participants felt may have occurred, is occurring, or may occur in the future. They must recognize and accept that the findings consistently point to the need for more information about the law being shared with international students. Additionally, there must be more intentional research by faculty, students, and student affairs staff targeted at understanding the impacts of campus carry on the international student population and the likely mitigation strategies that are needed to reduce these impacts.

Having expressed that there were undetected but likely impacts of campus carry at SU, the participants were asked to elucidate the strategies that SU used to mollify these impacts. Expectedly, most participants were not able to outline any mitigation strategy SU used to reduce the perceived impacts of campus carry on international students at the institution. Even though Park surmised that efforts were being made by SU, he was unable to explain any of these strategies in detail. SU's failure to expose the participants to the details of its campus carry policy is also the reason for this finding. The participants would have been better able to outline the mitigation strategies SU implemented had they been included in the policy development process or informed about its details. Going forward SU must meet with international students and find out if they are affected by campus carry after which, both parties should engage in a collaborative process to develop mitigation measures that would ease the impacts of the policy. Qualitative research similar to this one can yield the information needed to achieve this goal because the participants in this study were not hesitant to recommend strategies SU could use to mitigate the impacts of campus carry.

Most participants insisted that SU provided them with more information about the law. This finding supported my assumption that the participants need more information to truly understand the campus carry policy and its impacts. Behnejad (2015) supported this demand for more information and explained that adequate information about campus carry laws and how they apply to international students must be provided so that they do not break these laws. The participants recommended that the information be shared using several channels, for example, forums, training sessions, mass and special orientations, panel discussions, presentations, and information booths. SU must implement a series of these measures to ensure that international students are given sufficient information about the law so that they can feel safe and included in the shared governance process.

In the literature, Korobova and Starobin (2015, p. 83) recommended the execution of "specialized workshops, individualized counseling, online tools, and mentoring and pairing programs" to assist international students in assimilating on campus. The participants in the study indicated that these strategies could inform them about campus carry. Furthermore, by creating an avenue through which domestic and international students can discuss the nature of the phenomenon, SU could create awareness among the general student population and reduce the instances of resistance to the policy. University programs and seminars that cultivate relationships between domestic and international students is critical in making international students adapt to changes on campus (Cho & Lee, 2016; Hegarty, 2014; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2013; Yan & Pei, 2018; Zhou, 2017).

By the same token, the participants recommended that information about the law could be disseminated to them via the campus newspaper, dialogue, faculty lead sensitization programs, sessions hosted by SU's lawyers, and activities executed by the international student office.

Successful execution of these measures would have made the participants more knowledgeable about the law, but even more, faculty and staff can also gain additional knowledge about campus carry. Sensitization programs led by faculty require a training program for faculty, the inclusion of campus carry training in their syllabi, and in instances where they are advisors, provide one on one support to international students who have questions about the policy. There is also support for this stance in the extant literature where it is established from empirical research that campus carry policy development processes must allow for equal input from all campus constituents in a safe space (Cobb, 2014; Franz, 2017; Ortega-Feerick, 2017). Korobova (2012) also advocated for a combination of institutional support services and student-faculty interaction, quality relationships, and accommodative campus environments to help international students succeed on U.S. college campuses.

The intentional efforts of student affairs professionals and administrators are viewed as essential in helping international students transition and adjust to life on campus (Baba & Hosoda, 2014; Glass et al., 2013; Stebleton et al., 2017; Yao & George Mwangi, 2017). These administrators are also able to help international students learn about campus carry and decipher the impacts the phenomenon would have on them as campus constituents. The participants in the study recommended the provision of counselling support services for international students affected by campus carry and teaching international students to avoid confrontation. SU must ensure that these services are in place for international students who are affected by the phenomenon. Additionally, the students must be informed about the availability of these services so that they are able to access them if the need arises. I recommend that SU's administrators also factor this into their campus carry policy and ensure that they seek the input of international students if this initiative is to be successful. Baba and Hosoda (2014) and Geary (2016) posited

that additional support services will be needed for international students on college campuses. These services can help satisfy their on-campus needs, which in this case, is the need for more information about SU's campus carry law (Glass & Westmont-Campbell, 2014; Moores & Popadiuk, 2011; Roberts & Dunworth, 2012; Yakunina et al. 2011).

The need for higher education professionals including administrators and student affairs professionals helping international students adapt to campus life is critical in helping them become cognizant of the nature and consequences of campus carry laws. As a matter of fact, Stebleton et al. (2017) discovered that immigrant students valued the role student support services play in helping them understand the U.S. higher education system and campus ecology. In the case of the study's participants, SU's international students' office must collaborate with other student affairs offices to develop campus carry training programs and literature that will inform international students about the policy. In addition, these offices must use numerous social media platforms and emails to attract international students to the campus carry related programs they have implemented so that they are more aware of the policy and the protections in it for them.

Student affairs support staff could also lobby SU's administrators to consider the attitudes, needs, and perceptions of international students when they are revising the current campus carry policy. These attitudes, needs, and perceptions must be measured and reported as evidence from the assessment of the campus carry policy sensitization programs implemented through the collaborative efforts of the student support staff. Leong (2015) advocated for the development of more student support services for international students on U.S. college campuses to help them adjust to college life, and in this case, the campus carry phenomenon. When international students are provided with a balanced array of intentional and collaborative

support services, they usually have a better campus experience since their needs may be adequately met (Wang et al., 2012; Yao & George Mwangi, 2017).

As it relates to the participants' awareness of how campus carry affected SU's social ecology, their opinion was formed from their experiences within the mesosystem. The developmentally instigative characteristics they would have encountered while socializing on campus informed their selective responsivity in this regard. The selective responsivity in this case, would be the participants' ignorance of campus carry's impacts on SU's social ecology because of the limited opportunities they had to socialize and learn about the law. The proximal processes between the meso and exosystems which would have informed the participants about the effects of campus carry, were scarce and this made it difficult for them to state any impacts the phenomenon had on SU's social ecology. Only one participant was able to share sufficient knowledge of the law after interacting with classmates in the microsystem. The other participant with extensive knowledge of the law gained this from interactions with players in the macrosystem, external to SU. In essence, the participants' failure to engage in prolonged socializing restricted the proximal processes through which they could learn more about the phenomenon. These restrictions also affected their ability to identify any strategies SU used to mollify the impacts of campus carry on international students.

In sum, the participants answered research question two by stating that, from their experiences and observations, campus carry did not affect the social ecology for international students at SU. Their responses were mostly influenced by the restrictions to the time they had to socialize on campus. This gap in the micro, meso, and exosystem interplay, inhibited the participants' knowledge of the possible modifications the policy triggered in the social ecology for international students. However, when probed, most participants assumed that campus carry

negatively affected the social ecology for international students at the institution. They were unable speak to any obvious or significant impact the phenomenon had on international students, in general, but shared their thoughts of the nature of these impacts. These findings are not peculiar since most participants did not socialize on campus, all were graduate international students, SU's campus carry policy was recently enacted, and there was an absence of gun related crimes on campus. Further contrasts about the reasons the participants were unable to detect any changes in the social ecology for international students because of the implementation of campus carry were scarce in the extant literature.

The participants in study were also unable to identify any mitigation strategy established by SU to help international students cope with the impacts of campus carry. The provision of more information about the law was the key mollification strategy suggested by the participants. Their desire for more information and the various channels through which this information may be distributed was supported in the literature related to international student experiences on U.S. college campuses. The next phase of the study queried the formal inclusion of international students in the campus carry implementation process at SU.

SU's Formal Inclusion of International Students in Campus Carry Policy Implementation

The formal inclusion of international students in the enactment of SU's campus carry policy is not known and knowledge of their inclusion may illuminate their perceptions of the phenomenon. Again, Behnejad (2015) advocated for international students to be informed about campus carry so that they know how these laws apply to them and refrain from breaking them. Interestingly, none of the participants were able to illuminate the efforts used by SU to include them in the implementation of campus carry at the institution. Furthermore, all participants affirmed that they were not included in any discussions with SU's administrators during the

enactment of the policy. The literature advised that campus carry policy development processes require the input of all campus constituents in the policy implementation process (Cobb, 2014; Franz, 2017; Ortega-Feerick, 2017). Any exclusion of the voices of campus constituents from the development and enactment of university polices may result in ignorance and possible opposition to these policies. The failure of SU to include international students in their campus carry implementation process was another reason why the participants had limited knowledge of the law, opposed it, and were ignorant of its impacts and the strategies used to mitigate them.

During the interviews, most participants were not involved in any discussion about the phenomenon, apart from Ana, Matt, Seena, and Sham. These four participants were engaged in informal discussions about the phenomenon with campus constituents such as lab mates, friends, and new international students. The discussions were triggered by media reports of gun related incidents, threats to personal safety, and in Matt's case opportunities to share a supportive stance for the law. At the time of the interviews, SU's campus carry policy was in effect for at least two years and the participants indicated that they were still not formally involved in any discussions about the policy. It should be noted that the participants intimated that they were not intentionally engaged in discussions about the phenomenon because of the absence of gun related incidents on campus after the policy was implemented. Additionally, they avoided political debates and conflicts, lacked time, felt that the time since the implementation of the policy was substantial and campus carry was not at the forefront of their thoughts. Some participants, for example George, informed me that there is futility in discussing the phenomenon since international students cannot effect any changes to the policy.

The principle of shared governance requires the inclusion of all campus constituents in the decision-making process at higher education institutions (Oslon, 2009). The end goal of the

shared governance process is to achieve consensus in decision-making and facilitate acceptance of new policies such as campus carry. While student inclusion in shared governance is often limited, the campus carry implementation process at SU required student inclusion, and obviously excluded the input of international students. Again, this exclusion resulted in the negative views about the policy by the study's participants who are poorly informed about the law. While the policy is already in effect, it is not too late for SU to garner the attitudes and opinions about the policy from international students using the previously suggested strategies. Future amendments to the policy will then include those perspectives and international students will be more knowledgeable about the law. More knowledge will result in a more balanced analysis of the phenomenon among international students. This may transform their views about the policy, its likely impacts, and international students will be better able to describe the way SU included them in the policy implementation process. Eventually there may be more buy-in into the policy from international students because they would be more aware of the geneses and intended purpose of the campus carry policy.

The proximal processes that link the exosystem with the mesosystem in the campus environment was not used by SU's administrators to involve international students in the campus carry implementation process. Bronfenbrenner (1993) illuminated the need for researchers to pay attention to proximal processes in the exosystem because the setting does not usually include the individual as an active participant. College student development is not usually included in the exosystem unless there is a focus on their ability to benefit from financial aid or the exosystemic processes impact on their academic performance (Renn & Arnold, 2003). However, the exosystem indirectly impacts campus constituents including international students and as such Renn and Arnold (2003) questioned the developmental motivations it has on students. In this

study, international students' involvement would not be sought since they were excluded from SU's exosystemic setting based on their status as students and nonimmigrants. In addition, SU's campus carry laws were developed by state lawmakers in the macrosystem and then imposed on the institution. This elucidated the fact that the proximal processes which occurred in the exosystem involved SU's administrators and the state's macrosystem players in formulating and executing the policy.

It is therefore not strange that all participants communicated that they were excluded from the campus carry development process. The onus was on SU to use the players in the participants' microsystem to formally engage and seek their opinions about the phenomenon in the mesosystem, then use the proximal process between the meso and exo systems to garner their input in the enactment of the law. The participants felt SU failed in this regard, even after the law was implemented on campus. Chronosystemic analysis indicated that the participants were not involved in the enactment of the policy before, during, and after its implementation. Micro and meso time inferences from the participants detailed the episodical phases in the proximal processes they used to learn about the law. However, most participants indicated at the end of the interviews that they were not formally, informally, or consistently engaged in discussions about campus carry. While the participants shared varied reasons for their detachment from discussions about the law, George's belief that international students would not be able to change the law links not only to the extant literature but elucidates SU's exosystemic exclusion of international students from the policy development process. Figure 3 graphically represents the application of Renn and Arnold's (2003) interpretation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) to the findings in this study to reflect the factors influencing international student perceptions and attitudes towards the campus carry phenomenon in the postsecondary environment.

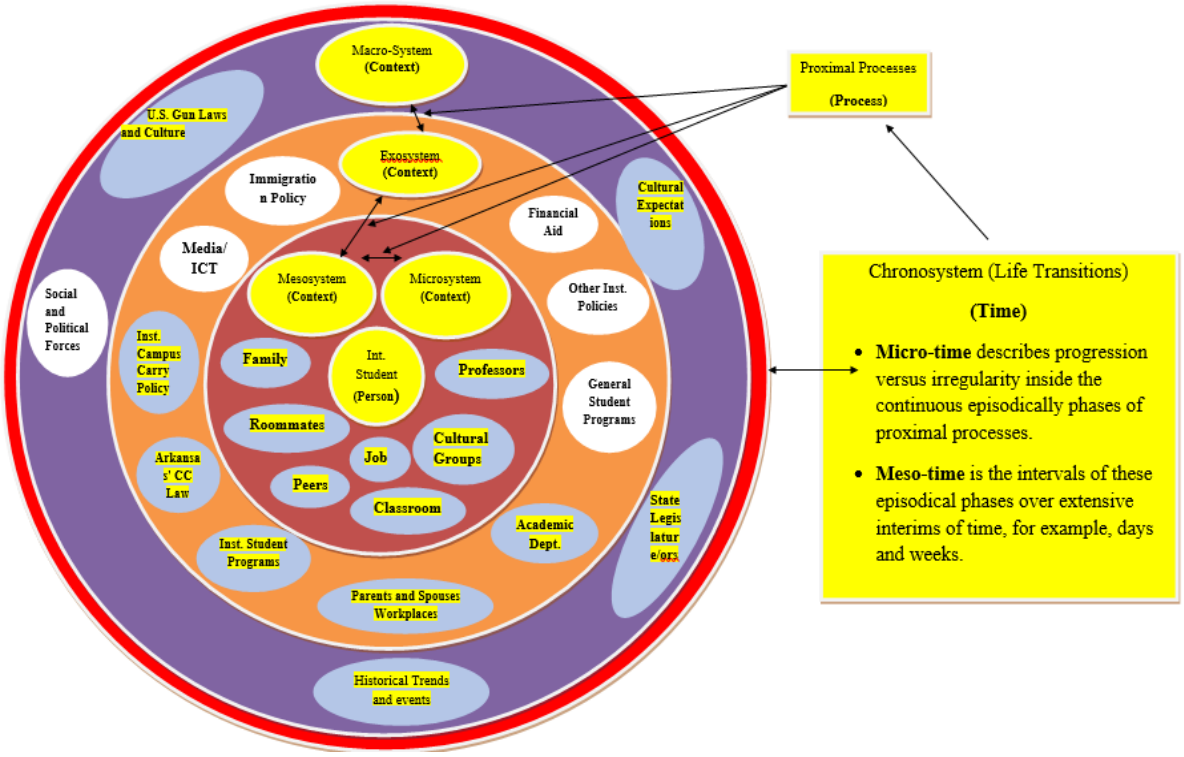

Figure 3. *Renn and Arnold (2003) postsecondary application of Bronfenbrenner's (1993) PPCT Model reimagined to reflect the factors influencing international students' perceptions and attitudes towards the campus carry phenomenon at SU.*

The answer to research question three therefore suggests that SU did not formally include international students in the on-campus campus carry policy discussion and implementation at the institution. Even after the enactment of the policy, the participants could not report any way in which SU sought their input. Contrasts to the extant literature were not possible because of the dearth of literature examining international students' involvement in and their perceptions of the campus carry phenomenon.

Conclusion

In sum, the responses from most participants suggested that campus carry did not affect their experiences on campus, nor did it affect the social ecology at SU. Additionally, the participants were excluded from the on-campus, campus carry policy discussion and

implementation. Other participants, however, intimated that there were likely impacts on the campus' ecology, of which they were unaware, because of their exclusion from the implementation process and the limited time they had to socialize as a result of the academic rigors of graduate school.

Theoretical application of Renn and Arnold's (2003) interpretation of Bronfenbrenner's ecology systems theory (1993) revealed that the participants' perceptions of the phenomenon were influenced by the relationships they had with individuals in the microsystem and the proximal processes that occur among the meso, exo, and macro systems. Mesosystem proximal processes created from interactions with peers, professors, advisors, classmates, and individuals at the international student office exerted the greatest influence on the participants' views of SU's campus carry policy. Exosystemic proximal processes reflected the greatest gap on the part of SU with regard to the inclusion of international students in the campus carry implementation process, even at the time of the study, which was two years after the implementation of the law. The stories from the study's participants elucidated the need for campus wide consultation on policies such as campus carry, which impacts their development in college. One of the main contributions of this study to the extant literature is the inclusion of the opinions of international students and the application of student development theory in the campus carry discourse.

Implications for Student Affairs Practice

Several ideas emerged from the analyzed empirical data in this study, which could inform the future administration of student affairs for international students as it relates to campus carry policies. The campus carry phenomenon will require an evolution of the current roles carried out by student affairs practitioners. In addition, research which incorporates student development theory and uses evidence-based data to inform practice will be critical, considering the changes,

campus carry brings to college campus climates. Bronfenbrenner (1993) advocated for more focus on the role of the exosystem in understanding college student development and how institutional policies impact the proximal processes associated with this development. In the future, exosystemic campus carry policy development processes must encompass a campus wide holistic approach which caters to the concerns of international students.

Role of Student Affairs Practitioners and Researchers

As discussed earlier on, **s**tudent affairs practitioners must ensure that international students are given the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of social support programs and services that can help them assimilate on campus, while learning and grappling with the realities off campus carry. Student affairs professionals are in a unique position to develop the necessary programming that will provide the requisite support international students seek while they respond to the realities of campus carry (Baba & Hosoda, 2014; Glass et al., 2013; Stebleton et al., 2017; Yao & George Mwangi, 2017). The international students' office at SU could execute a monthly campus carry intercultural engagement, where domestic students are given an opportunity to learn from international students about the gun cultures in their home countries. These sessions could be offered as part of SU's introductory university courses which makes it mandatory for domestic students to attend. Questions about SU's campus carry policy in relation to those in the different cultures presented each month, can be fielded, and the process moderated and recorded by the staff at the international students' office during these sessions. The international students' office can then share the feedback from these session via email to domestic and international students, faculty, and staff. The sessions can be advertised in the campus newspaper and the feedback from each session can be highlighted weekly via the same medium.

Cobb (2014) also outlined that the protection of constituents' rights, the use of research, new student orientation, and inclusivity in the campus carry implementation process were the key concerns for staff and students regarding campus carry implementation. In the case of SU for example, during international student orientation a deliberate effort could be made to sensitize international students about the probable existence of legal guns on campus and the strategies put in place by the university to ensure their safety. Since all international students have to participate in mandatory orientation, this would be the ideal medium for the information about the law to be dispersed. A number of participants in this study pinpointed this a strategy SU could use to include international students in the campus carry discourse.

The concerns of the students can be gauged by the team responsible for international student orientation and shared with SU's administrators. Moreover, the inclusion of campus carry training and sensitization in international student orientation will facilitate international students' understanding of the limitations of the law with regard to their immigration status. In fact, international student programs and the efforts of the staff therein, were key players in the proximal processes between the micro and exosystem in this study and should be used by U.S. institutions of higher education to orientate international students about their rights and responsibilities with regard to campus carry laws. International student programming should be led by the student affairs staff in the international students' office and their efforts must be informed by research, theory, and institutional best practices (Hwang, 2015).

Include International Students in On-campus Campus Carry Decision-making

Universities must mobilize their resources, human and nonhuman, to ensure that all students, especially international students, are a part of the exosystemic proximal processes on campus where discussions are held and campus carry policy decisions are made, because these

laws will impact their development on campus. Even though it could be argued that international students' input may not cause amendments to State campus carry laws, they must be included in the campus carry discourse on campus and this inclusion must be more than symbolic. Panel discussions and campus carry related events with SU's administrators and international students openly dissecting the provisions of the policy and its impacts, can solicit key feedback from international students about the law.

These sessions can be hosted by the graduate student council, international students' office, campus RSO's, and those campus constituents who are interested in the learning and sharing knowledge about the policy. The information shared can be reviewed by an internal committee comprising faculty, staff, domestic students, international students, and a legal officer to decide the best approach to address some of the issues shared by the general international student population. The decisions must then be communicated to these students so that they know that SU's administrators prioritized their concerns and included them in amendments to the policy.

Holistic campus carry policy development processes are important to the campus constituents (Cobb, 2014; Franz, 2017; Ortega-Feerick, 2017). Any program which is designed to implement campus carry policies must be intentional, collaborative, and span the spectrum of proximal processes that international students engage in on college campuses. The implication for researchers and student affairs practitioner in this regard is to ensure that the processes, programs, and the systems they put in place to initiate policy is inclusive of the perspectives of international students.

Improve Cultural Responsivity

Acculturative stressors such as loneliness and language barriers present challenges which already prevent some international students from engaging in discourse about unfamiliar issues including campus carry. One of the key factors influencing the participants' views of campus carry in this study was the gun culture in their home countries. Within the programs, processes, and services created by student affairs practitioners, consideration must be given to the cultural composition of campuses and intentional steps must be taken to be responsive to the needs of international students (Campbell, 2015; Mahmood & Burke, 2018). Institutions of higher education such as SU must ensure that campus constituents that refuse to be culturally sensitive and responsive are dealt swift and severe penalties, especially where there are violations of its campus carry policy. The penalties can range from warnings to terminations or expulsions. Higher education institutions must send a clear signal that they want to maintain a culturally diverse campus where domestic faculty, staff, and students are responsive to the needs of international students.

If institutions fail to develop culturally sensitive and inclusive policy development processes, international students may selectively respond by seeking to study in other foreign countries and advice other international students against studying in the U.S. This may be detrimental because international students add tremendous academic and cultural value to U.S. colleges and universities. U.S. colleges and universities may lose these benefits if enrolment numbers among international students are reduced.

Implications for Research

In terms of campus carry, the campus environment for international students will be different from that of domestic students because domestic students have U.S. Second

Amendment constitutional rights which are not afforded to international students. As such, the structure and composition of the campus environment for international students will require targeted analysis among researchers to decipher the diverse issues related to campus carry which affects this demographic. By scrutinizing international students' perceptions of campus carry through the lens of Renn and Arnold's (2003) interpretation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) in this study, the metaphorical door is now open for the application of other student development theories such as Schlossberg's theory of transition (1995) in examining the assimilative challenges international students face on U.S. college campuses where campus carry is implemented.

Researchers may choose to combine theoretical frameworks when studying the experiences of international students on U.S. college campuses (LaBanc et al., 2015). The use of theoretical frameworks in higher education research and practice is essential in tracing international student development as they progress through college (Patton et al., 2016) and grapple with the impacts of the campus carry phenomenon. For example, Renn and Arnold's (2003) work and Schlossberg's transition theory (1995) could be combined in future studies to reveal how the campus carry phenomenon will change the climate and culture of the campus for international students. Findings from these studies may inform practices that could mollify the impacts of the phenomenon on international students.

Schlossberg's Transition Theory (1995)

As international students transition from their home countries into U.S. higher education institutions, they encounter a period of uncertainty that can become complicated with the presence of campus carry. Schlossberg's theory of transitions (1995) scrutinizes the elements of transitions, the forms of transitions, the process of transition, and factors that impact transitions

(Schlossberg et al., 1995; Schlossberg & Goodman, 2005). Goodman et al. (2006) argued that in Schlossberg's theory a transition can only be defined by the person experiencing it. In the case of this study, only international students can truly explain the transitional challenges they are experiencing as they assimilate on SU's campus. The participants in this study were exposed to unanticipated transitions because SU implemented its campus carry policy after their enrollment. They did not foresee the need to adjust to a campus with legal or illegal guns. This calls for research on the impacts of campus carry on the transition process for this campus demographic by SU's administrators. The study must isolate the international student population and select a sample which can provide the data needed to understand the impact of the campus carry phenomenon during the transitional phase.

Additionally, future studies must focus on those international students who are aware of SU's campus carry policy but still enroll at the institution. Schlossberg's (1995) model can be used to assess these transitions and clarify to SU's administrators the context in which the students are experiencing the transition. The idea of contexts exists both in Schlossberg's theory of transitions (1995) and Renn and Arnold's (2003) interpretation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993). When studied together, the context domains in both theories may not only point out who the players were in the environment who informed international students' opinion of the phenomenon but also clarify the roles they played in the transition process and their attitudes towards and perceptions of campus carry.

If SU successfully conducts a study of this nature, they can predetermine the transitional needs for international students now and in the future and make the necessary policy amendments to support these needs. Since individuals transition over time and eventually integrate with a transition (Schlossberg et al., 1995), theoretical application of the model in

research on the assimilation processes for international students in the campus carry environment can highlight the phase at which they best adapt to the provisions of the law. Furthermore, researchers can understand the impacts it may have on this student demographic. SU's administrators must apply Schlossberg's theory of transitions (1995) to understand the situation, self, support, and strategies which comprise the factors that will help international students cope with a transition, especially in the campus carry environment (Goodman et al., 2006).

Chapter Summary

In sum, the purpose of this study was to conduct a qualitative phenomenological investigation into the perceptions and attitudes of international students regarding the campus carry phenomenon at a Southern University. The study told the stories of 15 graduate international students enrolled at SU during the implementation phase of the institution's campus carry policy. The key findings of the study were interpreted through the lens of Renn and Arnold's (2003) reconceptualization of Bronfenbrenner's ecology systems theory (1993). The findings indicated that international students were not impacted by the campus carry phenomenon, the social ecology at the university was not affected by the policy, and the participants were excluded from SU's campus carry implementation process. Data analysis through the lens of Renn and Arnold's (2003) reconceptualization of Bronfenbrenner's ecology systems theory (1993) revealed that most participants formed their opinion of campus carry based on interactions in the mesosystem, while exosystemic proximal processes failed to include them in the policy enactment process. I recommend that student affairs' practice geared towards international student support are intentional, encompass cultural sensitivity, and encourage campus carry development processes that are inclusive and informed by research that applies student development theory.

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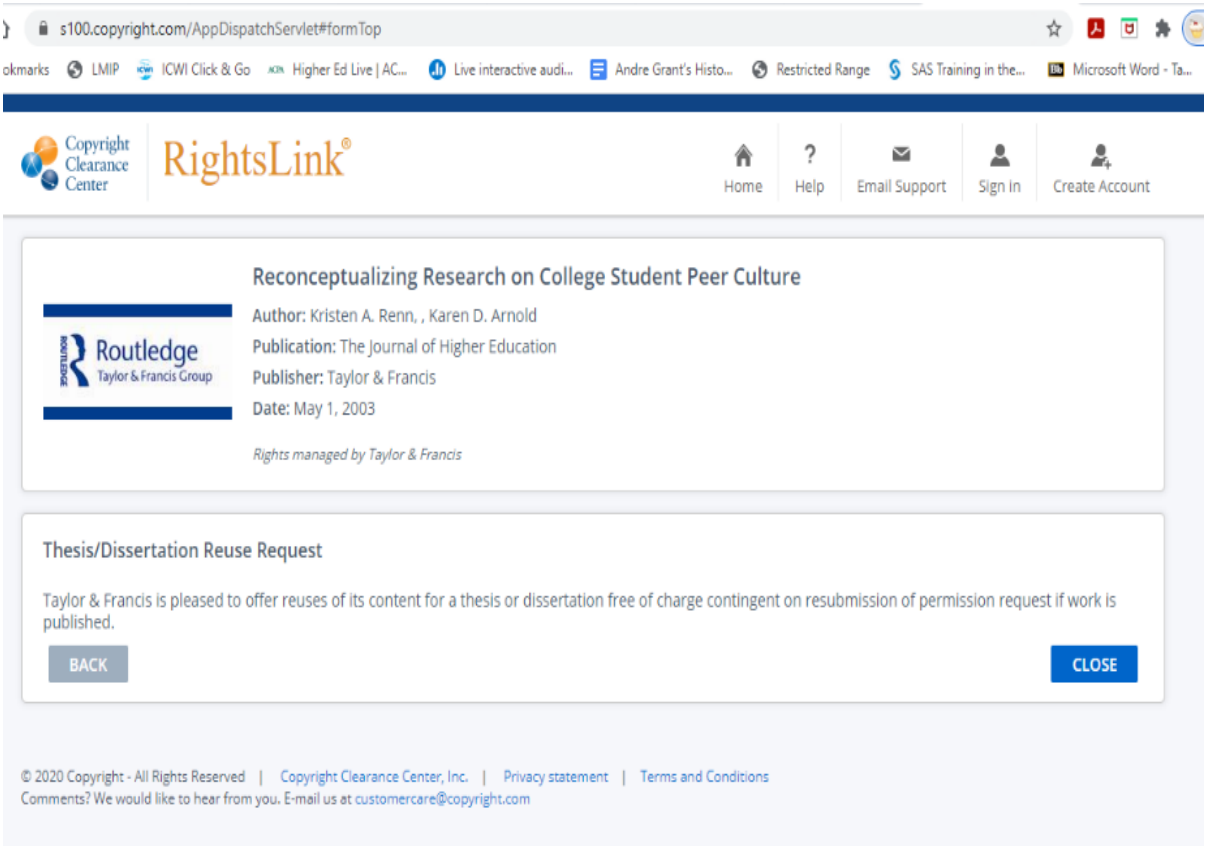
Appendices

Appendix A

Permission to use Renn and Arnold's (2003) reconceptualization of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) as applied in the College Environment



Appendix B

Recruitment Email

Dear _____ (Participant Name) _____:

This email serves as an invitation to participate in a qualitative study which seeks the perceptions of international students about the policies which authorize the possession of concealed guns on campus at SU. Arkansas' campus carry law or the law authorizing guns on campus was enacted in spring 2017 and implemented on SU's campus in fall 2018. The law allowed for the legal possession of concealed handgun on SU's campus by qualified individuals.

The main purpose of this study is to add the voices of international students into the concealed carry debate at the university. The study will also seek to suggest to the university's administrators and researchers that the legalization of concealed carry on college campuses requires the consideration of all campus constituents affected by these policies. This study may not directly benefit you as a participant, but it opens the door for future international students to engage in the discourse about the legalization of guns on campus.

Let me assure you that there are no risks associated with participating in this study and your confidentiality will be maintained as much as is legally possible throughout the entire period of research.

I am therefore asking you to state via return email to argrant@uark.edu a voluntary expression of interest to participate in an interview which will allow you to share your views on campus carry at the university.

Please contact me via email at argrant@uark.edu with any questions or concerns regarding this email.

Appendix C

Demographic Data Sheet

Instructions: Please answer the following questions:

What is your preferred pseudonym? _____

Which country are you from? _____

What is your age? _____

What is you gender? _____

What is your first language? _____

What is your race? _____

How long have you been a student at SU? _____

What is your major? _____

What is your current class level (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate)? _____

Please state your class level if it is not listed: _____

Are you aware of that staff, faculty and students at SU can legally carry concealed guns on campus? _____

In what year and semester did you become aware of the legalization of guns on campus? _____

Appendix D

International Students in the Campus Carry Debate: A Descriptive Phenomenological Inquiry

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Principal Researcher: Andre Grant

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Leslie-Jo Shelton

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

You are invited to participate in a research study about the perceptions of international students regarding the policies which authorize the possession of concealed guns on campus at SU. You are being asked to participate in this study because you were purposefully sampled being that you are an international student at the institution.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE RESEARCH STUDY

Who is the Principal Researcher?

Andre Grant
135 Hibiscus Drive
Moneague Housing Scheme
Moneague P.O., St. Ann Jamaica
Email: argrant@uark.edu
Telephone: [redacted]

Who is the Faculty Advisor?

Leslie Jo Shelton, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Higher Education
HIED M.Ed. Program Coordinator
College of Education and Health Professions
The University of Arkansas
116A Graduate Education Building
Fayetteville, AR 72701
[redacted]
ljshelto@uark.edu

What is the purpose of this research study?

The purpose of this study is to add the voices of international students into the concealed carry debate at the university.

Who will participate in this study?

Thirty graduate international students will participate in this study

What am I being asked to do?

Your participation will require the following:

1. Agreeing to the terms in this consent form by affixing you signature.
2. Completion of a demographic data sheet via Qualtrics.
3. Participation in one round of semi structured interview (pilot study) before the actual study or
4. Participation in one round of semi structured interview for the actual study.
5. Completion of follow-up research questions during data analysis via Qualtrics.
6. Keeping the details of your participation in the study confidential.

What are the possible risks or discomforts?

There are no anticipated risks to participating in this study. However, you may become uncomfortable answering questions about legal guns on campus. If this happens, you are free to stop the interview immediately.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

The study will also seek to suggest to the university's administrators and researchers that the legalization of concealed carry on college campuses requires the consideration of all campus constituents affected by these policies. This study will also open the door for international students to be engaged in the discourse on campus carry.

How long will the study last?

You will be expected to participate in a 1-hour semi-structured interview and a follow-up Qualtrics survey over a two-month period for the study.

Will I receive compensation for my time and inconvenience if I choose to participate in this study?

You will not be compensated for your participation in the study

Will I have to pay for anything?

No, there will be no cost associated with your participation.

What are the options if I do not want to be in the study?

If you do not want to be in this study, you may refuse to participate. Also, you may refuse to participate at any time during the study. Your job, visa status, relationship with the University, or grades will not be affected in any way if you refuse to participate.

How will my confidentiality be protected?

All information will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by applicable State and Federal law. You will select a preferred pseudonym which will be used throughout the study. The audio recordings and transcripts will be locked in a manually secured (lock and key) computer desk in my home. I am the only person who will access to the computer desk. All data collected will be kept confidential

Will I know the results of the study?

At the conclusion of the study, you will have the right to request feedback about the results. You may contact the faculty advisor Leslie Jo Shelton, Ph.D. [redacted], ljshelto@uark.edu or Principal Researcher, Andre Grant- [redacted] argrant@uark.edu about the results of the study. You will receive a copy of this form for your files.

What do I do if I have questions about the research study?

You have the right to contact the Principal Researcher or Faculty Advisor as listed below for any concerns that you may have.

Andre Grant
135 Hibiscus Drive
Moneague Housing Scheme
Moneague P.O., St. Ann Jamaica
Email: argrant@uark.edu
Telephone: [redacted]

Leslie Jo Shelton, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Higher Education
HIED M.Ed. Program Coordinator
College of Education and Health Professions
The University of Arkansas
116A Graduate Education Building
Fayetteville, AR 72701
[redacted]
ljshelto@uark.edu

You may also contact the University of Arkansas Research Compliance office listed below if you have questions about your rights as a participant, or to discuss any concerns about, or problems with the research.

Ro Windwalker, CIP

Institutional Review Board Coordinator
Research Compliance
University of Arkansas
109 MLKG Building
Fayetteville, AR 72701-1201
[redacted]
irb@uark.edu

I have read the above statement and have been able to ask questions and express concerns, which have been satisfactorily responded to by the investigator. I understand the purpose of the study as well as the potential benefits and risks that are involved. I understand that participation is voluntary. I understand that significant new findings developed during this research will be shared with the participant. I understand that no rights have been waived by signing the consent form. I have been given a copy of the consent form.

_____

Appendix E

Interview Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study and agreeing to meet with me today. As promised, your identity will be kept confidential, but for the purpose of this interview, I will use your real name and your demographic data. Your preferred pseudonym will be used to keep this information private in the study's report. At this point, I must seek your permission to digitally record this interview. May I record this interview with you?

TURNS ON RECORDER

My name is Andre Grant and today is (day and date). The current time is, and I am at (location) with (name of participant/pseudonym), an international student at (name of institution). Today we will explore your views regarding the legalization of guns on campus or at SU using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993). In this interview we will refer to the legalization of guns on campus as campus carry.

Overarching Research Questions (1 of 3): How has the implementation of the campus carry policy at SU impacted international students' perceptions of their experiences at the institution?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Tell me about yourself as a college student in the U.S.?
2. What made you decide to attend SU?
3. Tell me about the campus environment for international students at SU.
    a. Describe your social experience/s on campus since you officially started attending the university.
    b. Tell me about some of the campus-related social activities that are available to you as an international student.

4. How did you learn about the university's policy regarding the legalization of guns on campus?
    a. What specific information about the legalization of guns on campus, were you made aware of?
    b. Tell me how you felt when you learned that persons on campus were going to be allowed to legally carry concealed guns.
    c. What are your personal thoughts on the legalization of guns on campus?
    d. Why do you feel this way?
    e. Do you know anyone who legally owns a gun in your country of citizenship?
    f. If yes, what is your relationship to that individual?
    g. Do you know anyone who legally owns a gun in the United States?
    h. If yes, what is your relationship to that individual?
    i. Do you legally own a gun in your country of citizenship? _____

Overarching Research Questions (2 of 3): How has the implementation of campus carry policies at SU influenced international students' perceptions of the social ecology of the institution?

5. Describe how you think the legalization of guns on campus changed the way international students participate in campus activities.
6. How has the legalization of guns at SU affected the way you interact on campus?
7. What impacts do you think the legalization of guns on campus had on international students at SU?
8. How else has the legalization of guns on campus affected the campus environment for international students at SU?

9. Tell me your opinion of SU's current efforts to mitigate the impacts the legalization of guns has on international students
10. What strategies has SU used to mitigate the impacts the campus carry phenomenon has on international students?
11. How has SU included international students in developing these policies?

Overarching Research Questions (3 of 3): How did SU formally include international students in the on-campus campus carry policy discussion and implementation?

12. Describe the level input of international students had in the implementation of campus carry at SU.
    a. How has SU facilitated international students' engagement in the campus carry policy debate on campus?
    b. How was your input sought by the university regarding the implementation of campus carry?
    c. What activities did you participate in to sensitize you about campus carry at SU?
    d. How engaged are you in the discussion about the legalization of guns on campus?
    e. How did you come to know of these activities?
    f. What have you learned from participating in these activities?
13. Is there anything else you would like me to know, or you consider relevant to this study or topic?

Appendix F

Institutional Review Board Approval

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

To:	Andre Richardo Grant
From:	Douglas James Adams, Chair IRB Committee
Date:	04/29/2019
Action:	**Expedited Approval**
Action Date:	04/29/2019
Protocol #:	1903187029
Study Title:	International Students in the Campus Carry Debate: A Descriptive Phenomenological Inquiry
Expiration Date:	04/08/2020
Last Approval Date:	

The above-referenced protocol has been approved following expedited review by the IRB Committee that oversees research with human subjects.

If the research involves collaboration with another institution then the research cannot commence until the Committee receives written notification of approval from the collaborating institution's IRB.

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain review and continued approval before the expiration date.

Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without Committee approval. Please submit continuation requests early enough to allow sufficient time for review. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in the automatic suspension of the approval of this protocol. Information collected following suspension is unapproved research and cannot be reported or published as research data. If you do not wish continued approval, please notify the Committee of the study closure.

Adverse Events: Any serious or unexpected adverse event must be reported to the IRB Committee within 48 hours. All other adverse events should be reported within 10 working days.

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, study personnel, or number of participants, please submit an amendment to the IRB. All changes must be approved by the IRB Committee before they can be initiated.

You must maintain a research file for at least 3 years after completion of the study. This file should include all correspondence with the IRB Committee, original signed consent forms, and study data.