

**GLOBAL  
WAKE FOREST**

**PROJECT RISE**

**CIES 2022**

**Nelson Brunsting, PhD**  
Research Associate Professor  
Director, RAISE Center  
Wake Forest University

# RAISE Center



To understand and enhance the experiences, development, and engagement of study abroad and international students

# DRIVING QUESTIONS

The background of the slide is a photograph of a sailboat on the ocean. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The water is dark blue with some whitecaps. The sailboat's mast and sail are visible on the right side of the frame.

How can students maximize their growth and engagement abroad?

How can universities support international students' engagement and development?

How can global competency increase engagement across cultures and backgrounds?

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# CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON ABROAD AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

## MEMBERS AND COLLABORATORS



# CONTRIBUTORS TO PROJECT RISE

- Nelson Brunsting, WFU
- Porshe Chiles, Univ. of Florida
- Lisa Kiang, WFU
- Jon Smart, WFU
- Qiaona Yu, WFU
- Shinji Katsumoto, Univ. of Iowa
- Rhonda Bryant, Univ. of the Pacific
- Tenisha Tevis, Oregon State
- Hyunju Lee, WFU
- Yihan Zheng, Oxford
- Sonali Kathuria, Boston College
- Corinne Zachry, Ohio State
- Ryan Luo, WFU
- Siyu Wu, WFU
- Fanyi Zeng, WFU
- Xuanyu Fang, WFU
- Yueying He, NYU
- Meg Mischinski, Richmond

# OVERVIEW

- Goals and Research Questions
- Wave I (2017-2018)
  - Findings
- Wave 2 (2020-2023)
  - Initial Results
- Wave 3 (2023+)
  - Next Steps



## Goal

Design iterative longitudinal line of inquiry to better understand and enhance international student engagement and wellbeing

## Core Research Question

What is the interplay between individual factors, university contextual factors, and student social-emotional and academic outcomes?



# DEFINITIONS

**Student engagement:**  
attention, curiosity, and  
participation in university life

**Student wellbeing:**  
psychological wellness, which  
includes:

- Autonomy
- Personal Growth
- Purpose in Life
- Self-Acceptance
- Environmental Mastery
- Positive Relations with Others




# DEFINITIONS

**Belonging:** feeling valued, respected, and a part of another group (here: university)

**Social support:** perceiving that one can access information, empathy, and social connections from various groups:

- Faculty
- Domestic students
- International students





# WAVE I: 2017-2018

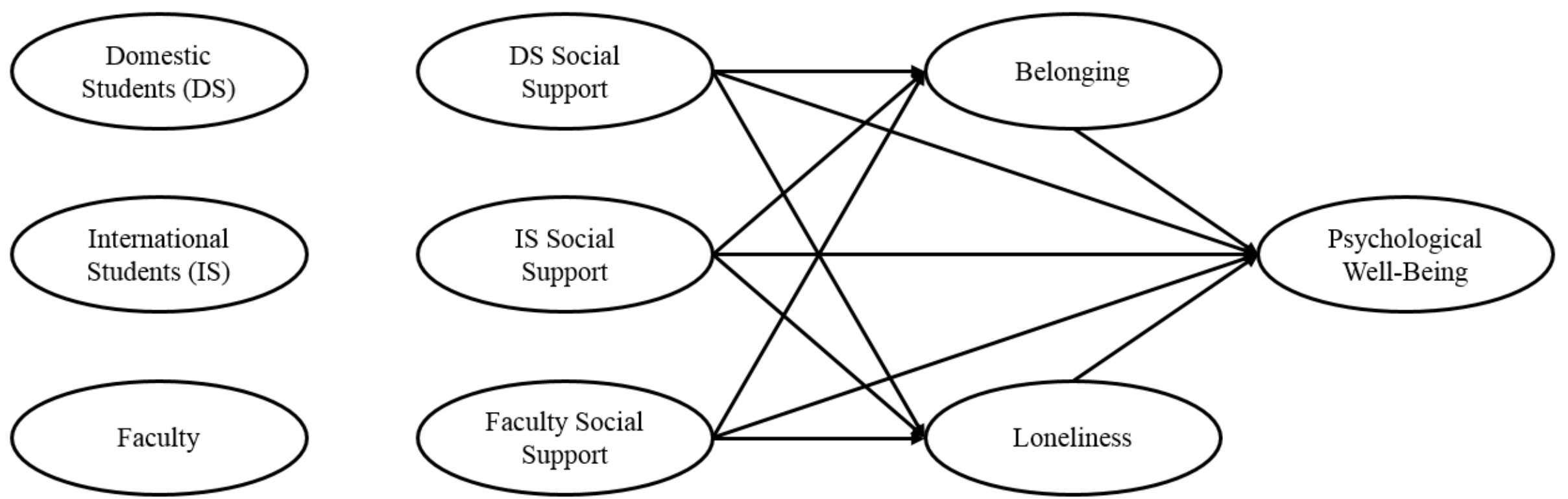
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT TWO UNIVERSITIES IN THE U.S.



## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Which source(s) of support predict social-emotional outcomes?

2. Do belonging and/or loneliness serve as mediators?



**Setting Resources**

**Setting Social Process**

**Setting Social-  
Emotional Outcome**

**Individual Outcome**

**Systems Theory**

**Acculturation Theory**

**Self-Determination Theory**

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

# Participants

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$N = 126$

74% Female

79% Graduated HS in Home Country

58% Undergraduate



## Citizenship by Region

74% East Asia and Pacific

8% Europe + Central Asia

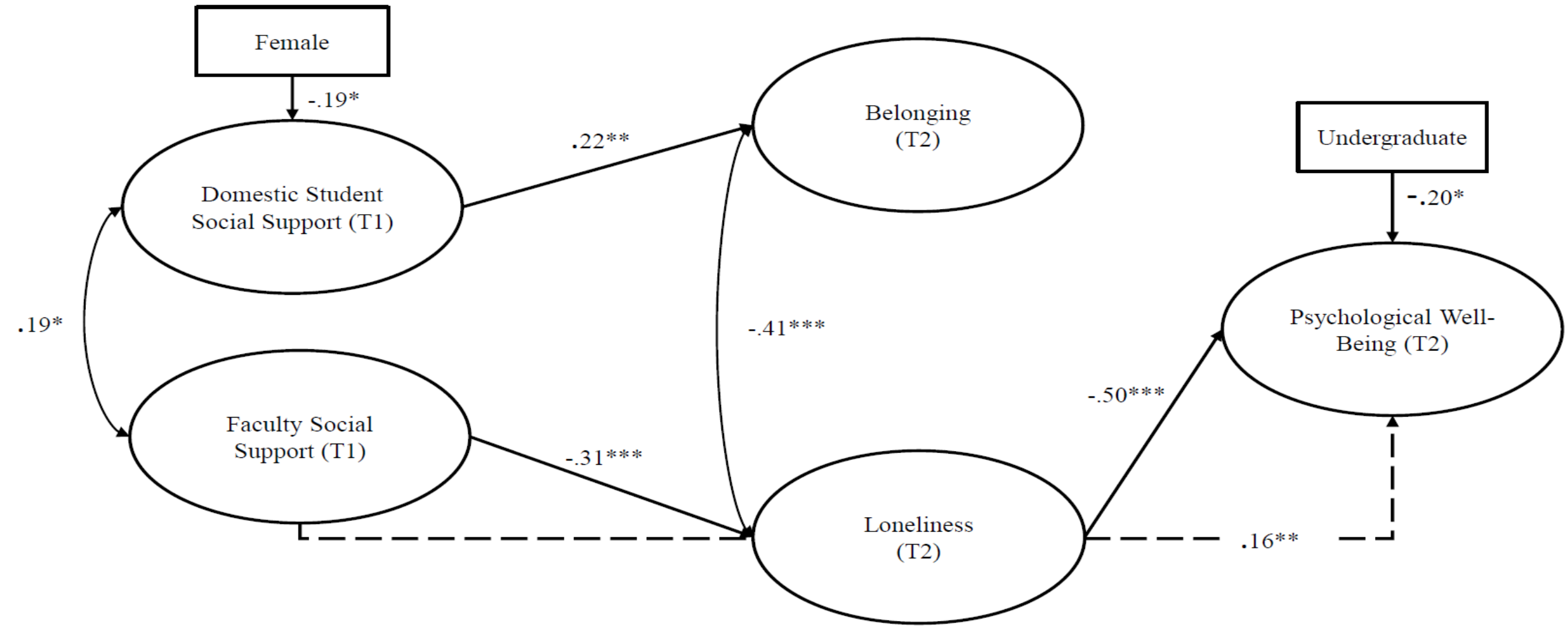
6% Latin America + Caribbean

2% Middle East + No. Africa

2% North America

5% South Asia

2% Sub-Saharan Africa



*Note.* Model fit indices:  $\chi^2(330) = 392.90$ ,  $p = .01$ ; RMSEA = .04, 90% CI [.02 - .05], CFI = .97, TLI = .96.  $^*p < .05$ ,  $^{**}p < .01$ ,  $^{***}p < .001$ .

A group of approximately 12 international students are posing for a photo on a city sidewalk. They are dressed in casual summer attire, including t-shirts, shorts, and jeans. Some students are wearing backpacks, and one student in the foreground is holding a red and white bag. The background shows a brick building and a street with a fence. The text "Wave 2: 2020-2022" is overlaid in the center of the image.

# Wave 2: 2020-2022

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT FOURTEEN UNIVERSITIES IN THE U.S.



## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Does English proficiency impact outcomes?

2. Does academic stress impact loneliness?

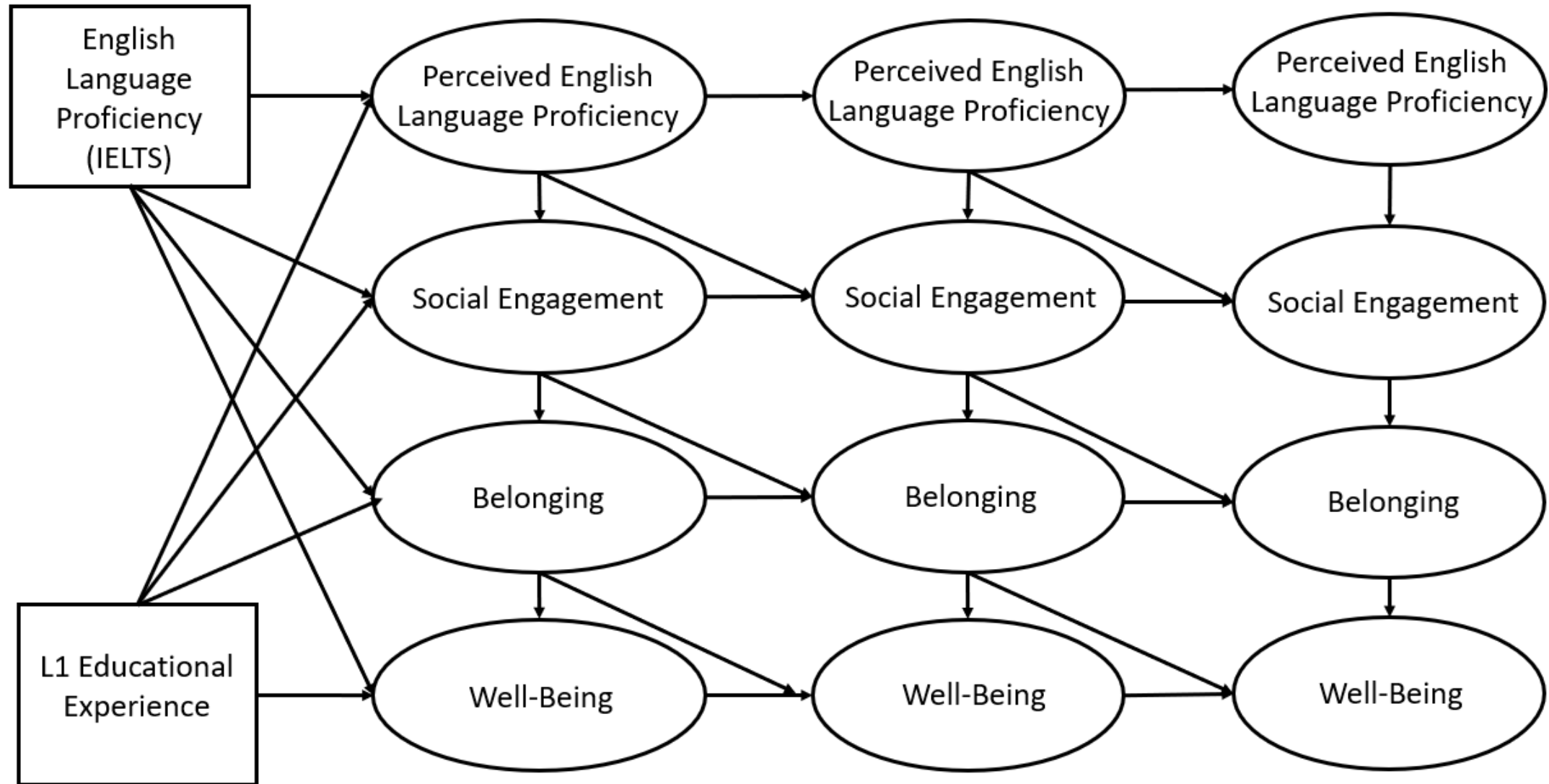
*Research generously funded by  
the International English  
Language Testing Service (IELTS)  
Joint-Funded Research  
Programme*

Prior to Admission

Spring 2021

Fall 2021

Spring 2022



# Participants

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$N = 1040$  attending 14 U.S. colleges and universities

49.8% Female, 48.9% Male, .4% Trans, .9% Gender Non-Conforming, .6% Prefer not to answer

37% Undergraduate; 63% Graduate

6% Participation Rate

## Citizenship by Region

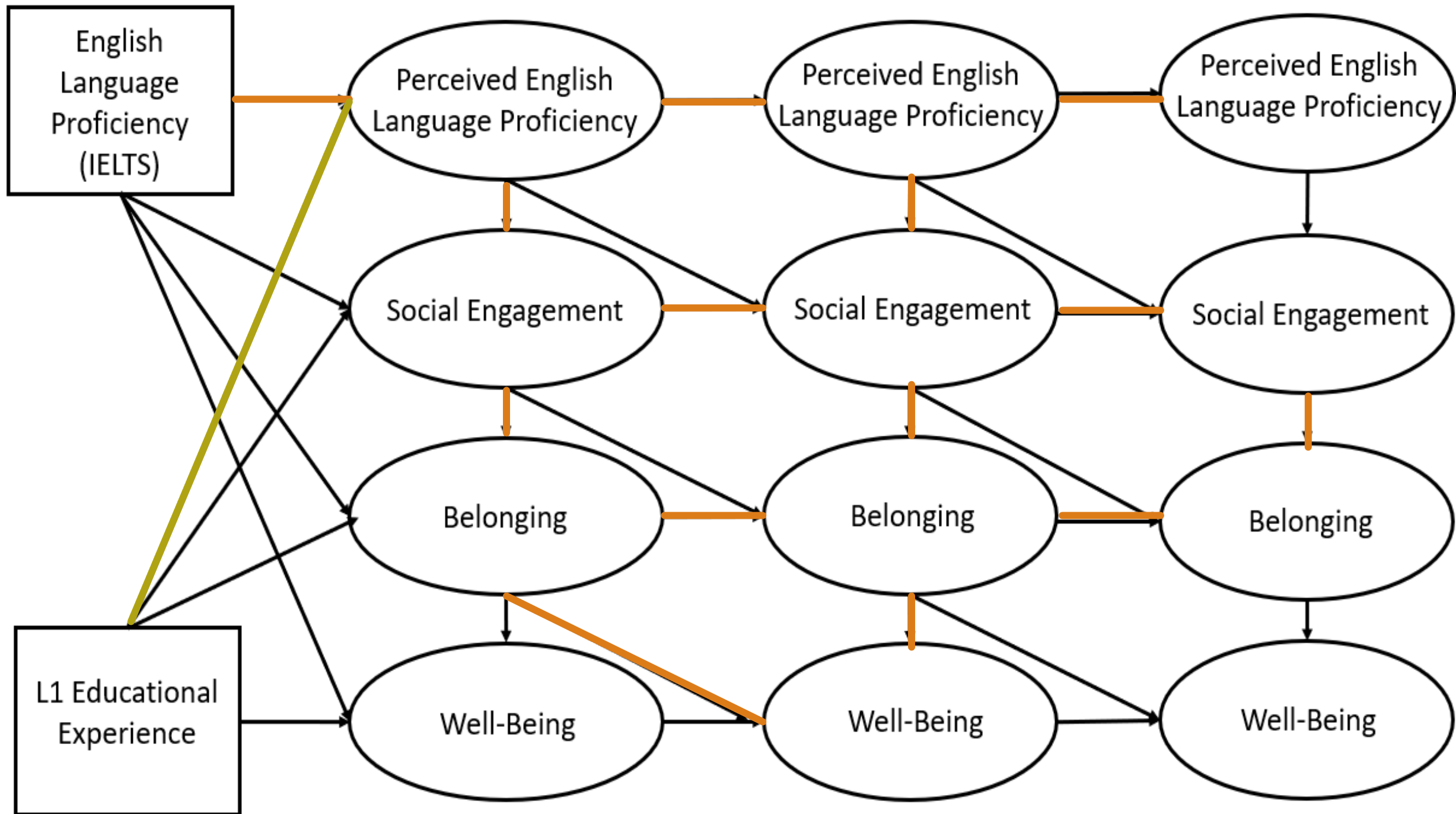
35% East Asia and Pacific  
11% Europe + Central Asia  
12% Latin America + Caribbean  
6% Middle East + No. Africa

3% North America  
29% South Asia  
7% Sub-Saharan Africa



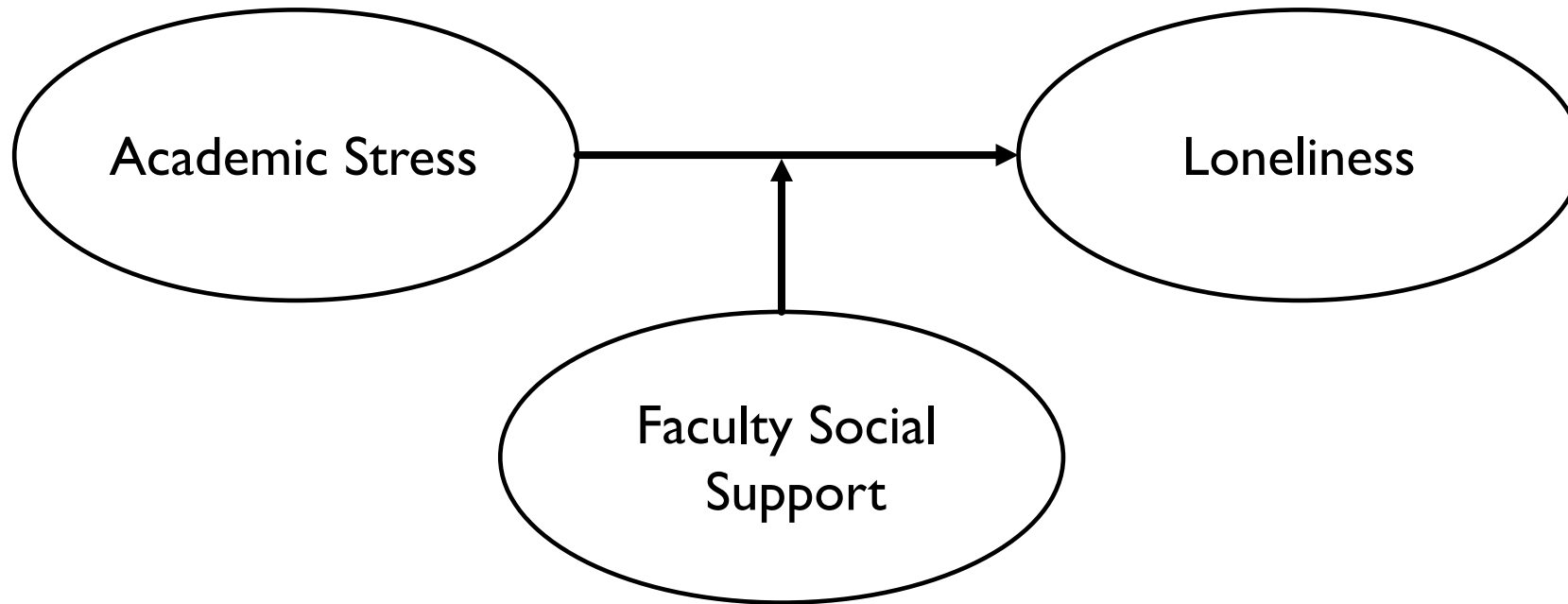


## INITIAL RESULTS



*Note. Initial analyses run with multiple linear regressions prior to structural equation modeling*

## WAVE 2 INITIAL RESULTS: RQ2



	B	SE	t
Constant	2.08	.39	5.38***
Aca. Stress	.03	.02	1.32
Fac Soc. Supp.	-.29	.10	-2.91**
AS x Fac SS	-.01	.07	-.17



## WAVE 4: 2023-ONWARD

PLANNING FOR A LONG-TERM LONGITUDINAL STUDY LINKING  
UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCES AND CAREER AND LIFE OUTCOMES

# LINE OF INQUIRY: 2023 AND BEYOND

## Expand

- Long-term longitudinal approach

## Understand

- Understand post-graduate outcomes

## Include

- Focused recruitment for high response

Interested in joining or collaborating? Email [projectrise@wfu.edu](mailto:projectrise@wfu.edu)



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## QUESTIONS

Where do you see **opportunities for research** on international student engagement and wellbeing?

How might we best **recruit and maintain** a long-term participant group?

[raisecenter.wfu.edu](https://raisecenter.wfu.edu); [projectrise@wfu.edu](mailto:projectrise@wfu.edu)