



## Background

- Intercultural sensitivity is an essential skill for healthcare professionals and improves patient satisfaction and outcomes.<sup>1</sup>
- Studies have shown intercultural sensitivity skills can improve through focused intervention.<sup>1,2,4</sup>
- No known study has reported the adoption of an intentional intercultural development curriculum and measured its effectiveness with a valid and reliable outcome tool in Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) students.
- The DPT program at Regis University implemented an intercultural development thread and selected the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI®) to assess and guide the enhancement of intercultural sensitivity for the individual students and the program.

## Purpose

The purpose of the study was to explore change in intercultural sensitivity during a 3-year DPT program using a mixed methods design, and identify curricular content, activities, and experiences that were influential in the students' intercultural development.

## Methods

Characteristic	Class 2015	Class 2016
Age mean (SD)	25.01 (3.25) years	
Gender Identity	60%	62.50%
Female	40%	37.50%
Male		
Identify as Ethnic Minority	16.90%	Unknown
Total Time Spent Abroad		
<3months	72.40%	62.30%
3-12 months	20.70%	29.50%
>1year	6.90%	8.20%
Clinical Experience		
Peru & Domestic	9.20%	12.50%
Ethiopia & Domestic	18.50%	18.80%
Nicaragua & Domestic	6.20%	9.40%
Domestic Only	66.20%	59.40%

- Quantitative**
- Online IDI administered to all participants the 3<sup>rd</sup> and last semester of an 8 semester DPT program

- Qualitative**
- 3 Focus groups 8th semester : domestic, domestic & international, (n=5/group)
  - Sessions recorded, transcribed and coded for themes

## Methods

### Data Analysis

- The Wilcoxon Sign Ranks test was used to assess change in IDI® Developmental Orientation(DO), Perceived Orientation (PO), and Trailing Orientation (TO) scores using SPSS v21.
- Qualitative: Coding, content analysis (theme development)

### Intercultural Curriculum

- Students completed an individualized IDI® plan and advising session 3<sup>rd</sup> semester.
- Intercultural development was supported using focused curricular content, session activities, community and clinical experiences throughout the 3-year DPT Program.

### Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI®)

- Assesses the capability to shift cultural perspective and adapt behavior to cultural differences and commonalities based on Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity<sup>3</sup>
- 50-item online questionnaire (cost \$11.00/student)
- Generates scores that reflect cultural orientation/dimension
  - PO reflects an individual's self-perception along the continuum.<sup>3</sup>
  - DO indicates one's primary orientation toward cultural differences and commonalities along the continuum.<sup>3</sup>
  - TO is an unresolved orientation used in unfamiliar situations.<sup>3</sup>

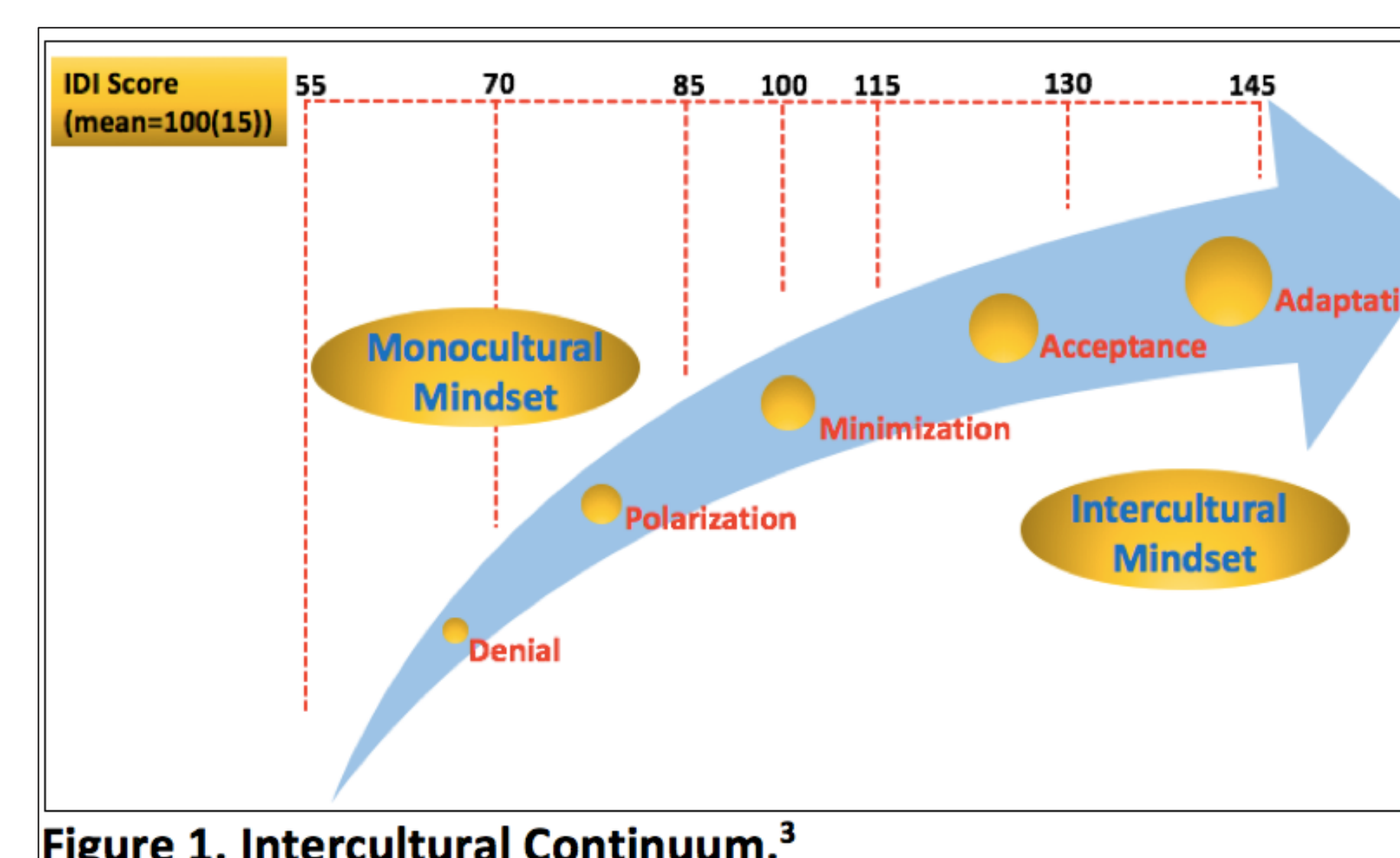


Figure 1. Intercultural Continuum.<sup>3</sup>

## Results

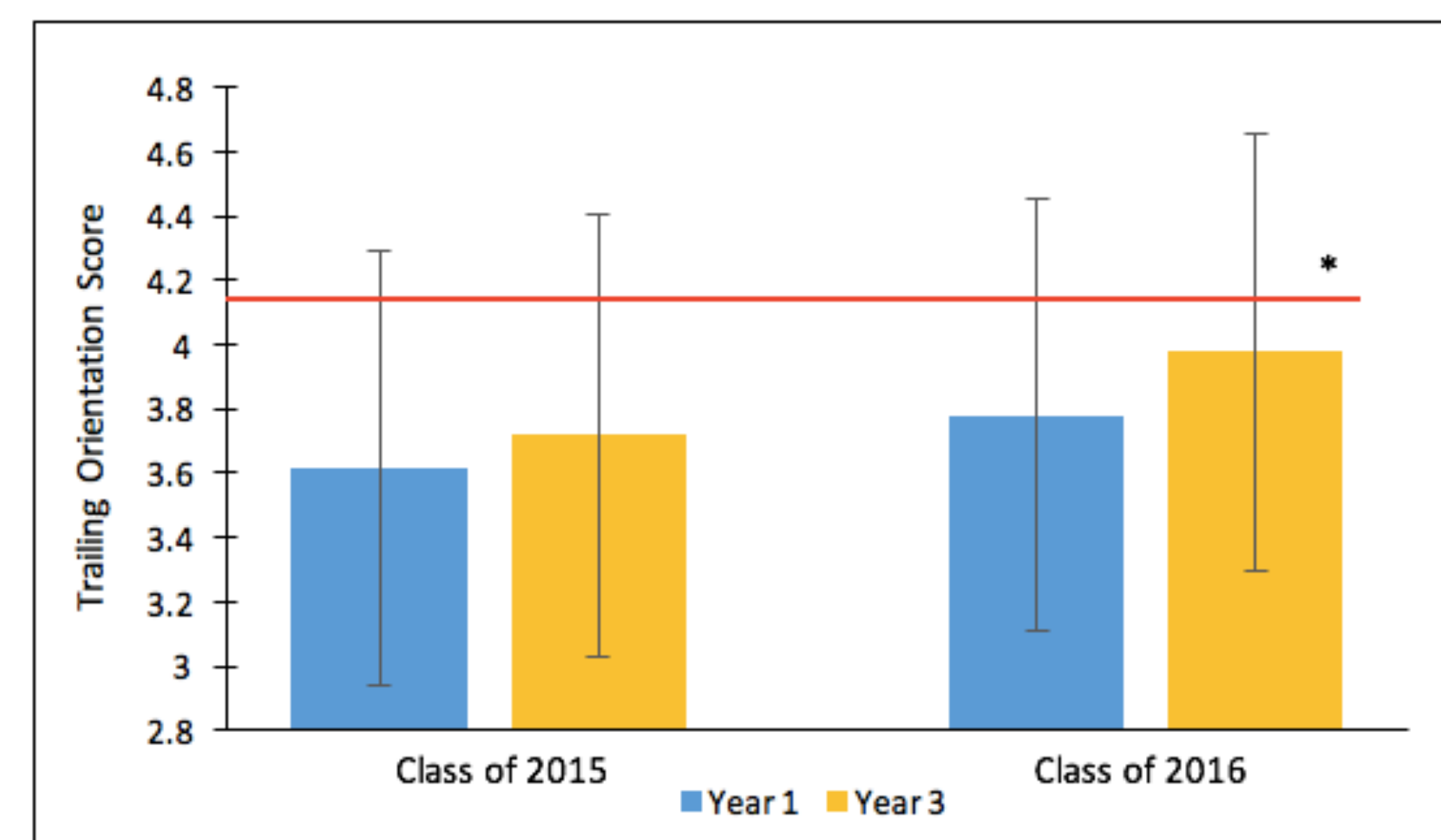


Figure 2. Class of 2015 & 2016 Change in Trailing Orientations: Year 1 vs. Year 3, with standard deviation. The asterisk (\*) indicates p<0.05 and the red line indicates resolution of trailing orientation.

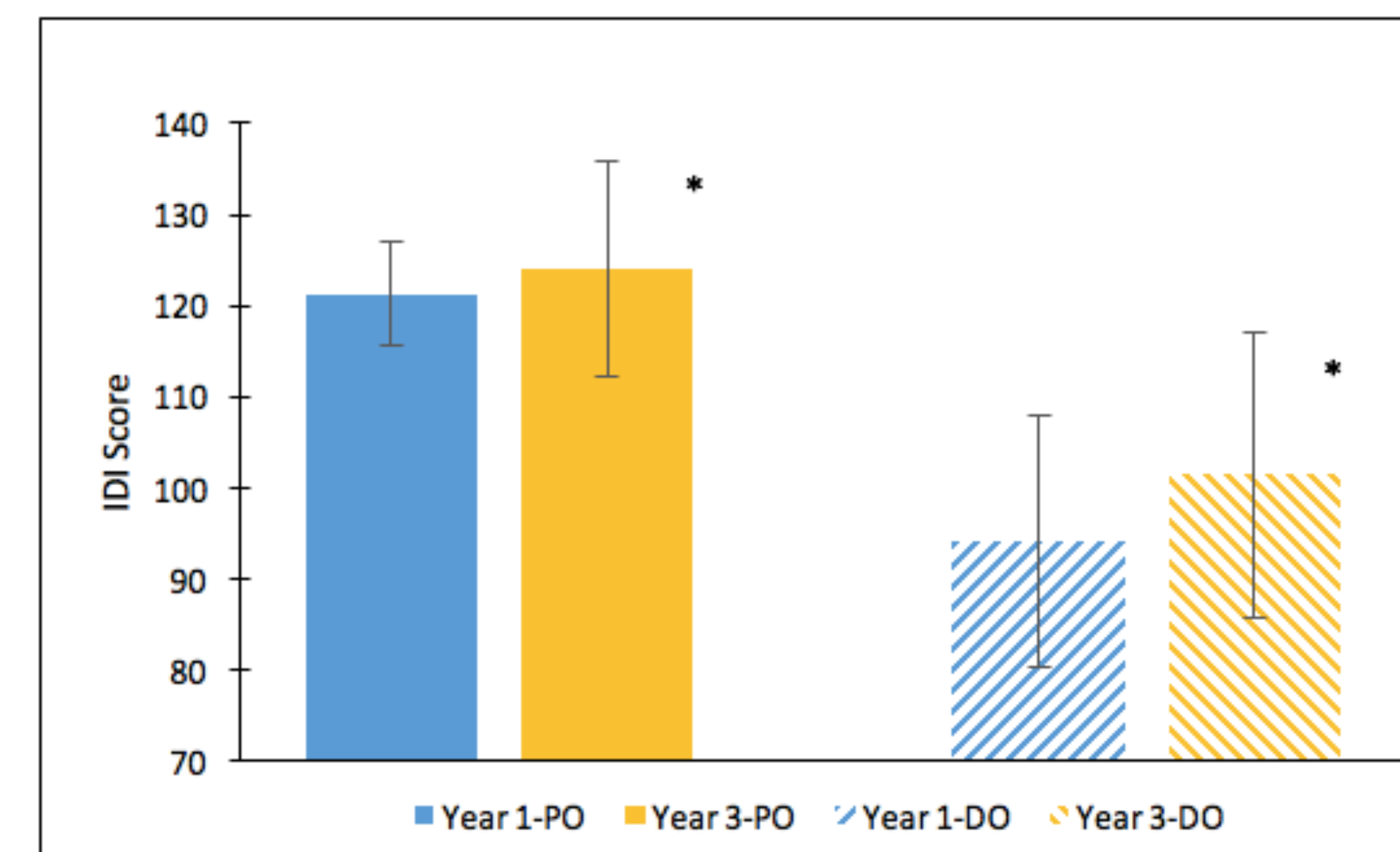


Figure 3. Class of 2015 & 2016 Grouped Change in PO and DO: Year 1 vs. Year 3 with standard deviation. The asterisk (\*) indicates p<0.05.

*"When you are from a dominant culture, it is hard for you to see the differences from those around you..."*  
 -anonymous DPT student

*"You have to dive into it, there is no other way around it, to get it yourself you have to experience it and live it even for a day, the best thing you can do is try to immerse yourself, and go out of your comfort zone."*  
 -anonymous DPT student

Table 2. Developing Themes and Subthemes from Focus Groups

Major Themes	Subthemes
Experiencing Culture	Service learning, global immersions, situational challenges, clinical education with emphasis on rural settings
Awareness of Difference	Participation in the IDI, minimization approach to differences, acknowledgement of diversity
Enhanced Engagement with Others	Facilitation of conversation through the IDI, language barriers, challenging cultural conversations
The Role of Values & Beliefs	Cultural perspectives, stereotypes/judgments, family, traditions, belief systems
Discovery of Self	Recognition of cultural identity, self-awareness, reflection, cultural disengagement or resolution

## Conclusions

- Improvement in student intercultural sensitivity may be the result of the intentional intercultural curriculum in the DPT program at Regis University.
- Students value contextual and experiential activities curriculum activities which they view enhance their ability to recognize, respond, and adapt their behavior to cultural similarities and differences.
- Creating an individualized intercultural development plan in combination with faculty advising provided a common language and framework and facilitated peer discussion and personal reflection.
- Past research suggests that improved intercultural sensitivity may enhance patient satisfaction and outcomes.<sup>4</sup>
- Improved intercultural sensitivity in Regis DPT students may lead to improved patient outcomes.
- A mixed methods approach that gathers student perspectives in combination with standardized assessment tools, can inform programs about the impact and value of educational methods used to enhance intercultural sensitivity.
- Limitations include lack of control group and the inability to determine the specific experiences and activities with the most impact on intercultural development.

*"...recognizing the differences and how that should shape the intervention you're giving a patient. Because I would say that in the past I probably did minimize or try to find those commonalities versus trying to find the differences that would tailor treatment for a particular patient. So, I never thought of it that way before I took the IDI®."*  
 -anonymous DPT student

## References

1. Altshuler L, Sussman NM, Kachur E. Assessing changes in intercultural sensitivity among physician trainees using the intercultural development inventory. *Int J Intercult Relat.* 2003;27(4):387-401. doi:10.1016/S0147-1767(03)00029-4.
2. Peiying N, Goddard T, Gribble N, Pickard C. International placements increase the cultural sensitivity and competency of professional health students: A quantitative and qualitative study. *J Phys Ther Educ.* 2012;26(1): 61-68.
3. Hammer MR, Bennett MJ, Wiseman R. Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory. *Int J Intercult Relat.* 2003;27(4): 421-443. doi:10.1016/S0147-1767(03)00032-4.
4. Tucker CM, Marsiske M, Rice KG, Jones JD, Herman KC. Patient-Centered Culturally Sensitive Health Care: Model Testing and Refinement. *Health Psychol.* 2011;30(3):342-350. doi:10.1037/a0022967.