



Planting Asian American Chapters

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Historical Context

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, InterVarsity's primary strategy for reaching Asian American students was to invite them to multiethnic chapters or predominantly white chapters. This strategy tended to draw low and moderate identity East Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese) Christian students who were able to adapt well to white culture. (See Appendix A: the Kitano-Daniel Grid, Cell A). In an effort to reach more Asian American students and to serve unstaffed students groups in the 1990's, InterVarsity acquired and affiliated independent East Asian-specific groups (mostly Korean and/or Chinese) and planted Ethnic-specific Asian fellowships in the Midwest and East coast out of existing "multiethnic" chapters. We were better able to attract and retain less assimilated Asian students (Cell B & Cell D). In the more diverse parts of the country, we've since expanded our targeted ethnic small group or ethnic-specific chapter strategy to reach South East Asians (e.g. Filipino, Hmong) and South Asians. The past 5 years of AFRs have indicated a steady growth in Asian American student numbers.

However, among staff, there was still a felt nervousness about celebrating the surge in Asian student numbers especially when a quarter of the faces at Urbana were Asian and there was fear that it might cause white flight. It wasn't until the larger Asian American Staff community looked back at our history, examined the present and looked to the future at the triennial 2010 Asian American Staff Conference that we felt permission to more freely target and contextualize our strategies to reach Asians of all ethnicities on campus. Even so, our tactics have been relatively undocumented and under-shared. The purpose of this paper is to record some of our best practices and to help the reader think through the nuances of reaching Asian and Asian American students on campus. The contributors have planted under various circumstances. Alice Liu and Christian Chin planted Asian American chapters out of existing multiethnic chapters. Planters from the National Chapter Planting Cohorts: Adam Leong (Cohort 3), Arul Karunanidhi (Cohort 4) and Andrea & Jason Huang (Cohort 5) planted chapters from scratch.

Strategic Planting – *Who are you trying to reach?*

The "who" question is an important one. Just as it is strategic to nuance ministry tactics to reach Black, Latino, Native American, White and Asian American students, one should also consider the contextualization that needs to occur when reaching out to Chinese American versus South Asian or Hmong students. Consider when a people group immigrated to the U.S. and the circumstances of that immigration. How recent was it? Was it voluntary in order to pursue the American dream? Was it involuntary in order to escape persecution or war? Also, consider shared cultural backgrounds (e.g., Confucian-based cultures (Chinese and Korean), Hindu-based cultures (South Asian), effects of imperialism (India and Philippines). Likewise, consider their religious upbringing. Churched Asian American students (which is more common when planting from an existing chapter) are socially and culturally distinct from unchurched Asian American students (more common when planting from scratch). The answer to these questions should influence how you invite, where you go to gather students, how you share the gospel, and what you do to attract and effectively keep students involved in the mission.

Strategic Planting – *Who keeps showing up?*

Who do you naturally attract? Who is more likely to attend an ethnic specific chapter? A multiethnic chapter? A different para-church ministry? Or a local church? Socio-economic factors come into play. Can only the middle class or upper middle class students afford the activities you choose?

Whom a group attracts often reflects the chapter culture and that culture is often influenced by the staff member's primary assumptions about what is acceptable and normative ministry. For example, I found that some higher identity, churched Korean American students found the more evangelistic, pan-Asian culture forming at University of Illinois @ Chicago too large of a cultural gap. They left the group that was targeting non-Christians and seekers to begin a local college ministry with a Korean pastor, whose messages were targeted for Christian believers who enjoyed theology.

Students will pick up quickly on what is affirmed behavior (e.g. reverent stance and dimmed lights during musical worship v. an atmosphere which doesn't judge drinking and partying on the weekends). How you make decisions (e.g. hierarchical v. democratic vote v. group consensus) and how you go about developing leaders (apprenticeship/mentorship v. a one-hour individual appointment each week) will make a difference as to who feels comfortable coming and advancing the mission of the group.

As we move through the stages, particular challenges emerge. For instance, we've found that moving to stage 3 is particularly challenging when the group is large and there are few missional students – a challenge more common when planting from scratch. Whereas in a more churched AA culture, or when one takes churched AA students to plant a chapter, trying to help these students let go of their "churchy" traditions in order to create a more open environment for non-Christians is usually the challenge.

As much as we would like to think we are doing *a-cultural, biblical, Christian ministry*, all ministry is influenced by one's cultural values and presuppositions, whether we are aware of it or not. And it is usually the dominant culture in the room or the persons in power, i.e. staff, core members, the leadership who establish that culture. See Appendices B and C for further reflection and assessment.

Action Needed

So now, to whom is God calling you to reach? How is He narrowing or expanding that vision? How are you growing in your personal ethnic identity and cross-cultural skills? Choose your set of challenges. Which ones are you willing to embrace?

Reflect on your own assumptions and hidden presuppositions about what chapter life ought to look like. If you were an InterVarsity product, your cultural norm undoubtedly has been influenced by your own personal chapter experience. If your background is of a particular denomination or church culture, that will inform what you see as normative.

Asian American Ministry Tactics

(framed by the 6 Chapter Planting Essentials)

Prayer

Observations and Best Practices:

- In my experience, prayer is the strand that has to run through everything or the whole thing falls apart. Considering all the barriers that South Asians have to the Gospel and the lack of churched South Asians on our campus the only reason we still exist is because of God's faithfulness to answer our prayers.
- Coming from a communal culture, it was easier to pray communally. And when formed around committed students, weekly prayer meetings have been well attended.
- Part of our authority and authenticity on campus came from really significant prayer ministry times with students. This was also huge in convincing students about the power of God.
- Prayer has been key throughout the (chapter planting) process for both staff and students.

- Prayer styles are culturally-determined (e.g., One Voice prayer v. individual prayer; early morning prayer meetings v. anytime meetings; passion v. precision)

Challenges:

- Teaching new methods of prayer that may be unfamiliar to a given denomination or subculture. Koreans (have had the reputation of being more disciplined or) stronger at prayer, but I found that I had to be more directive with (teaching them about) listening prayer.
- Introducing new prayer content, e.g. praying for our culture (confession and interceding), and praying for the success and needs of the Asian American community.

Authoritative Vision

Observations and Best Practices:

- Take advantage of your innate authority as a campus pastor. AA students are more apt to listen to staff and follow with fewer objections. But, because they may follow without personal conviction, it is important that they SHOW you they are on board with the vision as opposed to just TELLING you they are in.
- To help students have ownership of the vision, (especially in unchurched circles where there isn't a common understanding of what Christian thinking or behavior entails) critical mass and "approval" is usually needed from key students with social power in the AA community. When the community validates and affirms vision, the vision is more apt to move forward.
- Students "catch" vision at conferences (e.g. Urbana & Imago Dei)
- Strong vision needs to be repeated over and over.
- (From my experience) vision is only seen as credible and possible after a communal experience (i.e. catalytic event)
- Outreach to South Asians from non-Christian backgrounds is an important aspect of the vision that always needs to be reaffirmed. If it is not, it's easy for the fellowship to turn into a haven for non-missional South Asians from churched backgrounds (which reflects the cultural realities of a church community living for centuries as a minority community within a Hindu state)
- Casting vision for 1) Evangelization of the Asian American community and 2) Campus renewal is key. The enterprising leadership of an Asian American student leader (e.g. ours was president of AAA and of AAIV) can influence the idea of campus renewal.
- An experiential way to cast vision is to visit a Hindu temple and then debrief the experience. Call the temple beforehand and ask if you can bring a small group (4-5) to view the inside of the temple. Some churched South Asians might be opposed to entering, if this happens, debrief their feelings and consider how you can help them see the lostness of Hindu students.

Challenges:

- Presuppositions about purpose. Vision casting needs to happen often, particularly for churched students who come with certain assumptions about the purpose of the group. The vision of missional community can be undermined by the common Asian experience of strong non-missional community.
- Lack of vision for witness to AA students. A specific vision for witnessing particularly to the Asian American community is helpful in providing focus.
- Mobilizing a large fellowship. It become challenging to promote the idea of campus renewal, particularly to churched Asian Americans who have been acculturated to accommodate systems for the sake of personal security and family advancement

Outreach

Observations and Best Practices:

Reaching MCs and PMCs:

- Network with local churches to connect with students.
- During NSO, provide an event for AA freshmen to gather and mingle before other AA student org events.

- Capitalize on word of mouth from current members and church connections.
- Put different ethnic representations up-front during Bible studies
- Pray that God brings other Asians to the fellowship.
- Join and/or network with presidents and club officers of AA organizations on campus. Look for missional students. Encourage students to be involved in the cultural clubs, e.g. Taiwanese Students Association.
- Partner with existing Asian American student organizations attending your NSO outreach dinner.
- Strategically situate your fair table in the ethnic/cultural aisle instead of the religious aisle – catches students with a diversity of interest: some spiritual interest, some spiritually curious, some just socially interested.
- Learn about other ethnicities and learn to cook different kinds of ethnic foods so as to provide students with a taste of home.
- Sponsor an alternative music band ("Tim Be Told concert) or dance competition to raise money/awareness for human trafficking.
- Create a weekly hangout social event series with high quality events that involve food. These build momentum and create a natural place for AA social life.
- Although outreach may be a foreign concept to many AA students (i.e. they may have been raised in an Asian home church and never learned how to reach out beyond their church), once they became more adept with outreach, they can become amazing at it. Create an "ohana" or family culture in which everyone feels like they belong. The family culture helps to (build) ... natural inroads to new students and to non-Christians.
- AA communities look for a large communal space, so it is easy to reach many people
- Periodically making lists and praying for non-believers inside the AIV community has been key to helping the CORE community to take ownership of potentially spiritually curious people in their own backyard... and really taking advantage of the crowds of students that only come to AIV social events.
- The primary mode of regular outreach is usually a mix of both internal AIV sponsored events and AIV-goes-to-another-organization's-event-together events. (Medium O's.)

Reaching South Asian Students:

In the South Asian context, of the 6 Essentials, outreach (and gathering) required the most contextualization. Outreaches also involved more non-Christians than Christian students.

- Forget the idea of NSO only happening in the first 2-3 weeks. Because the Christian South Asian population is usually much smaller having a big push to meet them in the first few weeks isn't the best use of your time. Year round you want to be meeting and connecting with both non-Christian and Christian South Asians. Also, NSO for South Asian students will not look like traditional Multiethnic NSOs. What may be more effective for an ME fellowship (i.e. tabling) is probably the weakest way to find/connect with SA's. More effective strategies involve going to where SA's already gather and making relational connections or networking through SA Christian students and finding out when new students from their churches will be coming on campus.
- Non-South Asians can come aboard with the vision and be effective at reaching the South Asian community. If you run across students with good cross-cultural skills and a heart for South Asians tackle them! They may turn out to be the most missional students in your core.
- Establishing meaningful relationships with South Asians is a necessary prerequisite to inviting them to a gathering that is social or spiritual in nature. Since many South Asians come from a non-Christian background and have either a strong adherence to their particular faith or form of religious pluralism, they may have an aversion to the idea of Christian conversion. It is unlikely that they will attend larger Christian gatherings. They are more responsive to relational invitations as opposed to event-oriented invitations.
- Avoid a bait and switch. It is very important to be clear about whether the event/gathering is a social or a spiritual event. Mixing the two could lead to breaking trust and confirm their skepticism that Christians just want to force them to believe in their religion. Inviting them to an Indian potluck and then having someone stand up and share their testimony/Gospel equals bait and switch to South Asians.

- Sponsor effective social outreaches: game nights, sporting activities (volleyball, basketball, cricket, etc.), Bollywood movie nights, potlucks with Indian food, etc. Attending another South Asian organization's events are easy invite activities and great ways to meet more South Asians.
- Sponsor interfaith dialogue events. The most effective spiritual outreach activities have been small group bible studies run as GIGs and interfaith dialogue events. Once a semester host an event called "Faith and Chai." The goal of the event is to create a neutral and respectful environment for students to come and dialogue about their perspectives on faith and religion. The core students facilitate these discussions at table groups with 5-6 other students. If follow-up is done well, students who attend are likely to continue dialoging with the core about spiritual issues and even attend a bible study.

Challenges:

- Resistance towards risking reputation. AAs are very eager to take risks to invite friends to communal spaces (dinners, etc.) but very risk-averse when doing things that could potentially harm their personal reputation with the community.
- Resistance to leaving the safety of the herd to meet new people.
- Tendency to defer the more missional work to the staff worker.
- Lack of pattern or skills in gathering, building trusting friendships with non-believers, assessing spirituality, selecting the most helpful course of action, noticing non-believers in the chapter, giving multiple invitations, and moving people along to true conversation.
- The small number of Asian American friends with whom students can know and witness to on a primarily white campus.
- Whether 1st generation or 2nd generation, seeing South Asians from non-Christian backgrounds make decisions for Christ tends to take time. You may be witnessing to them their entire college career as they consider the claims of Christ in light of their family, their culture, and their preexisting religious beliefs. Do not grow discouraged.

Gathering

Observations and Best Practices:

- Build in strategic communal experiences (small catalytic events) into the chapter's rhythm.
- Use core meetings and prayer gatherings to share about the specific mission on campus.
- Break up the core into "corelets" (in order to better focus on developing PMCs), where there is a weekly missional challenge for all students.
- Maintain liminal spaces where the chapter is constantly sharing social ground with AA organizations. This encourages involvement in these groups and makes it possible for students not to have to choose between the AA community and IV.
- AAIV presidents can be key to ambitiously fostering relationships with leaders in the AA community (or being on leadership in an AA org themselves); these have resulted in opportunities for joint events - some spiritual in content, others not.
- Core gatherings may include visiting an AA org's meeting and meeting new people, partnering events with other AA orgs, and visiting during office hours to get to know, ask questions of the officers and "spy out the land" of AAA.
- Teaching student leaders to cast vision and continue to invite to the core has been key. Asian American students really need the personal invitation to start coming regularly.

Challenges:

- Some of my most missional students who have developed lives outside of the chapter are sometimes not identified by staff or student leaders as "on the inside" or real members...however, they identify with AAIV and feel comfortable moving in and out of this space while retaining involvement in the AA community.
- Churched AAs in particular are wary or inexperienced in Asian American non-Christian culture.
- The idol of academics. Mission is great as long as it doesn't conflict with schoolwork.

Leadership Development

Observations and Best Practices:

- Students accustomed to or expecting a formal leadership structure find a lack of structure challenging in stages 1-2. Help students lead out in missionality (lead a GIG, make friends with other AA leaders or share the gospel one-on-one).
- Resist the temptation to develop only students who can run a fellowship as opposed to students who can run with a vision for mission on campus.
- Students are more apt to be open to a staff person modeling leadership with them as it's easy to create trust earlier in a hierarchical culture of Asians.
- Students benefit from verbal acknowledgement and affirmation of their leadership gifts and potential before recruiting them for leadership. (They need to be invited to lead because your invitation gives them permission to lead. You should not wait for them to volunteer.)

Challenges:

- Students may feel limited by social and age hierarchy. However, it is possible to challenge these innate assumptions and redefine what leadership looks like (i.e. a sophomore can lead small group or serve on the leadership team). It requires managing a culture change and reinforcing new definitions of leader as influencer, as opposed to students being ascribed leadership status by virtue of age or time in the ministry.
- Leadership development may take a little bit longer in an Asian context. Asian Americans are more communal in nature, and in humility, may not promote themselves for leadership as readily. It is important to not merely make leadership opportunities known, but to invite them into spaces. It gives them permission to lead. It may take a while before students begin to initiate and have it feel more natural instead of just following which feels more comfortable for our Asian American students.
- You will need to address a fear of failure (and the shame which results from failure) as you develop leaders.

Catalytic Events

Observations and Best Practices:

- Experience and Community were crucial pieces to Catalytic events.
- One important Catalytic event was a Fall Conference where a student in the community very publicly stood to accept Christ. Although 4 other students had received Christ for the first time the week before, this public act moved and convicted the entire chapter. As a result a South Asian student felt called to start a South Asian ministry and has been working on planting that faithfully. A number of students (with increased faith) began bringing their non-Christian friends to AAIV, in hopes that they might also become Christians.

Challenges:

- One of the most important steps in catalytic events has been to have tangible action items ready immediately. I've seen some potentially catalytic events go by the wayside because I was not ready for it and by the time I was prepared school had taken over again.

Living Out the 2012-17 National Strategic Plan in an Asian American Context

Evangelism

Reciprocity

- Reciprocity is key when inviting students to your events. Make sure you attend the Asian organization events on campus and that you help promote these events

Churches Asian American Christians & Evangelism Theology

- Churched Christians may be wary of non-Christians and new Christians and sometimes will choose to be heavily invested in a local church rather than the InterVarsity chapter. Or they may really struggle on a relational and theological level with whether para-church is valid.

- There are a number of students who do not choose us because messages were not theologically dense. They do need and look for “quality” worship (as defined by their youth group experiences).

Growth

Community & Networking

- Beware of mistaking a student’s commitment to community as a commitment to the mission. Because Asian Americans generally enjoy the lure of community, they may “put up with” a teaching/emphasis on mission in order to stay within the community.
- Having students who can gather—people who are good at fostering a spirit of welcome as well as excitement for an activity, vision or mission—is key in an AA planting situation Asian Americans who are naturally communal are easily attracted to gatherers. This has made moving from stage to stage quicker and developing MCs quicker also.
- Asian Americans seem to prefer doing activities (missional) together. Unfortunately many activities that the core does require individual commitment and action... which they are hesitant to do. Take advantage of the natural desire to be together by crafting more communal missional activities, such as joining another campus club together as a way of building relationships with seekers.
- My first year of “spying out the land” was spent mostly building relationships with students in the Asian Pacific Islander American (APIA) clubs on campus. Since the AA population at Mizzou is so low relative to the entire student body, working with the APIA groups allowed me to build trust with a relatively large number of AA students in a short amount of time. My philosophy has always been to complement and not compete with the other APIA groups on campus, which has led to great bridges being built. We cross promote each other’s events and do our best not to have date conflicts, which has really helped our group grow and thrive, as well as build relationships with non-Christians.

Discipleship

Shame, Grace & Celebration

- Emphasizing the grace of God when addressing sin is helpful, especially for church-ed students who are very accustomed to hearing about the judgment of God from their pastors or parents.
- Celebrating what God is doing in our lives is key to balancing out the tendency to dwell in shame.

Core & Leadership Development

- Being part of a hierarchical culture is an important factor. Because white students come from an egalitarian culture and view staff as friend or an equal, it takes time to prove oneself deserving of their respect. In contrast, AA students give staff respect and trust without many questions and thus it’s actually easier to get things done in many ways.
- Be patient with how quickly you invite people into the Core. Planters should be aware that AA students coming from highly church-ed and highly hierarchical cultures tend to act on what staff say and appear more missional than they really are.
- Unless one is on a campus with a very large Christian South Asian population, planters need to immediately consider how to bring in any South Asian Christian encountered into the core, cast vision, and develop them as a missional leader.
- The experience of being invited by an older person into a discipleship relationship and leadership roles is key for many AA students.
- The planting model assumes a gradual shift of leadership and centrality from the staff to the student leaders. Asian Americans have a complicated relationship with authority coming from a hierarchal culture and their experience with intergenerational conflict. So this gradual shift may not be very easy to manage.
- Modeling and giving AA students an opportunity to see missional activity done well and successfully is important, possibly because of a hesitancy towards risk and challenge. When other AA staff share about evangelism in their chapter our students are challenged in a helpful way. They think, “they can do it, why can’t we?”

Hierarchy & Status

- Asian Americans are very highly functioning, busy students who seek out strong communities. They're very similar to Greeks in some ways.
- It is challenging to retain upperclassmen (who aren't Christians) that want authority and recognition within the group. It can be difficult to retain these upperclassmen as their reputation and role within the group is based on their positional authority... and we can't necessarily give them the positional authority that they want because they're not Christians.
- The leaders of similar status best in reaching club/social leaders. Personal relationships as simple as being on a same name basis are helpful. Look for opportunities to serve and resource them because AA orgs tend to be desperate for resources and mentors. It's a great thing if you can cast vision for the Asian American community and their organization better than they can.

Multiethnicity

What does it mean to value multiethnicity and grow in cross-cultural competence?

There are numerous definitions and perspectives on cross-cultural competence. The National Multiethnic Ministry's Department would like to see our staff, students and faculty grow: *in the ability to interact effectively with people of various cultures and ethnic backgrounds, particularly in the context of student/faculty ministry, camps, office work, and organizational management.*

To acquire greater cross-cultural competency one must continually grow in the following areas:

1. ***Biblical Understanding:*** being convinced of the Biblical foundations of culture and ethnicity, as well as God's desire to reach all nations by various means. This includes various modes of ministry (i.e. ministering in ethnic-specific contexts and ethnically diverse contexts);
2. ***Historical Knowledge:*** knowing and understanding the history of race and ethnicity, both in the general U.S. context and in a specific sub-context and/or subculture.
3. ***Personal Awareness:*** a self-understanding of one's own ethnicity and culture, both currently and historically.
4. ***Skills Development:*** using audience and context-specific cross-cultural tools when crossing from one's own culture to the targeted culture. These tools relate to language, cultural cues, mindset, time, trust, conflict, etc.

Is focusing on reaching Asian Americans biblical?

Yes! Or we wouldn't have this paper. When planting on campuses where there is a multiethnic chapter or other existing chapters, you, your students and faculty will need to be versed on the biblical basis for ethnic specific chapters. Asian American students in a multiethnic chapter can sometimes be critical of AA's who "silo off into an AA enclave". Check out *Ethnicity Matters* © 2012, featuring James Choung on <http://vimeo.com/35721693>. Discussion guide may be found on the MEM website.

How does an Asian American chapter keep its focus on the AA community and not become a multiethnic chapter by default?

Targeting the AA community does not mean intentionally turning away non-Asian Americans. Due to the very communal nature of the AA community, people from other cultures often feel very welcome to attend. If so, that is great! However, the chapter planter needs to continually focus on addressing the issues of the AA community, use illustrations that are understandable to the heart-language of the community and unapologetically try not to accommodate to every other type ethnic community. In any group there will be a dominant culture that emerges. In an Asian American chapter, the dominant cultural values will have an Asian American flare—in what types of food is served, how leaders are raised up and developed, in what musical worship sounds like, in the activities that are seen as fun and attractive, how shame and grace is addressed in the gospel, etc. Non-AA's attending need to be helped to understand that the group exists primarily to reach non-Christian Asian Americans on campus. A key question to continually ask the leadership is "*who or what AA niche have we not yet reached on this campus?*"

Once the chapter has effectively reached all of the Asian Americans on campus (e.g. AA leaders influencing the campus, unchurched AA's, AA clubs/associations, AA artists, AA Greeks,

Southeast Asians, South Asians, AA internationals, AA staff and faculty, etc.), we strongly encourage you to intentionally target another ethnicity. *In healthy chapter plants, the chapter begins to start new things in other contexts or niches.* A few African American students at University of Pittsburgh attended the AIV chapter for a year and falling in love with AIV and attending InterVarsity's regional Black student conference, they had a burden to help plant a Black Campus Ministry (BCM) chapter! A parallel phenomenon occurred at the BCM chapter at Youngstown State. After year 4, students decided to intentionally target two different niches—International students and Black Greek students. Ethnic specific chapters can be quite missional in this way because they are often more keenly aware of what makes a person feel welcomed or feel like an outsider, that they go out of their way to help people feel included. Asian American (and other ethnic specific) small groups or chapters can value and live out multiethnicity. It will look different from a multiethnic chapter where many of the cross-cultural realities come to play in whole group gatherings (aka large group) or in core and leadership meetings. For ethnic specific chapters, cross-cultural relationships also occur when chapters share New Student Outreach tables, co-sponsor evangelistic or justice events and pray together. Additionally, opportunities for cross-cultural relationships will present themselves at urban and global projects, multi-chapter training conferences, camps and Urbana conventions. We encourage campuses with multiple chapters to covenant to working together in reaching the whole campus in all its cultures and ethnicities. To see what other chapters are doing in multiethnicity, view the *Portraits from the Journey* DVD (uploaded onto the MEM website).

Additional Resources:

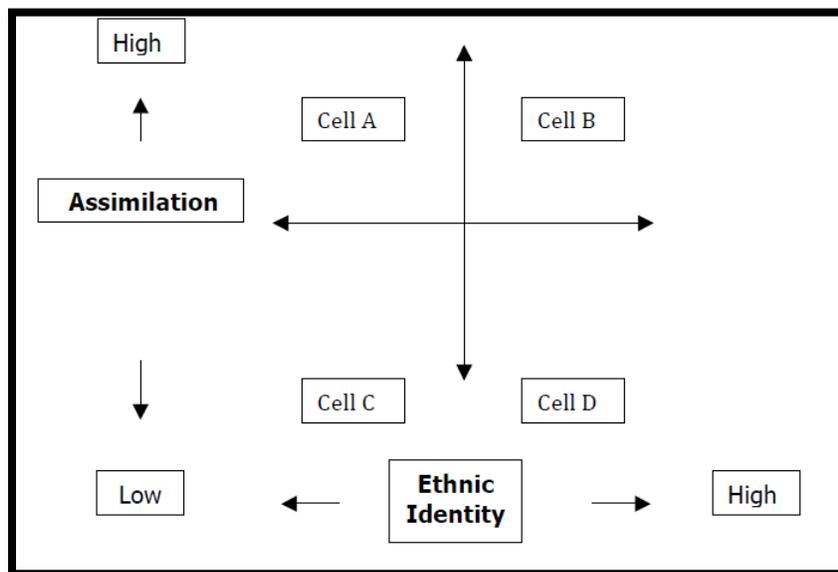
- AAM website, <http://mem.intervarsity.org/aam>
- MES12 virtual resources website, <http://mes12.intervarsity.org/seminar-resources>.
- National Chapter Planting resources, <http://www.intervarsity.org/mx/page/chapterplanting>
- Collegiate Ministries website, <http://collegiateministries.intervarsity.org/chapter-planting>

My hope is that this paper is just one of many shared resources to come. Blessings as you extend Christ and reach more Asian and AA students and faculty on campus.

– Humbly submitted, Marcia J. Wang, 5/5/12

Appendix A: Ethnic Identity/Assimilation Grid (June 2001)

(From Harry Kitano and Roger Daniels, *Asian Americans: Emerging Minorities*)



Assimilation includes:

- Integration into schools, work places and social groupings of the majority culture
- Identification with the majority
- Marital assimilation

Ethnic identity focuses on *the retention of ethnic ways*.

Questions for reflection and discussion

- How would taking an individual's or group's levels of ethnic identity and assimilation into account affect specific strategies you pursue in trying to reach, gather, develop and serve them?
- Are you reaching primarily churched or unchurched Asians?

Appendix B: Ethnic Identity/Assimilation Grid Applied to Asian Americans

(applied from Kitano and Daniels by Jeannette Yep)

Cell A—high assimilation, low ethnic identity

- More (dominant culture) American than ethnic
- Feels completely "at home" in the dominant culture
- Are assimilated and accepted
- Includes third + generation of Asian Americans and Asian Americans who may have grown up isolated from other Asians
- Friendship and social patterns, these folks relate to a high number of non-Asians
- High rate of "out-marriage"

Cell B—High assimilation, high ethnic identity

- In friendship patterns, membership in organizations etc., these folks show a bicultural perspective
- Move back and forth between American and Asian cultures easily
- Interested in keeping his/her ethnic heritage alive and is quite knowledgeable about it
- Can serve as bridge people between cultures

Cell C—Low assimilation, low ethnic identity

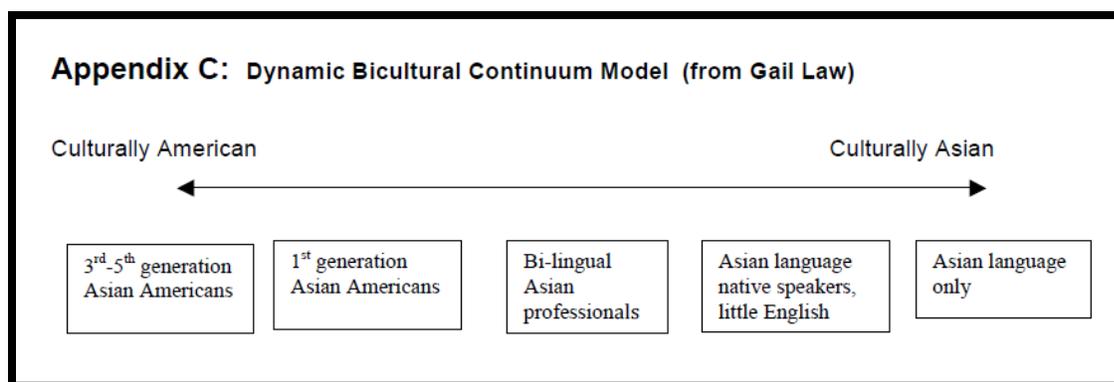
- Can feel estranged, disenchanted and disillusioned
- Aren't at home in any of the two cultures they find themselves in
- Maybe includes some Eurasian or mixed race folks

Cell D—Low assimilation, high ethnic identity

- Can include newly arrived immigrants
- Identify more closely to the ethnic community than the American one and tend to live with fellow Cell D types
- Are culturally are more ethnic than American

Appendix C: Dynamic Bicultural Continuum Model

(from Gail Law)



[Planting Asian American Chapters](#) is posted on the [Collegiate Ministries website](#) with related resources for InterVarsity staff and student leaders.