

## White U.S. College Students' Perceptions Of Prospective International Students Differ By Race And Stereotypical Attributes

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### ABSTRACT

*Because many international students of color report feeling devalued by host peers, host peers' responses to students from different racial/ethnic groups warrant empirical study. Participants were White, non-Latinx undergraduates (N = 228) who were randomly assigned to one of four conditions. Specifically, participants read about a prospective student from either Asia or Europe who was described as exhibiting either model minority stereotypical or counter-stereotypical attributes. Participants evaluated how likely the student was to be admitted to college and the student's academic and social competence. Despite identical qualifications, participants perceived the Asian student as more likely to be admitted but less academically competent than the European student. Regardless of race, international students with stereotypical attributes were perceived as less socially competent than those with counter-stereotypical attributes. Results suggest that racial dissimilarity reduces host peers' receptivity towards international students of color. Targeted multicultural education for host peers may be necessary to promote international students' effective integration.*

**Keywords:** Asian, college students, international students, race, stereotyping

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### INTRODUCTION

International students leave their country of origin and travel to another country on a temporary basis to pursue academic study. Since 2017, fewer new international students have enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities. Explanations for this decrease include visa difficulties, the costs of higher education in the

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U.S., and changes in the country's political and social climate (Sanger & Baer, 2019). Compared to the prior academic year, international student enrollment in 2019 decreased by 1.8% (Institute for International Education, 2020). Furthermore, federal policy changes initially banning international college students from enrolling at U.S. institutions during Fall 2020 amidst the COVID-19 pandemic led to further declines (Israel & Batalova, 2021).

Enrollment rates may also be affected by the hospitality of campus climates. Many international students report difficulties acclimating to campus and perceptions of an unwelcoming environment (e.g., Yao et al., 2020). For instance, in one study involving nine research universities in the U.S., international students perceived a less favorable climate for diversity and respect when compared to domestic students (Van Horne et al., 2018). Perhaps relatedly, many international students describe having experienced both covert and overt forms of exclusion and rejection by host peers (Houshamand et al., 2014; Spencer-Oatley et al., 2017).

Importantly, international students who are also members of racial/ethnic minority groups report particularly high rates of perceived discrimination. In contrast, at predominantly White institutions (PWIs), compared to students of color, White European students report being more welcomed and feeling more of a sense of belonging (Lee & Rice, 2007; Poyrazli et al., 2004). These findings could suggest that host peers are less hospitable towards international students of color than international students who are White. This possibility is supported by research showing that racial/ethnic minority group members report hearing disrespectful comments upon being misperceived as international students. For example, in one study of Asian American students, participants were told to "go back to China and stop taking all the jobs here and ruining the curve" (Yeo et al., 2019, p. 51). However, given the many challenges of transcultural mobility, multiple factors may affect international students' perceptions of their experiences of campus climate, including language barriers and varying cultural interpretations of social interactions. Additional research is needed to more definitively test whether international students of color, when compared to White international students, are devalued by host peers.

Social categorization theory (SCT) might help explain White host peers' responses to international students of color (Turner et al., 1987). SCT posits that people feel and act more favorably toward others who are perceived to be part of a shared social category (ingroup) while feeling and acting less favorably toward others who are perceived as excluded from that shared category (outgroup). Furthermore, following the 'cognitive miser' argument proposed by Fiske and Taylor (2017), outgroup members are viewed as prototypes, with individual-level features of the outgroup member largely ignored. Race/ethnicity is a prominent social category that can affect peer interactions, regardless of whether a peer is an international student. A growing literature suggests that students of color perceive the campus climate as less hospitable than their White counterparts (e.g., Lo et al., 2017; Schuster, 2020). Accordingly, U.S. college students of color report facing challenges related to their racial/ethnic status (e.g., Mwangi et al., 2018; Nguyen et al., 2018).

The current research compared White, non-Latinx U.S. students' perceptions of prospective international students from Asia (a racial outgroup member) versus Europe (a racial ingroup member). We focused on students of color, specifically from Asia, because many countries host college-aged youth from Asia, most commonly from South Asia. For example, in 2019-2020, over a third of all international students in the U.S. came from the People's Republic of China (Institute for International Education, 2020).

In the U.S. and similar contexts, people who are Asian tend to be stereotyped as having both positive and negative attributes. Positive stereotypical attributes include being intelligent, educated, and studious, whereas negative stereotypical attributes include being shy, nerdy, and socially inept (Ghami & Peplau, 2013). Based on Fiske's Stereotype Content Model (SCM; Fiske et al., 2002; Fiske et al., 2007), these stereotyped attributes reflect high competence and low warmth (Lin et al., 2005). That is, people who are Asian tend to be perceived as academically capable and worthy of respect but also as socially deficient and unlikeable.

These types of stereotypes seem to affect Asian international students' interactions with host peers. For example, Asian international students studying in Canada described being seen as intelligent in math and science but not in other areas, teased for their accents and pronunciation of English, and generally socially rejected and excluded by peers (Houshmand et al., 2014). These authors concluded that North American students appear to subscribe to the myth of the model minority, leading to resentment towards the perceived success of Asian students. Similarly, at a university in the U.K., students from China reported greater difficulties with social than academic adjustment, and compared to other international students, students from China had more difficulties making friends in their host country (Spencer-Oatley et al., 2017). Although these studies were conducted in Canada and the U.K., Asian international students may have similar experiences in the U.S., where many White students report infrequent social contact with people who are Asian and also endorse prejudicial attitudes about them (Lowinger et al., 2018). Regardless of where they were born and raised, Asian college students in the U.S. reported high levels of perceived discrimination by White peers (Wang et al., 2019), suggesting that visible racial differences mark even Asian Americans as "forever foreigners" (p. 23). As a result, they are seen as Asian rather than as also American, conflating Whiteness with national identity (Devos & Banaji, 2005).

White host peers may also devalue Asian international students of color because their presumed stereotypical attributes are seen as threatening. Regardless of their country of origin, Asian students may be inaccurately viewed in terms of the stereotype of the hardworking model minority who is apt to outperform others (Yoo et al., 2010, 2015). In the U.S., Asian students are stereotyped as interested in orchestral music and individual rather than team-based athletic pursuits. People with such interests are seen as less socially competent (Chai & Weseley, 2010). Research suggests that U.S. college students perceive Asian students to be intelligent and hardworking, posing a threat to their status and success (Maddux et al., 2008). Yet college students in the U.S. had negative evaluations of even racially ambiguous peers characterized as having model minority attributes (Maddux et al., 2008). These authors concluded that stereotypical model minority attributes feel threatening, regardless of the race/ethnicity of the individual who displays them. These findings suggest that host peers may have more negative responses to an Asian international student who conforms to model minority stereotypes rather than to Asian international students generally.

A competing possibility, however, is that regardless of their attributes, Asian students generally will be devalued due to concerns about "reverse discrimination." As many institutions in the U.S. have worked to increase ethnic and cultural diversity, often via affirmative action, some White, non-Latinx U.S. student citizens have felt unfairly disadvantaged and threatened (e.g., Lowinger et al., 2018). Feelings of threat may lead people to shore up the boundaries of acceptance/admittance to their group and distance themselves from people who pose a threat (e.g., Tajfel & Turner, 1986). When people who are White feel threatened by demographic shifts in minority representation, they react more angrily toward ethnic

minorities, demonstrate increased racial bias (Craig & Richeson, 2014; Outten et al., 2012), and show decreased support for cultural diversity (Danbold & Huo, 2014).

The current study investigated U.S. college students' responses to prospective international students based on their race/continent of origin (Asian or European) and the presence or absence of model minority stereotypical attributes. Drawing on SCT (Turner et al., 1987), we expected White, non-Latinx students to perceive that, compared to a student from Europe, that a student from Asia would be more likely to be admitted to their selective college (Hypothesis 1a), more academically competent (Hypothesis 2a), and more socially incompetent (Hypothesis 3a). However, whether or not the prospective students described themselves in terms of model minority stereotypical attributes was expected to moderate these effects. Specifically, an Asian student with stereotypical attributes was expected to be perceived as more likely to be admitted to their selective college (Hypothesis 1b), as more academically competent (Hypothesis 2b), and more socially incompetent (Hypothesis 3b) than a counter-stereotypical Asian student.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Participants

Participants were 228 undergraduate students enrolled at a public liberal arts college in the Northeastern U.S. All identified as White, non-Latinx citizens of the U.S. The majority were women (76.1%,  $n = 175$ ). The average age was 19.18 ( $SD = 1.12$ , range 17-23).

### Manipulation

We randomly assigned each participant to read part of a prospective international students' college application with identical grades and standardized test scores (see below). There were four conditions. Concerning race, the applicant self-identified as either "Wen-Yong" from Guanzhou, China, or "Wendy" from Glasgow, Scotland. Participants also read the short paragraph below ostensibly written by the prospective student describing her goals and interests. Based on Chai and Weseley (2017), the interests were either stereotypical of the Asian model minority (e.g., playing violin and competing on the school's math team) or counter-stereotypical (e.g., drumming and being in the school's yearbook club).

Please read this brief statement by a high school senior and prospective international student:

Student: **Wen-Yong/Wendy** Sex: Female

Location: **Guangzhou/Glasgow**

High School Average: 90 ACT score: n/a SAT Score: 1360/1600

On my first tour of the college, I realized [name of college] was the perfect school for me. Walking on the campus, exploring the buildings, and interacting with current students made it feel so much like home. I could continue to participate in activities that I currently enjoy, all while getting an outstanding education experience. My current schedule involves playing the *violin in chamber orchestra/drums in a rock band* for ten hours per week, running cross country, and organizing activities for the *Math Team/Yearbook Club* for an hour per week. It is important to be a well-rounded student to achieve success in the classroom and in one's field of choice. SUNY Geneseo prepares students to be successful for the rest of their lives and it would be an honor to be accepted as a Geneseo Knight. (*Note: Manipulated aspects in bold. Model minority stereotypical attributes are also italicized, whereas counter-stereotypical attributes are not.*)

### Design

A 2 (race/continent of origin of the prospective student; Asia or Europe) x 2 (model minority attributes; Asian stereotypical or counter-stereotypical) between-subjects design was used. The dependent

variables were perceptions of the prospective international student's likelihood of admission to college, academic competence, and social incompetence.

### Measures

*Likelihood of admission* was assessed with a single item adapted from Chai and Weseley (2017): "How likely is she to be admitted to a selective college like [name of college]?" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *extremely likely*).

*Perceived competence* of the international student was assessed with subscales adapted from the *Scale of Anti-Asian American Stereotypes* (SAAAS; Lin, Kwan, Cheung, & Fiske, 2005). This scale was developed based on Fiske's Stereotype Content Model (SCM; Fiske et al., 2002; Fiske et al., 2007), a theoretical framework positing that anti-Asian prejudice stems from perceptions of high intellectual competence paired with low social warmth/likeability. The 12 item academic competence subscale assesses the degree to which respondents believe that people who are Asian are driven to achieve and compete with others to outperform them and reach high levels of success. Specific key phrases from subscale items include "working all the time," "obsessed with competition," and "acting too smart." (p. 37). The 13 item social competence subscale assesses the degree to which respondents believe that people who are Asian are socially awkward and isolated due to poor interpersonal skills. Specific key phrases from subscale items include "shy and quiet," "have less fun," and "rarely initiate social events or gatherings" (p. 37). Items are rated on a 6 point scale (0 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). In the current study, items were adapted to refer specifically to the prospective student from the Manipulation. For example, "Asian Americans seem to be striving to become number one" was changed to "[student name] seems to be striving to become number one" and "Asian Americans are less committed to socializing than others" was changed to "[student name] is less committed to socializing than others." Responses to each item reflect a conscious endorsement of stereotypical expectations that underlie envious anti-Asian prejudice. The scale authors report evidence for the scale's reliability and convergent validity as well as the underlying two factor structure reflecting related but distinct dimensions of competence and sociability. The internal consistency indices were good in the current sample (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .84$  for academic competence,  $\alpha = .87$  for social incompetence).

### Procedure

The campus Institutional Review Board approved all study procedures. We recruited undergraduate students from a voluntary psychology department pool for a study of "Assessing Prospective Students." Data collection sessions were conducted on campus in classrooms where participants sat in alternating rows to ensure privacy. After providing informed consent, each participant was randomly assigned to read and respond to one of four partial college applications. Participants completed paper and pencil self-report measures and submitted their responses to a slotted box so that their responses would remain anonymous. We provided a full written debriefing and compensated participants with course credit. No sessions lasted more than one hour.

## RESULTS

Almost half of the sample (49.1%,  $n = 112$ ) was assigned to the Asian student condition, whereas 50.9% ( $n = 116$ ) was assigned to the European student condition. About 52.2% ( $n = 119$ ) read a description about a student with model minority stereotypical attributes whereas 47.8% ( $n = 109$ ) read about a student with counter-stereotypical attributes.

To test whether stereotypical interests moderated participants' responses to a prospective student based on her race/continent of origin, a 2 (race; Asian or European) x 2 (model minority attributes; stereotypical or counter-stereotypical) multivariate analysis of variance MANOVA was conducted. There were three dependent measures: perceived likelihood of admission, perceived academic competence, and perceived social incompetence. Results showed an overall effect of race,  $F(3, 222) = 4.34, p = .005, \eta^2 = .06$ , and an overall effect for model minority attributes,  $F(2, 222) = 9.20, p < .001, \eta^2 = .11$ , but no interaction,  $F(2, 222) = 0.25, p = .18, \eta^2 = .003$ .

Table 1 lists univariate follow up analyses. As can be seen, there was a main effect of race. Participants perceived that the Asian student was more likely to be admitted ( $M = 6.23, SD = 0.89$ ) than the European student ( $M = 5.87, SD = 1.04$ ),  $F(1, 224) = 7.55, p = .006, \eta^2 = .03$ . This finding supported Hypothesis 1a. Because there was no main or interactive effect of stereotypical attributes, this racial difference was independent of whether the student was described as similar to the model minority stereotype. Thus, Hypothesis 2a was not supported.

There was also a main effect of race on perceptions of the student's academic competence. Unexpectedly, participants perceived that the Asian student was *less* academically competent ( $M = 2.25, SD = 0.85$ ) than the European student ( $M = 2.47, SD = 0.74$ ),  $F(1, 224) = 5.14, p = .023, \eta^2 = .02$ . This finding did not support Hypothesis 1b. In addition, race did not interact with stereotypical attributes, which did not support Hypothesis 2b. However, there was a main effect of stereotypical attributes. Students with model minority stereotypical attributes were seen as more academically competent ( $M = 2.47, SD = 0.71$ ) than those with counter stereotypical attributes ( $M = 2.22, SD = 0.87$ ),  $F(1, 224) = 6.37, p = .012, \eta^2 = .03$ .

**Table 1: Effects of Race and Model Minority Stereotypical or Counter-Stereotypical Attributes on White, non-Latinx College Students' Perceptions of Prospective International Students**

	International Student Race		Race $F(1, 224)$	Model Minority $F(1, 224)$	Race x Model Minority $F(1, 224)$
	Asian	European			
Likely to be admitted			4.55**	1.67	< 1
Stereotypical	6.34 (0.65)	5.91 (1.13)			
Counter-stereotypical	6.10 (1.11)	5.82 (0.97)			
<i>Academic competence</i>			5.14*	6.37*	<1
Stereotypical	2.38 (0.74)	2.59 (0.67)			
Counter-stereotypical	2.09 (0.94)	2.35 (0.78)			
<i>Social incompetence</i>			2.27	24.32***	<1
Stereotypical	2.37 (0.71)	2.46 (0.68)			
Counter-stereotypical	1.85 (0.81)	2.04 (0.66)			

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Cell sizes were as follows: Asian/model minority stereotypical attributes ( $n = 64$ ), Asian/model minority counter-stereotypical attributes ( $n = 52$ ), European/model minority stereotypical attributes ( $n = 55$ ), European/model-minority counter-stereotypical attributes ( $n = 57$ ).

Social competence did not vary as a function of race, either alone or in interaction with model minority stereotypical attributes. Therefore, neither Hypotheses 1c nor 2c were supported. However, there was a main effect of stereotypical attributes on perceptions of the prospective student's social competence. Participants assigned to read about a student with stereotypical attributes reported that this student was more socially incompetent ( $M = 2.30$ ,  $SD = 0.67$ ) than one with counter-stereotypical attributes ( $M = 2.06$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ ),  $F(1, 224) = 24.32$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .10$ . That is, regardless of whether the prospective student was Asian or European, a student described in terms of model minority stereotypical attributes was perceived as less socially competent.

## DISCUSSION

The current study compared White, non-Latinx students' responses to prospective international students from Asia versus Europe. We found that an Asian student was perceived as more likely to be admitted yet less academically competent than an identically qualified European student. In contrast, international students from Asia versus Europe were not perceived to differ in social competence. Instead, judgments of social competence were negatively related to having attributes consistent with the model minority stereotype. Overall, these findings provided partial support for the general hypothesis that social categorization based on race/ethnicity affects majority host students' responses to international students of color.

We found that White, non-Latinx students perceived that an Asian student was more likely to be admitted to the college than an equally qualified European student. This finding suggests that international students of color may be perceived as unfairly advantaged in the college admission process. This finding matches research on U.S. students' negative attitudes about college admission for Asian Americans, including a lack of support for affirmative action (Lowinger et al., 2018). Importantly, affirmative action considers many different factors, including race, to achieve student diversity by defining merit in ways that can benefit people from all racial/ethnic backgrounds. In contrast, many Asian students in the U.S. are affected by "negative action," defined as a preference for White over other races in admissions and hiring decisions (Kang, 1996 as cited by Kim, 2018). Similar concerns are reflected in recent legal efforts by a group, Students for Fair Admissions, which sued Harvard on behalf of Asian American applicants who perceived that they were unfairly denied admission (Jaschik, 2020). Although negative action is sometimes confused with affirmative action, some scholars argue that negative action discriminates against Asian students who must academically outperform White students to be considered equally qualified (Liu, 2008).

The current results showed that, despite identical academic qualifications, a prospective international student was perceived as less academically competent if she was described as being from Asia than from Europe. Given past research suggesting that Asian students are stereotyped as academically competent (Lin et al., 2005), this result was unexpected. However, this unexpected result may reflect the concept of negative action. Perhaps because Asian students are expected to be academically capable, an Asian student may need to outperform a White student to be perceived as equally successful by host peers. In addition, this unexpected result may be explained by ingroup/outgroup biases. Consistent with social categorization theory (SCT; Turner et al., 1987), White participants perceived the White international student (a racial ingroup member) to be more academically competent than the Asian international student (a racial outgroup member).

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Importantly, we found that an international student's race was not the only factor that affected perceptions of the student's academic competence, suggesting that predictions based on SCT may vary, depending on co-existing social categories. Independent of whether they were from Asia or Europe, students described in terms of model minority attributes were perceived as more academically competent. This finding is consistent with past research with U.S. college student suggesting that peers with model minority attributes induce feelings of threat, independent of their race/ethnicity (Maddux et al., 2008). Yet importantly, we found that race and stereotypical attributes each exerted independent effects on perceptions of academic competence. Although an Asian student was perceived as less academically competent than a European student, being described in terms of model minority attributes, which is typically expected for Asian but not European students, led to perceptions of greater academic competence. Overall, our results suggest that Asian international students are academically devalued by White host peers specifically due to their race. This devaluation occurs regardless of whether Asian international students are also described in model minority stereotypical attributes.

A different pattern of results emerged for perceptions of social competence. An international student's race did not affect perceptions of her social competence. Instead, regardless of race, international students described as having stereotypical model minority attributes were perceived as less socially competent than those described in counter-stereotypical ways. This finding matches with past research on perceptions of Asian American and White prospective college students in which admissions counselors saw stereotypical Asian attributes, instead of race, as strongly related to perceived social incompetence (Chai & Weseley, 2017). The current study extends this past finding by showing that White, non-Latinx peers' judgments of international students' social competency are affected by stereotypical attributes, not by race.

Understanding biases related to judgments of social competence is important given that Asian international students studying abroad at a PWI reported substantially greater difficulties with social than with academic adjustment (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2017). The current study may help explain why host peers seemed generally disinterested in developing friendships with Asian international students in past research. Barriers to social interaction cited by Spencer-Oatey et al. (2017) included having different social interests and having different personalities. We speculate that perceptions of social interests and personality qualities are linked. That is, to the degree that the Asian students showed a lack of interest in social activities such as drinking alcohol and dancing, they may have been seen in terms of model minority attributes such as being serious and introverted. In turn, such perceptions may have reduced Asian students' social attractiveness as potential friends.

The current findings supplement past studies documenting challenges to adjustment faced by international students of color. Because a prospective student's race affected perceptions of how likely she was to be admitted to the college as well as evaluations of her academic competence, the current findings provide evidence for resentment towards students of color by host peers. This apparent resentment matches with past research documenting challenges faced by international students of color at PWIs (e.g., Houshmand et al., 2014). Unlike White international students from Europe, international students from Africa, Asia, and Latin America studying in the U.S. described feeling ignored and disrespected by covert and overt forms of hostility, verbal insults, and confrontation (Lee & Rice, 2007). Taken together with these past studies, the current study suggests that racial dissimilarity affects how welcoming or resentful host peers are towards international students. Therefore, institutions of higher education seeking to promote the



adjustment of international students of color should consider ways to provide students with the necessary support, including social support, from peers.

Unfortunately, many higher education institutions provide limited support services to foster adaptation among international students studying in the U.S., and these interventions target the international students themselves (Madden et al., 2019). The current findings suggest the need for multicultural education for host peers to help promote a climate in which international students of color feel a sense of belonging. The goal of promoting multiculturalism is to acknowledge and affirm group differences while fostering positive attitudes towards those who are different (Rattan & Ambady, 2013). A general strategy to promote multiculturalism could be to highlight the positive effects of heterogeneous groups on instrumental outcomes such as problem-solving. For example, students might learn about the difficulties that emerge when racially homogenous groups work towards developing technology purportedly designed for universal use; they may also learn about the benefits of incorporating diverse voices, including those of people of color, to promote more useful applications (e.g., Wachter-Boettcher, 2018).

More specific strategies to promote multiculturalism might involve interventions designed to help host students' welcome diverse international students, perhaps by promoting awareness and empathy and reducing perceived threat. To promote awareness, educators might explain that it is common for people to feel more positively toward and more responsible for the well-being of others who appear similar to the self. Educators could ask host students to reflect on or discuss the potential adaptive benefits of such tendencies, the potential negative consequences, and the degree to which such tendencies match with their personal values. To promote empathy, host students might engage in situations that international students might encounter, such as taking a quiz in a different language or be eating culturally unfamiliar foods. Finally, interventions could be aimed at reducing perceptions of threat related to apparent competition for resources. For example, White students might be educated about the myth of the model minority and the pressures that such stereotypes place on Asian students. They might also learn about affirmative action and negative action debates, challenging the idea that students of color receive unfair advantages and preferential treatment. Helping host students identify the ways in which international students benefit them, and the campus more generally might help promote feelings of gratitude and compassion rather than competition and resentment.

Providing opportunities for meaningful, ongoing, high-quality intergroup contact between international and host students might also both increase empathy and reduce threat/anxiety. One specific suggestion might be to pair international students with a peer mentor. Facilitating ongoing, constructive interactions with host peers could be a useful supplement to existing programs that seek to promote international student integration. For example, a first-year seminar class for mostly Asian international students assessed whether the class helped students to learn about cultural norms for social interaction (Andrade, 2008). Although students reported being comfortable with diverse cultures, they also reported being less comfortable interacting with American peers than other peers, suggesting a need to foster international student comfort with host peer interactions. Providing structured opportunities such as peer mentoring might simultaneously benefit host peers as well as international students.

Future research is needed to test whether and under what conditions the adjustment of international students is directly affected by the receptivity of host peers. In past research, Asian international students reported significantly greater acculturative stress than European students (Poyrazli et al., 2004). Possibly, these differences in acculturative stress could be at least partly explained by host peer behaviors, including

a lack of social support, the presence of discrimination, or both. This is an important question for future research. In addition, in past research, compared to European international students, Asian international students reported significantly more anxiety as well as difficulty making new friends (Fritz et al., 2008). We strongly suspect that anxiety may be associated with facing social difficulties, although research is needed to specifically test whether and when these experiences are linked. Another area for future research involves the potential detrimental impact of strategies that international students of color use to be socially accepted in their host countries. For example, Zhao and Biernat (2018) found that Chinese students who adopt an Anglo name have lower self-esteem and this lower self-esteem also mediates a host of other psychological outcomes (e.g., overall well-being, mental and physical health).

The current research focused on host peers' receptivity to international students. However, future research is needed to study receptivity by faculty and staff to international students. For instance, prior work found White professors were less likely to respond to a student inquiry regarding graduate training when signed by a Chinese student using a stereotypically Chinese (compared to an Anglo) name (Zhao & Biernat, 2018). Similarly, Milkman and colleagues (2012) found evidence that faculty members favored requests to meet by White male students compared to minority and female students, even among faculty who received emails from students of their own race. Like the dominant host peers studied in the current research, these past studies suggest that many faculty members are less receptive than they might be to international students of color, and perhaps unintentionally so. Additional research on factors that affect faculty and staff responsiveness is needed given that these professionals are tasked with providing opportunities for academic and social integration and growth. Culturally competent faculty and staff who respond with greater receptivity might help offset the lack of receptivity offered by host peers.

Finally, future research also is needed to address the methodological limitations of the current study. Data were collected from a convenience sample of White, non-Latinx undergraduates, which may limit the external validity of the current findings. Students of color who are U.S. citizens also may show biases towards international students of color, although it is notable that most PWIs, by definition, enroll relatively few students of color, which limits the impact of their responses on the broader campus climate. In addition, U.S. students of color may themselves be negatively stereotyped in ways that create stress (McGree & Martin, 2011; Torres et al., 2010). That may adversely affect their own feelings of belonging on campus well as their receptivity towards international others. Studies of receptivity within different geographic regions are also needed. The current data were collected from a single PWI in a fairly rural, largely White county in upstate NY. It's unclear whether White participants in more racially and ethnically diverse regions would respond similarly to prospective international students of color. Given that the majority of international students enroll in schools in NY, TX, and CA (Israel & Batalova, 2021), studies of host receptivity across these different states, including within urban, rural, and suburban regions, should be conducted.

Other limitations warrant mention as well. Participants in the current study did not actually interact with a prospective international student. Naturalistic studies are needed, given that perceptions based on actual interactions may differ from self-reported perceptions. Also, data for the current project were collected prior to the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Future research is also needed to investigate the ways in which the pandemic has affected the receptivity of host students to international students of color, and in particular, students from Asia. After the first reports of the virus were reported from the Chinese city of Wuhan, the illness was often referred to as the "Chinese flu" or "Wuhan virus."

Subsequently, many people of Asian descent reported being targets of both explicit hate crimes and less explicit acts of racism and xenophobia, both in general (e.g., Tessler, Choi, & Kao, 2020) and on college campuses (e.g., Haft & Zhou, 2021).

### IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Overall, the current findings provide evidence that the racially dominant peer group responds to international students of color in ways that may create additional challenges for them in adjusting to college. Perceiving an Asian student as unfairly advantaged compared to a European student matches with past descriptions of U.S. college students' feelings of "envious anti-Asian prejudice" (Lin et al., 2005, p. 34). In contrast, we found that a student's model minority characteristics, rather than her race, were more strongly associated with her perceived lack of social competence. Programs that foster the academic and social integration of individual international students are likely to have limited success if institutions fail to consider how receptive host peers are to international students, particularly students of color who are at risk of being devalued.

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