



TEXAS EDUCATION REVIEW

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TEXAS EDUCATION REVIEW

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Welcome to Volume 8, Issue 1 (Fall 2019) of the *Texas Education Review* (TxEd).

This issue contains four manuscripts, including: a critical organizational theory perspective to an examination of how higher education scholars struggled with the issue of institutional racism within their studies on Black doctoral students at Predominantly White Institutions (Nagbe); an examination of the Córdoba University Reform Movement of 1918 through both an historical perspective and the application of Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (Patterson); an exploratory analysis of teacher gesturing via a case study of an elementary teacher (Fernandez, Tharayil & Callahan); and an analysis of Texas postsecondary institutions that have enrolled students with disabilities over a five-year period (2013-2017) (Charran, Bicak & Taylor).

In addition to these pieces, we feature two critical forums curated by TxEd editorial board members. The first forum, edited by Chloe Latham Sikes, examines the current political landscape in Texas educational policy through a review of some of the most salient debates in public education during the state legislative session of 2019. Inspired by the first volume of TxEd, which offered a "time capsule" of perspectives on state educational policy issues, this forum provides an update on Texas educational policy and politics, and directions for the future. In the second critical forum, Z.W. Taylor presents pieces that examine cross-cultural mentoring in education and its ability to connect people from different races, ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, genders, and other personal identities.

Information for Contributors

The *Texas Education Review* is an independent, peer reviewed, student-run scholarly publication based at the College of Education at The University of Texas at Austin. The *Texas Education Review* was founded and is operated by doctoral students at The University of Texas at Austin's College of Education, which consistently ranks as one of the best public university graduate education programs in the United States.

The *Texas Education Review* aims to advance scholarship by publishing an academic journal of the highest quality including works by graduate students, professors, and practitioners, focusing on education policy and related issues. This journal features articles, essays, notes, and reviews relevant to a national and international audience of scholars and practitioners. The *Texas Education Review* focuses on analysis of education policy and related issues, with non-exclusive preference given to issues affecting the State of Texas. Each issue shall display unparalleled excellence in content and style. Further, The *Texas Education Review* fosters the academic and professional development of its members through participation in the editorial process and each member displays the highest standards of integrity and professional excellence in every endeavor.

From Sweatt v. Painter and No Child Left Behind, to charter schools, curriculum policy, and textbook adoption, the State of Texas has played and will continue to play a critical role in shaping education policy in the United States. The *Texas Education Review* is located directly on The University of Texas's campus in the heart of downtown Austin. Its close proximity to the Texas Capitol, Texas Education Agency, and State Board of Education offers unparalleled access to the thought leaders, policy makers, and academics who are driving education policy in Texas.



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The Black (W)hole: Examining Institutional Racism in Doctoral Education, an OrgCrit Perspective

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The Black (W)hole: Examining Institutional Racism in Doctoral Education, an OrgCrit Perspective

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Doctoral program socialization was originally conceived to capture the formal and informal processes or stages by which graduate students become acclimated to the norms, ideologies, values, procedures, and behaviors of their departments and institutions, and ultimately embrace roles as independent knowledge producers in their respective academic or professional fields (Weidman et al., 2001). Given their prominence for harboring most doctoral degree-granting institutions, Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) serve as an essential socialization site for students who wish to pursue careers in the professoriate, academic administration, or other professional fields in non-academic arenas to utilize their expertise as researchers. Because adequate preparation for such careers is required and traditionally fostered through doctoral programs, a student's socialization process during their graduate training is crucial for their successful transition into the job market (Blockett et al., 2016).

Black Doctoral Student Socialization in the Matrix of Domination

While reaching this terminal level of higher education is no easy endeavor for anyone, several overlapping empirical and conceptual research in the literature echoed—for Black doctoral students in particular—the environment, structures, relationships, policies, and practices that fashioned their socialization experiences were plagued with racialized hostility, barriers, and marginalization (Blockett et al., 2016; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Haynes, Stewart, & Allen, 2016). As affirmed in many of the narratives unearthed through these scholars' work, Black doctoral students' individual and collective struggle is permeated by what Collins (2002) identified as a matrix of domination—a concept drawn from her rendition of Black Feminist Thought, which pointed to the phenomenon of an interlocking system of oppression existing in four domains: structurally, disciplinarily, hegemonically, and interpersonally.

Despite its conceptual usefulness, there have been no studies since Collins' (2002) publication that centered the matrix of domination as a theoretical construct to understand the environmental conditions of Black doctoral students' socialization experiences. Instead, the closest attempt to empirically studying such a phenomenon was Gildersleeve et al.'s (2011) work on doctoral student experiences with everyday racism. Here, these scholars raised awareness around the projection of insecurity and doubt onto students of color in doctoral level educational spaces—both through hegemonic and interpersonal formulations of the matrix of domination, although they were not explicitly named as such.

In a similar study, Barker (2016) looked at cross-race engagement between Black doctoral students and their white advisors at PWIs. This scholar found that Black doctoral students endured varying forms of racial socialization by learning how to navigate through racist departmental practices. One students in their study navigated through those racist departmental practices involved them preferring to keep a strictly professional relationship as a defense mechanism around racial boundaries—which exemplified the structural and disciplinary domains of the matrix of domination. Although these students sought connections among faculty with their same racial identity, the

underrepresentation of faculty of color in academia does not lend itself to accommodate this desire—a clear sign that the matrix of domination was at work once again.

Focusing specifically on those pursuing the professoriate after graduate school, Blockett et al. (2016) conducted a systematic literature review on the socialization experiences of Black doctoral students in U.S. higher education institutions. Mentorship from faculty, development around this professional role, and support offered through their program environment were cautioned as key areas of socialization where doctoral students of color felt the most marginalized. Examples of these varying forms of marginalization appeared through Black doctoral students' feelings of isolation and invisibility within and beyond classroom spaces, or within the tensions between finding community in Black student organizations yet having the presence of such groups in historically white institutional contexts deemed illegitimate.

As shown throughout the work of Gildersleeve et al., (2011), Barker (2016), and Blockett et al., (2016), Black doctoral students are seemingly tasked with reconciling the (mis)alignment between their racial and other intersectional identities, interests, and values with the culture, norms, and rituals of their department and institution. It appears as though being a Black doctoral student in a predominantly white institutional space could potentially mean being connected to this matrix of domination that one must actively work against. However, to what extent is this racialized socialization work within the operative context of institutionalized racism made apparent in how researchers and practitioners discuss Black doctoral students' access to and/or their experiences in graduate education?

Peering into the Black (W)hole

Upon reading the existing literature on Black doctoral students' socialization experiences at PWIs, the matrix of domination and institutional racism appeared to be normalized attributes of doctoral education for students with minoritized identities. Yet, these attributes were not accounted for in current models of doctoral socialization. Moreover, in some scholars' work such as Lewis et al., (2004) and McGaskey (2015), I found that their discussions about systematic oppression and structural barriers in the form of institutional racism remained peripheral to their inquiry. While issues of race and racism were key issues raised across the literature base on doctoral education, evidence of researchers grappling with these realities surfaced primarily in the implication sections of their work. This signals a need for scholars to explicitly unpack the manifestations of institutional racism within doctoral education, particularly for students with minoritized identities. Doing so informs important socialization agents (i.e. students, faculty, staff, and administrators) on how to minimize issues such as marginalization, discrimination, persistence or attrition within their programs.

To meet the need for explicit unpacking, I conducted this systematic literature review to properly address this conundrum of a "Black (w)hole" in existing scholarship on institutional racism in doctoral education. I bracketed the "w" in whole to represent the dual realization that although there is a whole body of literature on race and racialization in doctoral education, there still remains a hole in research that positions institutional racism as the focal point for empirically or conceptually examining Black doctoral student experiences. Thus, the purpose of this systematic literature review was to apply a critical organizational theory (OrgCrit) perspective on how higher education scholars grappled with the issue of institutional racism within their studies on Black doctoral students at PWIs. My usage of an OrgCrit approach was to foreground institutional racism as a construct embedded within the operations, structure, and environment of organizational entities, including doctoral

programs. The key research questions that guided this systematic literature review were: Within research on Black doctoral students who attend Predominantly White Institutions, 1) How do higher education scholars interpret the manifestation of institutional racism in Black doctoral student experiences? and 2) Where are these manifestations of institutional racism situated in the organizational structure of doctoral programs?

Below, I detail the conceptual framework and methodology used to select and analyze my sample of peer-reviewed journal articles. Next, I offer a thematic presentation of my findings using my conceptual framework. Finally, I conclude with thoughts and implications on how to move our scholarship forward on understanding the manifestations of institutional racism in graduate education, particularly around Black doctoral student socialization experiences.

Conceptual Framework

This systematic literature review incorporated Griffith et al.'s (2016) model of institutional racism, which was formulated through their study on the functions of racialized oppression through health service organizations. They defined institutional racism as "a systematic set of patterns, procedures, practices, and policies that operate within institutions so as to consistently penalize, disadvantage, and exploit individuals who are members of non-white groups" (p. 289). This model argued that institutional racism operated at every level of an organization, including their features and structures, and offered the following typology:

- A) individual level, racism operates through staff members' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.
- B) intraorganizational level, institutional racism operates through an organization's internal climate, policies, and procedures. These include the relationships among staff, which are rooted in formal and informal hierarchies and power relationships.
- C) extraorganizational level, institutional racism explains how organizations influence communities, public policies, and institutions. Also, institutional racism describes how organizations are affected by larger institutions (i.e., regulatory, economic, political, professional) and are shaped by the sociopolitical and economic contexts that frame an organization's policies, procedures, and functioning (Griffith et al., 2016, p. 289)

In alignment with Griffith et al.'s (2016) focus on health service organizations, higher education can be complex organizations (Bastedo, 2012) that are not immune from the endemic nature of institutional racism. Since our public educational system operates within a broader systemic milieu of racial oppression (Ladson-Billings, 1998), I applied Griffith's model of institutional racism to undergird my analysis of how higher education scholars make meaning of its presence within their research on Black doctoral student experiences.

To compliment Griffith et al.'s (2016) model, I turned to Becker's (2004) conception of organizational routines to understand the mechanisms of institutional racism that exist within the individual, intraorganizational, and extraorganizational levels of doctoral education. Per Becker (2004), organizational routines are behavioral regularities, or "recurrent interaction patterns" and cognitive regularities, which involve "rules, standard operating procedures, etc." (p. 662). In this respect, the organizational routines that shape the doctoral education exist within the behaviors of departmental students, faculty, and personnel, along with the formal and informal rules and operative protocols that

regulate the ideologies that drive those behaviors. Becker (2004) emphasized the ability of organizational routines to function as coordinating devices, reduce uncertainty, offer stability and store knowledge. These functions served as the basis of my analysis on the elements and processes that doctoral programs deploy as organizational routines, with the intent to focus on how higher education scholars discuss these dynamics in their research on Black doctoral students at PWIs.

Methodology

Epistemology

I approached this work through a critical social constructionism epistemology to both describe higher education scholars' interpretation of Black doctoral students' experiences and "produce a sociopolitical critique" (Koro-Ljungberg et al., 2009, p. 689). Because this study focused on researcher interpretations of institutional racism within Black doctoral students' experiences at PWIs, my epistemic and methodological decisions intentionally center their experiences as a marginalized group within this institutional context.

Researcher Positionality

Having traversed the terrains of elite and highly influential public PWIs, I self-identify as a scholar-activist, dedicated to using my scholarship to investigate how institutional racism and other forms of structural oppression hinder the success of graduate students, particularly doctoral students of color. My shared lived experiences as a current doctoral student were useful in crafting this literature review's approach and analysis around the realities and nuances we face in this graduate space, which oftentimes are not captured. Admittedly, my close proximity to this work required careful attentiveness to manage the amount of influence my biases brought to this literature review. In recognizing the multiplicities of researchers' perspectives on institutional racism within doctoral education, I incorporated reflexive journaling as a means of ethical validation (Hayes & Singh, 2012) throughout the duration of this literature review.

Data Sources

To explore the literature on Black doctoral student experiences at PWIs, I delimited my search around peer-reviewed articles published from 2000-2018, and ran four queries using combinations of the following terms: African American OR blacks OR minorities OR "minority groups" OR "of color"; doctoral students OR graduate students OR doctoral programs OR graduate programs OR doctoral education OR graduate education; socialization; NOT mentor; PWI OR predominantly white institution; curricular* OR coursework; undergraduates OR "college students" OR doctoral students OR graduate students OR doctoral programs OR graduate programs OR graduate education OR doctoral education; and (scholarly OR academic OR professional) n1 (identity OR "self concept" OR "self perception"). The aforementioned notations were a compilation of words, letters, symbols, and numbers as shown, to activate specific algorithms that would return the type of articles I intended to find within the literature databases of my search queries.

The initial search returned 443 articles. However, I narrowed down my sample of articles based on the following exclusion criteria of studies that: only had one black doctoral student in their study, but did not offer any interpretations of their experiences; grouped students as underrepresented minorities or students/people of color, but failed to specify the distinct experiences reported by Black

doctoral students in their study; solely discussed faculty level issues about working with Black doctoral students, without incorporating the voices of Black doctoral students themselves; related to graduate support programs external to the department or institution (e.g. bridge program, preparatory institutes, national mentoring initiatives, professional associations); focused on recruitment or prospective Black doctoral students; or provided an annotated review of another research study. Based upon this exclusion criteria, a combined total of 28 peer-reviewed journal articles were selected for this literature review's analytical sample.

Data Analysis

After locating each article in my analytical sample, I followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach to conduct a textual and categorical analysis. Because I was interested in higher education scholars' interpretations of institutional racism in Black doctoral student experiences, I extracted the discussion, implications, and conclusion sections of each article in my sample. Each article was combined into a single PDF document, separated by the articles' author, year of publication, and title to label each section of extracted text, then converted it to .RTF format, and uploaded the file to NVivo for analysis. During the first and second cycles of coding (Saldaña, 2013), I used deductive codes (racism, oppress*, barrier, interpretation, individual, intraorganizational, and extraorganizational) drawn from my research questions and central phenomena within my conceptual framework to search the extracted text. I encountered one major limitation of incongruency among the articles, as the authors did not follow the same signposting structure of discussion, implications, and conclusion. To correct for this limitation within articles that veered away from those traditional headings, I used subjective judgement to pinpoint which elements constituted discussion, implications, and conclusion sections by extracting the text that immediately followed where authors stated their findings or results.

Findings

Scholar Interpretations of Institutional Racism

My first research question asked, "Within research on Black doctoral students who attend Predominantly White Institutions, how do higher education scholars interpret the manifestation of institutional racism in Black doctoral student experiences?" Higher education scholars in my analytical sample of selected literature covered a breadth of focus areas regarding Black doctoral student experiences (Table 1), based upon the organizational levels drawn from my conceptual framework.

At the individual level, scholars pinpointed their interpretations of institutional racism within the ways Black doctoral students attempted to forge relationships and support networks (McGaskey, Freeman, Guyton, Richmond, & Guyton, 2016) through advising and mentorship (Barker, 2016; Felder & Barker, 2013; Grant, 2012; Grant & Ghee, 2015; Grant & Simmons, 2008; Kador & Lewis, 2007). Additionally, scholars noted manifestations of institutional racism within Black doctoral students' cognitive realm, as they discussed perceptions of their programs (Lewis, Ginsberg, Davies, & Smith, 2004; Weng and Gray, 2017; Williams Shealey, 2009; Wasburn-Moses, 2007), psychosocial experiences tied to being in those spaces (Shavers & Moore 2014b; Uqdah, Tyler, & DeLoach, 2009), and subsequent feelings of marginalization (Gay, 2004; Green, Pulley, & Jackson, 2018).

Table 1

Summative Topics Covered in Analytical Sample of Articles and Corresponding Data Sources

Organizational Level	Topics Covered	Data Sources
Individual Relationships	Advising and mentorship	Barker, 2016; Felder & Barker, 2013; Grant, 2012; Grant & Ghee, 2015; Grant & Simmons, 2008; Kador & Lewis, 2007
	Support networks	McGaskey, Freeman, Guyton, Richmond, & Guyton, 2016
Individual Cognitive Realm	Program perceptions	Lewis, Ginsberg, Davies, & Smith, 2004; Weng and Gray, 2017; Williams Shealey, 2009; Wasburn-Moses, 2007
	Psychosocial experiences	Shavers & Moore 2014b; Uqdah, Tyler, & DeLoach, 2009
	Marginalization	Gay, 2004; Green, Pulley, & Jackson, 2018
Interorganizational Processes	Navigating doctoral education	Green, 2008; McKinley, 2014
	Self-presentation and coping strategies	Shavers & Moore, 2014a; Shavers & Moore, 2014b
Extraorganizational Outcomes	Socialization	Ellis, 2001; Felder & Freeman, 2016; Joseph, 2012; McCoy, 2018; Taylor & Antony, 2000; Twale, Weidman, & Bethea, 2016
	Persistence and time to degree	Ellis, 2001; Kim & Otts; Merriweather, 2008
	Dissertation writing and research productivity	Howley et al., 2015; McGaskey, 2015

The interorganizational level encompassed various processes Black doctoral students endured where instances of institutional racism surfaced. In response to those encounters, scholars described the tactics Black doctoral students employed to navigate their doctoral programs (Green, 2008; McKinley, 2014) and socialization experiences (Ellis, 2001; Felder & Freeman, 2016; Joseph, 2012; McCoy, 2018; Taylor & Antony, 2000; Twale, Weidman, & Bethea, 2016) in other educational spaces beyond the classroom. The navigational tactics included self-presentation and coping strategies (Shavers & Moore, 2014a; Shavers & Moore, 2014b) to protect themselves of the potential harms inflicted by allowing racialized hostility and barriers to get the best of them.

These individual and interorganizational level interpretations help us identify a more nuanced understanding of institutional racism that pushes beyond our tendency to reduce its manifestations to mere “racist acts” between individuals. Resultantly, we see these scholars recognized institutional racism as a phenomenon situated inside and outside the psychosocial arenas of individuals who occupy doctoral program spaces. Additionally, their sensemaking demonstrates how institutional

racism entrenches itself in the ideologies, values, discursive, and behavioral aspects of doctoral program operations. This heightened realization adds another layer of racialized work that Black doctoral students might assume on top of the already demanding workload that any doctoral student would face.

Lastly, at the extraorganizational level, scholars attempted to make sense of the resulting impact institutional racism had on doctoral programs' outcomes through their discussions on Black doctoral students' disparate rates for persistence and time to degree (Ellis, 2001; Kim & Otts; Merriweather, 2008), which lagged behind their non-Black peers. Two particular areas where scholars noted difficulties were in Black doctoral students' research productivity and experiences in the dissertation writing phase (Howley et al., 2015; McGaskey, 2015). Troubling these two areas is crucial because the traditional metrics of success for doctoral students are determined by demonstrating their scholarly aptitude through presentations and publications. Moreover, doctoral students' final milestone for completing this terminal degree is contingent upon their successful progression through the dissertation writing phase. Without proper support and/or in the face of navigating a problematic or racially toxic program environment, doctoral students (especially those with minoritized identities) run the risk of prolonging their time to completion, or being entrapped in the often deficit-based attrition narrative placed upon students who dropped out of their programs.

While this cursory scan of topics covered provided a broad snapshot of the ways scholars in my analytical sample grappled with manifestations of institutional racism in Black doctoral student experiences at PWIs, it also provided insight on how each level of the organizational landscape of doctoral education can be subjected to the effects of institutional racism. In the next portion of my findings section, I answer my second research question through offering a detailed typology of organizational oppression in doctoral education.

Typology of Organizational Oppression in Doctoral Education

Revisiting my second research question, I posed: "Where are these manifestations of institutional racism situated in the organizational structure of doctoral programs? Below, I present categorical findings, based upon my conceptual framework, to formulate a typology of organizational oppression within doctoral education (Figure 1).

Individual level. Coinciding with the individual level of Griffith et al.'s (2016) model, the researchers' interpretations supported its claim of institutional racism's operation within the attitude, behaviors, and beliefs of varying doctoral program constituents. Two categorical elements emerged to capture where these dynamics got routinized within the organization of doctoral programs: troubled interactions, ideologies, and environment; along with inequitable program outcomes that adversely impacted the experiences of Black doctoral students at PWIs.

Troubled interactions, ideologies, and environment. Detailing how she maneuvered in her doctoral program as a Black woman with career interest in the professoriate, McKinley (2014) shared several firsthand accounts of run-ins with institutional racism through the ideological realm. In one instance, a white woman classmate ventured to ask her if she spoke Ebonics, and followed up with agitation because McKinley problematized her question as racist. Failing to comprehend how such a comment perpetuated racist ideology, her classmate denied the accusation by explaining it away as sheer curiosity. McKinley (2014) asserted that incidents like this example were exonerated by color-

blind racism, as it leveraged whiteness, a system of privilege, to reconstitute issues like racism and sexism as nonexistent.

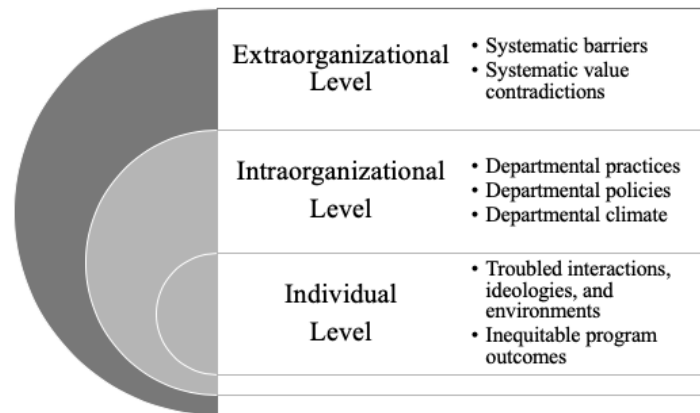


Figure 1. Typologies of Organizational Oppression and its Manifestations in Doctoral Education

Note. This figure's scaffolding of the extraorganizational, intraorganizational, and individual levels is adapted from Griffith et al.'s (2016) model of institutional racism in organizations.

Another study reasoned that oppressive environments fraught with racist ideologies placed constraints on Black women doctoral students, where participants felt their persistence and academic success could not co-exist with their well-being (Shavers & Moore, 2014a). This perception of an unfortunate opportunity cost resurfaced in Felder and Barker's (2013) study, where Black doctoral students viewed the negotiations between themselves, their faculty, and program environment were commonplace. Fostering positive student-faculty and peer relationships are ingredients in the recipe for doctoral success. However, researchers maintained that interpersonal interactions between Black doctoral students and other key individuals in their graduate programs continued to leave them feeling isolated (Green, 2008; Lewis, Ginsberg, Davies, & Smith, 2004).

Inequitable program outcomes. Beyond navigating troubled interactions, ideologies and environments, Kim and Otts (2010) demonstrated racial disparities in program outcomes where Black doctoral students lagged behind their white peers in their study on degree completion times. Wasburn-Moses (2007) found another Black-White disparity around the outcomes of receiving leadership training grants, which were funds intended to increase doctoral students' academic focus and heighten their experiences. Despite such provisions and intent, Wasburn-Moses (2007) explained that Black doctoral students "still felt more poorly prepared overall for their positions, and more poorly prepared to publish in refereed journals, than their Caucasian and Latino/Latina counterparts" (p. 463). Furthermore, this scholar contended that such disparities in feelings of preparedness were especially grave because paper submissions in peer-reviewed journals is an outcome of doctoral socialization that directly influenced the trajectory of students' success in the academic job market for faculty positions. In an institutional context devoid of faculty accountability measures that guided the intellectual development of doctoral students, McCoy (2018) called into question how attrition rates for students of color were explained by labeling those students as inadequate. Resultantly, scholars believed that institutions failed to respond when doctoral students of color exited

their programs, instead of acknowledging the reality that some could have suffered at the hands of oppressive socialization tactics (McCoy, 2018; McGaskey et al., 2016; Shavers & Moore, 2014b).

Intraorganizational Level. Moving to the intraorganizational level of my conceptual framework, researchers' interpretations confirmed that institutional racism was filtered through the organizational routines surrounding Black doctoral students' experiences with departmental practices, policies, and the climate at PWIs. These intraorganizational features were noteworthy because they got filtered through the ways group members, such as peers and faculty, circulated their thoughts and behaviors around one another, which often maintained existing power structures.

Departmental practices. Joseph (2012) publicized, "Institutions of higher education are distinct establishments of history and culture, and that same culture and history may not be conducive to the success all of students in attendance" (p. 136). Twale, Weidman, and Bethea (2016) observed, "Racial dilemmas and microaggressions such as the lack of faculty support of a research agenda that focuses on racial issues is an example of the sociopolitical dynamics in academic programs that can hinder socialization" (p. 90). Gay (2004) and McCoy (2018) recorded instances of racial marginalization for graduate students of color, particularly Black doctoral students, that were rooted within departmental practices. On the cognitive and behavioral regularities that crafted essential academic features of doctoral education, Black doctoral students were left to deal with:

...the implicit lessons embedded in the informal attitudes and behaviors of the caretakers of 'the system.' They encounter discrimination, hostility, isolation, tokenism and marginality. Their intellectual capabilities are doubted, and their research interests are often suspected or neglected. When they try to claim the same prerogatives as granted to their mainstream peers (such as researching and writing about things of personal and cultural relevance to them) they are discouraged, silenced and sometimes even abandoned. (Gay, 2004, p. 267)

McCoy (2018) exposed her own encounters with these affronts to ideas and perspectives she shared in her department. She observed that those disparaging comments to her scholarly ideation and creativity were masked as constructive criticism, when in actuality, they hindered her intellectual growth.

Departmental policies. Kim and Otts (2010) found racialized disparities in the funding support of graduate students of color, which were exacerbated by the financial stratification of academic disciplines whose departmental funds had more constraints than others, like those in STEM fields versus cultural studies or social sciences. In comparison to their peers of other racial identities, Kim and Otts (2010) revealed, "The fact that significantly lower percentages of Black students received research assistantships suggests that Black students are disadvantaged not only in terms of time to degree but perhaps in terms of research experience, as well" (p. 24). Expounding upon this sentiment, McGaskey (2015) remarked, "Given the relatively low levels of research productivity of Black doctoral students, this result may be more of a function of either hindered opportunities to participate in scholarly inquiry or an overall undervaluation of the importance in the practice" (p. 198). According to Weng and Gray (2017), curriculum policies in the field of social work were steeped in Eurocentrism which rendered perspectives outside of this normative frame ineligible and inadequate. They further extended, "Social work education is not immune to this university culture...having been adopted by many social work doctoral programs and infused within the mission statement, curricula, and language" (p. 664). As these scholars substantiated, Black doctoral students were disenfranchised by institutional racism amongst departmental policies on resource allocation, restraints on their research development, and curricular decisions.

Departmental climate. Green, Pulley, and Jackson's (2018) sensemaking around the dissatisfaction of Black women doctoral students at PWIs urged, "Though academia is often portrayed as a field that combats inequities, many Black women find it as the field that actually reifies 'racial hierarchies' and gender-biases by marginalizing some groups and privileging others" (p. 306). Joseph (2012) targeted administrators' lack of understanding these dynamics of racial and gender-based biases and their ability to stack additional types of oppression onto doctoral students with minoritized identities.

Black doctoral students at PWIs experienced a climate that applied pressure to succeed amidst adversities imposed upon them by larger structural issues (Kador & Lewis, 2007), yet departments propped fallacies of objectivity in their messages on approaching research impartially and overcoming structural challenges by their own strength (McCoy, 2018; Weng & Gray, 2017). Ellis (2001) uplifted the voices of Black doctoral students who critiqued their department's culture of conformity. A few scholars reasoned Black doctoral students at PWIs harbored feelings of isolation, discontentment, and marginality that pervaded perceptions of their departmental climate, and believed they were left to fend for themselves when navigating these conditions (Gay, 2004; Joseph, 2012; Lewis, Ginsberg, Davies, & Smith, 2004).

Extraorganizational Level. Entrenched within the extraorganizational level of Griffith et al.'s (2016) model, researchers' interpretations evidenced its assertion that institutional racism effects systemic barriers and contradictory values that shaped Black doctoral student experiences at PWIs. Doctoral education is part of a larger set of societal systems, and must broker the external forces of power, authority, and hegemonic ideals that reify institutional racism in its organizational routines.

Systemic barriers. The underrepresentation of Black doctoral students is an issue prevalent across many institutions; however, this lack also seeps into a systemic inability to properly mentor and socialize these students into scholars that do not have to compromise or conform their interests and perspectives into something more palatable to dominant hegemonic norms (Grant, 2012; Weng & Gray, 2017). Williams Shealey (2009) further substantiated this point in describing the academy as, "[not being] welcoming of scholars from ethnically diverse backgrounds and their research agendas, which most often are undergirded by a social justice and equity framework. Thus, African-American scholars face systemic and attitudinal challenges in attempting to counter dominant paradigms that are prevalent" (p. 359). Twale, Weidman, and Bethea (2016) also recognized a disparity in advisement based upon doctoral program types, where Black students shared hierarchical inequalities around access to guidance and support that differed between those pursuing and Ed.D. versus those on a Ph.D. track.

Systemic value contradictions. Given the institutional values held at a systemic level in doctoral education, researchers interpreted contradictions between those espoused in rhetoric, but not enacted in their behaviors and decision making. On the subject of doctoral socialization one co-authored study posited:

It is important to note what socialization is not. It is not encouragement and pressure to maintain the status quo and fit into the existing dominant structures. Socialization is not being silent about the broader structures of power within systems that lead to racism and oppression so students feel they fit in. Instead, it is about giving students a voice to be open

about systemic barriers and forms of oppression that impede their motivation, commitment, and ultimately, their success in the program. (Weng & Gray, 2017, p. 670)

Another value contradiction was routinized by university reward structures, where faculty promotion metrics did not incentivize service through student mentorship and advising (Shavers & Moore, 2014). Conversely, doctoral students operated on a value system that viewed research as a form of service (Taylor & Antony, 2000).

Moreover, contradictory values were operationalized by a false systemic belief that access and success were one in the same. Critiquing this institutional perception, Gay (2004) mentioned, “These [‘input-based’] assumptions overlook the other prices that many African, Asian, Latino and Native American students have to pay living through graduate studies, and being faculty of color in academe” (p. 266). As the extraorganizational level within the overall typology of organizational oppression in doctoral education connotes, there is a larger system of racialized disenfranchisement at work. We must enact fundamental shifts on how researchers, practitioners, administrators, policy-makers, and other key constituents in our educational enterprise acknowledge and engage new perspectives on the Black (w)hole to resist the pervasiveness and sophistication of institutional racism and its manifestation within doctoral education. In the following discussion section, I meditate on a few new perspectives I gathered from the findings of my systematic literature review.

Discussion: New Perspectives on The Black (W)hole

Explained earlier, the conundrum of a “Black (w)hole” magnified that despite a plethora (i.e. a whole body) of existing scholarship on Black doctoral student experiences at PWIs, we still have a significant gap (i.e. a hole) of empirical and conceptual work where researchers intentionally centered institutional racism as the focal point of their studies. While my conceptual framework shed light on how higher education scholars interpreted manifestations of institutional racism in Black doctoral students’ experiences within their findings, this analytical sample of literature also unearthed three new perspectives on the gradations of a Black (w)hole in doctoral education research writ large. These three avenues of perspectives include: new dimensions of understanding racial socialization, critical approaches to scholarly inquiry, and a cautionary note on assumptions researchers might make when examining Black doctoral student experiences at PWIs.

Racial Socialization

When one thinks of racial socialization, they may consider the process by which a person understands and embraces the fullness and meaning of their racial identities. However, Barker (2016) defined Black doctoral students’ usage of racial socialization as “those tools and techniques to deal with racism or racial incidences within predominantly White contexts” (p. 136). The tools of racial socialization involved managing tensions between their personal interests and those of their departments (Felder & Barker, 2013), and heightening their awareness of cultural environments that were unwelcoming (Grant & Ghee, 2015). Black doctoral students employed an additional tactic that repositioned their lived experiences with institutional racism as the foundation upon which they built their research agendas. To this point, one scholar noted:

In particular, African American participants came to the study of a topic relating to dynamics of race and/or ethnicity from their own experiences of racism, and they decided to pursue doctoral work in response to their strong belief that the degree would provide them with

both a measure of career security and a platform for continuing and expanding advocacy efforts – beneficial outcomes they saw as inter-dependent. In other words, for these participants the link between advocacy on behalf of self and advocacy on behalf of others tended to be close. (Howley et al., 2015, p. 222)

This revealed resistance tactics that Black doctoral students employed, but more relevant to my research questions, it showed another layer of the manifestations of institutional racism that Black doctoral students attempted to combat or navigate.

Although Black doctoral students developed tactics to traverse the terrains of institutional racism in graduate education, this savviness of racial socialization might come with several costs and risks. Shavers and Moore's (2014b) findings expressed, "the coping strategies used by black women to persist academically might be in direct opposition to their overall mental and emotional well-being when enrolled in [PWI] doctoral programs" (p. 32). From a firsthand vantagepoint, McKinley (2014) explained, "the physical, mental, and spiritual exhaustion associated with teaching a course on social problems, as a black female 'professor in training' was a burden I had to endure on my own and in silence" (p. 41). Correspondingly, two additional authors asserted:

Participants reported using the academic mask as a strategy to overcome oppression and persist academically, but it resulted in feeling incomplete, disconnected, and exhausted...The participants' use of the academic mask was survival-oriented...some of the characteristics they listed for this manner of coping are feeling disconnected from their self and communities of support; an inability to seek assistance and/or show vulnerability; threats to self-efficacy; and chronic stress, anxiety, and oppression (Shavers & Moore, 2014a, p. 404)

This insight on racial socialization, and its respective costs or risks, allow us to clarify new types of targets to hit in the research questions we pose, survey instrumentation we create, enhancements to the theoretical frameworks we select, and improve the methodological tools we employ for data collection.

Critical Approaches to Scholarly Inquiry

The most distinctive approaches to scholarly inquiry used by the researchers in my analytical sample incorporated critical lenses in their theories and/or methodology. Through using Critical Race Theory, McCoy (2018) touted this model's ability to "expos[e] how institutions that support and encourage the intellectual development of White students simultaneously engaged in oppressive institutional practices that threatened my intellectual development" (p. 341). Regarding Black doctoral student attrition, Merriweather (2008) critiqued Tinto's (1993) student departure theory on the basis that it "underplays the role of external communities, race, and racism" (p. 262). As seen here, some researchers provided critical commentary on existing theories popularized in scholarship on doctoral education, which is a vital stance of resistance against pathologizing explanations of Black doctoral student attrition.

A few articles in my sample were autoethnographic (Green, 2008; McCoy, 2018; McKinley, 2014)—which is defined as a methodological approach that employs self-reflection on one's lived experiences as a data source for empirical inquiry—to circumvent their findings as, for instance, Black scholars writing about Black doctoral students (Gay, 2004). In using this approach, one researcher highlighted:

Methodologically, I used autoethnography for ‘describing and analyzing’ my own process of intellectual identity development as an emerging African American scholar...Collectively, both CRT and auto-ethnography allowed me to present specific examples of my identity development within a doctoral program at a PWI that engaged in oppressive institutional socialization (McCoy, 2018, p. 335).

Autoethnography and autoethnographic techniques were ways that researchers evoked Cooper’s (2017) notion of embodied discourse, which she defined as a “[f]orm of Black female textual activism wherein race women assertively demand the inclusion of their bodies and, in particular, working-class bodies and Black female bodies by placing them in the texts they write and speak” (p. 3). Uqdah, Tyler, and DeLoach (2009) encouraged researchers to utilize data collection instruments that were created to assess issues of institutional racism and its byproducts, such as discrimination. These are powerful methodological strategies for fostering resistance-based sense-making of one’s navigation through the landscapes of systemic issues like racism.

Cautionary Note on Assumptions

The final new perspective drawn from this literature review led me to identify dangerous assumptions and subsequent practices that could lead to institutional negligence if not handled properly. For instance, two scholars shared:

[T]here was an incredible notion of ‘self-reliance’ among the students we interviewed. They persisted in spite of all of the difficulties encountered...At this university, this ‘communalism’ evolved for the African-American students due solely to their own initiative...And an appreciation of the importance of self-reliance for the African-American students implies a need for considering this aspect of personality as part of a recruitment strategy. (Lewis & Ginsberg, 2004, pp. 243-244)

Identifying self-reliance as a characteristic embodied by Black doctoral students can be a productive action, as possessing a sense of agency and initiative are important for pursuing doctoral education. However, if doctoral departments base their reward structures and resource allocation solely on students who possess this trait of self-reliance and demonstrate behaviors that fit a narrow prototype of that trait, consequences might ensue. A major consequence of this practice is the risk of maintaining structures of inequality against students who might be introverted, slightly passive, or may believe that faculty and administrators are the gatekeepers of opportunities and do not want to overstep boundaries on how those dynamics are negotiated. This establishes the importance of doctoral departments making their values explicitly known to students, while also self-assessing their institutional culture to ensure the environment is conducive to equitable practices.

A second cautionary example stemmed from McGaskey et al.’s (2016) suggestion to increase the presence of student and faculty of color on the basis that, “...structural conditions and practices continue to create challenges for Black male doctoral students in finding support and being effectively socialized into their field” (p. 155). Although they acknowledged this suggestion as insufficient by itself, but a step in the right direction, the underlying assumption of this as a solution can be interpreted as problematic because it perpetuates the normalcy of racial oppression—a rationale that positions equitable representation of diverse faculty of color as an unattainable goal. (Mis)interpretations like this reinforces an earlier point I debunked on the false assumption that access does not necessarily equal success for doctoral students with racially minoritized identities. It takes

comprehensive, structurally-centered, and intentional efforts on all fronts of organizational change to reverse institutional racism's tendency to leave Black doctoral students behind.

Conclusion

I conclude by echoing a poignant statement that Dumas (2014) articulated in his work on the cultural politics of Black education, "I simply want to create a space in which to meditate on the idea that black people suffered, and suffered dearly in the midst of our efforts to pursue a range of educational and racial reforms over the past half-century" (p. 3). In solidarity with his sentiment, I hope that my work in this systematic literature review magnified the types of struggles that Black doctoral students were subjected to as a result of the effects of institutional racism in graduate education. Existing research on Black graduate students pursuing doctoral studies at PWIs revealed issues within several aspects of their graduate education: academic experiences (Haynes, Stewart, Allen, 2016; Platt & Hilton, 2017); interactions with faculty (Blockett et al., 2016; Gildersleeve et al., 2011); cross-race faculty advising (Barker, 2016); and same race-gender advising (Pope & Edwards, 2016). As these scholars pinpointed, not only were the experiences of Black doctoral students racialized in academic, social, and professional contexts, but they also tended to be problematic.

Socialization was a central focus for many of the articles within my sample, which signifies the importance of including this construct in future studies on institutional racism within doctoral education. Although the scholars in my analytical sample did not incorporate organizational theories in their analyses, they did offer recommendations for change at the organizational and institutional levels in their discussion and implications. The collective interpretations offered in their research illustrates how Black doctoral students oftentimes expended extra labor and energy to combat the effects of institutional racism on their own due to inadequate interventions from their departments and institutions. As Gonzales, Kanhai, and Hall (2018) noted, "When non-dominant students are forced to take up such labor, it means they are doing the work that organizations have failed to do, often at the cost of their academic, mental, and emotional well-being" (p. 506). My hope is for future scholarly inquiry to bear in mind the purpose of this systematic literature review as a launching pad into the innumerable possibilities for advancing important discourse around empirical research, and translating this work to policies and practice.

A main implication drawn from using a critical organizational perspective to conduct this systematic literature review points to the dire need for research that dives directly into the Black (w)hole of institutional racism in doctoral education. Doing so enhances the abilities of students, scholars, practitioners, policy makers, and administrators to recognize the embodied complexities of higher education stakeholders, and positively transform our institutional approaches to protect our most vulnerable groups.

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The Córdoba Reform Movement of 1918 and Ecological Systems Theory

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The Córdoba Reform Movement of 1918 and Ecological Systems Theory

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A little more than 100 years ago, the students at the National University of Córdoba (UNC) rebelled against university leadership and accused professors of being autocratic, ineffective, religiously oriented, and obscurantist. Founded in 1613 by Jesuits, UNC, Argentina's first university and the sixth oldest university in Latin America, was led by conservative members of Córdoba's most prestigious and wealthiest Catholic families. After more than two centuries of Jesuit and Franciscan administration, the national government assumed control of the university in 1856. With this change in leadership, UNC faculty members fully embraced anti-secularism and nepotism, which endured even after the Avellaneda Law of 1885 permitted the university to govern itself without state intervention (Walter, 1969).

The rebellion against UNC leadership in 1918, coupled with previous student activism at other Latin American universities that oriented the Córdoba Reform Movement, established the Latin American academic tradition. The Latin American academic tradition stresses the importance of university autonomy, a concept that would continue to be a powerful force in the region. What started as student protest ultimately generated significant university reform in Argentina and most of Latin America. Consequently, this reform led to many of the region's public universities becoming autonomous by law and tradition, which would impact universities' relationships with the state and the Catholic Church, and have implications for academic freedom in the proceeding decades (Altbach, 2016). Moreover, autonomy provided protections for faculty, staff, and students during periods of political turmoil in Latin America. Although these protections were not comprehensive, and were threatened during eras of military dictatorships, they certainly reshaped the Latin American academe and contributed to how the region views higher education.

Some scholars argue (Berry & Taylor, 2013) that Latin American higher education is relatively under-researched. To a certain extent, this claim is true; in the context of English-speaking and/or Western, industrialized nations, Latin American higher education is a neglected area of study. Within the Latin American region, however, there is a wealth of research, analysis, and commentary on the subject. This essay draws on scholarly contributions from Latin America and external sources to explain how UNC student reformists strategically advocated for policy that would enhance and enrich the university experience at UNC and other Latin American universities. This advocacy would set new standards for university students in Latin America and define a new purpose for Argentine and Latin American higher education.

The historical analyses and accounts of the Córdoba Reform Movement of 1918 largely examine the demands and ideological components of the movement, its different historical stages, and the numerous setbacks it suffered from counter-reformist governments during the twentieth century. Richard J. Walter (1969) focuses on the intellectual background, specifically the prevailing intellectual climate in Argentina and the prominent intellectuals who served as "*maestros de la juventud* (teachers of youth)" (p. 233), out of which the university reform developed. Akin to Walter's (1969) focus on the foundational elements of the Reform Movement, Mark J. Van Aken (1971) thoroughly examined the antecedents of the Córdoba revolt and debatably contends that scholars "overemphasize the historical importance of the Córdoba student revolt" (p. 448). Other scholars, primarily Latin American

scholars, centered the students who participated in the movement and wrote their biographies or detailed their ideological trajectories from the Reform Movement era through later stages of their life (Caldelari & Funes, 1997; Marsiske, 1989; Portantiero, 1978; Schwartzman & Stang, 1998; Tunnerman, 1978).

Expanding on the aforementioned foundational histories, Natalia Milanesio (2005) wrote “Gender and Generation: The University Reform Movement in Argentina, 1918” to analyze the collective self-representation of the young, male, and socioeconomically privileged reformists who participated in the Reform Movement. Milanesio’s (2005) examination successfully identifies the unique intersection of masculinity, generation, and reformist identity, which explains how reformists constructed their identities as activists and enacted their masculinity to achieve their goals.

For the purpose of this analysis, the existing literature provides a useful foundation for understanding the complexities of the Reform Movement and its legacies. Using this scholarly and historical foundation, I first examine the Reform Movement and subsequent events through a historical lens. Then, I review Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (1979, 1986, 1993) ecological systems theory and model, with particular focus on the components that I use in my analysis. Including comprehensive historical context and analysis is necessary to complete a robust analysis of the Reform Movement through the lens of an ecological systems framework.

By employing a historical analysis and situating the Reform Movement within Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems model, I elucidate how the university environment affected students and how students ultimately affected their university, national, and regional environments. Furthermore, throughout this analysis I explore how issues, challenges, and opportunities to alter institutional policy and structure arose at different levels within the student activist experience at UNC. This exploration provides insight into how these transformative experiences create shared and unique realities for student activists that promote student development. Moreover, understanding the historical complexities and institutional environmental factors that affect students’ experiences in higher education offers a framework for practitioners to build campus environments that promote holistic development for diverse student populations.

A Historical Examination of the Córdoba Reform Movement of 1918

Dissatisfaction among UNC students originated from multiple sources in the decades prior to the Reform Movement. The city of Córdoba was a conservative refuge, infamous for resisting the fight for independence 100 years prior (Marques, 2018). The university was a bastion of traditionalism and was steeped in Catholic doctrine, which was incongruous with the modernization occurring throughout the rest of the country and viewed as repressive by many UNC students (Marques, 2018). According to students at the time, teaching methods were authoritarian and relied on repetition and obedience (Marques, 2018). Teaching methods such as these derived from the university’s Jesuit roots, with obedience being central to the mission and union of the Society of Jesus (Boston College, n.d.). In medicine, teaching was performed orally and never offered practical experience or patient visitation. Moreover, at UNC there was a general rejection of modern scientific knowledge and practice. Students also despised the rampant nepotism at the university and how professorships were largely inherited (Marques, 2018). The autocratic and clerical academic model that prevailed at UNC, a remnant of Spanish colonization, was insufficient for student growth and development, and students were desperate for momentous reform (Marques, 2018).

The Reform Movement had several national and regional antecedents of student organization and mobilization, such as the Uruguayan Association of Students (1893), the First International Congress of American Students in Montevideo (1908), and the League of American Students (1908), which sponsored two international congresses in Buenos Aires (1910) and Lima (1912) (Milanesio, 2005). Argentina possessed a well-established history of student activism and protest against oppressive university hierarchies and disciplinary measures. For example, in 1871, a law student at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) committed suicide after failing an exam, which instigated mass student protests against oligarchic university leadership and academic standards that threatened student welfare (Aiken, 1971). In 1903, students at the UBA Law School went on strike, and by 1905 medical students joined them in protest. The students protested the exam system, high fees, and the appointment of professors for personal and political reasons rather than intellectual or professional competence (Milanesio, 2005). After three years of protests, several of the UBA students' demands were met, but a crucial result of the students' activism was the creation of student centers managed by students at the Law, Medicine, and Engineering schools (Milanesio, 2005). These student centers provided student representation at the governing bodies, organized and coordinated academic and social activities, and published a periodical (Milanesio, 2005).

In addition to the national and regional student movements that precipitated the Reform Movement, the dramatically altered sociopolitical context of the early twentieth century profoundly influenced students at UNC. The students who coordinated and joined the Reform Movement witnessed the 1910 Mexican Revolution and its sweeping social reforms that benefitted the peasantry and working-class. These students also witnessed the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which established the first communist regime of the modern era. Lastly, UNC students were also affected by the atrocities of World War I, "which represented a profound intellectual disappointment with nineteenth-century political and social philosophies" (Milanesio, 2005, p. 508). Collectively, these events engendered a climate of political mobilization and social unrest, and revived hopes for robust social, political, and economic transformation. Situated in this sociopolitical context, the student movement that originated in Córdoba in 1918 was well-positioned to exceed earlier attempts of student organization and protest, and to secure overdue institutional reform.

The Reform Movement

At the conclusion of the academic year in 1917, the student center at the UNC School of Medicine sent a memorandum to the University Superior Council and to Dr. José Salinas, the National Minister of Justice and Public Education. In the memorandum, medical students decried the poor quality of curricula and teaching, the lack of experimental laboratories, and the recent end to the internship program at the Hospital de Clínicas, which was fundamental to their intellectual and professional development (Milanesio, 2005; Rock, 1987). When students returned for the new academic year in March 1918, they discovered their demands were ignored. In response, the medical students went on strike and the School of Engineering student center joined them in solidarity. Students from the School of Engineering were dissatisfied about newly imposed regulations for student attendance, which motivated their decision to join the strike (Milanesio, 2005; Marques, 2018). This strike caused tremendous student absence from classrooms and other campus spaces, which was felt widely across campus and could not be ignored (Milanesio, 2005).

Not long after the strike began, law students joined the medical and engineering students, thus cementing this student mobilization as an institution-wide movement. Because the reformists sought

to improve the quality of UNC's faculty, much of their rhetoric was anti-professorial (Walter, 1969; Rock, 1987). Due to this rhetoric, few professors initially supported the student movement, although many appreciated the overall reformist aim of educational improvement (Walter, 1969). The student partnership resulted in the *Comité Pro-Reforma* (Pro-Reform Committee), which consisted of 24 delegates from the law, medical, and engineering schools. The committee's primary goal was to shed the ecclesiastical orthodoxies of Jesuit scholasticism by secularizing and democratizing UNC (Walter, 1969).

To achieve this goal, the committee advocated for radical institutional changes that would ensure student participation in university councils, modernize curricula, and permit greater control over the appointment and retention of professors. Moreover, to accommodate low and middle-income students with work obligations, the committee sought to make university education more accessible and affordable. Methods for enhancing accessibility included removing entrance restrictions and establishing greater flexibility in attendance policy and examinations (Milanesio, 2005; Walter, 1969). From there, the committee went on to form the University Federation of Córdoba (FUC) and assisted the newly created Argentine University Federation (FUA) in organizing its first congress in the city. Throughout the first few months of 1918, reformists and activists continued to strike, protest, and rally.

After months of protests, the FUC called for the rector, Dr. Antonio Nores, to resign and published the Córdoba Manifesto on June 21, 1918. The manifesto detailed the reformists' arguments to modernize the antiquated university structure (Roca, 1918). The manifesto also outlined why increased student participation in the university assembly was essential to the prosperity of the institution and its students (Roca, 1918). Furthermore, the document offered a robust analysis of the miseries of the oligarchic, dogmatic, and pious university that ignored scientific progress and evolving social norms. One month after the manifesto's publication, the FUA organized the first National Student Congress in which they advocated for autonomy and contested the regime's attempt to subvert and control the reform process (Walter, 1969). As pressure mounted, Nores resigned from his position as rector. Because of his resignation, the Superior Council closed the university. After the university's closure, the reformists requested that the Argentine president, Hipólito Yrigoyen, order a diplomatic, national intervention (Milanesio, 2005). President Yrigoyen appointed Dr. Telémaco Susini to lead the intervention, but Susini never traveled to Córdoba. Yrigoyen then appointed the National Minister of Justice and Public Education, Dr. José Salinas, to lead the intervention. By September, however, Salinas had not arrived at UNC and the FUC feared betrayal and decided to act (Milanesio, 2005). On September 9, 1918, 83 students forcefully seized control of UNC. Though heavily armed police and military confronted them, the students had anticipated the opposition's maneuvering and preemptively armed themselves to fend off an attack (Milanesio, 2005; Marques, 2018).

During the seizure, the students assumed authority roles they argued their professors were unable to fulfill. Upon assuming their new positions, students reopened the university and designated themselves as professors to teach and give exams. This role-play quickly ended when the army re-entered the building and arrested the 83 students. Although violence ensued and some students, police, and military were injured, no fatalities were reported. As students left in automobiles and ambulances, they were met with applause and cheers from onlookers (Milanesio, 2005).

The Reform Movement continued to grow, and in late September 1918, several labor groups in Córdoba organized with the students and called for a general strike. To reciprocate and demonstrate their support for the labor unions, the FUC condemned the capitalist economic system and sent

student representatives to assist the striking workers. Two leaders of the FUC were arrested for inciting workers to armed revolt, which prompted labor groups throughout Argentina to protest as well (Walter, 1969).

In October 1918, President Yrigoyen conceded to the students' demands. He issued an executive decree that approved a student reform program at UNC in which students could be elected representatives in the university's administrative councils and influence school policy (Walter, 1969). Additionally, the reform program made class attendance optional, eased restrictions on education materials, and permitted flexibility in examination procedures (Walter, 1969). The reform program also resulted in the creation of an autonomous model known as co-governance. This model established a management system for public tertiary institutions in Argentina in which decisions are made by professors, students, and alumni (Marques, 2018). This idea of university autonomy from direct government and religious control would become a cornerstone of the Latin American academic tradition and a powerful force throughout the region (Altbach, 2016).

Aftermath and Reverberation

The UNC reforms were swiftly adopted at the universities of Buenos Aires and La Plata, in addition to the newly founded Universities of Santa Fe and Tucumán (established in 1919 and 1921, respectively). Alongside the UNC reform program's nationalization, several other Latin American countries quickly experienced the effects of the Reform Movement. The Reform Movement rapidly spread to Lima (1919), Cuzco (1920), Santiago de Chile (1920), Mexico (1921), Cuba (1923), and Colombia (1924). Obtaining autonomy enabled universities to freely define their own curriculum, independently develop policy, and manage their own budgets without government interference, thus profoundly improving academic life at the various public institutions. The radicalism and success of the UNC student mobilization not only altered the identity and politics of Argentine and Latin American students in 1918 and the 1920s, but also of future generations that embraced the ideals of their predecessors.

Academic Freedom in Latin America: Setbacks and Persistence

Political turmoil throughout much of Latin America in the mid and late twentieth century upended the Reform Movement's progress. The tumult led to military coups, social instability, and guerrilla struggles. Many student and faculty groups in the universities, particularly the large autonomous institutions located in capital cities, were heavily involved in the conflicts and primarily sided with the leftist dissidents (Altbach, 2016). In Peru, for example, some of the key leaders of the *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) movement, which committed shocking acts of violence and created severe civil unrest between 1980 and 1992, were former faculty (Altbach, 2016).

In other parts of Latin America, some activist students left their universities to join, or perhaps lead, guerrilla movements against their governments (Altbach, 2016). In areas that military authorities controlled, academic freedom was not valued or protected, and these authorities violently confronted the academic community. Professors and students known for their dissenting views were forced into exile, jailed, or murdered. Student movements were also brutally repressed. Between the 1960s and 1990s, academic freedom and the concept of university autonomy eroded, especially in countries such as Argentina, Peru, Brazil, Uruguay, El Salvador, and Chile (Altbach, 2016).

In Argentina, specifically, the goals achieved in 1918 suffered dramatic and sustained setbacks during the era of conservative governments in the 1930s, the Peronist government in the 1940s and 1950s, the dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s, and the neo-liberal governments of the 1990s. Throughout these difficult periods, however, students consistently returned the ideals of their predecessors; they looked to the spirit and model of the 1918 Reform Movement but also incorporated new goals such as anti capitalism, anti-imperialism, and anti-neoliberalism as elements of their agenda. As such, multiple generations participated in the movement and enabled it to persist because they viewed the goals, mission, and values of the Reform Movement as an unfinished project worth developing and defending (Milanesio, 2005).

Gradually, as violent dissent decreased and military rulers were replaced with democratic governments, the chaotic situation in Latin America settled and academic life regained a relative sense of normality. Latin American universities continued to be involved in national politics, and partisan politics often influenced campus elections, campus culture, and academic life (Altbach, 2016). Once democracy was restored, however, universities were able to rebuild and even strengthen academic freedom (Altbach, 2016). This resilience demonstrates that strong traditions of academic freedom can endure and survive periods of severe political and social repression (Altbach, 2016), because they are essential to the educational process.

The Córdoba Reform Movement and Ecological Systems Theory

Through a historical analysis of the Reform Movement it is evident that university students were profoundly affected by their university environment and, in turn, deeply influenced their university, national, and regional environments. Their activism greatly reformed and shaped other university environments as well. In higher education, ecological systems theory provides a way to understand how students interact with campus environments to promote or inhibit development (Patton, Renn, Guido, & Quaye, 2016). An ecological approach accounts for individual differences and multifaceted contexts in holistic student development (Patton et al., 2016). Developmental psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1993, 2005) introduced a four-component person-environment theory of development. The four components are *process*, *person*, *context*, and *time*, and their interactions create an individual student's development ecology or environment (Patton et al., 2016). This theory provides a framework through which higher education practitioners can examine individuals' relationships within communities or the larger society. As individuals encounter different environments and settings, their behavior and experiences are often influenced in varying degrees.

For the purpose of this analysis, I will focus on the component of *context*. This framework is useful in considering the complexities of student activist experiences because it identifies the five levels embedded within and external to the college environment that affect a person's development: microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986, 1993). Together, these levels demonstrate the interconnected effects of social contexts and processes on individuals over time (Barber, Espino, & Bureau, 2015). In what follows, I examine the Reform Movement through the lens of each of the five levels, which demonstrates the movement's significance in student development within Latin American higher education.

In this adaptation, the student activist is situated at the center of the model and is surrounded by the microsystem, which is the relationship between individuals and their environment within a particular setting. In this case, the microsystem would involve the student activist's relationship with UNC, the city of Córdoba, faculty, the Catholic Church, social and activist groups, and work settings.

Mesosystems include the relationships between these settings, such as the relationship between UNC and the Argentine University Federation. Bronfenbrenner (1993) determined that a defining element of the mesosystem is the focus on the “synergistic effects created by the interaction of developmentally instigative or inhibitory features and processes present in each setting” (p. 22). The exosystem is an extension of the mesosystem, including events and processes that indirectly affect the student (Barber et al., 2015). Governing body policies, national economic trends, and changes in federal law are examples of these events and processes. The macrosystem describes the attitudes or ideologies of a culture in which an individual lives (Barber et al., 2015). Examples of attitudes or ideologies are campus culture, Argentine culture, and piety. Across these aforementioned systems, the chronosystem accounts for the change that occurs in the environment over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1986, 1993). All of the five systems are interrelated and affect each other and the individual (Barber et al., 2015).

The Individual: Student Reformists at UNC

At the center of the Reform Movement are the student activists who mobilized to enact sweeping reform at their institution. Every UNC student within the Reform Movement originally arrived at the institution with a distinct educational background, personal history, and positionality that would ultimately influence their thinking and motivation to mobilize. College student development theories based on empirical research describe how individuals in this stage of life are at a formative period in cognitive development, identity, and indispensable relationships (Barber et al., 2015). Baxter Magolda’s (2001) research on self-authorship conveys how many traditionally aged college students are heavily reliant on external authorities and are only beginning their journey toward a more internally driven orientation.

Although Baxter Magolda’s (2001) research is situated within the United States, self-authorship theory easily translates to Argentine society, which was and still is oppressively *machista* and patriarchal (Carnes, 2017; Dizgun, 2010). *Machismo* and patriarchy are societal norms that serve as external authorities. The Catholic Church and the staunch conservatism in Córdoba would have also been prominent external authorities in the lives of young Argentine students.

A university education, across many geographic contexts, provides students the opportunity to begin forming their own personal values and self-awareness. Therefore, students arriving to UNC in the early twentieth century began engaging in higher-order critical thinking that led them to challenge established norms and advocate for their needs and aspirations. At this level, students also grappled with developing and understanding their own identities while interacting with individuals who may or may not share their values, ideas, or beliefs in the classroom and in the larger environment.

Microsystem: Argentine University Federation (FUA)

Arguably, one of the most significant organizational legacies of the Reform Movement was the establishment of the Argentine University Federation (FUA) in April 1918. The federation held its first congress in July 1918 with delegations of more than 70 students from Córdoba, Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, Tucumán, and La Plata. The initial congress’ goal was to establish mutual recognition and intragroup social identification as student activists (Milanesio, 2005). The FUA coordinated reformist efforts on a national scale, organized national meetings and congresses, supported local federations, and became the official national representative for university students of which there were 14,745 in 1918 (Milanesio, 2005). Today, the FUA is still governed by a council of delegates from each

university federation and, theoretically, represents all university students in Argentina. In applying Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1986, 1993) ecological systems model, the individual members of the FUA form the microsystem.

The FUA functioned as a way for students to get to know each other, communicate, and understand one another (Watson, 1918). FUA meetings and congresses enabled students to have personal, face-to-face interactions; they provided opportunities to discuss common issues and a forum for proposing alternatives and solutions. The FUA supplied students with a sense of community, built in solidarity that reinforced their common identity as students, and differentiated them from other social groups. A sense of belonging is essential to the development and persistence of university students (Strayhorn, 2019). For students who shared experiences of confronting and surviving threats and injustices, membership in the FUA reaffirmed a sense of belonging.

The FUA also had the responsibility of fostering the development of individual students while also enacting the values that the organization espoused. The FUA most notably cultivated student development through self-organization, which was essential to demonstrating their ability and aptitude for participating in university councils. Its members also showed impressive organization and mobilization skills by coordinating and executing large public demonstrations that sought to foster public support for the reformist cause.

Mesosystem: The Relationship Between FUA and UNC

In applying Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1986, 1993) ecological systems model to the Córdoba Reform Movement, the mesosystem is most notably comprised of the relationship between the FUA and UNC. With this convergence of different constituencies and stakeholders, "the mesosystem is also the area where conflict is most apparent in the ecological systems, especially with regard to adhering to regulations and campus-specific policies" (Barber et al., 2015, p. 250) that affect student organizations.

A major point of contention between the FUA and universities such as UNC was the lack of accessibility to tertiary education for working-class individuals. During the FUA Congress, reformists recognized that a university education was a socioeconomic privilege and aimed to democratize access to higher education by bridging the relationship between the university and society. To achieve this goal, the reformists developed the idea of *extensión universitaria* (university extension). *Extensión universitaria* entailed a formal institutional democratization of the university based on easing course requirements, adopting open attendance, and abolishing fees and tuition to encourage working people to attend. The concept also promoted the participation of university students and faculty in teaching courses, hosting conferences, and organizing workshops at factories and labor unions. In essence, *extensión universitaria* was the "proletarianization of the university" (Milanesio, 2005, p. 517).

Within the context of higher education, the greatest challenge within the mesosystem is managing and negotiating the tension between the organization and the university. A partnership between these entities is crucial for ensuring students gain meaningful educational experiences as members of their organizations and the university. The coalition is also important for ensuring that students adhere to policy. Within the Reform Movement no such partnership existed and the FUA and UNC had drastically different opinions regarding meaningful educational experiences and policy, which was the crux of the conflict between the reformists and the university.

Exosystem: National Economic Trends in Argentina

The exosystem is an extension of the mesosystem; however “exosystems do not contain developing individuals but exert influence on their environments through interactions with microsystems” (Patton et al., 2016, p. 44). More specifically, the exosystem provides an opportunity to examine factors outside the institution that influence students’ environments (Patton et al., 2016). In this framework, the influence of national economic trends in Argentina during the early twentieth century in the microsystem is the primary focus.

Adhering to a broader trend that links the working and middle classes with the student movements of the twentieth century, the Reform Movement is an extension of that historiographical tradition and an expression of the educated, ascending middle classes (Walter, 1968). Argentina’s early industrialization, external commercial explosion, and extensive urbanization had consequences for the emerging middle classes (Walter, 1968). For the children of European immigrants who started arriving to Argentina at the end of the nineteenth century, those consequences included the possibility for economic prosperity, social ascendance, and cultural integration (Marques, 2018). Higher education signaled prestige among the middle classes and fulfilled aspirations of social mobility and political leadership. Despite Argentina’s impressive economic advances by the turn of the century, the benefits and the distribution of national wealth, including the benefits of higher education, were heavily concentrated among the elite (Dizgun, 2010). The urban and rural working classes, in particular, failed to share in the economic boom. This maldistribution of wealth was a principal motivator for the students leading the Reform Movement (Dizgun, 2010).

Regarding the Reform Movement as an expression of the working and middle classes aligns with the reformists’ self-characterization of their movement (Bermann, 1946; Mendiorez, 1918). Reformists viewed their professors as clerical, materialistic, and bound to traditional colonial families, which were characteristics associated with the landed oligarchy (Van Aken, 1971). Conversely, students identified themselves with science, liberalism, and liberal professions, characteristics related to the middle-classes (Van Aken, 1971). To achieve the goals of university expansion, a central focus in the mesosystem, reformist students viewed educational reform as a necessary and desirable means to guarantee that progress and complete Argentina’s ideological transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century.

Macrosystem: Campus Cultures at Argentine Universities

The macrosystem represents a more complex and abstract level of context in the developmental ecology model (Barber et al., 2015; Patton et al., 2016). This level includes the underlying culture, values, and social norms of the environment (Barber et al., 2015). Bronfenbrenner (1977) described macrosystems as “carriers of information and ideology that, both explicitly and implicitly, endow meaning and motivation to particular agencies, social networks, roles, activities, and their interrelation” (p. 515). As a result, macrosystems are often difficult to fully identify due to their implicit and covert characteristics.

The campus culture at UNC and how it related to marginalized or underrepresented groups serves as the macrosystem in this framework. Reformists recognized that UNC was restricting access to tertiary education and excluding the lower socioeconomic classes through multiple means. These reformists actively sought to disrupt, challenge, and alter the prevailing patterns of culture, privilege, and oppression by influencing policy and procedure at UNC.

Examining this particular macrosystem also uncovers that the reformists lacked an intersectional perspective and ignored the issue that women were very poorly represented among university students. Since the *extensión universitaria* plan was explicitly designed to benefit the proletariat, it is reasonable to conclude that reformists were largely concerned with the democratization of the university exclusively in class terms. Julio V. González (1930), a prominent leader of the Reform Movement, argued that this was because workers would supply the university with a clear understanding of social, economic, and cultural problems, and were “the only class that is not yet included within the University” (p.154). Indeed, the working classes had no access to higher education, but they were not alone. Very few women enrolled in higher education, yet the reformists never addressed women, let alone working-class women, as a distinctive social group also excluded from receiving a university education. For example, between 1905 and 1910, only 25 women completed undergraduate and graduate courses at the University of Buenos Aires, which was considered to be one of the most liberal universities in Argentina (Carlson, 1988). Therefore, when reformists devised the *extensión universitaria* plan, they thought of it not only in class terms but in gendered class terms as well; when they referred to the working class, they meant the *male* working class. Further demonstrating that the reformists viewed the Reform Movement as a struggle for the male working class, FUA President Osvaldo Loudet (1918) equated the universal ballot (which was restricted to men at the time) to universal access to higher education. Loudet (1918) argued that in a country in which all *men* could vote, those men should have the possibility of entering the university. Therefore, from the right to vote, Loudet (1918) derived a new privilege for men: the right to higher education.

Women rarely appear in the reformists’ sources, but when they do, they are linked to religion, obscurantism, inertia, and tradition (Milanesio, 2005). Reformists believed faculty members’ wives, daughters, and mothers compelled the faculty to vote for the church’s candidate because the clergy and the Jesuits supposedly swayed these women (Milanesio, 2005). Additionally, women (mothers) were blamed for the Catholic university students who opposed reform. Deferring to misogynistic and reductive views of womanhood, the reformists made women the clear scapegoat for many of the issues in the university system. Placing blame on women, a group that held very little social, economic, or political power, is particularly paradoxical yet unsurprising. Negative attitudes towards women reflected social and cultural attitudes of the time period. These attitudes also contributed to delaying widespread access to higher education for women until the 1960s, which coincided with substantial urban growth and industrialization throughout the region (Balbachevsky, 2014). This expansion helped raise women’s education levels and facilitated their incorporation into the expanding labor market (Jaquette & Wolchik, 1998).

Chronosystem: Era of Collegiate Experience

The chronosystem is a newer addition to the ecological systems theory, which Bronfenbrenner included in 1986 to address the changes and continuities in the environment over time (Barber et al., 2015). Some students attend university during times of unprecedented change, while others attend in times of relative stability. The chronosystem is the most abstract and long-ranging element of Bronfenbrenner’s (1986) model. Due to the relatively short time of an individual’s undergraduate experience (typically four to six years in Argentina), major shifts in sociohistorical context are not often perceived in the moment. As demonstrated in previous sections of this essay, Argentina was experiencing extraordinary social, political, and economic developments. Externally, there were numerous social and political movements occurring in other Latin American countries and elsewhere that greatly influenced the sociopolitical climate throughout Argentina, at both the national and local levels. Having a broad yet clear overview of the changes in the environment over time helps to identify

how the Reform Movement fits within Argentine and Latin American higher education history. More importantly, this understanding reveals how the Reform Movement would become a vital reference point, even to this day, for universities across the region in defending the issue of autonomy and overcoming the pressures imposed by governments (Marques, 2018). After the Reform Movement, universities across Latin America emphasized the importance of developing a student body that sought active participation both within and external to its walls, and recruiting and retaining professors “who are not hidden away in their ivory towers” (Marques, 2018, para. 12).

Discussion and Conclusion

The Córdoba Reform Movement permanently altered Latin American higher education and even inspired the leaders of student movements outside of Latin America during the twentieth century (Altbach, 2007; Walter, 1969). The movement not only established academic freedom as a fundamental prerequisite for an effective university and a core value for academia (Altbach, 2007), it also confirmed university students as an organized, articulate, and often effective force (Walter, 1969). Higher education is global in scope, and student movements are a unique part of the culture of higher education, so issues arising in one country affect others (Altbach, 2007). Therefore, this historical example is still salient.

A sophisticated understanding of the Reform Movement also demonstrates how student movements are a critical gauge for understanding college students’ experiences. Using a historical example such as the Reform Movement provides a large-scale, enduring example of how and why individuals transform into student activists. Moreover, the Reform Movement showcases how student organization, mobilization, and activism offer invaluable opportunities for student learning, engagement, and development. Through activist work, students navigate multiple contexts and systems, within and external to their community, while interacting within an organization that is anchored in leadership and service. Bronfenbrenner’s (1979, 1986, 1993) ecological systems theory is a useful framework for examining and conveying the intricate, interconnected contexts in which students live, work, and study. Student development scholars have used ecological models to study student identities such as race and ethnicity (Guardia & Evans, 2008; Hoffman & Peña, 2013; Renn, 2003, 2004) and functional areas such as academic advising (Stebbleton, 2011), residential colleges (Jessup-Anger, 2012), and fraternity/sorority membership (Barber et al., 2015), as well as White students’ experiences at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Peterson, 2014).

However, student development theorists and scholars have not previously explored the identity formation of student activists. Developmental ecology is a useful method for mapping students’ development across a number of domains and for understanding how these students interact with campus environments (Patton et al., 2016). With student activists’ experiences at the center of an ecological systems framework, researchers can further illuminate ways in which higher education leaders can shape campus environments to promote holistic development for diverse student populations.

In the case of the Reform Movement, students were dissatisfied with stifling academic policy, archaic teaching methods, exclusionary practices, and ultraconservative ideology. Because of this, students asserted their agency and advocated for policy and procedure that would comprehensively elevate their educational experience and development, while expanding higher education access to some underrepresented populations. Their model for reform was then disseminated throughout Latin America and influenced numerous universities’ policies. Situating the Reform Movement within the various levels of the *context* component illuminates where the work of development

occurs and how the student activists' developmentally instigative characteristics provoked reactions from the local, national, and regional environments. These reactions produced sweeping reforms that not only altered the micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chronosystems for UNC students, they also altered the various systems for students at other universities in the ensuing decades.

In addition to affecting the environments and experiences of Latin American university students, the UNC reformists demonstrated the importance of holding leaders and practitioners accountable. When their leaders failed them, students sought to determine their own trajectories by reimagining the possibilities for higher education in Latin America and forming a new generation of university youth. This new generation became instrumental in determining a new character and a new purpose for Argentina and Latin America, which cemented the Reform Movement as a defining example of student-led institutional innovation.

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Introduction

Marked ethnic, linguistic, and racial disparities in elementary, secondary, and college students' STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) preparation and achievement (Lord et al., 2009; Muller, Riegle-Crumb, Schiller, Wilkinson, & Frank, 2010; Riegle-Crumb & Grodsky, 2010) suggest a need to integrate STEM curricula with pedagogical approaches that address the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students, especially those of the growing English learner¹ student population (García & Jensen, 2007). Despite the fact that English learners (EL) are the fastest growing K-12 population in the United States (Fong, Bae, & Huang, 2010; Jiménez-Castellanos & García, 2017; Kim & García, 2014), only 27% of teachers in a national survey reported receiving any professional development related to EL instruction (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). Likewise, 15% of English learners receive no linguistic support services whatsoever (Wolf, Herman, & Dietel, 2010). For the most part, mainstream classroom teachers instruct English learners in STEM content in English with little, if any, pedagogical reinforcement (National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018; Santos, Darling-Hammond, & Cheuk, 2012).

In view of this, this study is part of a larger project that trained teachers in the use of a new EL-focused engineering curriculum for grades K-5, designed to address English learners' STEM literacy while simultaneously developing their English proficiency. The project built on prior research from two distinct fields: bilingualism and engineering systems thinking. Specifically, we endeavored to

¹English Learners (ELs) are the subgroup of bilingual students, those who speak a language other than English in the home, who the school has determined to require linguistic support services in order to successfully access core academic content.

capitalize on bilingual students' *problem-solving advantage*, which refers to bilingual students' approach to every situation from various (linguistic) perspectives (Bialystok & Majumder, 1998; Secada, 1991). This parallels a key mindset and perspective in engineering of assessing and considering a problem from multiple angles, otherwise known as *systems thinking* (Chan, 2015). The larger project (Callahan & Crawford, 2015) was designed to bridge STEM and EL instruction and broaden English learners' participation in our nation's STEM pipeline. More specifically, the project's engineering lessons incorporated principles from established frameworks for quality K-12 engineering education (Moore et al., 2014) and were designed to prompt teachers to maximize collaboration, communication, and systems thinking among their students in order to facilitate English learners' English proficiency development while strengthening their STEM engagement and efficacy.

Prior research has demonstrated the potential of gesturing to benefit English learners' second language acquisition (McCafferty & Stam, 2009), suggesting that teachers' gesturing during engineering and STEM instruction for ELs merits empirical consideration. In the present study, the focus is on the implicit and explicit use of gesturing, as one aspect of potentially effective EL pedagogy, during elementary school engineering and science instruction. This exploratory comparative analysis highlights first, differences in teacher gesturing between science and engineering instruction; and second, how engineering and STEM instruction might incorporate linguistically sensitive teaching practices. Therefore, we explored the following research questions:

1. What types of gestures does an elementary school teacher enact, and with what frequency do they occur during engineering and science instruction?
2. What, if any, differences exist in the type and frequency of the gestures enacted by the elementary school teacher during engineering and science instruction?

Literature Review

Gesturing and Primary Language Development

Prior research suggests that gesturing plays a fundamental role in the development of children's modes of communication, including their primary language. In fact, research has illustrated how early language development is a complex process that draws from multiple inputs, linguistic as well as physical. Goodwyn, Acredolo and Brown (2000) showed how the use of gestures and other physical actions in early communication parallels and even precedes the trajectory of "distancing" *symbol* (i.e., the communicative input such as words, and signs) from *referent* (i.e., the concept being communicated) in verbal language development (p. 82). That is, young infants, (i.e., approximately 10 months old) begin to use deictic gestures (i.e., reaching, pointing) to communicate what they want, while older children (3-5 years) use sophisticated representational pantomimes (i.e. physically representing a situational action without having concrete or substitute representation of an object). For example, producing the motion of opening a door without using any objects and only one's hands to communicate actions done with objects. In so doing, it appears that children may no longer need concrete symbols in their physical representations by this developmental stage (Boyatzis & Watson, 1993; Goodwyn et al., 2000). Ultimately, Goodwyn and colleagues (2000) found symbolic gesturing to facilitate early verbal language development in young children (i.e., approximately 11 months to three years). The authors posited that gesturing might serve as a scaffold to verbal communication, a more complex modality, possibly accounting for some of the advantages observed among young children assigned to the Sign Training treatment (Goodwyn et al., 2000). These findings complement earlier work suggesting a significant relationship between symbolic gesturing and oral language

development (e.g., Acredolo & Goodwyn, 1988; Iverson & Goldin-Meadow, 2005; McCafferty & Stam, 2009).

Gesturing and Second Language Acquisition

Prior research has also extensively examined the value of gesturing and other physical movements in second language acquisition (e.g., Asher, 1966, 1969; Lazaraton, 2004; Mavilidi, Okely, Chandler, Cliff, & Paas, 2015; Nicoladis, Mayberry, & Genesee, 1999; Toumpaniari, Loyens, Mavilidi, & Paas, 2015). Stemming in part from early primary language development research with infants, Asher's seminal Total Physical Response (TPR) model (1966, 1969) postulated that second language instruction should also incorporate similar pedagogical models to those of primary language development, particularly a stress-free and relaxing environment in which the focus is on meaning through the use of physical movement and real-world objects (Smith-Walters, Mangione, & Smith Bass, 2016). Repeatedly, researchers have found that young children who receive either foreign (i.e., English in Japan) or second (i.e., English in the U.S.) language instruction that incorporates physical activity and/or gesturing outperform language learners who receive speech-only instruction (e.g., Mavilidi et al., 2015; Smith-Walters et al., 2016; Toumpaniari et al., 2015; Wang, Hwang, Li, Chen, & Manabe, 2019).

Findings like these have also proven consistent across an array of languages and language learning contexts (e.g., Mavilidi et al., 2015; Nicoladis et al., 1999; Toumpaniari et al., 2015). Notably, in a study of bilingual French and English language-learning infants, Nicoladis and colleagues (1999) found that young infants mirror adult patterns and frequencies of gesturing, but most importantly, that the types of gesturing produced by language learners could correlate with their stage of language proficiency development. Indeed, Lazaraton (2004) argued that nonverbal behavior is a fundamental aspect of teaching second language learners, and that gesturing provides an important form of comprehensible input. Given the relatively nascent examination of gesturing in the context of second language and disciplinary content learning, we propose that gesturing may be an essential form of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1981, 1982, 1985). In the following section, we examine the literature regarding teachers' practices framing content for second language learners.

Potential of Gesturing in EL Pedagogy and Practice

Language and educational policy charge teachers with developing English learners' academic proficiency in STEM content at the same time they are learning English (Hakuta, 2011). Nationally, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001), and its successor, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015), focused educators' attention on English learners' STEM achievement for the first time (Cosentino de Cohen, 2005), with the recent standards movement (Next Generation Science Standards Lead States, 2013) reinforcing the importance of teachers' EL and STEM capacity (Lee, Quinn, & Valdés, 2013). EL instructional efficacy is particularly challenging as teachers must simultaneously develop students' English proficiency and content area expertise (Téllez & Waxman, 2006). However, even when teachers feel confident in their STEM knowledge and instructional abilities, they often fail to address issues of cultural and linguistic diversity, which in turn minimizes English learners' STEM experiences (Lee, Maerten-Rivera, Buxton, Penfield, & Secada, 2009). It is not enough to simply employ good teaching practices and expect English learner achievement to improve (De Jong & Harper, 2005). Instead, EL instructional efficacy reflects a teacher's ability to contextualize the language constructs that English learners must master (Bailey, 2007; Shin, 2009). Importantly, teachers must be able to call out and address the linguistic nuances specific to each academic content area

(Lee, Quinn, & Valdés 2013, Valdés 2001; Turkan, de Oliveira, Lee, & Phelps, 2014). This becomes of greater importance as the EL performance gap is defined not just by language acquisition, but also by content area mastery (Cosentino de Cohen, 2005; Fry, 2007; Valle, Waxman, Diaz, & Padrón, 2013).

Research has found that pedagogical approaches that simultaneously integrate literacy and science instruction produce significant gains in students' science achievement (Cervetti, Barber, Dorph, Pearson, & Goldschmidt, 2012). Offering language experiences through inquiry-based instruction may be one of the more effective practices for improving EL instruction (Stoddart, Solis, Tolbert, & Bravo, 2010). Engineering instruction in particular may lend itself to improving teachers' EL instructional efficacy due to its emphasis on open-ended design challenges, collaboration, communication, and systems thinking (Katehi, Pearson, & Feder, 2009), all features typically endorsed as rigorous and effective EL pedagogical approaches to content area instruction (de Oliveira, Obenchain, Kenney, & Oliveira, 2019; Verplaetse & Migliacci, 2017). As such, we argue that it is important to identify specific teaching practices that can both improve language instruction and make STEM content more accessible to English learners.

The role of gesturing in STEM instruction also pose important implications in efforts to adopt more culturally responsive teaching practices. Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) not only values diverse students' cultural attributes, features, experiences and perspectives, but also incorporates them into instructional practice for improved outcomes (Gay, 2002). CRT is predicated on the idea that learning is enriched, heightened, and facilitated when students are not only given opportunities but encouraged to access academic content from their "lived experiences and frames of reference" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). As such, one core feature of CRT is the notion of *cross-cultural communications*, which emphasizes the need for teachers' ability to be sensitive to their ethnically diverse students' communicative codes and to utilize them to help their students succeed (Gay, 2002). Of course, one key feature of these codes are gestures, as Gay (2002) explains:

Culturally responsive teacher preparation programs teach how the communication styles of different ethnic groups reflect cultural values and shape learning behaviors and how to modify classroom interactions to better accommodate them. They include knowledge about the linguistic structures of various ethnic communication styles as well as contextual factors, [...] *gestures* [emphasis added] and body movements. (p.111)

Thus, as Gay highlights above, effective cross-cultural communications between teacher and student are dynamic and multifaceted in nature, involving a comprehensive understanding and reciprocation of all modes of communication, including embodied modes, with respect to the cultural community of interest.

Accounting for these rich and diverse perspectives informing EL educational policy, STEM instruction as a context for literacy instruction, and culturally relative pedagogies, in the present study, we examine teacher gesturing in the context of engineering instruction. In particular, in the present study, we focus on the potential of engineering and gesturing within engineering, to improve English learners' STEM experiences.

Theoretical Framework

Krashen's (1982, 2009) input hypothesis postulated that the acquisition of a second language requires, in part, for the learner to receive considerable and understandable linguistic input, or comprehensible input. Receipt and processing of comprehensible input in turn leads to an internal development of grammatical structures and overall fluency in the learner (p. 22). The main idea behind such hypothesis is to provide the second language learner with enough varied, understandable linguistic exposure, similar to first language development, such that a natural language acquisition process develops that will lead to proficiency. We overlay McNeill's (1992) gesturing framework as the essential link between speech sounds and gestural movement that facilitates comprehensible input. In short, we argue that gestures' fundamental connection to linguistic communication makes them critical to the comprehensible input process as defined by Krashen (1982, 2009). For the purposes of the present inquiry, we adopted McNeill's (1992) gesturing framework as our theoretical lens when exploring teacher gestures.

McNeill (1992) initially classified gesturing into four major categories that, depending on the nature of the gesture, dictate the relation between the gesturing production and the content of one's speech. These gesturing categories included: (a) *deictic* (pointing) gestures, which call attention to objects, both concrete and metaphorical, and are typically performed with the index finger, (b) *iconic* gestures, which represent semantic content including kinetographic gestures (e.g., "sweeping" the floor or "driving" a car), and pictographic gestures (e.g., outlining the shape of a box or other physical objects), (c) *metaphoric* gesturing, which, similar to iconic gestures, represent semantic content but now symbolizing abstract ideas, and 4) *beat* gestures, which serve as a visual representation of the rhythm being produced by one's speech (Lazaraton, 2004, p. 76). As individual gestures often encompass elements of multiple categories, McNeill (2005) updated this theory to frame these as four related, rather than mutually exclusive, dimensions.

Methods

Case Study Context and Participant

Data for this study were collected as part of a larger ongoing research project designed to examine how professional development in and implementation of an EL-focused, K-5 engineering curriculum might inform how teachers supported English learners' linguistic capabilities through collaboration and systems thinking. Drawing on seminal research detailing the bilingual advantage (Bialystok & Majumder, 1998; Secada, 1991), the curriculum was designed to optimize the relationship between English learners' problem-solving skills (Greenberg, Bellana, & Bialystok, 2013; Prior & MacWhinney, 2009) and engineering habits of mind (Katehi et al., 2009) which emphasize systems thinking, collaboration, and design, and require sophisticated creative and critical thinking skills (Chan, 2015; Katehi et al., 2009; Razzouk & Shute, 2012). Project implementation took place in an elementary school located in the Southwestern United States that enrolled fewer than 15 percent English learners and offered primarily integrated English as a Second Language (ESL)-services in English-only instructional contexts. All school site teachers were required to address English learners' linguistic development within their daily lessons; the school offered no discrete ESL instructional services.

During the initial phase of the project, the research team invited the six participating elementary teachers (one per each grade level) to participate in multiple, individual semi-structured interviews, as

well as professional development workshops before, during, and after the completion of their implementation of the EL-focused, K-5 engineering curriculum. Furthermore, the research team asked the teachers to record themselves as they taught one science lesson and up to nine engineering lessons over the course of the school year (2016-17). Here, we focus our inquiry on one of the six participating teachers, Ms. Collins (a pseudonym).

Aligned to our exploratory case study approach, we focused our analyses on Ms. Collins, a female kindergarten teacher with over 10 years of teaching experience. Additionally, we selected Ms. Collins as a focal participant due to her extensive teaching experience and ESL certification, which we hoped would provide compelling gesturing data. Furthermore, as prior research has shown that gesturing provides an important scaffold to young children's language development (Acredolo & Goodwyn, 1988; Gu, 2015; Kuhn et al., 2014; Nicoladis et al., 1999), Ms. Collins' kindergarten students (approximately 5-6 years old) would all be in the process of English literacy development, either as a first or second language.

Data Collection Procedure

As part of the larger research project, Ms. Collins received video-recording equipment (i.e., two video cameras, four memory cards, and a camera stand), and recorded as many of her engineering lessons as possible. It is important to note that our research team did not intentionally set out to study gesturing in and of itself. As such, Ms. Collins was not aware that her gesturing in particular would be of interest. Only after reviewing over six hours of our participants' instructional footage did we elect to focus our gesturing inquiry on Ms. Collins in particular. As such, we are confident that the gesturing Ms. Collins enacted during her lessons was not related to the presence of the larger project at her school site or in her classroom.

Ultimately, Ms. Collins recorded and archived a total of nine engineering lessons and one science lesson. As recommended by Jewitt (2012), we adopted an exploratory microgenetic approach (Miller & Coyle, 1999) in which the researcher minutely analyzes short segments of video data. In our case, this facilitated a deeper analysis of teacher-enacted gesturing, or teacher-gesture, as well as the exploration of within-subject variation of teacher-gestures between their science and engineering instruction. Because of this, data included the video-analysis of two full lessons from Ms. Collins: 1) a science lesson that involved the exploration of force and motion through the use of manipulatives, and 2) an engineering lesson entitled "Materials: Our Material World," that involved the identification of engineering materials and why/how these can be used for the creation of structures. Together, the two lessons yielded approximately 60 minutes of video data.





Analytic Approach

Coding schema. We utilized McNeill's (1992) gestural dimensions framework in order to code the gestures observed in the video data. McNeill (1992) identified four related dimensions of gestures: a) iconic, b) metaphoric, c) beat, and d) deictic (pointing). In later works, McNeill (2006) also identified a fifth dimension: emblems. Emblematic gestures symbolize culturally embedded understandings (for example, a "thumbs up" to indicate approval). Table 1 explains the qualities of each dimension.

McNeill (2006) is careful to describe the aforementioned dimensions not as rigid categories, but as points along a continuum; within any one unit of gestural production, elements of the other four can be observed simultaneously. While we generally identified the most evident or apparent dimension

in a gesture, in some instances an observed gesture comprised multiple dimensions. In these instances, we coded these gestures to all of the most evident dimensions. Table 1 provides descriptions of each gestural dimensions.

Table 1. McNeill's *Gesturing Dimensions and Descriptions*.

Dimension	Description	Sample Image Depiction
Iconic [i]	"Iconic gestures that closely relates to the semantic content of speech [...] Iconic gestures may be <i>kinetographic</i> , representing some bodily action, like sweeping the floor, or <i>pictographic</i> , representing the actual form of an object, like outlining the shape of a box" (Lazaraton, 2004, p.84).	
Beat [b]	"Beats are gestures that have the same form regardless of the content to which they are linked. In a beat gesture, the hand moves with a rhythmical pulse that lines up with stress peaks of speech. A typical beat gesture is a simple flick of the hand or fingers up and down, or back and forth, the movement is short and fast. Although beats	
Table 1. (continued)		
	may serve a referential function, their primary use is to regulate the flow of speech" (Lazaraton, 2004, p.84).	
Metamorphic [m]	"Metaphoric gestures may be pictographic or kinetographic like iconics, but they represent an abstract idea rather than a concrete object or action. An example is circling the finger at the temple to signify the 'wheels of thought'" (Lazaraton, 2004, p.84).	
Deictic [d] (Pointing)	"Deictic gestures have a pointing function, either actual or metaphoric. For example, we may point to an object in the immediate environment, or we may point behind us to represent past time" (Lazaraton, 2004, p.84).	
Emblematic [e]	"'Emblems' are conventionalized signs, such as thumbs-up or the ring (first finger and thumb tips touching, other fingers extended) for 'OK', and others less polite. [...] Emblems or quotable gestures are culturally specific, have standard forms and	

significances, and vary from place to place. [...] These gestures are meaningful without speech, although they also occur with speech. They function like illocutionary force markers, rather than propositions, the mode of gesticulation, and the timing when they occur with speech, being quite different.” (McNeill, 2006, p. 58).



Video observations, coding, and agreement. After all video data were collected, the research team met first to review the video data, identify the type and frequency of gestures, and then later to discuss, articulate, and clarify the data-analysis processes and coding schema. Before viewing and coding the science lesson video, the team clarified the qualifiers for each dimension of McNeill’s (1992) gesturing framework, discussing inclusion and exclusion criteria for coding (see Figure 1). The research team participated in a round of blind coding, wherein they independently categorized all the gestures present in the video data without sharing perceptions of the gesture type. This initial round led to an inter-coder agreement of 83.74% for the classification of all 93 identified gestures, with a Cohen’s kappa statistic of 0.84. After the initial round of blind coding, the team met again to reconcile any discrepant codes, discussing until reaching consensus for each gesturing instance.

Figure 1. *Sample Image of Data Analysis*

Time-Stamp	Description of Gesture	Coder 1	Coder 2	Reconciled Codes
0:11:00	"put your labcoats on" with elbows bent and raised near shoulder, alternates moving arms from back to front as if she were putting on an invisible coat (gesture imitates the same motion one would have when putting on a coat).	iconic	iconic	iconic
0:13:00	"put your name tag on" one hand held in open flat palm facing her chest, moves palm and touches it to one side of upper chest beneath the shoulder (as if she had an invisible sticker nametag).	metaphoric	iconic	iconic
0:14:00	"wear your safety glasses" with both hands in the shape of a C (or as if holding a pair of large goggles) starting from in front of her chest moves them up to either side of eyes.	iconic	iconic	iconic
0:21:00	"today we're talking about movement"--with palms facing up and fingers spread apart, moves both wrists in a semi arc in front of her chest	metaphoric	metaphoric	metaphoric
1:23:00	counts with fingers	emblematic	emblematic	emblematic
1:31:00	"shhh" index finger to lip	emblematic	emblematic	emblematic
1:39:00	"moving our bodies" moved open-palm hands near chest	iconic	iconic	iconic
1:43:00	"...you gotta listen though" palms facing down, moves both hands down coming to an abrupt stop	metaphoric	metaphoric	metaphoric
1:45:00	"after our dance" one hand with fingers closed with thumb that moved to center of cupped palm of other hand	metaphoric	metaphoric	metaphoric

Inclusion and exclusion criteria. In accordance with McNeill’s (2006) framework, we coded anything involving representations usually made with the limbs, particularly arms and hands, but also inclusive of other body parts as gestures. We included both “empty-handed gestures where an object did not play an integral part” (Nicoladis, et al., 1999, p. 516) and instances where the teacher might have been holding an object *while* gesturing, but not instances in which the teacher was performing an action or motioning with an object that she had in hand.

As our research interests focused on Ms. Collin's content delivery and general teaching strategies, we opted to include only gestures that were visible to the whole group. That is, we did not code for gestures produced during individual or side interactions with either a single student or a small group. In addition, these individual or small group interactions were not reliably or clearly captured on video, all of which led to the elimination of seven gesturing incidents from our total corpus. Our final analytic sample included 86 gestures in total. We included gestures intended to either manage whole-class/large-group behavior or explain procedural information, as well as gestures that occurred in the context of content-driven discussions.

Post-coding analysis. After reconciling coding schema for all gestures, we further disaggregated the data by identifying the type of dialogic context within the instructional period. This yielded three broad emergent contexts within which Ms. Collins produced her gestures. The first one identified was *behavioral/ classroom management*, the context in which Ms. Collins' gestures and speech prompted students to demonstrate the appropriate or expected behaviors as participants in the classroom community. The second emergent context identified was *procedural instructions*, those produced to explain or demonstrate tasks or actions students would be engaging in during the lesson activities. Third, *facilitating discussion* is the context wherein the instructor's speech and gestures were closely related to discussions or direct instruction of the content or conceptual ideas.

Results

Before discussing findings from our comparative analysis, it is important to articulate exactly how we implemented McNeill's (1992, 2005, 2006) framework using several examples of Ms. Collins' instructional gesturing. In order to efficiently associate and analyze Ms. Collins' speech-gesture relationships, we adopted a variation of a commonly used transcription method for investigating non-verbal behavior referred to as "second-line" transcriptions (Lazaraton, 2004, p. 92). In second-line transcriptions, we described gestures and other nonverbal behaviors separately from the verbal channel. We indicate these behaviors by the presence of brackets ([]) and place them underneath the verbal channel of the transcription. More specifically, the type of gesture identified (depicted through the gestures' initials, i.e., in brackets such as [i] for iconic and [b] for beat as seen in Table 1) and a description of the gesture is placed directly below specific words or phrases within the speech, or dialogue, during which the gesture was produced. Lastly, the length of the gesture description underlying the text represents the approximate duration of the gesture.

We present the following excerpt, drawn from a discussion on the concept of "movement" to illustrate our argument. Ms. Collins had just finished soliciting examples of movements from her students. In the transcript below, her monologue transitions students to the next activity in which they will further explore movement. Here, Ms. Collins explained what tasks the students would be doing and how they would carry them out, being primarily concerned with providing procedural instructions.

The reader will note that in line 1, Ms. Collins' act of moving her hands appeared to illustrate the word "moving." In this sense, the symbol of the gesture was near to its referent, the idea of "moving," and was thus *iconic* of moving. However, in line 3, in an attempt to quiet the students who continued talking while she presented, Ms. Collins reminded the class to listen. In doing so, she moved her hands, held at either side of her waist, with palms facing down lower, and comes to an abrupt stop with them. This gesture appeared to represent, metaphorically, the lowering of volume among students. *Metaphoric* in nature, the gesture here (line 3) seemed further away from its referent than the

representation of moving (line 1) through the concrete action of moving one's hands. In line 3, both the speech and the associated gesture serve a behavioral/classroom-management function as Ms. Collins prompted her students to exhibit a desired behavior.

1. Ms. Collins: We are going to ... start our lesson with moving our bodies

[i]moved open-palm hands
at chest level in
semi-arcs

2. Ms. Collins: We are going to do our Halloween dance, you've got to listen

[m]open-palm hands
facing down moving
downwards

3. Ms. Collins: Then after our dance, we are going to do movement stations

[m]one hand with	[i]tenting hand apart
fingers bunched	from each other
with thumb that	started out in
moved in a slight	front of chest
arc to center	moved apart and to
of cupped palm of	the side and
other hand	moving in a
	circle, briefly
	hovered or
	reached toward the
	direction of each
	table group

5. Ms. Collins: Christopher ... shhh

[c]index finger to lip

In line 4, the reader will see the occurrence of two gestures. The first gesture appears to be associated with the word “after.” The arching nature of moving one hand concluding with the abrupt stop of this hand against the other palm seemed to indicate a temporal change or the progression from one point to another, however it did not appear to concretely emulate time (itself an abstract concept). Thus, the relatively abstract nature of this gesture is *metaphoric* because it represents an abstract concept. The second gesture in line 4, however, more concretely represents the speech with which it is associated. By tenting her hands and moving in the same pattern that she expected the students to follow from table to table, Ms. Collins employed a *kinetographic* gesture, a representation of the concrete action her students would soon take. The gesture was therefore iconic in nature. Although the nature of the two gestures within this same line of speech appeared to differ, they both served to aid Ms. Collins' explanation of a procedure.

Finally, in line 5, Ms. Collins attempted to silence a child who was talking over her. By placing her index finger over her lips, she utilized a culturally embedded, emblematic gesture commonly understood in the U.S. as an imperative that the recipient cease talking or remain quiet. Ms. Collins provides further evidence of the culturally embedded nature of this gesture with the similarly emblematic sound (i.e., shhhhhh) that she makes to quiet her class. Neither the gesture, nor the sound alone directly conveyed Ms. Collins' request for quiet, but rather their combined symbolism emerged from the larger cultural context. Since Ms. Collins executed the speech and the gesture simultaneously to

prompt a desired behavior, we situated this instance in the behavioral/classroom management context.

Exploratory Comparative Analyses

In order to compare the amount of gesturing Ms. Collins employed during science and engineering instruction, we calculated the gesture per minute rate for each lesson (see Table 2). Coding gestural rates allowed us to compare the frequency of certain types of gestures while accounting for differences in the duration of instruction (the science lesson lasted 40 minutes, and the engineering lesson 20 minutes). In doing so, our intent was not to conduct a thorough statistical analysis, but rather to visually represent the gesturing data in a more descriptive manner in line with recommendations from the field of gesturing studies (Gullberg, 2010).

Table 2 demonstrates Ms. Collins' gesture-rates per minute in both science and engineering instruction. Ms. Collins used a total of 51 gestures during the science lesson and 35 gestures during the engineering lesson analyzed for the present article, each of which lasted approximately 40 and 20 minutes, respectively. Despite the relatively short duration of the engineering lesson, Ms. Collins' demonstrated a higher gesturing-rate, which could imply that the engineering content prompted Ms. Collins to gesture more than she did in her science lesson. In addition, the reader will note that Ms. Collins demonstrated visibly higher shares of deictic, metaphoric, emblematic, and hybrid gestures during her engineering instruction. On the other hand, she produced a higher share of iconic gestures during science instruction, with beat gestures remaining about the same in both lessons.

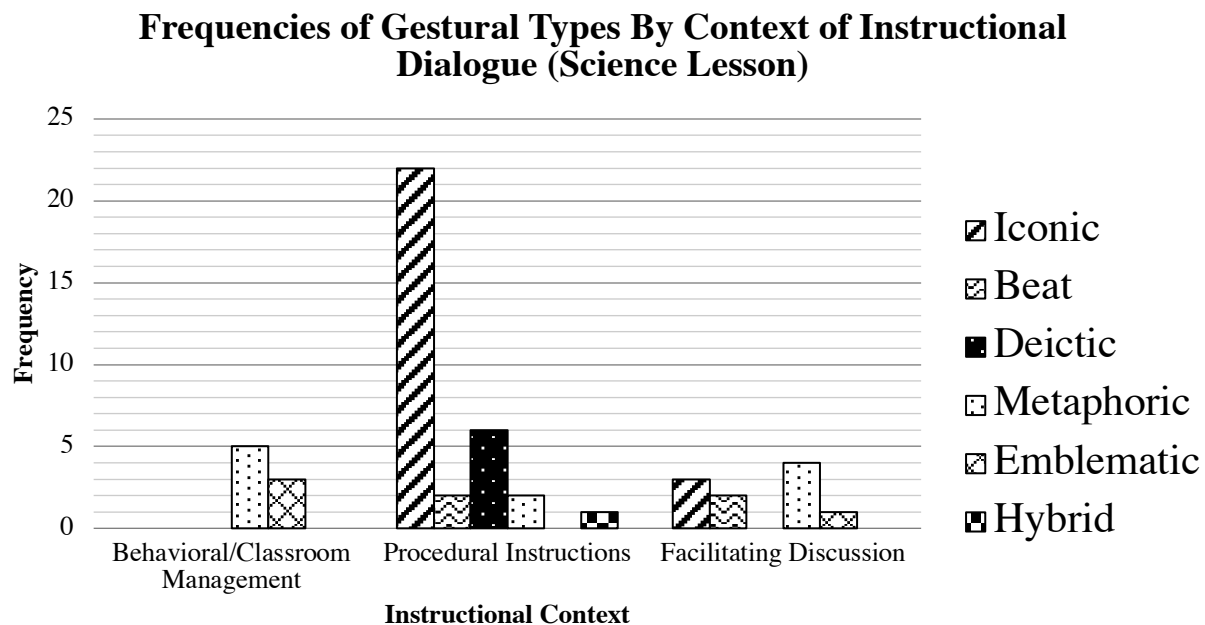
Table 2. *Teacher-Gestures per Minute for both Science Lesson and Engineering Lesson*

Type of Gesture	Science ^a (gestures per minute)	Engineering ^b (gestures per minute)
Iconic	.64	.20
Beat	.10	.10
Deictic	.15	.40
Metaphoric	.28	.40
Emblematic	.10	.37
Hybrid	.03	.30
Total	1.30	1.77

^aScience lesson lasted approx. 40 minutes with a total of 51 gestures

^bEngineering lesson lasted approx. 20 minutes with a total of 35 gestures

In an effort to better understand the types of gestures that occurred across both instructional contexts, science and engineering, we compared gesturing frequencies within each instructional dialogue category (behavioral/classroom management, procedural instruction, and facilitating classroom discussions) and across the lessons (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Teacher-Gesture Frequencies separated by Context of Instructional Context for Science Lesson*

We include Figure 2 to display the frequency of gestural type by instructional category during science. Ms. Collins produced iconic gesturing most frequently ($n = 25$), especially during procedural instructions ($n = 22$).

We present further evidence of gesturing frequency in the video transcript below. The sequence below lasted close to one minute and 30 seconds, and draws from video data (approximately three minutes long) in which Ms. Collins explained how students would engage with the lesson's stations and their corresponding materials

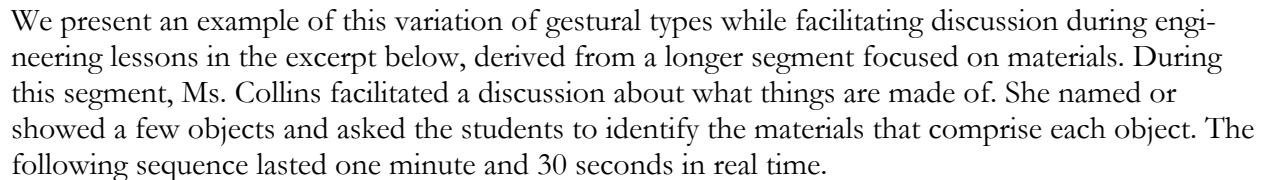
1. **Okay ... so each table is going to have a different something and we**
2. **are going to travel around ... I am going to travel around to each**
[i]tented hand moves in a circle
along the x,y plane within the
three-dimensional space
3. **station and we are going to do it ... we are going to do it just a few**
[i]similarly as before, tented
hand moves in circular
motions along the x,y plane
within the three-dimensional
space
4. **minutes ...**
5. **One station is marbles ... when you build the marble tower and you**
[i]moves hands up above each other
in a pseudo stacking motion
6. **have the marble go in there and you make the marble go down ... like**

- [i]swirls hand with index finger going down
finger
going
down
- [i]index
7. **the marble goes loopy-loop and all that stuff**
[i]index finger pointed out
and down; loops entire hand
in air briefly
8. **One of them is with magnets ... and you are making the magnet ... you**
[i]fingers loosely bunched
with palm facing away
from face and moves it
in an s-shape along the
x,z plane in the three-
dimensional space
9. **are going to use the magnet roads with one on the top**
[i]both hands with fingers loosely bunched [i]one hand with
pointing towards each other fingers loosely
bunched raised
to the top
10. **one on the bottom, you will need a partner for that one, and you**
[i]other hand with fingers
loosely bunched lowered
to the bottom
11. **will make the magnet travel along the magnet road**
[i]both hands with fingers loosely bunched facing each other
swirling on the x,y plane in the three-dimensional space

Here, Ms. Collins primarily produced iconic gestures as she emulated the actions and movements students would either produce or observe when manipulating materials at each station. For example, in line 10, Ms. Collins described an activity where students would build a marble tower. To symbolize a tower, she stacked her hands, bunching one above the other in a concrete representation of both the action of building (i.e., stacking) and the concept of height, as associated with towers. Similarly, in lines 14-15, Ms. Collins produced more iconic gestures as she demonstrated how students would configure their hands when holding two magnets on either side of a sheet of paper while simultaneously explaining the process verbally. In these sixteen lines (approximately one minute and 30 seconds of instructional time), we observed 11 instances of iconic gesturing. These iconic gestures comprised nearly half of the iconic total during the science lesson, which entailed a substantial exploratory phase that warranted procedural instructions.

The gesturing patterns that emerged in Ms. Collins' instruction differed markedly between engineering and science. Figure 3 compares Ms. Collins' gestural types across the three instructional dialogic contexts during the engineering lesson. Interestingly, iconic gesturing occurred far less frequently during engineering ($n = 4$) than during science ($n = 25$) instruction. Furthermore, Figure 3 shows that while most of the gesturing produced in science occurred in the procedural instructional context ($n = 32$ of 51; 63%), in engineering, the majority occurred when Ms. Collins was facilitating discussion ($n = 21$ of 35; 60%). Ms. Collins produced a greater variety of gestural types while facilitating discussion; we observed both deictic and emblematic gestures most frequently in this context. The

Frequencies of Gestural Types By Context of Instructional Dialogue (Engineering Lesson)



- 54

8. **Ms. Collins: Metal! ... what about ... stop ... what about your coffee mugs**
[m]clicks
and points
towards
student
9. **Ms. Collins: that you drink out of?**
[i]cups both hands
over mouth and moves
them forwards and slightly
over her chin
10. **S2: Glass!**
11. **Ms. Collins: They are made out of glass, right?**
[m]from cupped hands, lower
arms and spread them apart
with palms facing up

This segment included at least three different gesture types: deictic, metaphoric, and iconic. In lines 1 and 6, Ms. Collins' use of props such as the pencil and the scissors facilitated the deictic gestures. In line 9, Ms. Collins employed an iconic gesture to refer to and symbolize the action of holding a coffee mug to one's mouth to illustrate her question about what coffee mugs are made of. In line 11, the nature of her gesture was metaphoric—by opening up her palms and raising her hands she represented the rhetorical question, “right?”

While Ms. Collins facilitated discussion in the engineering lesson, we also observed a greater incidence of distinctly hybrid gestures during this time. In the sequence of transcript below, Ms. Collins prompted a discussion about the five senses while discussing how students can make observations about materials. This sequence lasted approximately 45 seconds and produced seven hybrid gestures.

1. **Ms. Collins: We are going to talk about their textures, what they sound**
2. **Ms. Collins: like, what they smell like ... we are going to use our five**
3. **Ms. Collins: senses**
4. **SN: Senses**
5. **Ms. Collins: You guys remember what your five senses are? Lea you remember one?**
6. **S1: Taste**
7. **Ms. Collins: Taste ... tasting ... Jenny?**
[h]points towards
tongue that is sticking
out
8. **S2: Hearing**
9. **Ms. Collins: Hearing ... Alex?**
[m]holds both palms
behind both ears
with fingers spread
10. **S3: Seeing**
11. **Ms. Collins: Seeing with your eyeballs ... one more ... Max?**

[h]takes both index fingers and points to corner
of each eye

12. S4: Hearing

13. Ms. Collins: Hearing ... seeing ... hearing ...

[h]both index fingers pointing/ touching both ears	[h]both index fingers pointing to both eyes	[h]both index fingers pointing/ touching both ears	[h]touches nose with index fingers
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14. SN: Smelling

15. Ms. Collins: Smelling ... tasting ...

[h]points towards tongue that is sticking out	[m]both hands up with fingers spread and moving
---	--

16. SN: Touching

17. Ms. Collins: Touching

[h]holds both hands up
near face, with both
palms open and facing
students, fingers
slightly spread and
wiggles fingers

We coded the gestures Ms. Collins produced in lines 6, 10, 12 as hybrid and those in line 14 as deictic-metaphoric combinations. We coded them as deictic because she pointed to various organs on her body, and metaphoric because she referred to students' senses (i.e., sight and hearing) and not the actual organs (i.e., eyes and nose). That is, the organs represented the abstract concepts (senses) they carry out. Line 16 also contains a hybrid gesture that is icono-metaphoric in nature. By wiggling her fingers, Ms. Collins both concretely represented the kinetographic nature associated with moving hands and fingers to demonstrate the act of touching, and referenced the sense, (i.e., feeling a surface). Altogether, these hybrid gestures embodied the dimensional nature of the McNeill's (1992) gestural typologies.

Discussion

Results from our exploratory comparative analyses on the gesture-per-minute rates and across instructional contexts revealed some differences in the types of gesturing produced between science and engineering instruction. Specifically, Ms. Collins implemented a higher rate of iconic gesturing during science. One possible explanation lies in the nature of the science lesson that we observed. The science lesson consisted of an inquiry-based activity during which students explored movement at different classroom stations. As Ms. Collins instructed her students, she used gesturing to model how she expected the students to interact within each station. The instruction itself lent to iconic gesturing as Ms. Collins expected the students to engage in physically oriented procedures, manipulate the materials and move around the classroom.

Likewise, the semantic content of Ms. Collins' procedural explanations for student activities allowed her to represent both the actions and the materials either kinetographic or pictographic. Her gestural symbols were proximal to their referents and provided scaffolds that described the intent of her

instructions (Goodwyn et al., 2000). Here, Ms. Collins' gestures eliminated the need for actual tools to demonstrate her ideas, yet they closely mimicked the form of the actions. Symbolic pantomimes such as these have the potential to facilitate English learners' language development in particular, by helping students verbally distance language from its concrete referents.

On the other hand, during her engineering lesson, Ms. Collins enacted higher rates of deictic, metaphoric, emblematic, and hybrid gesturing. Her gesturing happened most frequently when facilitating discussion. Like the science lesson, the nature of the engineering lesson appeared to influence Ms. Collins' gestural production and the contexts in which it occurred. During this lesson, Ms. Collins introduced students to the engineering concept of materials and their properties, engaging with physical objects and gesturing deictically to indicate the materials and pictures in the book she used during the whole-group discussion components of the lesson. Trying to describe properties like surface texture also prompted Ms. Collins to use more metaphoric and hybrid gestures, especially given the presence of realia that served as concrete representations of the materials and properties in discussion.

By employing both metaphoric and hybrid gestures, Ms. Collins created extralinguistic context which could have facilitated her English learners' comprehension. For example, gesturing facilitated not only word denotations, but also connotations and intentions, both direct and implied. Interestingly, however, Ms. Collins employed far fewer iconic gestures in this lesson. Perhaps the heavy materials-use and object-manipulation that characterized this lesson necessarily constrained the production of certain types of gestures, like iconic ones, and promoted the use of others, like deictic gestures.

The concretizing nature of iconic gesturing also becomes especially crucial when accounting for the linguistic needs of English learners. Nicoladis et al. (1999) suggest that iconic gestures could be important in helping young children develop the language necessary to express more complex ideas. Depending on students' English proficiency level, abstract concepts such as "top" and "bottom" could be incomprehensible without Ms. Collins' iconic gesturing. Iconic and metaphoric gesturing also have the potential to serve as cultural mediators during classroom instruction. For example, Ms. Collins instructed her students in the dynamics of "centers." It is possible, if not quite likely, that immigrant English learners might be unfamiliar with "centers", a fairly common practice in which teachers will rotate students through a series of stations, each of which involves a different activity. Centers or stations are fairly common in kindergarten classrooms in the United States. However, by gesturing, Ms. Collins demonstrated the path and the processes she expected the students to follow as they traveled from station to another, as well as the expected interactions for each station.

Overall, Ms. Collins' use of a variety of gesturing forms during both lessons allowed her to supplement her communication methods within each context of instruction (classroom management, procedural, and facilitating discussion) by providing extra-linguistic context as a potential additional support for her students to access linguistic meaning during these science and engineering lessons. Indeed, when asked about the place of language and language pedagogy in math and science instruction during a follow-up interview, Ms. Collins reflected on how gesturing could facilitate communication for students who might otherwise struggle with verbal expressions in English. She commented that

sometimes the kids don't have the words to tell you, but they can show you. So, there's, you know, the unspoken language of like hand gestures and building and showing you that I can do this and then sometimes they are able to tell me. (Interview 2)

Here, Ms. Collins' comments suggest that she recognizes the important role gesturing can play in helping students negotiate and produce meaning during STEM instruction and learning.

Limitations

As with any analysis pertaining to the complexities of communication and language (and even more so nonverbal, gestural research), this type of study requires a great deal of interpretation on the part of the observers. We are careful to acknowledge the subjective nature of our coding decisions and our interpretations of Ms. Collins' gestures. The very nature of our coding schema applies an interpretation to the representational intent and purpose of each gesture, as well as to every instructional dialogic context. Furthermore, due to constraints of time and access, we were unable to supplement these video observations with additional observations in other subject areas to understand the extent to which Ms. Collins employs gestures as intentional instructional strategies in all content areas. Nevertheless, we strove to make reasonable interpretations, to achieve realistic precision, and to be as consistent as possible during our coding process. We also exerted considerable effort to qualify as many definitions as possible. We attempted to temper our biases through blind coding processes and thorough discussion of any discrepancies before and during the code reconciliation process.

Conclusion

Improving the understanding and implementation of different types of gesturing has the potential to make engineering content (and STEM content more broadly) more accessible to diverse learners, particularly to English learners. Given prior research documenting the importance of early engineering education experiences and the development of engineering concepts, engaging English learners in engineering is particularly important (Ozogul, Miller, & Reisslein, 2017). For example, in their study of children's early engineering conceptions and interests, Ozogul and colleagues (2017) found racial discrepancies in students' accurate understandings of and interests in engineering. Specifically, White students articulated more accurate conceptions of engineering and demonstrated greater proclivities toward it as an occupation, even in early childhood, than their Latinx peers (Ozogul et al., 2017). Considering our findings in light of the prior research, we suggest that all students would benefit from an increase in early engineering exposure, especially English learners. Notably, effective early exposure would require teachers' awareness of the multiple tools, such as gesturing, that might facilitate the engagement of a wide variety of culturally and linguistically diverse learners in engineering. In particular, further exploration of iconic and metaphoric gesturing's potential to make abstract engineering concepts concrete has the potential to inform and produce more equitable practices in early engineering education.

The potential for gesturing as a pedagogical tool becomes increasingly compelling in light of prior research exploring elementary teachers' conceptions of engineering, especially their perceptions of who can successfully participate and why. Sengupta-Irving & Mercado (2017) found that some teachers view the teaching of engineering itself as an equity-driven practice and suggested prompting teachers to interrogate their own beliefs and stereotypes to actively work to counter them. In a similar vein, teachers' examination of their own gesturing habits with respect to alternately English

learner or engineering instruction may provide a foundation from which they might begin to intentionally leverage extra-linguistic comprehensible input for diverse language learners.

Future Directions

Although grounded in an elementary engineering context, the present study did not examine students' learning, either outcomes or experiences. Future research will want to examine how extra-linguistic instructional contexts, namely gesturing, may inform English learners' ability to engage with engineering curriculum. In particular, researchers might interview students and examine learning patterns in science, engineering, and even English language development, as they relate to teachers' gesturing patterns. Examination of gesturing in different cognitive tasks warrants would further inform how young learners engage with engineering at the precollege level. Gesturing may be especially salient to early learning processes and outcomes given the complex cognitive processes required of engineering design and problem solving. In addition, future research is necessary to examine how iconic and metaphoric gesturing, in particular, might contribute to the comprehension of the abstract engineering concepts, especially during student-led classroom discussions. While lack of student outcome data precludes us from making inferences in that regard here, future research examining the role of iconic gestures in elementary engineering instruction will inform disciplinary language development research, content-area mastery, and problem-solving capacity.

In short, further inquiry into gesturing at the nexus of language and engineering development is bound to offer important insights regarding elementary engineering curriculum development and design, as well as teacher professional development efforts. These insights will facilitate the incorporation of engineering instruction throughout PreK-12 education. Moreover, these efforts will be vital to make STEM learning more accessible to an increasingly diverse group of learners, facilitating their participation within the STEM community of practice.

In their call for future research, Sengupta-Irving and Mercado (2017) highlight the important potential of engineering in early education, stating:

Engineering in science could play a transformative role in children's experiences; it could fundamentally rewrite how children see themselves, the purposes of engineering and science learning, and their futures. Thus, what is at stake is not just the sustainability of yet another milestone in national reforms of science education, but the very possibility that doing this well is the greatest investment in our children someday solving the most pressing social and scientific problems of their time. (p. 120)

We take up their call to note the potential of engineering and build on the potential of gesturing in elementary engineering education to contribute to the linguistic and cognitive development of the growing English learner population. In fact, one in ten students in the U.S. is presently EL-identified, and one in five will be EL-identified at some point in time over the course of their K-12 experience (Kieffer & Thompson, 2018). As a community of educators and engineers, it is imperative that we continue exploring ways in which to cultivate the potential for academic success, especially as it relates to STEM participation for this large and growing population.

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Over the past thirty years, educational researchers have found that an increasing number of students with disabilities (SWD) are enrolling in higher education institutions in the United States (U.S.) (Adams & Proctor, 2010; Newman et al., 2011; Yssel, Pak, & Beilke, 2016). Federal legislation such as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990), and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA, 2004) has given students the opportunity to receive accommodations and supports in these settings. Interestingly, the percentage of undergraduates with a disability in the U.S. has gone from 6% to 11% over the last 20 years (U.S. Department of Education, 2000, 2016). For SWDs who transition from high school to college, one of the greatest challenges is obtaining educational supports that were otherwise addressed by parents and teachers in subsequent schooling years (Adams & Proctor, 2010; Kimball et al., 2016; Paul, 2000; Skinner & Lindstrom, 2003). Although ADA and IDEA states that postsecondary students with disabilities have the right to accommodations to support their learning needs, the onus is on students to gain access to these services (Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Kimball et al., 2016; Paul, 2000; Skinner & Lindstrom, 2003; Zhang et al., 2010).

As the enrollment of postsecondary SWDs continues to grow (Newman et al., 2011), little is known about the postsecondary institutions that are best suited to enroll SWDs either in Texas or nationally (Yssel et al., 2016). ADA does not require postsecondary institutions to report the specifics on the enrollment of SWDs (ADA, 1990). Instead, postsecondary institutions are only required to report the percentages of SWDs who have self-identified on campus as a person with a disability seeking reasonable accommodations (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). In addition, postsecondary institutions only report to the 3% threshold, meaning that postsecondary institutions whose SWD population is less than 3% do not report specific percentages: These institutions simply report enrolling a less than 3% SWD population. If a postsecondary institution does enroll a greater than 3% SWD population, then the postsecondary institution reports the specific percentage but does not report any other individual characteristics about the student, such as race, gender, age, major of study, or any other personally identifying traits (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). This lack of reporting detail has led some disability researchers to criticize the fact that the U.S. Department of Education and the ADA has not required postsecondary institutions to report more SWD information, informing institutional policies about how to best support SWDs on college campuses (Kimball et al., 2016; Paul, 2000).

Beyond qualitative research, there have been no longitudinal studies conducted. In Texas especially, the rhetoric regarding special education has been viewed as contentious and negative (DeMatthews & Knight, 2019a, 2019b; Hawkins, 2019; Murphy, 2019; Swaby, 2019; Zelinski, 2019). In the 2017 and 2018 school years, the U.S. Department of Education found that the state of Texas legislation illegally reduced funding for special education in K-12 public schools (B. Hawkins, 2019; Swaby,

2019). Moreover, Texas legislation argued that many students with disabilities served by Texas' K-12 public schools did not require the accommodations and educational supports they were receiving, even though these accommodations and supports were federally mandated by ADA (B. Hawkins, 2019; Swaby, 2019). In an analysis of Texas Education Agency (TEA) policies regarding school district performance metrics, DeMatthews and Knight (2019a) learned these TEA policies were effectively coercing school districts to artificially lower the number of students receiving special education services, denying students with documented disabilities their right to learning accommodations. In postsecondary education, Cawthon, Nichols, and Collier (2008) found that many Texas postsecondary institutions did not make their accommodations for deaf students available online, restricting these students' postsecondary success.

Additionally, Texas is one of the largest states in the U.S. with an increasingly diverse university population (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2019), suggesting that educational research into the experiences of students with disabilities in Texas' education system will be important for the success of these students. As such, the purpose of this study is to provide a greater insight into which characteristics predict the enrollment of SWDs in postsecondary institutions in Texas over a five-year period. Using data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the study addresses the following research question: Which institutional characteristics predict the enrollment of students with disabilities in Texas postsecondary institutions?

Literature Review

For years, educational researchers have posited that SWDs may represent the most marginalized student population in U.S. postsecondary education (Adams & Proctor, 2010; Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012; Plotner & Marshall, 2015; Renn & Reason, 2013; Skinner & Lindstrom, 2003; Stanley, 2000; Yssel et al., 2016). In recent years, however, progress has been made. Recent estimates suggest a nearly 12% increase since 2000 of SWDs in the U.S. postsecondary student population (Yssel et al., 2016). In all, 19% of undergraduates and 12% of post baccalaureate students in 2015-2016 reported that they had a disability, the most recent data publicly available (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

Despite these gains, access gaps have remained. Comparatively, students with disabilities complete a bachelor's degree at less than half the rate that students without a disability do, as only 16.4% of students with disabilities completed at least a bachelor's degree, in comparison to 34.6% of students without a disability (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education (2017) reported that in 2009, only 13.8% of high school students who received special education services expected to pursue postsecondary education at the bachelor's level. However, of high school students who received special education services in 2009, 37.4% had not enrolled in any form of postsecondary education four years later. When SWDs did enroll in postsecondary education, public or private nonprofit two-year institutions accounted for the largest percentage (29.9%). The U.S. Department of Education (2017) report also suggested only 17.6% of public two-year postsecondary students and 8.3% of private non-profit two-year postsecondary students who received special education services in 2009 enrolled in a public or private nonprofit four-year institution four years later. Beyond this descriptive reporting of enrollment of postsecondary students with disabilities, the U.S. Department of Education (2017) did not report on any other data besides student-level characteristics (e.g., race, sex, age, immigrant status, and veteran status) and some student disability types (e.g., cognitive, ambulatory).

Yet, as the number of SWDs enrolled in postsecondary institutions continues to rise, the transition from high school has continued to present new challenges (Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Kimball et al., 2016; Paul, 2000; Plotner & Marshall, 2015; Renn & Reason, 2013). National education policies and initiatives, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) only require U.S. postsecondary institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for SWDs on college campuses. The reasonableness of the accommodation is determined by individual faculty members at institutions of higher education, in conjunction with disability services or student support services offices (ADA, 1990; IDEA, 2004). To receive a reasonable accommodation, students need to request for a reasonable accommodation to the faculty member directly, in addition to the institution through their disability services office or student support center office (ADA, 1990; IDEA, 2004).

As a result, U.S. postsecondary institutions have provided these accommodations in a variety of ways with considerable differentiation from school to school, with many institutional leaders being very slow to adapt to a rapidly-changing student population (Bursuck et al., 1989; Madaus, 2011; Plotner & Marshall, 2015; Skinner & Lindstrom, 2003; Stanley, 2000). Prior studies have provided insight into the challenges that SWDs face in receiving accommodations in postsecondary institutions (Adams & Proctor, 2010; Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Kimball et al., 2016; Skinner & Lindstrom, 2003). These difficulties have included negative or unsupportive faculty attitudes toward SWDs (Baker, Boland, & Nowik, 2012; Lombardi, Murray, & Dallas, 2013; Zhang et al., 2010), inadequate services provided by smaller institutions (Hurst & Smerdon, 2000), inadequate postsecondary funding to pay for the accommodation (Plotner & Marshall, 2015), and a lack of specialized staff to deliver the accommodation (Quick, Lehmann, & Deniston, 2003; Zhang et al., 2010).

Moreover, because ADA-mandated reasonable accommodations require students to petition or apply for such accommodations, research has found that many postsecondary SWDs who persist through higher education and earn their degrees are those who tirelessly self-advocate for accommodations and often sacrifice other elements of their education (Ancil et al., 2008; Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Madaus, 2011; Paul, 2000). When SWDs successfully apply for and receive accommodations, SWDs have reported experiencing difficulty with faculty members and a necessity to downplay their disability to receive the accommodation (Barnar-Brak, Lectenberger, & Lan, 2010).

Although there are many factors that influence college success, research suggested that inappropriate educational services may contribute to lower graduation rates of SWDs when compared to those without disabilities (Adams & Proctor, 2010; Ancil, Ishikawa, & Scott, 2008; Hurst & Smerdon, 2000; Newman et al., 2011). Additionally, the ADA has not required U.S. postsecondary institutions to report which kinds of disabilities their students have or the specific types of reasonable accommodations they provide to specific students, resulting in a lack of actionable data to influence special education policy to support students with disabilities throughout the P-20 spectrum (Cawthon et al., 2008; Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Haber et al., 2016; Kimball et al., 2016; Madaus, 2011; Paul, 2000).

To date, there are no studies which evaluate institutional characteristics to predict postsecondary enrollment of SWDs, even though it is the institutions who are responsible for adhering to ADA. Instead of longitudinal, quantitative studies to understand where postsecondary SWDs enroll, the U.S. Department of Education (2017) synthesized data from several secondary and postsecondary sources (e.g., the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009, the 2012/14 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study) and provided basic descriptive analyses of enrollment trends at the postsecondary level and disability services at the secondary level. This broad overview did not delve

into specific institutional characteristics that are associated with greater enrollment numbers of students with disabilities.

Moreover, this report does not disclose details about the specific disability of enrolled students, making it difficult for institutions to understand how to best serve students with disabilities. However, institutional spending to support students with disabilities through learning accommodations and campus accessibility measures have been found to help these students persist and earn postsecondary credentials (Cawthon et al., 2008; Kimball et al., 2016; Paul, 2000; Zhang et al., 2010). To inform prior, national-level research, this study seeks to fill a considerable gap in the literature and perform a longitudinal quantitative analysis of postsecondary enrollment of students with disabilities in perhaps the most hostile state for special education in the United States: Texas (Cawthon et al., 2008; DeMatthews & Knight, 2019a, 2019b; D. Hawkins, 2017; Harris, 2018; Murphy, 2019; Swaby, 2019).

Texas is one of the largest states in the U.S., with 35 public universities, 39 private universities, 50 community colleges, and 21 other institutions of higher learning. In Fall 2018, 1,542,524 students enrolled in postsecondary institutions in Texas. There were 658,222 students enrolled in public 4-year institutions, 758,061 students enrolled in public 2-year institutions, and 126,241 students enrolled in an independent university or college in Texas (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2019). Yet, to date, no studies have reported on the enrollment statistics of students with disabilities in postsecondary institutions in Texas.

In Texas, the rhetoric regarding special education has been viewed as contentious and negative, with state legislation illegally trimming millions of dollars from Texas' special education budget (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2019; DeMatthews & Knight, 2019a, 2019b; B. Hawkins, 2019; Murphy, 2019; Swaby, 2019; Zelinski, 2019). As a result, researchers have posited Texas may be one of the most difficult states in the country for students with disabilities to access higher education (DeMatthews & Knight, 2019b; B. Hawkins, 2019; Murphy, 2019; Swaby, 2019). Examining the enrollment of students with disabilities in postsecondary institutions in Texas will provide a more in-depth understanding of how this population could be greater supported, given the size of the postsecondary population and the divisive nature of special education rhetoric in Texas (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2019; DeMatthews & Knight, 2019a, 2019b; Hawkins, 2019; Murphy, 2019; Swaby, 2019; Zelinski, 2019).

As Texas is one of the largest states in the country with an increasingly diverse postsecondary population, the purpose of this study is to provide a greater insight as to what institutional characteristics predict the enrollment of students with disabilities in higher education institutions in Texas over a five-year period.

Methods

The following sections will detail how the research team collected data, how quantitative methods were determined, and how the research team addressed limitations.

Data Collection

To gather longitudinal data, the research team employed the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System ([IPEDS], National Center for Education Statistics, 2019) to explore where students

with disabilities enrolled in Texas postsecondary institutions (N=394). Extant research has criticized the fact that U.S. postsecondary institutions—including Texas postsecondary institutions—are not compelled to publish disability-related information on their websites or report such data to the federal or local government (Kimball et al., 2016). However, student protections and federal requirements levied by the U.S. Government through ADA has allowed abundant, rich data sources for exploring where students with disabilities enroll in K-12 schools (Newman et al., 2011). Yet, Given this reporting problem, IPEDS only includes percentages of students with disabilities at the 3% threshold, meaning institutions enrolling less than a less than 3% students with disabilities population do not report individual percentages, and institutions who enroll more than a 3% students with disabilities population report their percentage without reporting specific enrollment numbers or the types of disabilities that students have reported and the accommodations they received. Moreover, this data is not reported by race, ethnicity, gender, or any other personally identifying characteristic (NCES, 2019), rendering it difficult to gather postsecondary student-level data: As a result, this study uses the data available, which is institution-level data.

The research team collected IPEDS data from all Texas postsecondary institutions (N=394)—descriptive statistics of this population can be found in Table 1. Institutional characteristics included sector (e.g. public or private), Carnegie classification, geographic location (e.g., rural, urban), four-year and less-than-four-year status, student services expenses, academic support expenses, and instructional expenses, student-faculty ratio, and average institutional grant aid. These variables were included in the data collection process because extant research has suggested that these institutional characteristics may influence the access, persistence, and graduation of students with disabilities at U.S. postsecondary institutions (Bursuck et al., 1989; Fichten et al., 2003; Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012; McGuire & Shaw, 1987; Plotner & Marshall, 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2017; Wiseman et al., 1988).

Analytic Strategy

Given the limitations of how disability data is reported by institutions and collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (2019), this study employed a random effects probit model with reporting of robust standard errors. Given the binary reporting structure of the data (institutions with 3% or less students with disabilities versus more than 3% of students with disabilities), the data justified the use of a random effects probit model (Gibbons & Hedeker, 1994; Wooldridge, 2009). A random effects probit model is appropriate for longitudinal data predicting a binary outcome including both time varying (e.g., academic support expenses) and time invariant characteristics (e.g., institutional sector) (Wooldridge, 2009). The random effects probit model formula employed in this study can be found below, where:

$$y_{it} = \alpha_i + X_{it}\beta_1 + Z_i\beta_2 + \tau_t + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

The outcome variable of interest- y_{it} represents a Texas postsecondary institution i 's first-time undergraduate students with disabilities enrollment in a given year (t) from Fall 2013 to Fall 2017. X_{it} represents institution i 's time-varying characteristics (such as academic support expenses per FTE). Z_i represents institution i 's time invariant characteristics (such as Carnegie Classification). The α_i is institutional-specific intercepts that take into account variation across the institutions. τ_t represents time dummy variables, which control for observed and unobserved events that may affect students with disabilities enrollment over time (such as the law, or technological change). By using 2013

as the reference group, τ_t indicates 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 dummy variables. ε_{it} is the error term.

Limitations

The primary limitation of this study—and all disability-related studies in higher education—is the way in which disability data is reported by institutions and collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (2019) and/or the federal government (Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Kimball et al., 2016; Newman et al., 2011). Because specific enrollment numbers and disability types (e.g., autism, deafness) are not made available by the institutions themselves or data reporting entities, quantitative, higher education-focused disability studies must employ a blunt instrument to articulate a highly contextualized, nuanced student population and their institutional environment(s). In addition, this study analyzes the enrollment numbers of students with disabilities in Texas postsecondary institutions and does not gather data through qualitative measures or explore the lived experiences of students with disabilities on postsecondary campuses. Here, another limitation of this study is the absence of an intersectional analysis of students with disabilities that can vary across social identity, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, language identity, religion, veteran status, immigration status, political affiliation, and any other identities.

As a result, this study—and others employing quantitative measures—do not adequately explain how students with a wide range of disabilities may or may not access a diverse, wide range of institutions, each with institution-specific nuances and subtleties in Texas. Decades of research has given students with disabilities an amplified voice in higher education settings, but institutional characteristics must be considered to provide a more holistic, comprehensive understanding of how postsecondary institutions support students with disabilities in Texas.

Results

Descriptive statistics of 2017 institutional-level data can be found in Table 1. Data from 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 can be found in the Appendices.

Only 10.7% of Texas higher education institutions enrolled student populations of more than 3% students with disabilities (SWD) ($n=42$, 10.7% versus $n=351$, 89.3%). With regard to institutions' Carnegie Classification, location, sector and type, Texas institutions of higher education did not enroll greater than 3% SWD populations. Notably, only 4.5% of less-than-four-year institutions ($n=12$ out of 268), which offer less-than two-year or two-year degrees, enrolled more than 3% SWD. In addition, institutions that enrolled greater than 3% SWD spent more on average in student support, academic support, instructional support, and average institutional grant aid. The student-faculty ratio in institutions enrolling more than 3% SWD was lower than the ratio at institutions with 3% or less SWD in 2017 (15.7 versus 17.2). We see similar patterns in other years (see Appendix).

Table 1. Texas higher education institutions enrolling more than 3% students with disabilities and institutions enrolling 3% or less than 3% students with disabilities, by Carnegie classification, location, sector, and type in 2017 (n=393)

	Institutions enrolling more than 3% students with disabilities		Institutions enrolling 3% or less than 3% students with disabilities	
	N	% Share	N	% Share
Total	42	10.7%	351	89.3%
Carnegie Classification				
Baccalaureate	7	46.7%	8	53.3%
Master's	13	38.2%	21	61.8%
Doctoral	10	47.6%	11	52.4%
Other*	12	3.7%	311	96.3%
Location				
Urban	29	10.9%	237	89.1%
Suburban	7	10.3%	61	89.7%
Town/rural	6	10.2%	53	89.8%
Sector				
Public	12	11.4%	93	88.6%
Private non-profit	21	30.9%	47	69.1%
Private for-profit	9	4.1%	211	95.9%
Type				
Four-year	30	24.0%	95	76.0%
Less-than-four-year	12	4.5%	256	95.5%
Student Services Expenses ⁺	\$3,347		\$1,647	
Academic Support Expenses ⁺	\$2,185		\$1,664	
Instructional Expenses ⁺	\$8,923		\$5,688	
Average Institutional Grant ⁺	\$12,380		\$2,739	
Student-to-Faculty Ratio	15.74		17.22	

*Notes: Other includes associate's institutions, special-focus higher education institutions, and Carnegie unclassified institutions.

⁺These amounts convert to 2018 dollars and they are per full-time student.

A random effects probit model predicting enrollment of students with disabilities in Texas postsecondary institutions (N=394) can be found in Table 2:

Table 2. Random effects probit model predicting whether institutions enroll more than 3% students with disabilities in Texas

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Four-year (Reference=Less-than four-year)	-1.455 (0.784)	-1.643 (0.872)	-1.438 (1.037)
Carnegie (reference = Bachelor's)			
Master's	-0.106 (0.773)	-0.215 (0.763)	-0.442 (0.765)
Doctoral/Research	0.548 (0.877)	0.339 (0.868)	-0.348 (0.884)
Other	-3.854*** (1.037)	-4.044*** (1.047)	-3.099* (1.125)
Location (reference=Urban)			
Suburban	0.250 (0.491)	0.296 (0.495)	-0.084 (0.645)
Town/Rural	-0.250 (0.528)	-0.226 (0.525)	-0.313 (0.529)
Sector (Reference=Public)			
Private non-profit	0.970* (0.487)	0.975* (0.482)	0.527 (0.561)
Private for-profit	-0.189 (0.565)	0.017 (0.553)	-0.369 (0.717)
Student services expenses (logged)		-0.080 (0.085)	-0.199 (0.113)
Academic support expenses (logged)		0.029 (0.085)	0.075 (0.100)
Instructional expenses (logged)		0.433* (0.212)	1.388*** (0.390)
Student-faculty ratio			0.005 (0.042)
Average institutional grant (logged)			0.590* (0.264)
Year (reference=2013)			
2014	0.222 (0.216)	0.307 (0.224)	0.389 (0.253)
2015	0.102 (0.267)	0.195 (0.287)	0.316 (0.330)
2016	0.274 (0.286)	0.383 (0.314)	0.466 (0.363)
2017	0.819* (0.286)	0.951* (0.314)	0.968* (0.363)

	(0.262)	(0.294)	(0.337)
Constant	-0.505	-3.831*	-16.877***
	(1.058)	(1.892)	(4.403)
Observations	1,882	1,882	1,257
Number of institutions	394	394	294

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** $p < 0.001$, * $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Model 1 included all institutional-level time invariant characteristics across the entire population ($N=1,882$). Results indicate students with disabilities were less likely to enroll in associate's, special focus, or non-Carnegie classified institutions ($p < 0.001$) than bachelor's institutions and are more likely to enroll in non-profit private institutions ($p < 0.05$) than public institutions.

Model 2 included both institutional-level time invariant and varying characteristics across the entire population ($N=1,882$). While the coefficients of other Carnegie institutions and private non-profit institutions remain significant, results indicate that instructional expenses per student was also associated with greater percentages of enrolled students with disabilities ($p < 0.05$), echoing prior qualitative studies suggesting increased instructional support may benefit students with disabilities (Bursuck et al., 1989). Finally, when controlling for institutional-level time invariant and varying characteristics, longitudinal data suggest a steady increase of enrollment of students with disabilities at postsecondary institutions in Texas.

Model 3 included institutional-level time invariant and varying characteristics, as well as student-faculty ratio and average institutional grant aid reported by 1,257 institutions across the five-year panel data period. The coefficients of instructional expenses and other Carnegie institutions remain significant across all three models, while the coefficient of private non-profit institutions is no longer significant in Model 3. Table 1 indicates the predicted probability of enrolling more than 3% of students with disabilities after holding all other variables at means. The probability of enrolling more than 3% of students with disabilities for other institutions (2.4%) is 23.5 percentage points lower than bachelor's institutions (25.9%). Additionally, as Table 2 indicates, after holding all the other variables at means, a 1% increase in average institutional grants ($p < 0.05$) were associated with 2.6% greater probability of enrolling more than 3% SWD in Texas postsecondary institutions. Similarly, a 1% increase in instructional expenses predicted 6.1 higher probability of enrolling more than 3% of students with disabilities in Texas institutions of higher education. Across Models 1, 2, and 3, longitudinal data also suggest a steady increase of enrollment of students with disabilities in Texas postsecondary institutions, a result echoed by prior research in other educational contexts (Kimball et al., 2016; Yssel et al., 2016).

Discussion and Implications for Research, Practice, and Policy

Building upon prior research, this study makes several contributions to the literature focused on students with disabilities in higher education, specifically in a Texas context. Of statistically significant findings, data in this study demonstrate that less research-intensive Texas postsecondary institutions (e.g., community colleges, trade schools, non-Carnegie classified institutions) have enrolled a greater percentage of students with disabilities than peer institutions. Given this finding, researchers and policymakers in Texas should be asking why students with disabilities are not enrolling in research-intensive postsecondary institutions in Texas, possibly producing a stratifying effect where students with disabilities are not being exposed to and have not experienced research-focused instruction and

other educational opportunities. As a result, these students may be excluded from four-year bachelor's degrees in research-intensive areas—such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields—limiting their ability to earn a high-paying job in these fields once they graduate. Texas postsecondary policymakers should address these access gaps and explore whether students with disabilities are being excluded from research experiences at the postsecondary level, possibly affecting their postsecondary experiences and outcomes.

Data also suggested that private non-profit postsecondary institutions in Texas have a greater percentage of students with disabilities than private for-profit or public institutions. No prior research has posited that private institutions have been more welcoming or supportive of students with disabilities, yet Cawthon et al.'s (2008) study did find that Texas postsecondary institutions did vary in terms of their reported accommodations for deaf students. Given these findings, the combative environment surrounding special education in Texas (DeMatthews & Knight, 2019a, 2019b; B. Hawkins, 2019; Murphy, 2019; Swaby, 2019; Zelinski, 2019) may be positioning public and private for-profit postsecondary institutions as less trustworthy or less supportive of students with disabilities. In the 2017 and 2018 school years, Texas legislation was found to have illegally cut funding to special education at Texas' K-12 public schools (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2019; DeMatthews & Knight, 2019a, 2019b; Swaby, 2019), possibly producing a sense of distrust between students with disabilities and public institutions. In this regard, special education researchers in Texas should explore how students with disabilities are supported in K-12 public schools compared to private schools and engage with these students to learn whether their K-12 experiences have produced negative impressions of public and private for-profit institutions.

In terms of institutional decision making pertinent to student access and equity, data also reveal institutions spending more on instructional expenses and awarding more institutional grant aid positively predicted enrollment of students with disabilities from 2013 to 2017. However, these findings are limited in that institutional expenses are not specifically outlined or itemized by IPEDS, and institutional grant aid reported pertains to both students with and without disabilities. Moreover, both ADA and IDEA do not mandate that postsecondary institutions disclose or itemize how these institutions or students themselves spend institutional grant aid on learning accommodations or support services for SWDs (ADA, 1990; IDEA, 2004). Yet, this finding echoes prior research suggesting SWDs have benefitted from postsecondary institutions who invest in special education services and deliver reasonable accommodations (Haber et al., 2016; Kimball et al., 2016; Madaus, 2011; Plotner & Marshall, 2015; Wiseman et al., 1988).

As a result, although it is difficult to say with certainty that institutional expenses and grant aid drive enrollment of postsecondary students with disabilities in Texas, future research should explore how postsecondary institutions—specifically private non-profit institutions—spend institutional expenses for students with disabilities. As certain learning accommodations for students with disabilities can be cost prohibitive (Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Kimball et al., 2016; Paul, 2000), researchers and policymakers in Texas should explore how postsecondary institutions spend instruction and grant aid and whether a student's knowledge of institutional spending or awarding of grant aid influences where a student with a disability applies or how they view prospective postsecondary institutions.

Additionally, researchers should probe what students with disabilities are specifically receiving from an institutional grant or increased instructional services, shedding light on the provision of assistive technologies, learning accommodations, or tuition assistance by postsecondary institutions in Texas. Cawthon et al.'s (2008) study uncovered how postsecondary institutions in Texas were publishing

their accommodations to deaf students on institutional websites, finding that many institutions did not publish any information about the types of accommodations the institutions could provide. However, without some type of federally or state mandated reporting mechanism, it is difficult to discern how institutions support SWDs through spending on instructional services if these services are not detailed.

Data from 2013 to 2017 also suggest that there has been a steady increase of enrollment of SWD in Texas postsecondary institutions, a positive sign of the changing educational landscape in Texas. As the enrollment of postsecondary students with disabilities increases, there is an urgency to improve their overall educational experience. One challenge that several studies have noted is that these students have difficulty in seeking accommodations and supports at the postsecondary level. In most cases, previous studies highlighted that faculty instructors may need more training to accommodate students with disabilities (e.g., Baker et al., 2012; Lombardi et al., 2013), thus increasing the quality of instruction students with disabilities may receive. Considering this, it seems as though having adequately trained instructors may play a significant role in whether or not a student with a disability seeks to enroll in a particular postsecondary institution in Texas, echoing prior research suggesting that faculty support of SWDs is crucial to the success of SWDs on college campuses (Plotner & Marshall, 2015; Zhang et al., 2010).

However, data suggests gains in postsecondary enrollment for SWDs have been modest and were only found to be statistically significant in 2017. This finding somewhat contradicts nation-wide data suggesting that the postsecondary SWD population grew at a steady rate in years prior to 2017 (Adams & Proctor, 2010; Newman et al., 2011; Yssel et al., 2016). It is important to mention that these aforementioned studies did not capture institutional characteristics to predict increased SWD enrollment to a statistically significant level. However, the contentious environment of special education in Texas (DeMatthews & Knight, 2019a, 2019b; Harris, 2019; B. Hawkins, 2019; Murphy, 2019; Swaby, 2019) may have contributed to the slow growth in SWD enrollment in postsecondary education. To build on findings in this study, Texas' educational researchers and policymakers must explore how private non-profit institutions and non-research-intensive institutions have been better able to drive enrollment of SWDs than peers. Policymakers must also ask why, and more specifically, why public institutions are not enrolling comparable shares of these students.

Regarding this study's findings without statistical significance, data suggests that the geographic location of Texas postsecondary institutions has had no effect on the percentage of SWDs enrolled in the institutions. Here, despite the considerable geographic diversity and the population distribution in Texas (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2019), the physical location of postsecondary institutions in Texas may not be as important as an institution's sector (e.g., public or private), their mission, vision and student services, or their commitment to awarding institutional grant aid. Subsequently, this finding reinforces the notion that researchers, practitioners, and policymakers should investigate how private non-profit institutions and less research-intensive institutions have enrolled greater percentages of students with disabilities, despite the potential geographic diversity of these institutions. Moreover, instructional expenses and grant aid seem more predictive of enrolling SWDs than physical location, another reinforcement to guide deeper research into institutional sector, research intensity, and institutional expenses on instruction and grant aid.

Moving forward, policymakers and practitioners should investigate whether to invest further in instructional expenses or institutional grants for SWDs. Additionally, to contend with the negative rhetoric and environment surrounding special education in Texas (DeMatthews & Knight, 2019a,

2019b; Harris, 2019; Swaby, 2019; Zelinsky, 2019), more research must be conducted to learn why private non-profit and non-research-intensive institutions have seemingly overcome considerable odds in enrolling greater numbers of SWDS, despite a lack of legislative and financial support at the state level. Ultimately, research and policy advocacy could help improve educational conditions for students with disabilities in Texas, forever improving the lives of these students, both on and off the college campus.

Conclusion

This study has provided a detailed, longitudinal snapshot of the postsecondary institutions in Texas that have enrolled students with disabilities within the five-year period of 2013 to 2017. As the historical context of special education has been controversial (Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Hurst & Smerdon, 2000; Kimball et al., 2016; Madaus, 2011; Paul, 2000; Wiseman et al., 1988; Yssel et al., 2016), it was of great interest to gain a deeper insight specifically into the institutional characteristics that predict the enrollment of SWDs to learn how postsecondary institutions can increase access for SWDs.

The findings of this study suggest that over the five-year period of 2013 to 2017, the postsecondary institutions in Texas that focus less on research, and are considered to be private non-profit institutions, have a higher percentage of enrollment of SWDs. The data in this study also suggested that instructional expenses and institutional grant aid predicted the enrollment of SWDs in postsecondary institutions in Texas. Moreover, the findings in this study have paved the way for more in-depth analysis into answering the big questions, such as why students with disabilities are less likely to enroll in research-intensive intensive postsecondary institutions, as well as the types of supports these students are provided with in either their K-12 public school or private school experiences. Further, more information on the accommodations are provided to SWDs with regards to institutional grants and increased instructional services in postsecondary institutions in Texas.

Although this quantitative study has contributed to the literature on the enrollment of SWDs in postsecondary institutions in Texas, little explanation is offered regarding the accessibility of the Texas institutions students with varying disabilities. In spite of this, it is relevant and necessary to have an understanding of the institutional characteristics to learn how SWDs are supported by postsecondary institutions. Considering this, there is a continuous need for researchers and policymakers to advocate for SWDs and urge postsecondary institutions in Texas to provide data on SWDs for research and policy advocacy purposes.

To support SWDs, disability studies researchers and policymakers in Texas must continue to advocate for the SWD population and encourage Texas postsecondary institutions to provide anonymous yet detailed data on SWDs. Such an effort would allow disability allies, support groups, and interested individuals the ability to advocate for more inclusive, supportive policies to facilitate the access to higher education in Texas for SWDs. In doing so, this advocacy for more holistic and inclusive policies can thereby increase the enrollment of SWDs in all postsecondary institutions in Texas.

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Appendix

Texas institutions enrolling more than 3% students with disabilities and institutions enrolling 3% or less than 3% students with disabilities, by Carnegie classification, location, sector, and type in 2016 (n=387)

	Institutions enrolling more than 3% students with disabilities		Institutions enrolling 3% or less than 3% students with disabilities	
	N	% Share	N	% Share
Total	30	7.8%	357	92.2%
Carnegie Classification				
Baccalaureate	5	33.3%	10	66.7%
Master's	11	32.4%	23	67.6%
Doctoral/Research	7	33.3%	14	66.7%
Other*	7	2.2%	310	97.8%
Location				
Urban	20	7.5%	246	92.5%
Suburban	4	6.3%	59	93.7%
Town/rural	6	10.3%	52	89.7%
Sector				
Public	11	10.5%	94	89.5%
Private non-profit	16	23.5%	52	76.5%
Private for-profit	3	1.4%	211	98.6%
Type				
Four-year	23	18.7%	100	81.3%
Less-than-four-year	7	2.7%	257	97.3%
Student Services Expenses	\$3,342	-	\$1,627	-
Academic Support Expenses	\$2,458	-	\$1,684	-
Instructional Expenses	\$9,618	-	\$5,665	-
Average Institutional Grant	\$11,818	-	\$2,850	-
Student-to-Faculty Ratio	15.2	-	17.1	-

*Notes: Other includes associate's institutions, special-focus higher education institutions, and Carnegie unclassified institutions.

Texas institutions enrolling more than 3% students with disabilities and institutions enrolling 3% or less than 3% students with disabilities, by Carnegie classification, location, sector, and type in 2015 (n=383)

	Institutions enrolling more than 3% students with disabilities		Institutions enrolling 3% or less than 3% students with disabilities	
	N	% Share	N	% Share
Total	27	7.0%	356	93.0%
Carnegie Classification				
Baccalaureate	4	26.7%	11	73.3%
Master's	11	32.4%	23	67.6%
Doctoral/Research	6	28.6%	15	71.4%
Other*	6	1.9%	307	98.1%
Location				
Urban	17	6.5%	245	93.5%
Suburban	4	6.5%	58	93.5%
Town/rural	6	10.2%	53	89.8%
Sector				
Public	9	8.6%	96	91.4%
Private non-profit	15	22.4%	52	77.6%
Private for-profit	3	1.4%	208	98.6%
Type				
Four-year	21	17.1%	102	82.9%
Less-than-four-year	6	2.3%	254	97.7%
Student Services Expenses	\$3,595	-	\$1,554	-
Academic Support Expenses	\$2,498	-	\$1,561	-
Instructional Expenses	\$10,023	-	\$6,879	-
Average Institutional Grant	\$11,558	-	\$2,835	-
Student-to-Faculty Ratio	16.3	-	18.0	-

*Notes: Other includes associate's institutions, special-focus higher education institutions, and Carnegie unclassified institutions.

Texas institutions enrolling more than 3% students with disabilities and institutions enrolling 3% or less than 3% students with disabilities, by Carnegie classification, location, sector, and type in 2014 (n=376)

	Institutions enrolling more than 3% students with disabilities		Institutions enrolling 3% or less than 3% students with disabilities	
	N	% Share	N	% Share
Total	29	7.9%	337	92.1%
Carnegie Classification				
Baccalaureate	5	33.3%	10	66.7%
Master's	9	26.5%	25	73.5%
Doctoral/Research	7	33.3%	14	66.7%
Other*	8	2.7%	288	97.3%
Location				
Urban	22	8.7%	230	91.3%
Suburban	3	5.2%	55	94.8%
Town/rural	4	7.1%	52	92.9%
Sector				
Public	7	6.8%	96	93.2%
Private non-profit	17	27.9%	44	72.1%
Private for-profit	5	2.5%	197	97.5%
Type				
Four-year	21	17.8%	97	82.2%
Less-than-four-year	8	3.2%	240	96.8%
Student Services Expenses	\$3,562	-	\$1,422	-
Academic Support Expenses	\$2,876	-	\$1,584	-
Instructional Expenses	\$9,865	-	\$6,785	-
Average Institutional Grant	\$11,132	-	\$2,920	-
Student-to-Faculty Ratio	15.4	-	17.7	-

*Notes: Other includes associate's institutions, special-focus higher education institutions, and Carnegie unclassified institutions.

Texas Institutions enrolling more than 3% students with disabilities and institutions enrolling 3% or less than 3% students with disabilities, by Carnegie classification, location, sector, and type in 2013 (n=353)

	Institutions enrolling more than 3% students with disabilities		Institutions enrolling 3% or less than 3% students with disabilities	
	N	% Share	N	% Share
Total	25	7.1%	328	92.9%
Carnegie Classification				
Baccalaureate	5	33.3%	10	66.7%
Master's	7	20.6%	27	79.4%
Doctoral/Research	5	23.8%	16	76.2%
Other*	8	2.8%	275	97.2%
Location				
Urban	18	7.4%	224	92.6%
Suburban	4	7.3%	51	92.7%
Town/rural	3	5.4%	53	94.6%
Sector				
Public	6	5.9%	96	94.1%
Private non-profit	14	23.7%	45	76.3%
Private for-profit	5	2.6%	187	97.4%
Type				
Four-year	18	15.8%	96	84.2%
Less-than-four-year	7	2.9%	232	97.1%
Student Services Expenses	\$2,996	-	\$712	-
Academic Support Expenses	\$2,222	-	\$874	-
Instructional Expenses	\$8,680	-	\$6,523	-
Average Institutional Grant	\$10,393	-	\$2,820	-
Student-to-Faculty Ratio	16.2	-	18.5	-

*Notes: Other includes associate's institutions, special-focus higher education institutions, and Carnegie unclassified institutions.



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The 86th Legislative Session Look-Back

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The 86th Legislative Session Look-Back

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In the inaugural volume of the *Texas Education Review* (*TxEd*), the first editorial board assembled a “Time Capsule” issue to understand the political landscape of Texas educational research and policy (Editorial Board, 2013). In doing so, the founding *TxEd* board members laid the foundation of their vision for the journal to be a “significant resource” of research “focused on specific critical issues in education” that account for the historical, physical, and geographic contexts of the UT College of Education (Editorial Board, 2013, p. 2). The publication covered Texas politics, bilingual education, teacher quality, higher education, and racial inequities in schools, among other priorities for educational research.

Wisely, the volume began with the perspectives of major educational policy advocates and state legislators at the time. State legislatures govern educational issues from school finance and teacher certification to high school graduation requirements and investments in higher education (Aycock, 2013; Horsford, Scott, & Anderson, 2019). The Texas State Legislature is an essential governmental entity to education policy whose innerworkings go overlooked in research on public K-12 education and higher education (McLendon & Cohen-Vogel, 2008; McLendon, Heller, & Young, 2005). Now, six years after the inaugural volume of *TxEd*, this critical issue allows researchers, policy analysts, advocates, and practitioners to look back and assess the victories—and future challenges—to public education. As the old adage goes, we must look back to move forward. In the spirit of the founding vision for *TxEd*, this critical issue presents perspectives from educational researchers, advocates, and legislators on the most pressing contemporary issues in educational policy from the past legislative session.

During the 86th Legislative Session, several contemporary political battles in education policy rose to the fore. School finance, a relentless thorn in the side of state lawmakers and education advocates alike, received substantial and serious attention for the first time in over 30 years. Teachers made their compensation plans a significant finance and policy conversation and signaled their growing power in the state political landscape through teachers’ unions and advocacy, as Chevalier and González explore in this issue. Policymakers also considered legislation that invested in and expanded access to public higher education, although racial disparities in the state’s investment in institutions and students persist.

Here, I present the background that contextualizes the 86th Legislative Session and how educational researchers and advocates move forward. In the pieces included in this volume, the contributing authors offer their unique perspectives on educational policy and advocacy, drawing from their experiences during the legislative session and professional expertise. Together, these pieces provide readers with a review of the achievements and challenges in state education policy, as well as future directions for research, policy, and educational advocacy.

Background of 86th Legislative Session

Texas entered the 86th Legislative Session with several educational issues at the fore: school finance and tax reform, teacher compensation, and higher education investments and outcomes. Events from the previous legislative session set the stage for these issues.

During the previous legislative session in 2017 (85th Legislature), the House of Representatives spearheaded significant changes to the school finance system. Rep. Dan Huberty of Houston, Chairman of the House Public Education Committee, authored House Bill 21, the most comprehensive school finance bill of that session. The bill contained new investments for schools and adjustments to the school funding formula, including the addition of a new per-pupil funding allotment for students with dyslexia. The allotment imposed an additional per-pupil funding calculation for students identified with dyslexia—a worthy yet limited investment in Texas students. Simultaneously, the Texas Senate launched a serious battle over vouchers and increased funding for charter schools. Perhaps more memorably to the general public, Senate leadership also prioritized controversial social legislation that restricted public bathroom access for people identifying as transgender (e.g. the “bathroom bill,” or Senate Bill 6), as well as aggressive immigration-related policies that supported statewide immigration enforcement efforts (e.g. Senate Bill 4). These issues took up all the air in the room, and efforts to advance school finance fumbled as the Legislature passed what many considered a diluted version of HB 21 into law. In the 86th Legislature two years later, policymakers and educational advocates sought to revive their more ambitious efforts.

The Texas Governor named tax reform as an emergency item at the start of the 86th session in January of 2019. Texas schools are funded in large part by local taxes (Alemán, 2007; Hobby & Walker, 1991; Villanueva, 2018), not state funds. Many advocates for public education have long stressed the need for the state to invest more money in public education (Villanueva & Lavine, 2018), while more conservative lawmakers cited rising property taxes as a deal-breaker to additional school funding without property tax reform (Ramsey, 2019). Tax reform became the central concern for many lawmakers while school finance reform progressed through the legislature.

While the resulting school finance bill (House Bill 3) included new investments in Texas schools and educators, accompanying legislation (Senate Bill 2) also imposed restrictive limitations on local municipalities’ abilities to set their local tax rates. The future of local city, county, and municipal funding—which directly affects public schools—remains uncertain in light of these new changes. As the articles contained in this issue discuss, the fight for funding and resources in education dictated much of the educational priorities of the 86th Legislative Session.

Major Educational Policies and Priorities in this Issue

The articles contributed to this critical issue outline the political landscape for public education advocacy in Texas, urgent policy priorities, and new directions for achieving them. At their core, the pieces herein highlight the tension between state government and local needs in education.

First, Morgan Craven, Director of National Policy for educational research and advocacy organization IDRA (Intercultural Development Research Association) discusses the disconnect between educational advocates engaged in state policy and the communities most affected by public education in Texas—students of color, low income students, linguistically and culturally diverse students, and students with disabilities. In review of the notable achievements of the 86th Session, Craven also questions how educational achievements fell short due to lack of representation and considers how new, more representative, more community-grounded coalitions for educational policy can be cultivated for the benefit of Texas students. In doing so, Craven charts a new way forward for racial equity in educational policy research and advocacy.

Next, authors Chevalier and House Representative Mary González identify a groundswell of educators in the Texas political landscape. They argue that teachers' and educators' renewed power in state politics helped turn the tides in formerly intractable legislative battles over school funding and teacher pay and compensation during the 86th Legislative Session. The authors spotlight educators' rising political power while simultaneously illuminating the barriers that educators face to entering state office as elected officials themselves.

Finally, Ashley Williams, Policy Analyst of the Texas think tank, Center for Public Policy Priorities, reviews the legislative achievements and remaining challenges in Texas public higher education. Despite new state investments, legislation to expand affordability, access, and post-graduation opportunities to Texas students fell short. Failed state attempts to secure free-college, increased student aid, and other student supports most heavily affect Black and Brown Texans seeking higher education opportunities. Williams argues that racial inequities in higher education will continue to grow without serious state investments toward enhancing college affordability and expanding postsecondary access.

Texas State Senator, Donna Howard, wrote in the inaugural issue of *TxEdu*, "There is no reason we cannot have both educated children and a healthy economy, and citizens must loudly and clearly convey this to lawmakers" (Howard, 2013, p. 24). Despite the ostensible gains for public education in the latest legislative session, inequities in education continue to demand the attention of educators, researchers, and policymakers. The authors in this issue urge the readership of *TxEdu*—a community of public education researchers, advocates, and practitioners—to cultivate new and better ways to be both louder and clearer in the movement to make public education more equitable and representative across race, gender, class, and cultural experiences of the people it benefits.

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*Skin in the Game:
The 86th Texas Legislative Session
and the Impact of Advocate Diversity*

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Intercultural Development Research Association

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Skin in the Game: The 86th Texas Legislative Session and the Impact of Advocate Diversity

MORGAN CRAVEN

Intercultural Development Research Association

Before each Texas legislative session, policymakers identify and shape themes, which dominate debates, hearings, and deal-making. Some of the major themes during the 86th Texas legislative session (2019) were property taxes, school finance reform, and school safety. In identifying these themes, lawmakers are responsive to a combination of factors, including polls, legal deadlines, personal interests, and crises. They are also responsive to a large group of advocates and lobbyists, some of whom have significant power to shape the laws that ultimately pass each session.

As the Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Community Engagement at the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) I was among the group of non-profit advocates that worked to push forward research- and evidence-based policies that would create more equitable, excellent schools for all Texas students. IDRA's positions are based on our data analyses, research, and deep connections to educators and families with important real-world experiences and perspectives. We worked on several education issues during the 86th session, including how to achieve a fair school finance system and how to create safe schools for all students.

At the end of the legislative session, I felt a small bit of hope from the reforms that had passed, but I also continued to feel a significant amount of anxiety, not only about the state of public education in Texas, but about the make-up of the lobbyists and advocates who were influencing policymaking. I observed that most of the state-level lobbyists and advocates from non-profit organizations, unions, school districts, and other educational associations who were pushing for education policies and analyzing and interpreting data did not look like most of the students and families impacted by those decisions. The majority of Texas' public school students and families are people of color and most of the student population comes from families with limited financial means. I have observed that state-level lobbyists and advocates do not match this demographic make-up. This is a problem because for a governing system to be truly representative, there must be diversity among those who are directly elected *and* those who influence the elected. The lack of diversity in the state-level advocacy community hampers our collective ability to produce good, effective laws and may actually contribute to the passage of laws that harm students and school communities.

Struggling to Find Common Ground

During the legislative session, IDRA partnered with another advocacy organization to co-convene a coalition of non-profit and union advocates, school district representatives, and regional leaders to try to identify common goals for the proposed school finance legislation. The group, optimistically called "Common Ground," sought to find a way to present a united front in defense of several core values upon which school funding legislation should be based.

Unfortunately, finding actual common ground among organizations with different core constituencies can be difficult, particularly with an issue as complex and divisive as school funding. The school funding system that we had, and the proposed changes debated being debated by legislators and policymakers, created divisions between groups with different priorities or fundamentally different visions of what education equity looks like in a state as vast and diverse as Texas. Several issues,

including: school district size, student population and density, levels of wealth and poverty, the cost of educating special student populations, even which data to use for the most basic calculations, drove tensions among organizations. Still, there seemed to be hope that the energy for change would spur a meeting of the minds.

But, at the start of the first Common Ground meeting, I noticed an issue that was as fundamental and problematic as the clear ideological differences about the funding of schools. There were probably about 30-40 people in the room, but very few were people of color. In fact, I appeared to be the only Black person at the first meeting and I could count the Latinx advocates on one hand. This Common Ground meeting was not the first time I was the only person of color in a room at the Texas Capitol. But, I found that moment particularly striking because the topic being discussed—school finance—is so tied to the lives of millions of Texans and to every other public education policy issue that *who* was in the room was as critical as *what* was being discussed.

Many of the first school finance advocates in Texas were the Latinx students and families who protested a system that allowed such extreme disparities in funding that many majority-white and economically-homogenous school districts were able to enjoy more funding per pupil at lower tax rates than many majority-Latino districts in the state (Cárdenas, 1997). Yet, as they fought for change, these students and families encountered a deep and persistent institutional disregard for the experiences of the people of color and poor people who made up a significant share of the Texas population. Decisions were made for them, not by and with them. This form of policymaking continues today and is inherently problematic and unsustainable.

Texas' Student Population vs. Texas' State-level Advocacy Community

The Texas student population is far more diverse than the advocacy community at the state Capitol. For the most recently reported school year, 2017-2018, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) reported that there were nearly 5.4 million students in Texas public and charter schools. Latinx students made up approximately 53% of students, or about 2.8 million. Black students made up 12.6% of the population—over 680,000 students—while white and Asian students made up 27.9% and 4.4% of the population, respectively. TEA reports that 58.7% of students from the same school year were “economically disadvantaged,” 9.2% received special education services, and nearly 19% were English learners (Texas Education Agency, 2019).

The populations of Latinx and Black students dwarf those of many other states. Demographic analyses show these numbers are rising, making Texas public schools increasingly diverse—a fact that should certainly be celebrated. Unfortunately, I have observed that public education advocates at the Texas Capitol do not reflect the racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, and other lived realities of Texas students.

Some state-level advocacy organizations have recognized the importance of having staff members who are able to authentically represent impacted communities. Yet, too often, their hiring practices only exacerbate long-standing inequities by prioritizing people with the skills and experiences that can only come from internship and employment experiences or academic institutions that have, historically, been closed to people of color and poor people. A failure to challenge these practices, build relationships with community-based organizations, and convene representative coalitions simply leaves us in the same poor policy-making space.

This problem is made worse by the well-documented lack of diversity among legislators themselves who, in Texas, are mostly white males (Ura & Cameron, 2019). Of course, legislators and their staff members hear from constituents. But, these constituents can be a self-selecting group, made up of the most vocal, well-resourced people in a district, not necessarily those who have endured systemic exclusion and invisibility for generations. Further, our political system allows groups that have financial resources to hire lobbyists and make campaign contributions in order to wield significant influence over legislators.

If representative voices are missing, then important perspectives from the people most impacted by the laws are missing. Students and families of color are doing critical work in their communities, schools, and school districts to drive policy change, but when they are excluded from conversations at the state level, we lose the deeper, richer understandings of issues that can lead to more meaningful, effective, and equitable laws.

Outcomes for Unrepresented Students of Color

Perhaps having more advocates of color at the Texas Capitol would have had little difference in the substance of the laws that ultimately passed during the 86th session. At the very least though, many lawmakers would have considered issues differently and thought more carefully about potential unintended consequences. The record of witnesses and testimony would have more completely reflected public sentiments of Texans. Below, I describe two policy changes adopted during the 86th Texas legislative session that disproportionately impact students of color but that, I believe, were disproportionately influenced by other constituencies, partially because of the lack of advocate diversity in the Capitol: education of English learners, and school safety and discipline.

English Learners

House Bill (HB) 3 was the major school finance bill that passed during the 86th legislative session. While many lauded HB 3 as having achieved equity in the Texas school funding system, there was a glaring omission: funding for the majority of English learners (ELs) in the state.

There are more than one million ELs in the state—about one-fifth of the Texas student population. They are an asset, with the potential for bilingualism, biliteracy, and multiculturalism that can improve outcomes for themselves, their families, and their communities, and can serve our collective social, economic, and political interests.

ELs are one of the “special student populations” in Texas that receive additional funding through the school finance formulas. In our school finance system, a basic allotment—the amount the state determines it takes to educate the average student—is set in statute, then “weights” are assigned to the special student populations who require additional funding, including ELs, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. Since the mid-1980s, English learners have been given a 0.1 weight, meaning they receive an additional 10% of funding above the basic allotment (Robledo & Cortez, 2008).

Depending on their grade and the programs adopted by a school district, ELs will either receive instruction in an English as a Second Language (ESL) program or in a bilingual education program like transitional bilingual or dual language immersion. For example, school districts that have at least

twenty ELs in an elementary grade level that speak the same primary language must create a bilingual education for students to learn English.

The 0.1 weight has never been sufficient to cover the costs of providing an excellent education to ELs (Robledo & Cortez, 2008). In 1984, when the weight was adopted, research conducted by a school finance working group convened by the Texas legislature showed that it should have been 0.4, but that research was ignored (Hinojosa, 2017). State policies that underfund programs for ELs make it difficult for schools to provide the well-qualified educators, educational materials, and assessments that are needed to ensure student success (Cortez, 2012).

Because HB 3 did not increase the weight for ELs, significant numbers of ELs will continue to be denied opportunities for academic success, high school completion, and post-secondary access afforded to many of their peers. HB 3 did enact several changes that impact funding for this group of students. The new law increases the basic allotment for all students, creates a special allotment for ELs in Kindergarten through third grade and creates a new weight for students in dual language programs.

HB 3's increase in the basic allotment for all students means that the overall funding for special student populations also increases. However, when weights remain stagnant over time, allocations for special student populations are particularly vulnerable to financial and political fluctuations that often drive state investment in public education and result in decreases to the basic allotment. Additionally, HB 3's new funding for young ELs in Kindergarten through third grade does not necessarily go directly to those students because it can be used to support the pre-K programs now required, though not fully funded, by HB 3. The funds do not have to be used specifically for ELs' education, despite their different educational needs.

Finally, funding dual language *programs* rather than EL *students* means that only ELs whose schools have adopted this particular program will see any benefit from the new weight, resulting in inequitable outcomes for schools and students. IDRA's analysis of bilingual education and special language programs in Texas shows that only 20% of ELs in the state have access to dual language programs. This means that 80% of all ELs will receive no additional funding from the new dual language weight. Additionally, HB 3 adds a dual language weight for non-ELs (students whose primary language is English) who are in two-way dual language immersion programs in order to learn another language (IDRA, 2019).

While it is certainly important to encourage bilingualism for all Texas students, it is particularly vexing to see a policy that allocates funds to non-ELs while simultaneously continuing to underfund the majority of ELs in the state who do not have access to dual language programs. While one group is gaining an additional (albeit valuable) skill, the other is being denied the funding needed to secure a basic civil right. Research suggests that advocacy for students matters in these funding decisions. Students whose primary language is English often see more of a benefit with program expansion than ELs: when vocal parents of non-ELs who have social and political capital demand the adoption of dual language programs in *their* schools, the differences in achievement that programs like dual language immersion are designed to address may actually be exacerbated (Latham Sikes & Davies, 2019). Increasing the number of advocates of color who are connected to ELs and their families *and* ensuring those advocates have a meaningful role in shaping policies can potentially mitigate some of the harms associated with narrowly-focused, program-based interventions that fail to recognize the real-world challenges of schools and many students.

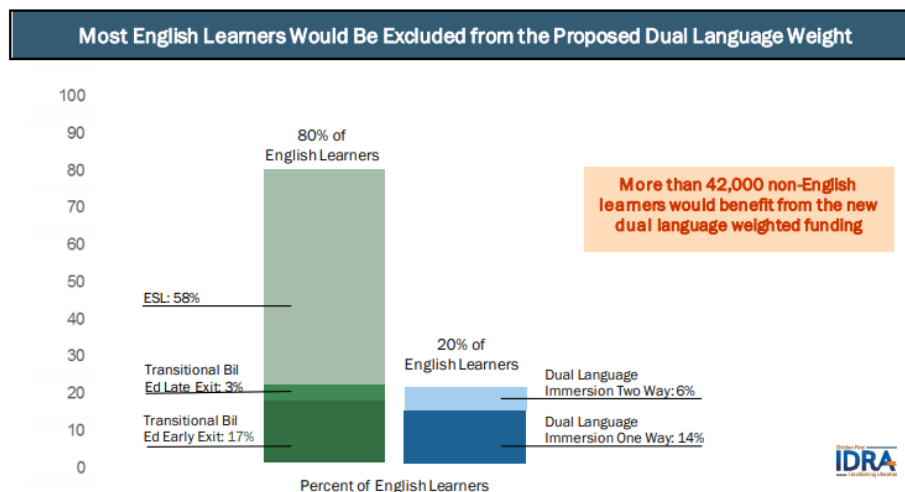


Figure 1. Data in the chart above were obtained from the Texas Education Agency and analyzed by IDRA. The data show the percent of English learners in each type of bilingual education (including dual language) and English as a Second Language (ESL) program offered in Texas schools.

School Discipline and Safety

High-profile school shooting tragedies in Parkland, Florida, and Santa Fe, Texas, led to the creation of school safety-focused committees in the Texas House and Senate, tasked with developing policy recommendations to increase school safety in the 86th legislative session. Unfortunately, what we have seen across the country is that such policies can focus almost exclusively on hardening school facilities with overly-restrictive barriers and surveillance equipment, increasing the presence of armed school staff, and pouring money into school policing. Texas was no exception: the supplemental budget bill passed in 2019 included \$100 million dollars for school hardening and surveillance. The omnibus school safety bill (Senate Bill 11) created a “school safety allotment” that instituted per-student funding that districts can use each year for a number of purposes, including training staff to carry weapons and hiring school-based police officers. Unfortunately, these approaches are not based in reliable research and, in fact, can create schools that are *less safe* for students.

The term “school-to-prison pipeline” describes the process by which students are pushed out of their classrooms through exclusionary discipline and school-based policing. Students who are suspended, even once, are more likely to be held back, drop out of school, and have contact with the justice system (Fabelo, 2011). A recently-released working paper argues causation, not just correlation, between harsh discipline techniques and future justice system involvement and shows that entire classrooms of students – not only those who are themselves suspended – are negatively impacted by exclusionary discipline practices (Bacher-Hicks, Billings & Deming, 2019).

“School safety” policies and practices that harden physical spaces, bring weapons into classrooms, increase the presence of police officers inside schools, and take a harsh, zero tolerance approach to student behavior are bad for schools. They push students into the school-to-prison pipeline and create negative school climates in which adults and students do not feel comfortable building the

relationships that are necessary for the safety and success of every person on campus (Advancement Project, 2018).

Unfortunately, the students disproportionately and unfairly impacted by the school-to-prison pipeline are students of color, students with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students. Black students, for example, are more likely than their peers to be suspended, placed in alternative schools, expelled, or referred to the police and juvenile court systems, even though they are not more likely to misbehave (Fabelo, 2011; Gilliam, Maupin, Reyes, Accavitti, & Shic, 2016; Skiba & Williams, 2014). Systemic discrimination and individual biases can often explain these differences in the perception of misbehavior and subsequent punishment (Okonofua & Eberhardt, 2015). Recent research has tied racial disparities in discipline to the racial achievement gap between Black and white students (Pearlman, Curran, Fisher & Gardella, 2019).

Measures that rely on exclusionary and criminalizing practices and punishments, even in the name of “school safety,” can unfairly target Black students. Additionally, the *adoption*, not just the implementation, of harsh school safety policies can be discriminatory. Following high-profile incidents of violence in schools, harsh security measures increased most dramatically in schools with higher proportions of Black and Latinx students, even controlling for factors like neighborhood crime and campus discipline rates (Nance, 2016).

While we want to create safer schools for all students, the calls for quick, ineffective, and reactionary security measures seem to be heard over the persistent pleas from many who understand that hard schools and regular policing will actually compromise the safety of many students by exposing them to harmful and unnecessary interventions. When certain families and communities demand harsh school security measures to quell fears of targeted school violence, wasteful and ineffective policies may be adopted quickly and without regard for the disproportionate and harmful impact they may have on the students of color, students with disabilities, and LGBTQ students in the same school. Intentionally increasing the presence of advocates from these communities would amplify a critical narrative about what safety truly looks like. This could lead to more policies that focus on the proactive creation of safe and supportive schools, not the costly and harmful reactions that have become commonplace following targeted school violence incidents.

Representation is Fundamental to Good Policymaking

The policy changes detailed above demonstrate how some voices can drive policymaking, while others are ignored. Fortunately, in many other instances, we have seen the power of organized policy campaigns led by impacted communities: disability rights activists have long demanded “nothing about us without us,” and the LGBTQ community, foster care community, and people who were formerly incarcerated recently pushed for and celebrated huge legal and legislative wins.

An absence of state-level advocate representation for the students of color who make up a majority of the Texas public school population is inherently damaging to the policymaking process. Advocates of color can offer different policy solutions, developed from their own experiences and the particular lens through which they view existing research and data. They often maintain important connections to students, families, and community-based advocates who can share their own research, experience, expertise, and policy solutions. Additionally, many advocates of color are in a position to understand and recognize policies that may have unintended consequences on students

who live in the intersections of identities, including race, gender, ability, and sexual orientation (Crenshaw, 1991).

To be clear, an increase in the *number* of advocates of color alone will not lead to perfectly fair and democratic policymaking. There are many barriers, some deeply entrenched and systemic, that prevent all people from participating meaningfully in the legislative processes in this country. But, to address large systems that concentrate power among a few and exclude others, we must continue to encourage all families, students, and community-based advocates to be leaders in policy and practice in their schools and districts. And, their interests should also be represented by advocates of color in state-level policy conversations, where decisions, good and bad, can be far-reaching and long-lasting.

What Can be Done

For many years, IDRA has engaged in family leadership work. Our Family Leadership in Education model was developed to support meaningful and lasting family involvement in campus communities and school districts (IDRA EAC-South, 2019). Instead of teaching parents to simply be volunteers in their schools or recipients of school services like an ESL or GED class, IDRA's model emphasizes leadership and true collaboration in local- and state-level educational policymaking. Through a network of Education CAFEs (Community Action Forums for Excellence) families have challenged and changed policies related to graduation requirements, the school-to-prison pipeline, and access to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) programs.

IDRA works to develop a two-way path of information— and support-sharing with the Education CAFE network. We provide technical support, issue briefs, and data analyses, and the families with which we work drive and inform our state-level policy making by providing the important perspectives and policy recommendations that can only come from those who are experiencing challenges in their schools firsthand.

To further achieve meaningful representation of Texas students and families at the state level, IDRA is developing a Policy Fellows of Color Program. Our fellows will work with students and families to craft and advocate for state-level policies that support excellent and equitable public schools. We urge others to recognize the importance of diversity in the advocacy community and insist on opening up the spaces that currently exclude the perspectives of all impacted communities. We all have a responsibility to contribute to policy-making that centers the perspectives, needs, and desires of the people who have too often been pushed to the periphery.

MORGAN CRAVEN, J.D., is the National Director of Policy and Community Engagement at the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA). Through relevant research and data analyses, actionable policy materials, and practical trainings for schools and educators, IDRA seeks to ensure that every student receives an excellent education in a public school that prepares them to succeed in college. Along with the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), IDRA co-convenes the Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (formerly the Texas Latino Education Coalition), a statewide group of advocates dedicated to protecting and promoting equitable and excellent education opportunities for children of color in Texas.

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Teachers in a New Political Landscape

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Texas House of Representatives

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Teachers in a New Political Landscape

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The political environment in the United States is undergoing rapid transformation (Mason, 2018; Price, 2008). While many scholars have focused on national dynamics (Darder, Baltodano & Torres, 2017; Fukayama, 2018; Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018; Price, 2018; Taylor, 2017), there have also been significant shifts at the state level. In particular, Texas has experienced both electoral and policy changes since the 2018 election cycle. A major catalyst for these statewide shifts is the positionality of teachers within the political landscape.

Advocacy and electoral politics have changed the role of teachers in Texas. The growing political capital of teachers might not seem surprising, given that education has always been a central political talking point for state legislators in the Lone Star State. Commonly referenced as a priority during speeches, town halls, and in newsletters, pointing to education is a standard within Texas political discourse, especially to appease voters (Jenkins, 2010). However, even when legislators have the best of intentions, education policy has traditionally struggled to be one of the landmark pieces of legislation during any legislative session. Not only have education policies struggled to cross the finish line, but centering teachers within the conversation has also been lacking. As teachers increased their presence in the electorate, the focus of the 86th legislative session shifted these dynamics. Reflecting on the background of education policy, recent teacher advocacy, and the outcomes of school finance policy within the 86th legislative session is critical to understanding teacher positionality and teacher agency within the changing political landscape in Texas.

The 86th Texas Legislative Session

The 86th Texas legislative session was a landmark session for education. With leaders of both parties united in the quest for improved school finance early on (Swaby, 2019; Wilson & Goudeau, 2019), the 86th legislature was characterized by a different, renewed energy towards education. This shift marked a departure from the previous session, which was dominated by social issues including legislation such as the infamously anti-LGBTQ “bathroom bill” (Senate Bill 6, 2017) and the anti-immigrant sanctuary cities bill (Senate Bill 4, 2017).

So, why the shift? Elections. Electoral consequences matter to legislators and the agenda shift of the 86th Texas legislative session is a clear example of that reality. The 2018 election cycle in Texas surprised many. The electorate increased 18 percentage points compared to the previous mid-term statewide election (Wang, 2018). Democrats gained twelve seats in the Texas House of Representatives, bringing the partisan balance to 83 Republicans to 67 Democrats, and two seats in the Texas Senate, resulting in 19 Republicans to 12 Democrats. The narrowing of the partisan divide increased the competitiveness between the Democratic and Republican parties, which affected legislator behavior.

Increased party competition compels legislators in the majority party to act more moderately in order to appeal to a larger spectrum of voters, especially legislators in contested districts (Jenkins,

2010; Wright, Osborn, & Winburn, 2004). Additionally, as the majority party loses members, its internal ideological factions are less likely to defect from the party on key votes (Kirkland & Slapin, 2017). This effect is quite evident when comparing the voting behavior of the ultra-conservative Texas House Freedom Caucus on the major school finance bills of the 85th legislative session (House Bill 21, 2017) and the 86th session (HB 3, 2019). On HB 21 (2017), 14 members of the Freedom Caucus broke ranks with the Republican Party to vote against the measure, while only one Freedom Caucus member voted against HB 3 (2019) during the following session. Furthermore, multiple members of the Republican Party departed from the Freedom Caucus altogether in 2019. Ultimately, the 86th legislature saw greater levels of agreement on a school funding package, particularly in the House of Representatives, which led to the passage of an \$11.6 billion school finance bill in a state that labored for over a decade to pass meaningful legislation in this area.

The intentional organizing and marketing of educators as an electoral bloc was a key component to the 2018 electoral change and resulting shift in policy agenda (Miller, 2019; Platoff, 2018). Mailed pamphlets and postcards, social media strategies, and grassroots organizing centered on the theme, “I am an educator and I vote.” Organizations like “Texas Educators Vote” and coalitions emerged to engage voters within the education profession about educator issues.

Two dominant catalysts spurred the educator movement in Texas in advance of the 86th legislative session. First, coalition-building occurred simultaneously during teacher activism across the country, which created a feeling of solidarity and empowerment amongst educators (Claster, 2018; Miller, 2019; Will, 2019). Second, and closer to home, was the anti-teacher and anti-public education legislation that was filed during the 85th Texas legislative session. For example, the “union dues bill” (SB 13) aimed to prohibit automatic payroll deductions for teachers’ union and other public employees’ dues payments. Interpreted as a deliberate tactic to limit educator political participation and voice (Canaves, 2017), the bill mobilized educators across the state to organize beyond party lines against this perceived attack. The combination of national momentum and harmful state policies motivated the educator-centric campaign, which led to an increased bipartisan focus on education and educators. The outcome of these dynamics was the space, will, and political pressure to accomplish school finance reform during the 86th legislative session in preparation for the 2020 election/re-election cycle.

From School Finance to Teacher Pay

While both teacher pay and school finance are education topics, they aren’t necessarily a connected conversation. Texas has historically underfunded education, compared to other states (DeMatthews & Knight, 2018; Samuels, 2018). The consequence of long-term underfunding is a battle for resources, which can push increasing teacher pay to the bottom of the priorities list in favor of other necessities like student supports. However, in January of 2019, as the legislative session was taking off, Lieutenant (Lt.) Governor Dan Patrick announced an across-the-board pay raise for teachers (Senate Bill 3, 2019) as one of his top legislative priorities (Office of the Lieutenant Governor, 2019). His announcement followed weeks of the Speaker of the House emphasizing that the Texas House of Representatives would prioritize an overhaul of the school finance formula. Teacher pay and school finance were now bonded by support from the state’s top political leadership.

The statement by the Lt. Governor shocked political insiders who had witnessed his long history of using and advancing anti-public education and anti-teacher rhetoric and policies in pursuit of privatization efforts (Miller, 2019). Political commentators point to the change in the Lt. Governor’s

agenda as a result of the 2018 elections (Miller, 2019). While both were Republican incumbents running for statewide office, Dan Patrick won his re-election even more narrowly than Governor Abbott, with 51.3% of the vote compared to Abbott's 55.8%. As expected by the education community, Patrick's most vocal opponents – educators – caused this tight win (Platoff, 2018; Ratcliff, 2018). To respond to the opposition he experienced on the campaign trail, the Lt. Governor centered teacher pay and pushed it into the school finance conversation.

The convergence of school finance and teacher pay led to a nearly non-negotiable understanding that pay raises would be a part of whatever school finance bill passed the legislature. The Lt. Governor's push for a \$5,000 across-the-board pay raise for educators was financially incompatible with other priorities, such as billions in tax relief. Thus, the legislature ultimately approved a less expensive, locally-defined teacher pay raise mandate within HB 3.

Interrelated Factors Impacting Teacher Positionality

It may seem counter intuitive, but among the countless hours of political discourse around education, the inclusion of educators has been inconsistent. Although the sporadic "let teachers teach" reference emerges from time to time, prioritizing educators' voices, needs, and knowledge isn't always common or a part of regular policy discussions in comparison to other professions. The positionality of educators within the current political system is limited by a variety of complex and interrelated factors, including institutional regulations, class, and gender, which act to exclude teacher pay from school finance conversations.

A contributing factor to the position of educators within the political landscape is the impact of identity in the formation of systems. With regard to class identity, there are a variety of barriers that make it difficult for low-income, working-class, and middle-class individuals to run for the Texas Legislature. These include the high costs of campaigns, the low pay of legislators, the challenges to earning an income while in session, and laws banning legislators' employment at a state agency or governmental entity (such as being a professor at a public university). For example, currently Texas legislators earn \$7,200 a year (not including per diem for expenses while in Austin, Texas, for government-related business). Additionally, in Texas and many other states (Will, 2018), legislators are not permitted to work for governmental entities, including local public schools, state universities, and community colleges. These institutional roadblocks limit the pathway for educators to be elected to the Texas Legislature.

The lack of ease with which an educator can enter office limits the number of Texas legislators who have an occupational background in education. In fact, across the nation, the percentage of state legislators who have direct expertise in education is low compared to those with occupations in business and law (National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), 2015b). Compared to a nationwide average of 6%, Texas is among several states with the lowest percentages of educator-legislators - at 3% (NCSL, 2015a). When educators do make it to office, they likely do not benefit from the same electoral benefits as lawyer-legislators and legislators who are businesspersons. These individuals enjoy significantly higher campaign contributions from political action committees (PACs) who can help to ensure the future career prospects of the legislator, as well as their re-election (Matter & Stutzer, 2015; Witko & Friedman, 2008). The difficulty of obtaining and maintaining office accounts for the lack of educator presence on the legislative floor and the limited visibility and inclusion of teacher voices in the halls of power.

Gender is also a key factor in identity that affects the positionality of educators within the political landscape of the Texas legislature. The female-dominated profession of teaching is a public service-oriented profession that is subject to the will of the male-dominated political institution. In 2019, the Texas legislature was only 23% female and the majority of those were Democrats (Ura & Cameron, 2019). In contrast, the Texas public education teaching force was 76% female in the 2017-2018 school year (Texas Education Agency, 2019). Having a majority-male legislature puts the legitimacy of women and their work at risk because of the implicit biases and consequences of embedded sexism in our society (Galea & Gaweda, 2018).

The consequences of the educator-legislator gender imbalance are evident in Texas's labor policy outcomes. For example, the United States Congress has passed legislation attempting to address the gender pay gap. Texas, however, has failed to pass similar state-level legislation. For educators, the impact of gender on pay is worsened by the historical treatment of subordinated women's work or occupations of care as not being worthy of full compensation (Oram, 2007). Recognizing the gender, class, and occupational aspects of the teaching profession, the lack of attention to gender pay discrepancy in the state as a whole, and the imbalance of female and educator legislators serving within the Texas Legislature reveals multiple layers of invisibility and complexity to the teacher pay issue.

What This Means Moving Forward

Now, more than ever, educators are in a strategically unique position within the framework of Texas politics. Recognized as a political voting bloc as well as a growing occupational identity within state legislative bodies, a larger educator presence provides the opportunity for substantive and necessary policy changes (Will & Schwartz, 2018). In order to capitalize on the moment, reflection, research, and intentional strategic plans are necessary for future agenda building. Retired teachers present a parallel yet different identity group to draw examples and knowledge from due to their similar position within the Texas political landscape. For example, after years of organizing, retired teachers are recognized as a critical bloc to consider by lawmakers when establishing a legislative agenda. Their advocacy has been so effective that retired teacher issues are addressed every session, though not always exactly in the ways that they want. Furthermore, based on the authors' experience, every legislator, regardless of political party, avoids having a vote against the retired teachers in their community. The positionality of retired teachers developed particularly over the last decade as they began to market themselves as a loud advocacy organization and strong voting bloc. By strategically organizing, marketing, and participating in elections, retired teachers moved themselves up on the legislative political agenda.

The position of retired teachers also allows for their issues to be used as pawns in the political chess game. During the 85th legislative session, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick was determined to pass facility funding for charter schools. However, the issue was having difficulty moving forward, particularly through the Texas House of Representatives, because of a coalition of rural Republicans and pro-public education Democrats. In order to advance the issue, the Lt. Governor attached charter school facility funding to a piece of legislation that was aimed to save the retired teacher's pension fund (HB 21). Even though legislators debated about how these two issues shouldn't have been tied together, the measure passed because they were concerned about voting against retired teachers. Recognizing the ways power dynamics work within the legislature is critical for educators as their role in the political landscape changes.

In order to embrace their new position for positive and necessary change, educators need to unite and develop action plans collectively. Take the example of standardized testing – educators frequently raise concerns of the current high-stakes testing assessment system in Texas. The validity and urgency of the concern quickly dissipates because legislators respond by asking, “And what should we replace it with?” While there are many alternatives to the testing regime that currently exists in Texas, such as portfolio and performance-based assessments, there is not a unified voice from the educator community on next steps or an alternative assessment. Without a plan to accompany the critique of the assessment system, legislation to ameliorate the situation has less chance to progress.

Understanding the internal dynamics of legislative session is critical to being successful in accomplishing a political goal. The Texas Legislature meets every two years for 140 days to address the issues impacting nearly 30 million Texans. On average over 10,000 pieces of legislation are filed each legislative session. The short time period of the legislative session, as well as the multitude of topics that must be covered, necessitates that any successful legislation has broad consensus amongst legislators in both chambers. Policy ideas that do not have consensus struggle to complete the legislative process within the time permitted during session. Thus, as educators create future legislative agendas, developing a healthy coalition of education groups with a collective plan together is key to success.

Conclusion

Educators have been successful in intentionally and strategically entering the Texas political landscape as an influential voting bloc. With the changes in demographics and elections in Texas, educators’ voice will continue to grow. Reflecting on the teacher pay policy process of the 86th Texas legislative session illuminates the systematic power dynamics within the Texas Legislature, the inner workings of the political arena, and the potential for future public policy change.

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A Review of State Investment in Higher Education Affordability and Access During the 86th Legislature

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A Review of State Investment in Higher Education Affordability and Access During the 86th Legislature

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Postsecondary education is critical for driving prosperity for Texas families. Increasingly, well-paid jobs available in Texas require more than a high school diploma. For more Texans to become qualified members of the workforce and sustainable earners for their families, more students of all backgrounds need access to a postsecondary education. The state government has an important role to play to ensure college affordability, and it is critical that lawmakers prioritize higher education to ensure Texans from all backgrounds are able to access and afford these opportunities.

Existing research has identified the critical areas in which states have major levers of influence on college affordability such as increasing direct institution appropriations, enacting tuition-setting policies, and investing in student aid programs (Perna, Leigh, & Carroll, 2017). This editorial focuses on the Texas Legislature's engagement in college affordability activities as well as its investment in increasing access for nontraditional students throughout the 86th Legislative Session, which spanned January to May, 2019.

Since 2001, the state has been slowly divesting from Texas colleges and universities. In 2003, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 3015, which deregulated tuition, allowing public colleges to charge unlimited tuition rates. This divestment, coupled with deregulation, has led, in part, to steady tuition increases at public colleges and universities to make up for the deficit created by decreases in state funding (Williams, 2019a).

As an increasing number of students in Texas are from nonwhite and low-income backgrounds, demographic shifts will require more state investment through appropriations, student aid, and other policies to ensure all students have the resources they need to access and complete their postsecondary education (Grawe, 2017). Therefore, the state's historical disinvestment in higher education must reverse course. With less state investment and unchecked tuition increases, students are forced to take on more debt and work longer hours, which can interfere with classroom performance during college and hinder economic mobility after graduation. Beyond the significant cost of tuition, many students struggle with rising costs of food, transportation, and housing, with some unable to afford postsecondary education altogether (Goldrick-Rab, 2016).

The Texas 86th Legislature made some positive increases in higher education investment, but more work remains ahead. Going forward, the Legislature must continue to prioritize higher education investment if legislators hope to expand access and affordability in postsecondary education—especially for students from historically underrepresented backgrounds. Following is an evaluation of the progress during the 86th Legislature as well as a discussion of remaining priorities for higher education access and affordability in Texas. As Texas higher education demographics shift and more resources are required to ensure students success, it is important to evaluate how the state Legislature has invested in higher education because the higher education legislative decisions of today will determine the economic prosperity for the future of Texas.

State Investment in the TEXAS Grant

Insufficient state funding has led to an increased cost burden on Texas students and families who have been forced to pay higher tuition and fees for students to attend college. One state program that is critical to helping Texans afford college is the Toward Excellence and Success (TEXAS) Grant. The TEXAS Grant was created in 1999 when the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 713 as a support to Texans who meet certain eligibility requirements including an expected family contribution (EFC), or the estimated amount of money a family can contribute to a child's education, of no more than \$5,233 per year (*2016-2017 Program Guide TEXAS Grant*, 2016).

The 86th legislative session began with legislators holding TEXAS Grant funding flat at the 2018-2019 biennium level; a total of \$393 million per year for the program in 2020-2021, even with a projected addition of nearly 7,700 students over the biennium. That means proposed TEXAS Grant funding would have decreased by almost \$540 per student between 2019 and 2021. At that rate, just 54 percent of Texans eligible for the TEXAS Grant would have received the critical funds while leaving near-half of eligible Texas students with serious financial need without the support for which they qualify.

Through the budget markup process, an additional \$30 million was added to the TEXAS Grant, with a reported 70 percent of eligible students now covered as a result of the increased funding which is a significant improvement from the starting-point. However, nearly one-third of eligible Texans, all who have high need for college financial support, are left with no support from this critical need based funding mechanism.

State Investment in Historically Black Colleges and Universities

While there has been insufficient state investment in higher education generally, there is a significant disparity in state investment in certain types of public institutions. This disparity in institutional investment is especially stark when comparing state funding of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) to that of flagship state universities. There are nine institutions designated by the Department of Education as HBCUs in Texas. Two of Texas' HBCUs are publicly funded four year institutions: Texas Southern University, founded in 1947 with the original name of Texas State University for Negroes, and Prairie View A&M University.

HBCUs in Texas serve students from diverse backgrounds. Prairie View A&M University awards Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees and has a student population that is approximately 86 percent African American and nine percent Hispanic. Additionally, 66 percent of Prairie View A&M students received Pell Grants in 2018 (*Higher Ed Almanac*, 2019). Texas Southern University serves a population of students that is 82 percent African American and eight percent Hispanic with 63 percent of total students receiving Pell Grants. Pell Grants are awarded to students who demonstrate financial need, as defined as the difference between a school's cost of attendance and a student's expected family contribution, calculated based on household income and tax information ("How Aid Is Calculated | Federal Student Aid," 2019).

In 2018, Texas public four-year HBCUs had student bodies where between 63 and 66 percent of students demonstrated significant financial need. In the same year, at two public flagship universities, The University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University, 22-23 percent of students demonstrated financial need. When comparing the student body compositions of Texas Public

HBCUs to two Texas Flagship Universities, it is clear that HBCUs function as sites of outstanding dedication to Texas students in most need of financial support (Table 1).

Table 1

Student Financial Profile Comparison: Texas Public HBCU vs. Two Texas Flagship Universities

Institution	HBCU Status	% of Students Receiving Pell Grants	Average Student Debt of Graduates	Average Time to Bachelor's Degree (Years)
Prairie View A&M University	HBCU	66%	\$ 42,103	5.1
Texas Southern University	HBCU	63%	\$ 42,699	5.7
University of Texas at Austin	Not HBCU	23%	\$ 38,344	4.1
Texas A&M University	Not HBCU	22%	\$ 33,710	4.1

Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Higher Education Almanac, 2019

Additionally, public HBCUs in Texas invest a greater proportion of their total funds on student services and scholarships than do both The University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University. In 2018, Prairie View A&M University spent 21 percent of its total funds on student services and scholarships. Similarly, in 2018, Texas Southern University spent 16 percent of its total funds on student services and scholarships. State flagship universities, The University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University, spent eight and 12 percent respectively of their total funds on student services and scholarships. Therefore, the Texas Legislature could ensure a proportionately greater amount of its investment went to institutions that prioritize historically underrepresented populations with higher levels of demonstrated financial need if it increased investment in the state's public HBCUs (Table 2).

Table 2

Comparison of School Expenditure on Student Services and Scholarships: Texas Public HBCU vs. Two Texas Flagship Universities

Institution	HBCU Status	Total Funds Per FTSE	% of Total Funds Spent on Student Services and Scholarships
Prairie View A&M University	HBCU	\$ 20,720	21%
Texas Southern University	HBCU	\$ 18,540	16%
University of Texas at Austin	Not HBCU	\$ 43,809	8%
Texas A&M University	Not HBCU	\$ 26,518	12%

Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Higher Education Almanac, 2019

When comparing state investments into students at HBCUs to state investment at two Texas flagship universities, the comparative level of per-student support from the state is stark. The 2018 state revenue provided to institutions per Full Time Student Equivalent (FTSE), the designator for a standard full-time student, at state flagships is higher despite HBCUs serving student bodies

composed of a greater percentage of historically underrepresented students and a greater percentage of students demonstrating significant financial need. The 2018 average state revenue per FTSE for two flagship universities, Texas A&M University and The University of Texas at Austin, was \$12,958. The 2018 average state revenue per FTSE at the public HBCUs in Texas was \$10,506. That represents an average difference of state investment per student of nearly \$2,500. This 2018 difference in average state HBCU investment versus flagship investment exists despite the fact that tuition and fees at the two public HBCUs in 2018 was between about \$2,000 and \$5,000 lower than tuition and fees at the selected flagships (Table 3).

Table 3

Comparison of State Funding and Tuition Per FTSE: Texas Public HBCU vs. Two Texas Flagship Universities

Institution	HBCU Status	State Funded FTSE	Tuition/Fees Per FTSE	State Revenue Per FTSE
Prairie View A&M University	HBCU	8274	\$ 5,060	\$ 11,454
Texas Southern University	HBCU	9158	\$ 7,958	\$ 9,557
University of Texas at Austin	Not HBCU	47243	\$ 9,978	\$ 15,745
Texas A&M University	Not HBCU	55775	\$ 9,941	\$ 10,170

Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Higher Education Almanac, 2019

Public Texas HBCUs serve incredibly diverse populations and students with high financial need while keeping their tuition and fees significantly lower than that of flagships who serve a smaller proportion of students from low-income and historically underrepresented backgrounds. Increased state investment in HBCUs would directly translate to increased investment in low-income and historically underrepresented students. Yet the state fails to prioritize HBCUs in its funding. Going forward, the Texas Legislature should show its dedication to equity in higher education by increasing its funding to HBCUs to a level that at least matches its investments in public flagships or even exceeds those levels considering the populations served at HBCUs.

Policy Changes and State Investment Impacting Adult Learners

In addition to the financial investments in higher education legislators made during the 86th Legislature, legislators also made policy changes to reflect the shifting demographics of Texas students. Earning a high school degree or credential is a critical step toward Texans accessing postsecondary opportunities. However, about 3.4 million Texans over 18 don't yet have a high school credential, making Texas the lowest-performing state in the nation for high school credential attainment. Additionally, there are inequities in high school diploma attainment by race, with high school educational attainment rates for both Black and Hispanic Texans averaging lower than white Texans (You & Potter, 2014).

Recognizing the need for Texas to make headway in this area, legislators took action to remove barriers that historically underserved and low-income Texans face when trying to earn a high school equivalency credential (Williams, 2019).

House Bill 1891, by Representative Lynn Stucky, and Senate Bill 2130, by Senator Beverly Powell, were filed to allow Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)-approved High School Equivalency (HSE) exam scores to count as exemptions to the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) and fulfill college readiness standards. As put forth by these bills, Texans who score well on the any of the THECB approved exams would be able to opt out of taking the TSIA. This increases access to high school attainment credentials for 3.5 million Texans (Williams, 2018).

Many working Texans face barriers to taking and succeeding on these exams, including the exam costs, cost of preparation materials and courses, costs of time forgone working, and costs of securing childcare during preparation, among others. These bills would prevent Texans from facing these costs twice to prepare for two separate exams that measure the same skills and thus remove a significant barrier for adult learners reentering higher education. House Bill 1891 by Representative Stucky, sponsored by Senator Powell, was signed into law on June 14, 2019 by the Governor and took effect September 1, 2019.

Additionally, Representative Diego Bernal filed House Bill 441, in which the Texas Workforce Commission provides subsidies to HSE exam takers. The bill represented a \$1.5 million investment in adult learners over the next two years. Considering Texas' dismal performance in adult learner investment, helping Texans cover the cost of HSE exams is a positive step toward reaching the 60x30TX goals of 60 percent of Texans ages 25-24 holding a postsecondary credential by 2030. While House Bill 441 did not pass, House Bill 3, an omnibus school finance law includes a subsidy for Texans taking an HSE exam. This subsidy allows Texans aged 21 years and older to receive a one-time subsidy for taking a state-approved high school equivalency exam, funded by the Texas Workforce Commission. Texas adult learners will still have to surmount the significant costs associated with preparation but this subsidy will certainly help lessen the load.

While there is still more work to be done to ensure Texan adult learners receive the resources they need to reach their full potential, legislators worked together this session to show their dedication both to improving higher education outcomes in Texas and investing in adult learners who have historically been left out of the state's investment priorities. What is required going forward is a dedication to effective implementation and coordination of all of the legislative policy changes for and continued investment in adult learners and other groups of nontraditional students.

Proposed College Promise Programs

Efforts to subsidize the costs of tuition and fees for students that meet certain income and academic requirements, frequently referred to as "College Promise" programs, have been implemented on a statewide basis in New York, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Mississippi (Williams, 2019b). Nationally, the popularity of College Promise programs has grown, as college costs and student debt continue to skyrocket.

In Texas, there are a number of cities and counties that have implemented or begun the process of implementing local College Promise programs including Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio. While residents of localities will reap the benefits of local College Promise programs, some are concerned that access to affordable college will become dependent upon what city a Texan resides in or is able to relocate to.

In response, lawmakers filed statewide College Promise bills during the 86th legislative session in both the Texas House and Senate. These included House Bill 630 by Hernandez, House Bill 998 by Cortez, House Bill 1040 by Meza, House Bill 2727 by Reynolds, House Bill 2887 by Martinez Fischer, and Senate Bill 33 by Zaffirini.

While the proposals varied, in general, these bills would have allowed the costs of tuition and fees to be covered at two year institutions for students meeting certain income and academic requirements and had fiscal notes ranging from \$80-86 million. Additionally, Senator Zaffirini put forth a bill to establish a Texas Promise Grant program at public four-year universities in Texas. Though the Senate bills did not receive hearings in the Senate Higher Education Committee, many of the College Promise bills did receive hearings in the House Higher Education committee including House Bill 630, House Bill 998, and House Bill 1040, suggesting serious legislative consideration.

Lawmakers left all of the House College Promise bills pending in committee, not becoming law, but the consideration of these programs indicates the Texas Legislature is paying attention to the serious college affordability and the student debt crisis that Texans face. Lawmakers will likely revisit College Promise models in the next legislative session as college affordability and student debt remain prominent issues. And while the College Promise bills did not go into effect, we can learn lessons from what each proposed to ensure future drafts are more effective.

The proposed Texas College Promise models generally included the following eligibility criteria for the programs. Students must:

- be Texas residents;
- have graduated high school in the last year;
- enroll in an associate degree or a certificate program;
- be enrolled at least half-time;
- and have applied for available financial assistance.

Additionally, the proposed Texas Promise Grant programs were limited to the costs of tuition and fees. The proposed plans excluded other expenses such as books, housing, food, and childcare, which represent significant affordability barriers. Lack of comprehensive coverage can hinder student completion and success, since tuition makes up only about a third of college and university attendance costs (Goldrick-Rab, 2016). The College Promise proposals largely left students without any additional support to cover the other two-thirds of the cost to attend college.

All College Promise programs proposed during the 86th Legislature were “last-dollar,” meaning they would provide support to students only if there was remaining tuition and fees after applying all other aid a student receives. With the income restrictions included in these proposals, many eligible students would receive enough federal aid to cover the costs of tuition and fees. Because “last-dollar” programs are only designed to cover the remaining tuition and fees after federal aid is applied, students receiving significant federal aid are unable to use assistance from state College Promise programs to cover the extensive costs of college beyond tuition and fees. Therefore, the proposed last-dollar models prevented students with the greatest financial need from receiving support from the free college programs, leaving students at the higher end of the income eligibility spectrum as the only group served. Removing the last-dollar provisions would provide for a more equitable

distribution of funds, but would likely add to the costs. Below are options that, if implemented by the Legislature, could advance this goal.

One potential legislative solution to ensure free college programs serve students with the most demonstrated financial need is including a minimum award to eligible students, sometimes referred to as a “middle-dollar” approach. When programs are designed as middle dollar, or carve out a minimum award, they ensure that students with demonstrated financial need can combine their federal support with at least the minimum award from the state College Promise program to cover tuition, fees, housing, books, food, transportation and all of the other significant costs associated with attending college. Oregon Promise is an example of a statewide program implemented on a middle-dollar basis (Perna et al., 2017).

A Texas College Promise program with a minimum award from the 86th Legislative Session is Senate Bill 33 which included a \$1,000 minimum award for eligible students. In the case of the \$1,000 minimum, even if aid from other sources exceeds the costs of tuition and fees at an institution, a student would still receive the \$1,000 that could be applied toward other costs of college. While the average student’s college cost in excess of tuition and fees goes well beyond \$1,000, requiring a minimum amount is one approach that could target state College Promise programs to eligible students with the greatest demonstrated financial need.

Additionally, existing research suggests that family income alone is not a sufficient lens through which to examine how students are impacted by financial burdens. There are significant historical racial wealth gaps that exist as a result of years of systematic financial and social oppression of Black and Brown Americans through home mortgage exclusion and predatory lending of multiple forms (Oliver & Shapiro, 2006). Black and Brown students often have financial responsibilities beyond college such as supporting their families with rent and other bills (Addo, Houle, & Simon, 2016). For College Promise programs to be most effective in increasing college access and success, they must also address racial equity and go beyond income considerations alone.

Dr. Tiffany Jones and Katie Berger at Education Trust, a national nonprofit focused on education research and policy, proposed a framework to make free college programs more equitable and address historical inequities in similar program proposals. They propose that programs cover costs beyond tuition, including fees and living expenses, include nontraditional students such as adult and part-time students, include four-year colleges and universities, and design programs with publicly available data tracking (Jones & Berger, 2018). While it is true that implementing all of the equity-advancing program elements would require significant resource investment, policymakers must be willing to invest in and prioritize college affordability while seeking opportunities to implement these elements whenever possible.

Policy Changes Impacting Student Debt and Professional Licensure

The burden of student debt goes well beyond college graduation. In fact, for many Texans, that’s where it begins. In 2017, fifty-five percent of students attending four-year institutions in Texas graduated with debt, with an average debt total of \$26,824 (“College Insight,” 2018). One-fifth of Texans who graduated in 2016 were not working or enrolled in further education one year after they graduated (“60x30TX Goals Tracking,” 2018). And even for those who are employed, making ends meet while paying student debt isn’t easy. Half of the students who graduated from Texas public

institutions in 2015 had student loan debt at or above 60 percent of their first year wages (“60x30TX Goals Tracking,” 2018).

Despite the fact that paying student loans upon graduation is a challenging reality for many Texans, prior to the 86th Legislative session, Texans who defaulted on their student loans were at risk of having their professional licenses revoked. Teachers, counselors, nurses, and social workers are among many other groups of Texans that require professional licenses to work. But some of these workers who fell behind on student loans found themselves without the very credential they needed to earn money to repay their student loans as a result of a Texas law that allowed the revocation or denial of renewal of professional licenses for student loan default. Reports indicate that between 2010 and 2015 530 nurses and 250 teachers had their renewals denied for student debt default (Najmabadi, 2018).

During the 86th Legislative session, legislators worked to repeal the law allowing for this practice of professional licensure revocation due to student debt default with the filing of House Bill 218 by Rep. Matt Krause, House Bill 258 by Rep. César Blanco, House Bill 466 by Rep. Ana Hernández, and Senate Bill 37 by Sen. Judith Zaffirini. Ultimately, Senate Bill 37 was signed into law by the Governor and took effect June 2019. A Brookings Institution report found that almost 40 percent of students who entered college in the fall of 2003 may default on their student loans by 2023, making it clear that this law will impact a significant number of Texans (Perry, 2019).

Conclusion

Higher education in Texas is in the midst of several substantial shifts. As student populations become increasingly made up of students from low-income and nonwhite backgrounds, significantly more resources will be required to ensure students can afford and succeed in college and achieve economic prosperity after graduation. The future of Texas higher education, and of the state’s economic prosperity as a whole, depend on investment in and expansion of student financial aid, campus programs that facilitate students supports, inclusion of nontraditional students, as well as serious consideration of equitable free college programs. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has set forth its strategic 60x30TX plan that aims for 60 percent of Texans ages 25-34 to possess a postsecondary credential by the year 2030. During the Texas 86th Legislature, lawmakers took significant strides toward a better funded and more equitable higher education system in Texas, but in order to drive sustainable progress toward state goals and reap lasting benefits, legislators will have to double down on their focus on and investment in higher education.

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Cross-Cultural Mentoring: What Education Needs Now

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Cross-Cultural Mentoring: What Education Needs Now

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In 1965, the United States (U.S.) experienced considerable social, political, and economic change. March of 1965 marked the arrival of U.S. combat troops in Vietnam, an event which is largely considered the start of the Vietnam War. Mere weeks after this deployment of troops, Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. led thousands in peaceful protest in Selma, Alabama and demonstrated against racial and civil injustice. Later that year, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, helping to ensure that African Americans had the same rights and access to voting privileges as Whites. Meanwhile, the U.S. was still competing with the Soviet Union in the Space Race, while strategically navigating against the Soviets and their many satellite states in the Cold War.

Perhaps, then, it is no surprise that in April of 1965, Jackie DeShannon recorded one of the most controversial and political soul ballads ever written:

What the world needs now is love, sweet love.
It's the only thing that there's just too little of.
What the world needs now is love, sweet love.
No not just for some but for everyone.

Written by Hal David and composed by the legendary Burt Bacharach, “What the World Needs Now is Love” was a song meant to inspire peace, understanding, and love during a time fraught with violence, bigotry, hatred, and war (Richards, 2009). Ultimately, the Vietnam War ended with the fall of Saigon in 1975, but not before tens of thousands of Americans, Vietnamese, and other soldiers lost their lives. The Civil Rights Movement continued until King was assassinated in 1968, marking this period of bloodshed with another tragic, needless death in the face of violent oppression. In many ways, an incredible outpouring of love, typified by David’s and Bacharach’s song, was absolutely necessary during a period of such civil unrest and social upheaval.

There are clear parallels between 1965 and 2019. In 2019, the United States is still involved in a nearly twenty-year conflict in the Middle East, stemming from the attacks on 9/11 perpetrated by the Islamic terrorist group al-Qaeda. In the years of U.S. occupation in the Middle East, thousands have lost their lives, akin to the countless casualties of the Vietnam War. African Americans have continued to be murdered in cold blood, some by police, and names like Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, Jordan Baker, and Eric Garner have become as synonymous with the fight against racial discrimination as Reverend King himself. Meanwhile, debate over the U.S. southern border has been wracked with xenophobia and isolationism—reminiscent of the Cold War and Red Scare of the 1960s—as the U.S. President has insisted upon anti-immigration and anti-inclusionary policies meant to uphold the racial and economic stratification still present in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Decades removed from the Civil Rights Movement, in today’s society, U.S. education is still struggling to uphold the values that Reverend King died defending. Many transgender students still protest for their rights to use school restrooms inclusive of their gender identity. State legislators still erase socially and culturally responsive curricular materials from K-12 classrooms. Wealthy enclaves

still redraw district lines to minoritize and exclude low-income communities from quality, well-resourced schools. Students of Color still feel unsafe on college campuses where young people should feel free to learn and grow. The more things change, the more they stay the same.

In education, societal contexts are often compared with education systems, as schools reflect culture. Today's school children eventually become tomorrow's leaders. If the United States is socially and politically conflicted, the United States education system is equally so. Affirmative action policies have continued to be attacked in courts of law, and student debt is at an all-time high, forcing many recent college graduates into difficult repayment plans and out of the housing market. President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program is hanging in the balance, while dozens of parents face criminal charges and jail time for facilitating bribes to purchase college admission for their children. Teachers continue to leave the profession across the P-12 spectrum, while racially motivated hate crimes continue to be perpetrated on college campuses (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

What the U.S. education system—and the United States writ large—needs is love but asking for an education system of millions to immediately embrace love and empathy toward others is a task that could take lifetimes. Moreover, what would an embrace of love and empathy look like across an entire system? Is the impetus on educational leaders to provide more opportunities for teachers, students, and other educational stakeholders to develop meaningful relationships that extend beyond the classroom and into the community? Is the impetus on educational policymakers and lawmakers to provide schools with the funding necessary so that students' basic educational needs are met, possibly rendering relationships easier to establish and maintain with teachers, staff, and educational leaders? Or is the impetus on individuals within the system—one teacher in one classroom or one student with another—to make concerted efforts to give and receive love and practice empathetic behaviors so that we may learn lessons beyond the schoolhouse walls?

I believe what U.S. education needs now is individual willingness to be open to new people, new cultures, and new relationships. What U.S. education needs now is a large-scale embrace of growth mindsets, and for individuals to acknowledge that they can learn from those who are different from them. What the U.S. education system needs now is cross-cultural mentoring, with mentors and mentees from different backgrounds coming together on common issues like inclusion, equity, peace, and love.

This critical forum of the *Texas Education Review* features five scholarly perspectives from individuals who believe in the power of cross-cultural mentoring to change education for good. In "Homeless Liaisons as Natural Mentors," doctoral student Desiree Viramontes Le powerfully articulates the plight of homeless youth pursuing educational opportunities. Viramontes Le details how homeless liaisons, as they mentor youth across a considerable socioeconomic gap, fundamentally change and save the lives of children, providing them with a better, brighter future through education. Similarly, Drs. Caroline Turner and Stephanie Waterman chronicle the importance of cross-cultural mentoring in academe in "Pushing Back Against Deficit Narratives: Mentoring as Scholars of Color." As scholars of color continue to be underrepresented at all levels of education in the United States, Drs. Turner and Waterman provide an incredibly timely piece about the fundamentals of mentoring, eloquently stating that "The best mentoring experiences do not have to be same-race or same-gender. What is important is caring and listening."

Next, an academic powerhouse in the field of mentoring in higher education, Dr. Richard Reddick, and colleague Dr. Katie Pritchett contribute “‘With the Richness of Their Resources’: Alumni of an Honors Program Reflecting on the Impact of Service-Learning and Mentoring.” In this piece, Drs. Reddick and Pritchett brilliantly focus on how alumni of an honors program—who enjoy a special position of privilege in higher education—leverage their privilege to participate in service learning and mentoring opportunities that effectively give back to a community that provided so much to the alumni themselves. In another piece, doctoral candidate Jessica Fry and one of her mentors, Dr. Julie Schell, speak to the importance of self-exploration within one’s educational journey. Through personal stories, the authors reflect on the importance of finding a sense of belonging in educational settings. In addition, they discuss the ways in which a pedagogy of belonging can help create cross-cultural bridges between faculty mentors and doctoral students. Finally, I share a two-year abridged autoethnographic account of my mentoring relationship with the aforementioned Dr. Richard Reddick. I have learned much over the past three years about cross-cultural mentoring, the importance of listening and learning, and how different people can come together to find so much common ground and compassion.

Ultimately, I hope for this critical forum to accomplish two goals. One, I believe that this critical issue demonstrates that cross-cultural mentoring can be an effective practice for bringing diverse people closer together. However, and perhaps more importantly, I also wish that reading these articles may inspire someone to seek a reciprocal relationship with someone with whom they do not share a dominant identity, such as race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, spoken language, dis/ability, or another. In a time of many crises in United States education, cross-cultural mentoring may be what education needs now.

Z.W. TAYLOR, M.A., M.S., is a PhD candidate at The University of Texas at Austin. His research interests include linguistics in higher education, particularly pre-college information addressing first-generation college students and English-language learners. His work has been published by the *Community College Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, *Journal of College Student Development*, and *Teachers College Record*, among others.

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Falling Through the Cracks: Homeless Youth Need Natural Mentors

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Falling Through the Cracks: Homeless Youth Need Natural Mentors

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President Trump and Congress have slashed and defunded spending on domestic programs such as education and poverty in their “America First” budget that leaves most vulnerable Americans last (Office of Management and Budget, 2017; Partelow, Benner, Dannenberg, & Barone, 2018). America is struggling to not leave any child behind, and without support in funding for education and social services on the federal level, it is more apparent today that homeless students in K-12 need an advocate to ensure that their educational needs are met. In what follows, I first provide a background for this study. Next, I briefly discuss the legislation and literature of youth homelessness then describe my findings. I conclude with implications for school practice and future research.

Background

Congress established the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program in 1987, which provided grant funding to meet the needs of homeless students in K-12 (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2007), in response to reports that only 57% of homeless children were enrolled in schools. The McKinney Vento Assistance Act of 1987 (M-V), subsequent reauthorizations of No Child Left Behind, and ESSA also offer increasing supports, access to basic needs and academic assistance with the creation of the position of a “homeless liaison” for homeless youth specifically.

Currently homeless liaisons are specially designated people in K-12 settings that work daily to assist youth who are homeless with issues surrounding housing, transportation, public education and higher education access.

The McKinney Act Education of Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is a requirement of all school districts to support identification and outreach; assistance with school enrollment and placement; transportation assistance; school supplies; coordination among local service providers; before and after school and summer educational programs; and referrals to support services (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2007).

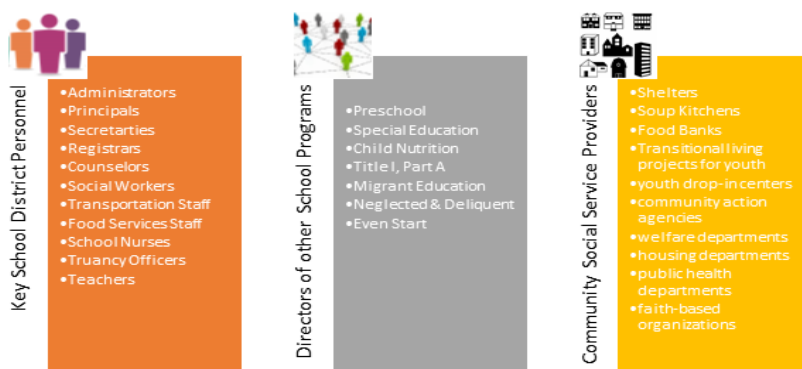


Figure 1. McKinney Vento Recommended Relationships for Homeless Liaisons (NCHE, 2008)

As seen in Figure 1, the homeless liaison is designated at the school district level to work primarily with key personnel that include central administrators, campus administrators, the transportation department and the food service department to fulfill the different mandates of the McKinney Vento Act.

The McKinney Vento law as it exists in policy provides sufficient guidance for all the basics that a school district should implement to adequately support homeless youth. In the last section of Figure 1, the federal government outlines different expectations outside regular education duties for the homeless liaisons to coordinate relationships in the community for the homeless families and youth. Homeless liaisons also battle the societal narrative about homelessness as well as a general understanding of homelessness with unique educational advocacy that balances fulfilling basic needs and students receiving a high-quality education.

Housing Challenges of Homeless Students

A quick Google image search of “homeless” displays the current societal image of homeless adults on the street in substandard conditions. The reality is that homelessness looks like a variety of different living situations. Across the literature, the problem of educating homeless students in K-12 is compounded with the public’s ignorance of educating homeless youth, yet the reality is there are 1.3 million children in K-12 schools, that are homeless in the United States today (Balingit, 2017; Milner, 2017; Pavlakis & Duffield, 2017).

The current societal image of homelessness is institutionalized in the definition of “homeless” from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that identifies two classifications of homelessness, which include unsheltered individuals, and those with families living in homeless shelters. In order to break down the barriers created within the narrow definition of homelessness from HUD, the Department of Education’s definition of homeless is broader and has been expanded through M-V to also include the following classifications of homelessness: families that are doubled up and consist of more than one family to a home; families whose address is a motel or hotel (Miller, 2011). The more inclusive definition from the Department of Education is contingent on the family lacking a “fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” and a “loss of housing, economic hardship, or financial difficulties” (NCHE, 2007).

Homeless families can quickly find themselves in various cycles of poverty. An example of a cycle of poverty that contributes to a continued state of homelessness is the motel/hotel cycle where families are unable to find housing and economic stability by paying more each month to live in the motel. I define the motel/hotel cycle in Figure 2, as a pattern that develops over time with the higher cost of motel or hotel living (in comparison to renting) in conjunction with an inability to rent due to a bad credit history that forces a family to be in a cycle of continued homelessness.

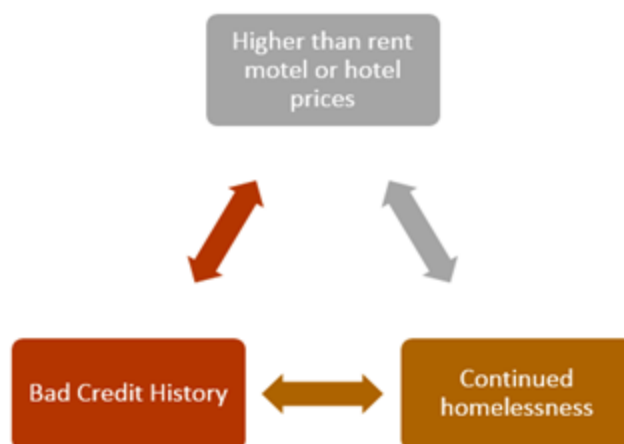


Figure 2. Motel/Hotel Cycle Developed by author

Currently families/individual students transition through different states of homelessness; once they find a couch to surf for a week or a motel for the night, they are no longer considered homeless in HUD's eyes and ineligible for housing options from the federal government. Legislation is needed that will align the definitions. For the homeless liaison and homeless youth, this limits the shelter options that every homeless family needs. This misalignment between the federal departments' policies and definitions creates burdensome and inconsistent barriers for homeless people trying to fulfill the basic need of shelter. Edwards (2019) notes a policy gap between HUD and Department of Education, around a comprehensive, holistic definition of homelessness. For families and youth who are temporarily living with relatives or other adults, as well as those living in shelters, motels, or cars housing assistance while trying to attend school is crucial (Miller, 2011).

High School to College Barriers

The ESSA's requirements have brought about many firsts for homeless youth. Data on homeless graduation rates is mandated and will be compiled nationally for the first time from the 2017-2018 school year. Currently, graduation data is available for six states' for homeless and overall graduation rates is included in Table 1 below. Homeless youth are increasingly being left behind with double digit differences in state graduation rates as compared to, the national graduation rates which are rising to record highs of 84% in 2016 (Balingit, 2017; Colorado State Department of Education, 2016; Dyer & Green, 2014; Kansas State Department of Education, 2015; Meyer, 2017; Virginia Department of Education, 2017).

Table 1

Comparison of Homeless Graduation Rates v. Overall in CO, KS, TX, VA, WA, & WY

<u>State</u>	<u>Homeless</u>	<u>Overall State</u>	<u>State Gap</u>	Difference from the National Graduation <u>Rate</u> of 84%
Texas	72.1%	89.7%	↓ 17.6%	↓ 11.9%
Colorado	53.2 %	78.9 %	↓ 25.7%	↓ 30.8%
Kansas	67.5 %	86.1 %	↓ 18.6%	↓ 16.5%
Virginia	74%	91.2%	↓ 17.2%	↓ 10%
Washington	46.1%	77.2%	↓ 31.1%	↓ 37.9%
Wyoming	60.8 %	80.2 %	↓ 19.4%	↓ 24.8%

Note. Data for homeless graduation for Texas from Texas Education Agency (2018), for Colorado from Colorado State Department of Education (2016), for Kansas from Kansas State Department of Education (2015), for Virginia from the Virginia Department of Education (2017), for Washington from Dyer & Green (2014), and for Wyoming from Meyer (2017).

To open access to higher education for students experiencing homelessness, state and national legislators must develop policies that address their willful ignorance to date. In 2018, a congressional briefing titled, *A Conversation with Youth: Education, Resilience, Homelessness, and Hope*, was held to persuade the audience to pass legislation to further assist homeless youth transitioning from high school to college. Mutt, one of the Homeless youth in the briefing, talked about pushing through AP classes, dealing with where to shower, sleeping in her car and how she saw higher education as the only path out of the darkness (personal communication, June 12, 2018). Each of the fourteen youth spoke of how they would have benefited from guidance or support from somebody at their school, or within their social network.

Homeless youth are not enrolling in college at a commensurate rate as their peers and this is an issue that goes unaddressed. There is little critical attention on creating bridge programs that assist homeless youth in transitioning from high school to higher education; these students remain largely unidentified and invisible to student support system and policymaking process (Gupton, 2017; Zaff et al., 2014). Once in college, homeless youth face housing, food, and financial instability as well as an additional verification process to validate their homelessness. Homeless youth are different because they do not go to college with the typical familial supports that most college youth take for granted. Current reforms in K-12 include increased FAFSA support, homeless verification letter, and Department of Education college guidance have not been effective in meeting their needs (Pavlakakis & Duffield, 2017).

Homeless Liaison

Every federally funded school district in America employs at least one homeless liaison to assist with issues of access to public education and higher education. However, the implementation of the homeless liaison role within the organizational context of a school district can pose two major challenges. First, though the role of homeless liaison does not have to be exclusive, the McKinney Vento Act specifies that “local educational agencies will designate an appropriate staff person, who may also be a coordinator for other federal programs, as a local educational agency liaison for

homeless children and youths” (subtitle B of title VII, (g)(1)(J)(ii)). The homeless liaison role does not fit within the organizational structure of a school district as naturally as a principal or superintendent does. Homeless liaisons typically wear multiple titles and are tasked with an array of outside of school district traditional functions and relationship building as demonstrated in Figure 1 to support their student population. Miller (2013) argues the McKinney–Vento’s positionally attached authority, then, is limited in that district-level homeless liaisons, who are the backbones of the policy’s implementation, are overwhelmed with multiple responsibilities and growing numbers of homeless youth. Homeless liaisons with multiple responsibilities and titles (Title I coordinator, homeless liaison, foster care liaison, etc.) will lack the capacity to carry out all of the duties outlined in the McKinney Vento act effectively.

The second major challenge is that homeless liaisons work with a difficult to assist and marginalized student group that has an array of basic needs that transcend the typical student needs such as housing, transportation and food. A homeless liaison’s challenge is to implement programs and systems for school personnel to heighten their awareness of, and capacity to respond to, specific problems in the education of homeless children and youths. “About one out of every five schoolchildren is growing up in poverty with all of its associated problems: poor nutrition, inadequate health care, transience, and stress” (Fowler, 2013, p. 62). A student that is homeless is easily disconnected from the school organization when these basic needs go unfilled. Schools are not typically outfitted to address these needs and rely on the homeless liaison as well as the surrounding community support and sub grant funds to fill the void.

Homeless liaisons often serve as natural mentors when they provide guidance through this last transition from high school to college with FAFSA assistance, homeless verification letter for college financial aid offices along with wrap around community resources. Enrollment in a four-year university does not guarantee homeless youth with more stable housing accommodations, unless they have access to room and board through federal assistance or scholarships.

Natural Mentors

The school organization can serve as a refuge for a homeless student to find emotional support, sustenance, and consistency that the student can rely on. A typical problem in our classrooms is that homeless students in K-12 are invisible to the untrained educator. “Through the United States, schools most frequently punish the students who have the greatest academic, social, economic, and emotional needs” (Noguera, 2003, p. 341). Homeless student’s low attendance rates, large achievement gaps, high rates of behavior problems, and high school mobility have education-related ramifications that make accessing college daunting and adult homelessness likely (Stronge & Reed-Victor, 2000). For homeless youth, access to postsecondary success and avoidance of adult homelessness is compounded by barriers to accessing financial aid, rising college costs, and any school personnel that are not trained to assist youth that are homeless. The homeless liaison functions as the bridge between academic supports within the school district and wraparound services within the community for these vulnerable homeless youth. Students that are homeless are in need of natural mentors; those non-parent adults or surrogate parents that guide them in accessing resources to be successful in transition to adult life.

In reviewing the literature about homeless youth there was a lot identified about the M-V law and the role of various school personnel, but little to no mention of mentorship from school personnel for homeless youth. Students that are homeless need natural mentors who serve as non-parent

adults or surrogate parents that guide them in accessing resources to be successful in transition to adult life (Dang & Miller, 2013). Homeless youth are ill equipped to handle the challenges of school without the support of natural mentors. In the school setting, mentors can be comprised of a homeless liaison, teacher, counselor, principal or a caring community member that work to support the holistic success of the homeless youth (Edwards, 2019).

Homeless youth need a combination of supportive parents, teachers, peers, and adult role models who provide guidance and give students social capital to draw on to get to college. As one homeless youth said:

“And then in high school, my last year, my counselor, attendance advisor and someone else, they were sending me scholarship applications. And things that like they knew I could take advantage of and I was capable of. So, I had a book scholarship for maybe \$500. And then I had another scholarship. Over the summer, they took me shopping for clothes. They took me dorm room shopping. And, I went to basically a huge event for students who graduated from high school. They supplied us with so many things. It was like giving us an experience we never really had. We were like in a ballroom. And there was a whole bunch of forks and knives on the table. And they were trying to teach us how we were supposed to eat. It just gave us a huge advantage...” (Skobba, Meyers, & Tiller, 2018).

Homeless youth potentially encounter dozens of natural mentor candidates on a typical school day: the bus driver on their way to school; the cafeteria staff as they receive their complimentary meal; the counselor to care and advise; the teacher as they sit down to learn; the community members involved in the campus and outside of the campus. Though there is heavy mention in the literature about the roles of the homeless liaison, administrator and counselor there is a gap in the research about other school personnel that can assist homeless youth (Havlik, et al., 2017; Miller, 2011; Timberlake & Sabatino, 1994; Tobin, 2016).

The homeless liaison, counselor, and school personnel that can serve as natural mentors and work to find supports for homeless youth can mitigate the negative effects of homelessness. Homeless liaisons, counselors and other school personnel are the education stakeholders mainly affected by M-V legislation and the Department of Education guidance in a school district to support homeless youth (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2007). As discussed previously, homeless liaisons work to provide a network of assistance within the campus, school district and surrounding community for wrap-around services to fulfill basic, emotional, and academic needs. Good administration is encouraged by good ideas and to be successful with homeless youth, school personnel need to be equipped with ideas to help support students academically and socially.

Under current M-V guidelines, homeless liaisons and counselors are the school personnel that assist youth that are homeless. Administrators, registrars, cafeteria workers, teachers, and all school personnel have the potential to be a natural mentor for homeless youth. For homeless youth to achieve multiple positive life outcomes such as mental and physical health, accessibility of services, high school completion, college enrollment, vocational assistance, higher self-esteem and healthy interpersonal relationships, they need natural mentors or a significant adult (Altena, Brilleslijper-Kater, & Wolf, 2010; Dang & Miller, 2013). Homeless liaisons under M-V are also tasked with providing school personnel with clear guidance in the regulations, professional development and dedicated

personnel to adequately transition larger graduating numbers of youth that are homeless from high school into a successful college experience (Miller, 2013).

Recommendations

More research, legislation, resources and support is needed to delve into the relationship between homelessness and high school graduation, college enrollment, college success and workforce outcomes. Traditionally, school counselors are the personnel tasked with preparing and assisting youth with college entrance support and counseling services. Homeless liaisons with dedicated time as natural mentors could assist with students' postsecondary outcomes such as assistance with FAFSA for Pell eligibility; access to advanced courses in high school Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or college dual-credit courses. Also, there is currently no homeless liaison at the college level to assist students in bridging the gap between K-12 and higher education.

Counselors

According to Havlik (2018), school counselors should be the "first line of support", but notes "counselors often feel helpless despite their desire to help students who are experiencing homelessness" (p. 1). The transition from high school to college can be especially challenging given the transition is also between the K-12 public education system and higher education institutions. The Department of Education directs youth that are homeless as follows: "if you need help to correctly answer a question contact a local liaison, school counselor, or the financial aid office or a financial aid administrator at the college you are interested in attending" (United States Department of Education, 2018). School personnel need clear guidance in the regulations, professional development and dedicated personnel to adequately transition larger graduating numbers of youth that are homeless from high school into a successful college experience. Without these solutions, education stakeholders are further disadvantaged by implementation of another unfunded mandated policy for marginalized student groups in need of better support (Havlik, et al., 2017).

Alignment of Homeless Definition

As discussed previously, the current definition of homeless from HUD identifies two classifications of homelessness, which include unsheltered individuals along with families living in homeless shelters. The Homeless Children and Youth Act of 2019 (H.R.2001), if passed during the current Congressional term, will align the definition of homelessness across multiple federal agencies. Currently, legislation is needed which will allow youth that are homeless in doubled up and motel/hotel living situations access to federal housing programs.

Higher Education Homeless Support

Across the literature there is an increase in focus on higher education and the transition to postsecondary education for youth that are homeless (Aviles de Bradley, 2015; Hallett & Skrla, 2017). In the literature and legislation reviewed, there is currently no federal legislation for a higher education homeless support, similar to the K-12 homeless liaison mandated in the M-V, at the college level to assist students in bridging the gap between K-12 and higher education. The College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 (CCRAA) was enacted by Congress as a reauthorization of "The Higher Education Act and expanded the definition of independent student to include youth who are (a) unaccompanied and homeless, or (b) unaccompanied, self-supporting, and at-risk of homelessness"

(Crutchfield, Chambers & Duffield, 2016). The CCRAA and the M-V function when various educators are aware of the law and implement both with consistency (Aviles de Bradley, 2015).

Without higher education supports, education stakeholders are further disadvantaged by attempting to connect homeless youth with institutions of higher education. Quantitative and qualitative research is needed to delve into the relationship between homelessness and high school graduation, college enrollment, college success and workforce outcomes (Broton & Goldrick-Rab, 2017). Current publications and resources for youth that are homeless are unable to offer substantive support and advice for homeless liaisons, students, and campus personnel that are trying to navigate financial aid and higher education enrollment.

The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children (NAEHCY) and “other stakeholders are attempting to adapt M–V to the post-secondary environment, with single points of contact” that function like a K-12 homeless liaison. A couple of states also have their own policies related to homelessness in higher education settings in Nevada, Tennessee, Louisiana and California providing supports such as enabling “students experiencing homelessness to access housing during school breaks” (Pavlakis & Duffield, 2017, p.825).

Advocacy and understanding are paramount in creating opportunities for youth that are homeless and in need of the most protection and support under the law to obtain access to higher education and a better life.

Conclusion

The complexity of homelessness is rife with factors for students that make going to school successfully a daily challenge. The hope for these students lies in the caring school personnel that they encounter each day. It only takes one significant individual or mentor to make a difference in these students' lives. Implications for future research include the transition of these youth from public education to postsecondary opportunities and ending homelessness. What is the relationship between homelessness and students' college enrollment? Specifically, at what rate are homeless youth obtaining college success and workforce outcomes as measured by persistence in obtaining a bachelor's degree and employment? What happens to homeless youth that fall through the cracks?

Every day in our schools all school personnel can be the natural mentor that homeless youth need in bringing all Americans homes. Legislators, government departments, and public educators have an opportunity to make college more accessible with higher education support, resources, and legislation for a group of students that has been traditionally marginalized and stigmatized in the public education system.

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Pushing Back Against Deficit Narratives: Mentoring as Scholars of Color

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Pushing Back Against Deficit Narratives: Mentoring as Scholars of Color

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Demographic data show that few scholars of color reach graduate school, and that fewer attain a faculty position and go on to obtain tenure (Myers, 2016; The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2014). In 2018, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that 14% of graduate students identified as Black, 10% as Hispanic, 7% as Asian American, 3% identified with two or more races, and less than 1% as Native American (de Brey et al., 2019). NCES also reported that 6% of associate professors identified as Black, 5% identified as Hispanic, 12% identified as Asian/Pacific Islander and less than 1% identify as Native American. For full professors, percentages drop by at least 1 percentage point for each group. Because the percentages of Indigenous and mixed-race faculty are so small, already at less than 1%, it is difficult to ascertain if their numbers increase or decline (NCES Fast Facts, 2018, p. 222). We share this information because faculty at the rank of associate and full professor are more likely to mentor and feel socially and academically responsible for students (Motha & Varghese, 2018). In their study, Patton and Harper (2003) shared that African American women respondents “felt that having an African American female mentor would be a rich and unique experience” because of the mentor’s “firsthand life and academic experiences” (p. 71). We agree that protégés are looking for mentors who look like them. When there are fewer potential mentors who understand cultural and gendered nuances available, then graduate students and new faculty of color have to depend on who is available while also likely over-taxing faculty of color who are available. The term cultural taxation, coined by Padilla (1994), describes the unique burden placed on the few ethnic minoritized faculty on predominantly white campuses who provide -- in addition to institutional needs for diverse representation -- mentorship for students of color, whether or not they are their advisees or enrolled in the same department. Padilla (1994) notes that these faculty may not be rewarded for such service, and may become “overcommitted and at risk for burnout” (p.26).

The purpose of this article is to discuss our experiences mentoring— as a full professor and an associate professor who are women of color— in the academy that is fraught with deficit narratives about communities of color, people of color, and people who identify beyond the binary genders. For example, Solórzano and Yosso (2002) state that “according to cultural deficit storytelling, a successful student of color is an assimilated student of color...and they identify the terms ‘at-risk’ and... ‘disadvantaged’... [as part of the] cultural deficit terminology...” (p. 31). Solórzano and Yosso (2002) also challenge the dominant narrative that educational institutions are objective, based on meritocracy, and race neutral. With the current rise in hate crimes (Xu, 2019), which are defined as “crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, gender or gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity” (Hate Crime Statistics, 2010, p. 1), we feel a heightened urgency to counter these narratives (Turner, 2015a; Turner & González, 2014a; Turner, 2003). We push back against the assumption that institutions of higher education are neutral sites, that we have to change to belong, and that we do not belong. We argue that the repudiation of deficit narratives and the lifting up of the narratives of those we mentor, the narratives of those who mentor us, and our own narratives, as vital to increasing faculty of color in higher education (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

What is Mentoring?

There are many definitions of mentoring. Merriam-Webster defines a mentor as a “tutor” or “coach.” Mentoring involves a relationship in which the mentor shares knowledge, provides support, and serves as a role model (Jacobi, 1991). Mentoring as a way to form business and social networks is common (Kanter, 1977). It can introduce individuals to careers (Rios-Aguilar & Deil-Amen, 2012) and peer mentoring type programs can support postsecondary students (Shotton, Oosahwe, & Cintrón, 2007). Some mentoring relationships are formal in nature through institutional or organizational programs, while others are informal. The image of traditional mentoring is that of the elder scholar taking a younger scholar under their wing to impart knowledge and sage advice. In contrast, for women and scholars of color, alternate models of co-mentoring and group mentoring provide space to process the patriarchy and individualism of higher education (Turner, 2015b; Turner & González, 2014a; Turner & González, 2014b). “Mentoring provides a process that can buffer women from both overt and covert forms of discrimination and assist women faculty to advance in academia and break through the ceiling” (Agosto et al., 2016, p. 77). Other forms include gendered and cross-cultural mentoring (Girves, Zepeda, & Gwathmey, 2005). What is important is that all differences be recognized (Bowman, Kite, Branscombe & Stacey, 1999). Patton and Harper (2003) found that African American women felt this was important:

The women stated that only an African American woman could understand the complex intersection of race and gender in the academy and society. They felt they could establish a deeper, more meaningful connection with her because of her firsthand life and academic experiences. Also, she could provide advice to help them avoid professional pitfalls while being a sister and a friend. (p. 71)

As discussed previously, there are many factors involved in mentoring, including trust, networking, skill development, encouragement, and recognition. When possible, as noted above, same-race and same-gender mentoring relationships can be very significant. However, successful mentoring experiences can also take place across-race and across-gender (Turner & González, 2014a). What is important is caring and listening to students and new faculty.

We will discuss several articles regarding mentoring among women of color before we begin sharing our stories. Findings from these studies inform and guide our own mentoring processes. The publications referred to in this article have a similar theme of relational kinship in addition to professional guidance. As noted above, African American women felt that mentoring relationships with other African American women would be “deeper” and “more meaningful” (Patton & Harper, 2003, p. 71). These relationships were described as mother/daughter relationships, and some participants referred to their mentor as a “second mother” (p. 71).

In addition to emotional support, the mothering role in mentoring proved to be effective in helping the participants learn survival skills such as how to maintain professionalism, dress properly, successfully navigate political environments, and reject negative stereotypes that have been traditionally used to characterize African American women. (p. 71)

Their lived experiences informed the need for mentoring to resist a system that is not made for people of color, let alone women of color. In a similar vein, Bernstein, Jacobson, and Russo (2010) deduced that, “the goal of mentoring is not simply to teach the system, but also to change the system so that it becomes more flexible and responsive to the needs and pathways of its members—

mentors and protégés” (p. 58). Furthermore, in *Mentoring as Transformative Practice: Supporting Student and Faculty Diversity* (Turner, 2015b), article contributors underscore the importance of the development of bidirectional trust relationships, practices based on social justice and equity, the creation of affirming learning environments, and the facilitation of a deeper sense of belonging and legitimacy as foundational to mentorships which nurture the academic growth of diverse student and faculty talent.

Indigenous ways of knowing and relationality (Wilson, 2008) form the foundation for sisterhood practices described in Shotton, Tachine, Nelson, Minthorn, and Waterman’s (2018) description of a collective of Indigenous women scholars in higher education. While the article’s focus is on research, the sisterhood practices of love, validation, and care— of each other and to our families, communities and land—is based on “being a good relative,” which is a foundational Indigenous way of being (p.639). The sisterhood supports and validates Indigenous ways of being that are often counter to the ways of the dominant Western institutions in which we work. “Sisterhood,” “relative”—these terms come with responsibility, and they are taken seriously. Instead of accepting the isolation, competitiveness, and solo-authored privilege of higher education, the collective collaborates while also having a presence that pushes back against the asterisk – marking the erasure of Native American data in quantitative studies due to sampling requirements and small populations (Shotton, Lowe & Waterman, 2013) and other stereotypes.

In their reflective article, Motha and Varghese (2018) “draw from two theoretical lenses: 1) from critical theory using the concepts of counter-story (Solarzano & Yosso, 2002) and community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005), and 2) from poststructuralism within the context of teaching based on Alsup’s (2006) borderland discourses” (p. 507) to describe a mentoring network that develops alternative ways of being women faculty of color and supports their identities rather than assimilating “into the ill-fitting mold” of the academy (p. 504). The authors pushed back against advice to work on “efficient” (p. 510) research projects that would produce publications rather than research that benefits communities. They write that their “article is an example of a counter-story, refuting established representations of academic life, highlighting the people and factors that help to shape our context into one that opens up possibilities and draws on our strengths, and narrating the ways in which we work to identify alternatives to assimilation” (p. 507).

Agosto and colleagues (2016) describe a multiethnic, multilingual, and multi-geographic mentoring network of women in academia that emerged through their attendance at professional organization annual meetings and continued through “techno-social forms of communication” (p. 6). They recommend that “mentoring groups create opportunities to learn about each member’s cultural norms and identities, as well as the organizational culture in which their cultural norms and identities are mediated” (p. 13). The above studies demonstrate several nuanced elements which constitute effective mentoring across cultural differences.

Conceptual Framework

Embracing approaches of effective mentoring across differences as noted in the studies above, we simultaneously reject external definitions of our identities (Simpson, 2017) and deficit assumptions of the knowledge and talents of communities of color (Yosso, 2005). These perspectives fuel our mentoring philosophies. In addition, Patel’s (2016) insights are applicable here as she discusses her refusal to define research as “objectively rendered, neutral, and person-less” (p. 85). We are also inspired by researchers who support the use of the narrative as legitimate scholarship and who

encourage its use as an important source of knowledge of the human experience (Clark, 2008; Harper, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Nash, 2004; Reddick & Sáenz, 2012; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). We recognize and encourage community and cultural strengths that support ourselves in higher education.

Learning by Living

As women scholars of color pushing back against a structure that encourages competitive individualism and institutions built on settler colonialism intent on erasing and holding power over people of color, we share some of our stories learned from years of experience navigating such higher education environments. Learning by living informs how we mentor, and our co-mentoring (Nganga & Beck, 2017). By working in historically White institutions, often without like-us-colleagues, often without local or national role models, we constructed “epistemological privilege” (Lawrence-Lightfoot 1994, p. 553); we had to learn “the inner workings of privilege and exclusion, and [to] identify ways to challenge and expose forms of inequity” (p. 553). The academy encourages objective, independent, individual, isolated publications and research (Tatum, 1997; Contreras, 2005; Yosso, 2005). We know that to be our true selves, we could not engage in that way of being. Using *our* experiences in settler colonial environments to inform our mentoring, we shared, we invited in, we reached out, and we embraced collaboration and affirmation. We share our stories next.

Caroline S. Turner, Latina and Filipina ciswoman, full professor, former administrator

My educational journey has taken me from working as a farm laborer to becoming the first in my family to go to college, to having the opportunity to serve for over 30 years as a professor of education at three large universities. Over the years, in addition to being a professor, I had the opportunity to serve in several administrative and leadership capacities. These include experiences as a founding director of a doctoral program and a state educational policy fellowship program, as a college of education interim dean and associate dean of research, and as president of an international higher education organization. In most of these contexts, I was a first (Latina, Filipina, woman of color, etc.) to serve. My combined experience with research and practice has provided opportunities for me to influence processes toward the increase of faculty of color and the creation of inclusive mentoring programs that support their career advancement and development.

In 1963, I was admitted to college, awarded a scholarship, and began my life as an undergraduate. At that time there were no financial aid programs, and I could count the number of students of color on campus on one hand. As my family dropped me off, a dorm mother approached me and said that they did not know where to assign me as I was different [as a Mexican/Filipina farm laborer] from most of the students on campus. I was finally assigned to room with another person who was also thought of as different. Later in the day, one of my first responses to fellow freshmen at the dorm stemmed from a statement made by another entering freshman to a group of her friends. She said, “Poor people are poor because they are lazy,” to which I responded that my family is poor but my father works from sun up to sun down. “We are poor, but we are not lazy.” Everyone looked at me and just walked away. My entire first day experience made me feel strange.

After completing my undergraduate degree, I inquired about master’s degree programs. As a woman of color from a “no collar” farm laborer class, when first exploring graduate school options I was discouraged from applying to a master’s level program in business by an admissions officer. The admissions officer stated that I would not be a good fit. I was a woman, a minority, a single parent, I

had experience in the public sector, and I had some but not enough math background. This would make it nearly impossible for me to succeed as others in the program fit an opposite profile. Although all of this may be true, it did not occur to the admissions officer that having a homogeneous and privileged student body might not be an appropriate state of affairs for student enrollment in the program. It was merely accepted as the way things are and should remain. I remember being struck by the many ways I could be defined as not "fitting in" and, therefore, not encouraged and, more than likely, not admitted. Program norms made it so I was easily "defined out" rather than "defined in" (Turner, 2003, p. 112). In my view, this is a personal example of how multiple social identities shape one's opportunities in higher education.

Over the last decades, teaching, conducting research, and otherwise interacting with a multitude of students and faculty of color leads me to conclude that to succeed in academe places enormous pressure on people of color to assimilate. In other words, we are encouraged to leave ourselves, who we are, and our community knowledge at the door as we enter educational institutions and, as faculty, while undergoing the tenure and promotion processes. However, who you are shapes the types of questions you ask, the kinds of issues that interest you, and the ways in which you go about seeking solutions. While doctoral student and faculty socialization processes are very strong, we must not lose ourselves in the process of fitting in. During an early period of my career, I wrote two research publications, based on interviews with students and faculty of color, which best portray these dominant and alienating processes: *A Guest in Someone Else's House: Students of Color on Campus* (1994) and *Faculty of Color in Academe: Bittersweet Success* (with Myers, Jr., 2000). These titles indicate the essence of study findings which underscore that even though a student or a faculty member may be intelligent, resilient, and motivated, such characteristics alone may not be enough to counter the effects of unwelcoming and often toxic learning environments. In such environments, institutional responsiveness and mentoring are crucial in order to persist and thrive.

In my support and mentoring of students and junior faculty, I stress that we must not only maintain our own identities but help others to do so as well, underscoring that one's intellectual development from childhood on is of great value and must be wholly drawn upon when addressing life challenges. It is important to remember where we come from and how one's background affects approaches to both our scholarly work and our administrative practice. Gaining a deeper understanding of the value of all knowledge, including knowledge learned during childhood both at home and within one's community, is critical to our personal and professional growth (Turner, 2017; Turner, 2015a; Turner, 2003).

Persistent and intentional work must be done to address the underrepresentation of students and faculty of color in academia. We must continue to reduce isolation and boost our interactions with one another in multiple ways, face to face and/or through social media. We must present papers/workshops together, write together, and cite one another's work. In addition, as full professors, we are typically asked to serve on the university-wide promotion and tenure committee, a very important campus service which provides opportunities to promote the understanding of the valuable contributions made by what is considered non-traditional scholarship. Through observation, we can also learn more about promotion and tenure processes to inform those on a pathway to promotion and tenure. At the same time, we can work to change perspectives of what is valued in the academy, promoting needed change in such processes. Furthermore, as administrators, including college presidents (Turner, 2007), one can create inclusive mentoring spaces and fund programs that are supportive of student success and the hiring and development of a diverse faculty. Campus leaders may also be in positions from which they can negotiate for diverse faculty and administrators during the

hiring and promotion process. Each of us, in our own way, must and can use our spheres of influence to advocate for and create needed change toward increasing opportunities, as well as fostering welcoming learning environments for ourselves and others.

However, I want to conclude with a word of caution. Reading about successes in academia, individual discussions with others and presentations to audiences reveal that mentoring can be defined from a deficit perspective which is important to acknowledge and guard against. Scholars who are viewed as talented by traditional higher education norms have always been mentored/sponsored (Clark, 2008; Zuckerman, 1996). Minoritized scholars of color also benefit from mentoring as a critical means to navigate the academic landscape, not due to their perceived deficits as students/faculty of color, but, in my view, by including them within already existing mentoring processes. This cross-cultural mentoring space and publications addressing it (such as those referred to in this article) have contributed to the growth, however small, of faculty and administrators of color and their allies.

Stephanie J. Waterman, Indigenous ciswoman, tenured associate professor

When I was inquiring about graduate programs, I met with a non-Native faculty member in her office to discuss programs and application requirements. I had not yet applied to any doctoral program. After a short discussion I was told, “Well, maybe you’re not capable of writing a dissertation.” This faculty member had not read any of my work, seen a transcript, or spoken with my colleagues. That following Fall I was admitted to a doctoral program. I graduated from that program on time by, indeed, writing a dissertation, and I was awarded a national prestigious postdoctoral fellowship, obtained a tenure track position, and earned tenure. My experience as an Indigenous student in non-Native University settings without Indigenous classmates or faculty informs how I support all students and mentor others as a faculty member. As a first-generation doctoral student, in a program where one of my faculty wondered if I could complete a dissertation, I found it hard to ask questions and show any behavior that might appear to be a weakness. I mentored before I was tenured despite knowing the implications of taking time away from single-authored work. I did so, and continue to, because I did not receive the guidance I needed.

Settler colonial constructs are privileged in the academy, which often runs in direct conflict with Indigenous ways of being (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). Settler colonial constructs of time, distance/objectivity (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014), individualism/competitiveness, and academic pipelines de-humanize students (Patel, 2016; Waterman, Lowe & Shotton, 2018). The western academy pushes and rushes us. Faculty and administrators are under pressing time constraints that inhibit relationship-building and care. External stereotypes and uncontested master narratives can inhibit student support. As noted in the opening anecdote, the faculty member stated her opinion of my potential ability based only on my physical appearance; she assumed deficit and likely negative stereotypes about Native Americans broadly. Indigenous faculty and students push back against these forces to earn their degrees as do other minoritized students.

When I was in my doctoral program I wondered how scholars developed research relationships with colleagues from institutions in different parts of the country, especially new assistant professors. It was only a few years after I completed my doctorate that I realized these relationships were developed in graduate school with their classmates or through the networking provided by their faculty. In my graduate assistantship, two women faculty from a different department helped me navigate my program. While I was able to present and publish an article through that assistantship, it was not

in my discipline, it was not in the field I sought for a faculty position, nor a journal that spoke to higher education.

I mentor by treating others as people, in a good way, through responsible relationships (Wilson, 2008) and by refusing to maintain the status quo of the academy through individualism and competitive behavior (Sunseri, 2007). Before tenure, I read applications and article drafts. I invited others to write with me. I wrote in a style that everyone could understand (as jargon-free as possible) so that my work would be accessible. I met with younger scholars to discuss studies, research, and how to navigate a difficult instructor, and we co-constructed strategies that we could share with others. It was not about me; it was about the larger community of scholars who are marginalized. Inviting others in and asking them about their programs, research, and families are ways we validate each other; they are ways to build community and strengthen relationships. When Caroline invited me to work with her, I understood that we could do good work together, for the benefit of others, and though we come from different backgrounds and cultures, her invitation was familiar to me culturally and I trusted her. When offering help to more junior scholars, a caution I must be aware of is my age. As an older scholar, (some call me auntie), I have to be careful that an invitation or suggestion is not interpreted as a directive, as many of our cultures teach us to respect our elders and younger people may be uncomfortable questioning elder scholars or refusing their recommendations.

Caroline and I presented this paper at a 2019 American Educational Research Association Conference Roundtable. At our table were scholars of color who presented their research and members of the audience who affirmed our experiences. One said, “You touched my heart” and another said there was no help or guidance, no one advising them to “do A, B, C” The need for mentorship from and for faculty of color remains.

Conclusion

We live in a complex world that was uncritically considered post-racial after Barak Obama’s presidential election. That legacy continues and we are now in a post-truth era (Schuessler, 2016). Deficit narratives and negative stereotypes fuel human service and educational funding cuts in this conservative environment. Faculty and scholars of color report experiencing hostility and marginalization (Croom, 2017; Gutiérrez y Muhs, Niemann, González, & Harris, 2012; Turner, González & Wong (Lau), 2011; Stanley, 2006; Turner & Myers, 2000) and are overlooked for faculty positions (Gasman, 2016; Turner, 2003). The hidden curriculum of institutions also limits who can be tapped for leadership. Our “epistemological privilege” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1994, p. 635) constructed through our memberships in multiple communities helps us to recognize and privilege protocols of the communities we love and support as well as the policies of the institutions in which we work. Through our experiences we can open up possibilities because we recognize the strengths in others and in communities that have been traditionally viewed as deficits.

This article is a co-mentoring and co-inspirational testament to the trust and respect we have for one another and for each other’s lens of knowledge. Sharing our real experiences, our relationship has developed and continues to develop over time. We looked forward to working together as part of informing each other’s perspectives based on our academic journeys. With the spirit of bringing each other in, we co-proposed, co-presented, and co-authored this article.

We each began and progressed in our academic careers at a time when there were fewer faculty like us from whom to seek mentorship. In this article, we shared our experiences through narrative and

discussed what we have learned. We continue to grow, appreciating our supportive home and academic communities which never cease to mentor us as we mentor others who we meet along our life's pathways.

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*“With the Richness of Their Resources”:
Honors Alumni Reflect on the Impact
of a Service-Learning and Mentoring Program*

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The public university's role in 21st century American society is in flux. Policymakers, elected officials, and the public writ large are demanding that institutions of higher education foster meaningful and productive partnerships with community agencies (Cherwitz & Hartellius, 2007; Cherwitz, 2012). These partnerships range from complex allegiances with healthcare organizations to simpler connections to small civic entities such as community centers and schools. Whatever the configuration, these partnerships serve as a critical bridge between universities and the communities in which they are located. Higher education then is *a part* of the community, rather than *apart* from the community. While the discussion may be amplified today, the concept is not new: Ernest Boyer (1990) argued that civic engagement precluded higher education from irrelevancy in his landmark report, *Scholarship Reconsidered*.

These concerns address the most essential functions of higher education. Ostrander (2004) notes that universities have historically held the role of fostering democracy and citizen participation, and providing value to society via the knowledge production process. From one perspective, simply having these partnerships is progress; it can be considered a re-engagement of higher education in social contexts. If university faculty and administrators are in part responsible for the personal development of young people, it is imperative to learn how students experience civic engagement experiences. As civic engagement should lead to student learning and active citizenship (Colby & Ehrlich, 2000; Ostrander, 2004), civic engagement experiences should measure and assess how student participants grow in these arenas. It is evident to us that an equally, if not more important, area of research is the impact of mentoring and tutoring on middle school student mentees which will represent a future area of analysis. At present, however, we will delve into the impact that serving as a mentor has on the college student participants. The focus of this paper is a seven-year collaborative civic engagement partnership between a university honors program and an urban charter school in Austin, Texas. Through an analysis of survey data and open-ended responses, we will present honors program alumni perspectives on how serving as mentors and tutors to middle school-aged youth impacted their views on civic engagement, education, and their future career paths.

Purpose of the Research

As the authors of this article, we describe ourselves as researchers with a profound commitment to facilitating growth and nurturing students as they learn to engage in the communities in which they live and study. There has been an increased focus on civic engagement in the last decade, especially among the millennial generation (Gilman & Stokes, 2014; Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2011; Pew Research Center, 2010). College attendance appears to positively impact volunteerism, with one recent survey reporting that 25% of college students volunteer – compared to 19% of all 15 to 25 year-olds, and 11% of non-college attendees (Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement [CIRCLE], 2010). At the same time, there is an increased focus on the levels of engagement among this generation of students: Psychologist Jean Twenge (2014) wrote a book entitled

Generation Me that described millennials as "tolerant, confident, open-minded, and ambitious but also disengaged, narcissistic, distrustful, and anxious" (Twenge, 2014). Twenge (2014b) further noted that "[Millennials'] high expectations, combined with an increasingly competitive world, have led to a darker flip side, in which they blame other people for their problems and sink into anxiety and depression" (p. 9). Clearly, there are varied views of how this age cohort perceives service and their role in civic engagement.

We were particularly interested in investigating a long-standing civic engagement project between an honors program and an urban charter school a few miles from the UT Austin campus. Civic engagement became a focus at The University of Texas at Austin when the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE) was established in 2007, providing a divisional home for community and civic engagement (Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, 2016). Specifically, the Longhorn Center for Community Engagement houses subunits for academic service learning, student engagement programs, and community resource development. The scope and reach of DDCE's activities have helped UT Austin gain national recognition for community engagement: most notably, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching awarded the university the Community Engagement Classification in 2015. The classification is based on a framework provided by the Carnegie Foundation (carnegieclassifications.iu.edu) to document an institution's activities around community engagement and public service. This places the university in an esteemed category as one of only six research universities designated by the Carnegie Foundation as having very high research activity to receive a classification for the first time (UT News, 2015).

While the Plan II/KIPP Partnership – an alliance with the Plan II Honors Program (further described in "Site") at The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) to provide mentors for KIPP Austin College Preparatory middle school students – is not formally affiliated with any of these initiatives, the authors of this study have informally connected with the Plan II/KIPP Partnership leadership via guest lectures and meetings and initiated a discussion about a research project examining the experiences of Plan II students who had participated in the partnership program. As scholars interested in the impact of civic engagement experiences on college students, we worked closely with the Plan II/KIPP Partnership director and student teaching assistants to assemble the data examined in this study. By examining college student (now alumni) reflections on the experience of mentoring and tutoring middle school students, we hoped to learn how this project impacted the present and future trajectory of honors program alumni in their personal, academic, and career domains. To address these critical concerns, we posed the following question: How do alumni of an honors program at a selective public university describe the impact, if any, of their experiences in a service-learning course that included the mentoring and tutoring of middle school students on their life trajectory?

Review of the Literature

In this section, we define service-learning and present its educational impact on students and student outcomes, both in the immediate term and long-term as students in the sample become college alumni. We then provide background on the partnership between the Plan II Honors Program at UT Austin and the Knowledge Is Power Program Austin College Preparatory middle school, which brought together college students from a prestigious honors program and adolescents at a high-performing public charter school. The partnership is contextualized within a program-wide civic engagement and service initiative, which frames service-learning in the collegiate context.

Service-Learning Defined

Academic service-learning is often included in the broader definition of civic or community engagement, yet it is a specific pedagogical technique that stands on its own (Gibson, 2006). Frequently cited in the research literature, the definition of service-learning provided by Bringle and Hatcher (1995) is:

...a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. (p. 112)

Service-learning differs from volunteerism because of two fundamental concepts—reflection and reciprocity (Jacoby, 1996). Hatcher and Bringle (1997) defined reflection as “the intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives” (p. 153). Reciprocity requires a mutually beneficial relationship for the community, the students, and the faculty member as each of these partners recognizes how they can contribute to each other’s efforts, as they also come to learn from one another. Through reciprocity, students and communities engage in mutually beneficial learning experiences while students develop a greater sense of belonging and responsibility as members of the larger community (Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education [CAS], 2011).

Educational Impacts of Service-Learning

Pedagogical research has indicated that students learn and develop at higher rates just from the simple act of interacting with others in the community (Rhoads, 1998). In particular, quantitative and qualitative research has positively linked service-learning courses with an increase in students’ comprehension of course content, understanding of the issues underlying social problems, sense of social responsibility, and cognitive and cultural development (Astin & Sax, 1998; Celio, Durlak, & Dymnicki, 2011; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997; Kilgo, Sheets, & Pascarella, 2015). Researchers have also reported that service-learning students had higher grade point averages than non-service-learning students (Gray et al., 1998), and showed a greater increase in critical problem-solving skills (Lisman, 1998). Astin and Sax (1998) concluded the more time devoted to service, the more positive the effect on students. More recent research points to benefits via service-learning to not only students, but also to community groups, agencies, and organizations (Rutti, LaBonte, Helms, Hervani, & Sarkarat, 2016). Service-learning, then, has the potential to influence the students who participate in these programs in addition to benefitting community partners and entities.

Service-Learning and Its Impact on College Alumni

Scholars have noted that service-learning research tends to focus on the short term – the impact of experience throughout the course of a semester (Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, 1997; Fullerton & Reitenauer, 2015; Huisman, 2010; Kendrick, 1996; Winston, 2015). This accommodation of the academic calendar and university-focused priorities creates challenges to sustainable and robust collaborative relationships (Cushman, 2002), and frankly prioritizes the needs of college students over those of the community. Hence, there is a need for studies that examine the long-term impact of such experiences because “few studies demonstrate whether this intensive form of pedagogy pays real

dividends in regard to long-term engagement with the community” (Winston, 2015, p. 79). There is an emerging body of literature examining the efficacy of service-learning among college alumni (Fullerton & Reitenauer, 2015; Mitchell, 2015; Winston, 2015) that responds to the claims by service-learning advocates of the transformative nature of these pedagogical experiences (Winston, 2015). Thus far, we can identify that an awareness of community needs increases the likelihood of future involvement (Winston, 2015). Additionally, community engagement and cohort experience not only enhance student learning in the short-term, but further provide reflective opportunities that alumni contemplate for years after the conclusion of their civic engagement experiences (Mitchell, 2015). Indeed, Richard, Keen, Hatcher, and Pease (2016) found that both formal and informal reflection of one’s service-learning experience contributed to civic outcomes, such as civic-mindedness, voluntary action, and civic action. In this study, we examined how the service-learning immersion impacted the post-college journeys of honors students who participated in a mentoring relationship with middle school students.

Plan II/KIPP Partnership Program Background

In 2007, Grant Thomas, a career educator with over 30 years of experience working with youth mentoring programs and a member of the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) Austin Regional Board, fostered a partnership with the Plan II Honors Program at UT Austin to provide mentors for KIPP Austin College Preparatory middle school students. Providing academically high-performing students with service-learning opportunities has a longstanding history. Lee, Olszewski-Kubilius, and Donahue (2008) traced its origins back to the 1930s through John Dewey’s philosophy of connecting life and learning embedded in communities. More recently, Makel, Li, Putallaz, and Wai (2011) noted a trend of high-achieving students being involved in service-learning in their free time. However, these studies examined high school-aged participants, leaving a gap in the literature for examining college students.

In 2007, 17 Plan II students were matched with KIPP middle schoolers (“KIPPsters”) (Plan II Honors/KIPP Partnership, 2014). Every year since, Thomas (and later his successor, Jill Kolasinski) has taught a course in the Plan II Honors Program to train college students and provide a space for reflection and planning regarding their mentoring relationships. Key requirements include weekly contacts with mentees, group trips to the KIPP Austin College Preparatory campus, attendance and participation at twice-monthly class sessions, and some readings (many with policy and critical analysis of structural inequity) and short writing assignments (Plan II/KIPP Partnership, 2013). The course is embedded in a larger program in Plan II titled *Praxis*, which is a student-led initiative intended to develop a multifaceted program for civic engagement and service within Plan II (Plan II, n.d.). The Praxis model utilizes the Plan II curricular structure to purposefully embed civic engagement opportunities for students:

Praxis is divided into four components: exposure, immersion, exploration, and synthesis. In their first year, students are exposed to a variety of current social problems and issues through a course entitled “Civic Viewpoints....” The immersion component usually takes place in the second year and is designed to give students practical experience through some form of community service or an internship. Currently the Plan II/KIPP Partnership Program serve[s] as [an] immersion piece... through mentoring students in a college-prep, charter school... accompanied by [a] service-learning course. (*Ibid.*)

Through Praxis, Plan II college students are oriented to social issues in a first-year course, then immersed in the mentoring and tutoring experience in the second year followed by a junior seminar relating to an aspect of their civic engagement experience, and finally the senior thesis project. Cast as a “multifaceted, model program for civic engagement,” the Praxis initiative is designed to present students an “opportunity to examine a social issue in depth, with the hope that he or she will someday engineer social change by turning today’s problems into tomorrow’s solutions” (Plan II, n.d.). As the Praxis experience culminates at the end of Plan II Honors students’ college careers, it is therefore logical to look beyond the student experience to the post-graduation/alumni phase of their lives, and understand the impact of this service-learning experience in their lives.

Theoretical Foundation

Our analysis of the data collected for this study examines the mentoring work of college students (now alumni) who participated in service-learning experiences during their undergraduate years; therefore, theories that discuss service-learning and its long-term impacts were essential to understand these experiences and to provide a framework for interpreting these relationships. Kolb’s Model of Experiential Learning (1984), with its four-step learning process, helped us conceptualize how these honors program alumni made meaning of their immersion in the mentoring and tutoring partnership with their middle school-aged students.

Kolb’s Model of Experiential Learning

In 1984, David Kolb developed an experiential learning theory (ELT), defined as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience” (p. 41). Kolb’s theory has been widely used by practitioners, professors, and researchers because service-learning has its roots in experiential education—the idea of learning by doing (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997). The ELT model consists of a four-step learning process: 1) concrete experiences; 2) observation and reflection; 3) forming abstract concepts; and 4) testing new situations through active experimentation (see Figure 1).

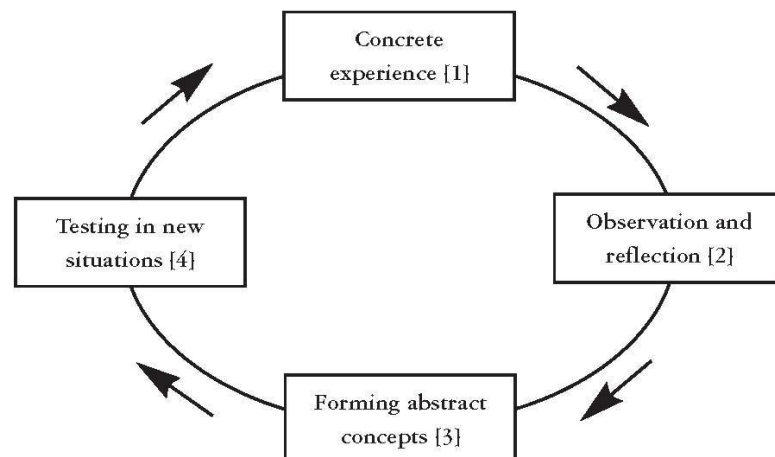


Figure 1. Kolb’s experiential learning theory (ELT).

Jacoby (1996) asserted that a person might enter Kolb's cycle at any point; however, a student engaged in service-learning would begin with a concrete experience and then embark on a period of reflection that would lead to analyzing their observations from the experience. Students would then reflect on the implications that arise from their observations and begin to integrate this newfound understanding with existing abstract concepts and knowledge. Most service-learning students would find that the acts of service combined with their classroom instruction deepened their understanding of the world and the root causes of larger societal and systemic issues. In the fourth step of the model, Jacoby states that students begin to see ways they can further test these concepts in different situations. "This experimentation leads the learner to begin the cycle again and again" (p. 10). Researchers have used Kolb's cycle as a theoretical model by which to analyze findings from service-learning classes (Baker, Robinson, & Kolb, 2012; Chan, 2012; Eyler, 2002). Similarly, we seek to identify how alumni who have completed a mentorship experience through a service-learning course may continue to synthesize their learning through this model.

Method

This study utilizes written participant narratives describing how honors program undergraduate students in a civic engagement course perceived benefits from their mentoring relationships. Narratives of this sort are frequently utilized and considered credible data sources in the qualitative research tradition (Sikes & Gale, 2006). The responses in the dataset represent 16 of 62 total Plan II alumni who served as Plan II-KIPP (P2K) mentors in four cohorts over a four-year span. In our review and analysis of these narratives, we utilized a phenomenological approach to understanding how these alumni describe the impact of mentoring in a civic engagement course, allowing us to posit a general theory of what occurs in such educational spaces (Maxwell, 2008).

Sample/Participants

Researchers sent surveys to 62 Plan II alumni who served as Plan II-KIPP mentors in four successive cohorts. Of the 62, 16 (26%) responded with completed surveys. The response rate was likely affected by the challenges of capturing the time and attention of recent college graduates busy starting careers or graduate programs (see Table 1 for a demographic profile of the participants). All participants had completed their initial service-learning experience at least two years prior. To protect participants, we assigned them pseudonyms in the manuscript.

Data Collection and Analysis

Upon completion of the Plan II/KIPP Partnership service-learning course each semester, the course instructor sent each mentor a survey asking questions reflecting on their experience in the course. The surveys also contained six questions about the impact of the civic engagement course on their coursework and future aspirations, which are also reported descriptively in the findings section (see Appendix A for the survey questions).

Table 1
Participant Sample by Cohort, Race/Ethnicity, and Gender

Total Participants	16
Cohort 1	3
Cohort 2	1
Cohort 3	2
Cohort 4	10
Race/Ethnicity	
Asian	6
Black	1
Hispanic/Latino	3
White	5
Gender	
Female	13
Male	3

Documentary analysis was utilized in analyzing mentor-authored reflections (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Documentary analysis suggests researchers focus on the presentation of information about the setting being studied, the wider context, and key figures or organizations (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Prior, 2003), and on the personal and social experiences of participants (Erben, 1993). In particular, solicited written accounts, such as those collected from Plan II alumni participants of the service-learning course, can be “useful ways of obtaining information about the personal and the private” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 127), making them an appropriate information source on alumni perceptions of the impact of their mentorship and participation on their lives.

The researchers read all mentor narratives and discussed the themes emerging from the narrative data. We then collaboratively created a codebook that documented these themes. Next, we re-read and coded the narratives, working individually to compose reflective analytic memos capturing their immediate impressions. Our team met to discuss and come to consensus on the thematic coding, highlighting unique and shared concepts across the narratives. We conferred again to create matrices from the data to identify patterns and points of comparison, in particular identifying key excerpts from narratives that might serve as representative perspectives for the emic themes. Finally, our team discussed each identified excerpt from the data proposed as best expressing the ethos of the identified themes.

Trustworthiness and validity of the data were established by utilizing direct quotes from the participants’ written reflections and our collaborative coding approach to discern the meaning of their statements. Additionally, we protected the privacy of the participants by using pseudonyms.

Site

The Plan II/KIPP Partnership represents a partnership between an established, renowned honors program at a flagship state university and an innovative, relatively new K-12 education program. The University of Texas at Austin is home to the Plan II Honors Program, founded in 1935 by Dr. H. T. Parlin, who was professor of English and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the time (Click, 1951). Parlin (1937) described the aims of the Plan II program thusly:

[Plan II is] a four-year course in general education free from professional pre-occupation.... Plan II is meant for students who want and are willing to spend four years on a liberal education. The course of study precludes all professional courses as such, and finds its chief purpose in a knowledge of science, a study of society, and finally an appreciation of culture and the arts.

Parlin (1937) further remarked that the program "give[s] a proper perspective, and as much humane experience as a young person can attain."

Since then, it has become one of the University's, and the nation's, premier honors programs (Cobler, 2013; Sullivan, 1994; Willingham, 2012). Plan II alumni are among the most heralded graduates of UT Austin. A listing of prominent Plan II alumni includes former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, poet Dr. Betty Sue Flowers, raconteur Kinky Friedman, former Texas State Representative Ron Wilson, and filmmaker Shola Lynch (McAndrew, 2008). As a degree program that extols "the importance of the individual in society, and finally aims at an exploration of human values that ought to temper learning with human feeling" (Parlin, 1937), Plan II seemed like an ideal intellectual community for a civic engagement partnership.

KIPP is the nation's largest public charter school network, with over 80 campuses. KIPP schools are specifically aimed at serving low-income students of color; 86% of KIPP students are from low-income families, and 95% are African American or Latino (Plan II/KIPP Partnership, 2014). One of the mottos of the KIPP network is "No Shortcuts, No Excuses" (Mathews, 2009). KIPP schools are notable for their focus on reading and math skills and feature an extended school day and academic year, a selective teacher hiring process, and a focus on rigorous behavior norms and work ethic (Angrist, Dynarski, Kane, Pathak, & Walters, 2010). Nationally, more than 93% of KIPP middle school students have gone on to college-preparatory high schools, and over 83% of KIPP alumni have gone on to college (Plan II/KIPP Partnership, 2014). The KIPP Austin College Preparatory Academy is the middle school that has partnered with Plan II since 2007 (*ibid*).

Program Overview

Plan II students must apply to be mentors in the Plan II/KIPP Partnership. The application process consists of a written application, exploring questions such as "Why do you want to be a mentor at KIPP?" and "Do you have any specific experiences, interests, or abilities that motivate you to become a mentor?" The competition for opportunities to serve as a mentor is keen: in the last academic year, over 60 students applied, and only 15 were accepted. Once accepted, students then enroll in the aforementioned one-hour credit course, and are concurrently matched with a KIPP Austin College Prep student. The class serves as a space to discuss the issues that emerge from their mentoring relationships with students (Plan II/KIPP Partnership, 2013).

While the official commitment for the Plan II/KIPP Partnership is a semester, Plan II students are encouraged to continue the mentoring relationship with their KIPPster as long as the arrangement remains mutually beneficial. Additional service opportunities have emerged from the partnership, such as episodic tutoring, college counseling, and writing workshops (Plan II/KIPP Partnership, 2014).

Findings

This section presents descriptive statistics and emergent themes from the study of student alumni who participated in a mentoring role as part of a service-learning course during their undergraduate years. Data gathered from the aforementioned survey informed our analysis of the research question, “How do alumni of an honors program at a selective public university describe the impact, if any, of their experiences in a service-learning course on their life trajectory?” Analysis of the findings reveal that the effects of this experience spanned three distinct areas: a) academic, b) postgraduate plans, and c) personal. This section begins by discussing 1) how participants described the service-learning experience impact on their academic pursuits; 2) how alumni described the impact of this experience on their postgraduate plans and careers; and 3) how alumni described the service-learning class as a formative life experience that impacted their personal lives.

Academic Impact

All survey respondents (100%) in the study strongly agreed that this course provided a positive experience in their academic career and gave them a greater appreciation for the inequality of educational opportunity in the U.S. Based on findings from this study, 16 participants reported that the two greatest academic outcomes of this course were its influence on their thesis topics and closer relationships with professors and classmates.

Students enrolled in the service-learning course as an elective, but all graduates indicated that the course impacted other academic decisions they made throughout their time at the university. One of the major ways this manifested was in the focus of an undergraduate thesis paper. For example, Amanda (pseudonym), a Black female Plan II and communications major, said, “The P2K program had a significant positive impact on my academic and career pursuits, as it led to me writing my senior thesis on educational inequity and charter schools.” Through exposure to critical course readings and service-learning, students were able to gain a deeper personal experience with compulsory educational issues that may have been different from their own experiences matriculating through the pipeline. Betty, a White female Plan II major, said:

Having the opportunity to learn about and discuss education reform in a college classroom made the mentoring experience vastly more meaningful. Getting to compare and contrast the academic accounts of educational gaps and failings with the real life mentee interaction was enlightening. But then, it was also challenging, since I felt a much larger responsibility to my mentee... I was supposed to be an educational nurturer and bridger [sic] of the gap.

The service-learning model allowed KIPP students and the Plan II alumni in the sample the opportunity to learn from one another through mentorship and academic exploration. After grappling with educational equity issues and working one-on-one with middle-school students, Carrie, an Asian female Plan II major, said, “Taking this course and participating in this program provided me with exactly what I needed to tackle the right question for my thesis.”

Another academic impact from the course was evident from how alumni described a deeper, more meaningful relationship with their instructor and classmates. The majority of survey respondents stated in their open-ended comments that the course provided a safe place to discuss controversial topics and difficulties they may have encountered relating to their mentee. Dylan, an Asian male Plan II and economics major, said that his favorite part of the course was the relationships he created with his instructor and classmates because:

[T]hey really opened my eyes to what my potential was, and to the problems in our society. I heard some of the most creative solutions discussed in that classroom. We went beyond education and talked about equality and broadening your horizons. I learned more about myself, and was more inspired in that classroom than any other.

In a similar way, Eve, a White female Plan II major, said this class “opened my eyes to the issue of educational inequity in a very real way, [because] it wasn’t simply another theoretical study of issues in our nation, but it made things more real and personal.” Adding to this, Eve said getting to know the instructor was instrumental in her academic future because the instructor eventually agreed to serve as her thesis advisor and encouraged her to pursue an education-related career path.

Career Impact

A second theme that emerged from the data was the strong influence of this service-learning class and mentoring experience on participants’ career trajectories, with three-fourths of respondents reporting that this class had a direct influence on their career choice. Of the alumni who stated this course impacted their career choice, about half specifically listed teaching as their chosen path. Fran, a White female Plan II major, said, “Observing teachers and students at KIPP Austin literally changed my life. I saw what was possible in education for underserved communities and was captivated.” At the time of the survey, Fran reported that she worked as a KIPP teacher in the Southern U.S., sharing that she “makes sure my students have the same and greater quality of education as their peers in high income communities.” Another respondent, Gail, a White female Plan II and area studies major, said that she has been working as an educator in charter schools serving low-income students in the Northeast. “I was always interested in social justice issues but joining [the P2K service-learning class] allowed me to delve deeper into education—a place I didn’t know much about beforehand.” Three other alumni reported how their service-learning and mentorship experience catapulted their interest in securing internships or teaching positions with educational non-profits, such as Breakthrough Central Texas and Teach for America.

In addition to choosing careers in education, 80% of respondents said they have stayed involved in education policy issues since completing the course. Dylan said, “It has motivated [me] to seek to support charities for education reform. I’m a petroleum engineer, so [teaching] was not in the cards for me, but I still hope to make a difference in my own way.” Carrie recalled how the course instructor did not push for students to change their career path because of the course. She said, “The best thing about the course was that [the instructor] didn’t expect us all to become full-time education reform advocates. Rather, she acknowledged that education reform requires leaders in all kinds of fields who could use their job as an avenue for contributing to education in some small way.”

By designing this course so that students could understand fundamentals of educational inequity and integrating them into an environment where they could seek to change the pathway of a student, the

instructor enabled students to see that small interventions can have lasting impact. Thus, the results of this study indicate that this particular service-learning experience had a direct impact on students' career choice—in some instances, inspiring them to become teachers or work for charter schools—and an indirect impact by linking their professional interests to educational policy issues or by motivating them to other mentoring outlets.

Personal Impact

Unanimously, alumni reported that their personal life was positively impacted through the mentorship interactions, many of which went well beyond the duration of the course: analysis of survey data revealed that 14 of the 16 mentors (87.5%) responded that they had stayed in contact with their mentees past the first year of the course. When asked why she maintained her relationship with her mentee, Fran said:

A one-year commitment to a student will not reflect the kind of impact that can be had on a student's life that I desire, [so] I felt it necessary to continue the relationship to communicate the message that I refused to give up on her.

Lauren, a White female Plan II major, said, "I maintained my relationship with my mentee because it is an important commitment. If I give up, I'm not just stopping an activity—I would also be removing myself from someone's life. That's not something I'm willing to do." These two quotes echo the sentiments shared among the 14 who maintained a relationship with their mentee and called it a personal commitment, rather than one that was tied to a course. On average, alumni stayed in contact with their mentees for more than one year following the program, and at least five of them continued contact via email, phone, and letter after two years.

Tangible mentorship opportunities exposed the participants to inequities in society, and all 16 respondents reported that the service-learning course shaped their personal lens in understanding the world around them. Carrie said:

The P2K course was probably the first time in my life that I, a highly privileged rich kid, actually wondered whether I would have been as successful had I grown up differently. Those kind of eye-opening experiences are one in a million.

Another former student stated that the course "does wonders in building character and concern for the future of public education." Amanda summarized the experience by saying:

The class has been even more valuable to me in [the] years since [finishing]. Learning about the American education system in an academic context completely changed how I view my public school experience and has made me so interested in the national education debate.

By designing this course so students could understand fundamentals of educational inequity, while integrating them into an environment where they could seek to change the pathway of an individual student, the instructor enabled students to identify the impact of micro-level interventions. Thus, results of this study indicate that this particular service-learning experience had a direct impact on students' career choice—becoming teachers or working for charter schools—and an indirect impact by keeping their professional interests linked to educational policy issues or by finding other mentoring outlets.

Not all of the alumni continued their relationships beyond the service-learning course. The two respondents who indicated "no" explained that they had moved away after the semester was over, which made it difficult to stay in touch with their mentees. One of the two respondents, Carrie, stated it was because she moved away to attend law school.

I discontinued my volunteering when I began law school, which I definitely regret now. I certainly had the time. I think maybe the rigid nature of linking the mentoring experience to the KIPP campus made it more forbidding at the time.

Carrie noted that some of the other classmates felt an independent connection to their mentee, rather than viewing it as a course component that ended with the class.

Discussion and Implications

The three broad areas in which the mentoring via service-learning impacted the alumni participants in this study – the academic realm, postgraduate plans, and the personal realm – suggested that service-learning opportunities were impactful both for students as they experienced their coursework, and in the long-term, as evidenced by the alumni involvement in education-related careers and issues. The applicability of Kolb's (1984) ELT four-step model is apparent in the outcomes as described by the study participants. Their initial experiences of interacting with a young student at the KIPP academy led to a process of observation and reflection—most often with the alumni noting how their experiences in school, in their home communities, and in their socioeconomic strata contrasted with those of their mentees. These reflections led to the third stage, where the participants considered issues of educational inequity—and ultimately, in the case of many respondents, testing via active participation through their choice of an education-related career *or* a commitment to work to improve educational opportunity for students in under-resourced communities through volunteer work. We found it interesting that the vast majority of the alumni participants continued to interact with and mentor their student mentees—and among the minority of participants that did not, there was an expression of regret that the relationship did not continue.

We also now understand that the service-learning experience refined and sharpened many of the participants' academic trajectories, such as by influencing undergraduate thesis topics and forging a strong bond with the course instructor. A senior thesis project with very broad parameters might be somewhat overwhelming for an undergraduate student; the findings explain that for some, mentoring in the service-learning context provided clarity and direction for their research projects. Additionally, the engagement and zeal of the instructor led to a highly satisfactory experience for the participants, with many noting the incredible impact (s)he had on their careers and even lives. The findings illustrate how the various components of a service-learning experience—the act of mentoring a younger student, exposure to literature with a critical and/or social justice lens, awareness of conditions that affect the lived experiences of the students the alumni interacted with, and a caring and engaged instructor—are distilled in outcomes that have impact on the lives of alumni years after the course.

Limitations

While having the potential to make significant contributions, we acknowledge that there are limitations to this study. First, the findings are derived from self-reported data and hence some responses might be biased toward social desirability. While this study cannot represent the full range of perspectives on the impact of the Plan II/KIPP Partnership, these narratives can be understood as

presenting *some* conceptualization of theories regarding how this experience affects the life trajectories of participants. Second, the application procedure to serve as a Plan II/KIPP Partnership mentor may attract a pool of participants who are particularly predisposed to and invested in civic engagement, mentoring, or otherwise supporting young people. As such, they may be more inclined to view the impact of the course and their mentoring favorably and associate more positive outcomes associated with the relationship.

There are caveats, of course to these outcomes. First, it is not entirely clear if the impact of the service-learning experience was equally robust for the KIPP student mentees as they appear to be to the alumni participants. We clarified that our research was focused on the Plan II alumni in this study; we are eager to conduct further research that also considers the effect of service-learning on mentees and community members impacted by the work of college students (and endorse others extending the research in this area).

One potentially troubling outcome could be that service-learning opportunities, if not supplemented with an understanding of structural inequity and the role of race, ethnicity, class, national origin, and socioeconomic factors in creating contextual realities that thwart and challenge success for marginalized members of the community, could become examples of “cultural tourism” (Hartman, 2012). “Cultural tourism” occurs when mostly White, affluent, and educated elites briefly immerse themselves in cultural milieus and then purport to have intimate knowledge—and policy solutions—to the challenges facing those who live in these contexts every day. The readings and discussions (e.g., Hochschild and Scovronick’s *The American Dream and the Public Schools* [2003], and discussions about Austin’s history of segregation and integration in schools and civic life) mentioned by participants in this study suggest that the instructor challenged such interpretations; it seems evident and important that strong community- and family-based support is essential to ensure that service-learning students come to understand that they too have a great deal to learn, and approach their experience with humility and respect for those in the community with whom they interact.

Even with these cautions, we posit that the voices of privileged and advantaged alumni of an honors program reflecting on the impact of their service-learning experience have significant implications for universities and the communities in which they reside. When writing this article, we were keenly aware of racial and ethnic tensions on predominantly White campuses across this nation. Students, staff, and faculty—primarily of color, and many with roots in low-income, marginalized communities—are holding up a mirror to institutions challenging their racial and socioeconomic composition.

Our interpretation of the experiences of these alumni and their service-learning engagement and mentoring across race and socioeconomic lines is that these opportunities are the ones in which we narrow the distance across those axes of difference. Policy quandaries and political debates become less caricatured, and their subjects become real people with real lives. While this particular service-learning partnership is small, we suggest it meets the standard that Boyer (1990) set forth in *Scholarship Reconsidered*, in that it is “crucially important to the health of our communities, the nation, and the academy for scholars to use the knowledge in their fields to benefit society, and that universities and their graduates must connect with the concerns and challenges faced by the wider community” (Coye, 1997, p. 22). This partnership and its impact on the alumni of the program might be one answer to Boyer’s challenge that American colleges and universities, “with all the richness of their resources, be of greater service to the nation and the world” (Boyer, 1990, p. 3).

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Appendix A
Open Ended Questions from Survey

- I have kept in touch with my mentee past the year commitment of P2K (Explain why or why not below).
- If you agreed or strongly agreed with the first question above, what part of the P2K experience has resonated most strongly with you in your time since leaving the course?
- Do you feel that your classmates had similar experiences?
- Do you have any additional comments on the effect of P2K on your academic, career or personal pursuits, or suggestions for the program?



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“The direction in which education starts a [person], will determine [their] future life. Does it not always attract like that?” –Plato¹

Cross-cultural mentoring matters in higher education. Campuses are hotbeds of culture: students, faculty, and staff bring distinct epistemologies, customs, and ways of being, living, and learning depending on their cultural and subcultural affiliations. While the literature on teaching at the K-12 level demonstrates that student success outcomes for girls, as well as students of color, are correlated when there is a demographic match between teacher and student (Egalite & Kisida, 2018), research on the idea of cross-cultural mentoring in higher education is limited. This article highlights the positive aspects of faculty-student relationships in doctoral programs that are cross-cultural rather than identical. These cross-cultural relationships can form turning points that start students down particular paths that, as Plato emphasized, “determine [their] future life.”

In this article, a student (Jessica) and professor (Julie) with cross-cultural characteristics—such as race, various identities, power dynamics, and backgrounds—offer a thesis that pedagogies of belonging, or educational strategies meant to foster a sense of belonging, that start in the classroom can create cross-cultural bridges that endure throughout doctoral study, and enrich the lives of both teacher and student. We begin with our personal stories: a Ph.D. student who is Asian American, cisgender and heterosexual, an immigrant, and a transracial adoptee raised by white parents; and a professor who is white, LGBTQ, and raised by biological parents of the same race. We each identify a parallel experience in education where a sense of belonging was borne of a cross-cultural interaction, and where key, positive academic outcomes resulted. The article then reflects on the importance of finding a sense of belonging in higher education, and the ways in which a pedagogy of belonging—an approach to teaching that places emphasis on every student being and feeling like a valuable, integral part of the classroom community—can help create cross-cultural bridges between faculty mentors and doctoral students. We conclude by explaining how to deploy a pedagogy of belonging in the classroom and beyond.

Our Stories

Jessica Fry: A Cross-Cultural Experience at The University of Texas at Austin

It was the first day of class my sophomore year of college in a conservative, predominantly white suburb of Chicago. I glanced nervously at my classmates who were all talking and laughing. I had just changed my major and moved out of the conservatory of music, and I didn't see any familiar

¹ *The Republic*, Book IV (translated by Benjamin Jowett), p. 380. Retrieved from https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1497/1497-h/1497-h.htm#link2H_4_0007

faces in the room. The professor—an extremely popular teacher with a waitlist for his class—began taking role.

"Jessica TenBrink?" he called out. I raised my hand. He glanced at me quizzically. "TenBrink...isn't that Dutch?" he asked. My face began burning as I felt everyone in the room turn to look at me. "Yes, it is," I replied, trying to keep my voice from shaking. "But you aren't Dutch. Why do you have a Dutch last name?"

In that moment, like so many just like it throughout my life, I felt a surge of panic as my "fight or flight" instincts kicked in. My mind raced as I looked at the door, wondering how fast I could sprint across the room. I wanted to simultaneously cry from shame and scream out of anger at being publicly singled out for having brown skin and a white last name. But as always, I felt myself go numb as I responded politely, explaining that I had been adopted into a Dutch family. Satisfied, the professor moved on, and my classmates stopped staring at me. But this moment was a lasting reminder that I did not belong.

Because of countless experiences like this one, I have rarely felt a true sense of educational belonging. I am also a naturally quiet and introverted person. These traits are often perceived negatively by others and compounded by stereotypes about Asian women. When I began as a doctoral student in Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin), I was worried, as usual, about fitting in. Because of a crisis in my personal life the first week of school, I wondered if I had made a mistake moving across the country for a Ph.D. program.

One of my classes in the first semester was Technology and Innovation with Dr. Julie Schell. When we went over the syllabus, I felt a deep sense of dread when Julie mentioned the weekly quizzes we would take in class. I have always struggled with test anxiety, and worried about my ability to perform well—I even considered dropping the class. There was also a section in the syllabus on social learning, in which Julie stated, "I believe my job is to *learn* you so I can best help you succeed." By this, she meant to learn about us, how we think, and how we learn.

I quickly discovered that Technology and Innovation was unlike any class I had taken before. In Julie, I found a professor who created projects that required out-of-the-box, creative thinking (e.g., using a new app to learn about the process of adoption, creating an educational game), who re-framed common misconceptions about the process of learning (people learn through retrieving information from their memory), and provided in-depth, timely feedback (even on things done well).

At an extremely difficult time in my life, I found affirmation in Technology and Innovation. The course challenged me in new ways, such as dealing with ambiguity and becoming comfortable with making mistakes that I could transfer outside the classroom walls. The latter was especially difficult for me. I had spent my entire life as an avid rule-follower whose perfectionist tendencies loathed even a hint of error. However, I began feeling a sense of comfort in class, particularly when Julie would read my work and seemed to internalize what I had written by incorporating it into her teaching practice. I felt cared for and encouraged, both academically and personally. I didn't feel judged or misunderstood. I spent that first semester at UT Austin simply trying to survive, and some days I felt like it took all of my energy just to show up to class. I never spent time at Julie's office hours like many of my classmates. But I felt a sense of belonging in the class nonetheless, which helped carry me through a difficult initial semester.

I began working with Julie in a research capacity during the summer of 2017, going into my second year of my doctoral program. During our first meeting, I felt uneasy and nervous about the lack of direct instruction I was given. Instead, I was being treated as a colleague and equal during our conversation. We brainstormed together, talked openly about different directions for research projects, and spoke a little bit about my dissertation topic and why I had chosen it. I was worried about giving the wrong answer or saying something that would cause Julie to no longer want to work with me, but felt constantly reassured through Julie's affirmations that I was free to speak openly and freely as we discussed possible directions for new projects. As a result, it did not take long for the same sense of belonging that I experienced in her class to settle in. Julie highlighted my strengths and wondered aloud how to best utilize them in a research capacity.

Julie and I have worked together regularly since then. The direction of my dissertation work changed after I began working with her, and she now serves on my dissertation committee. After many conversations in which she challenged me to think critically about my dissertation, I was able to 1) give myself permission to change my dissertation topic (essentially starting over), 2) face some ambiguity, and 3) extend myself grace in the process. While I was plagued with doubt at the time, I am now confident in the decision I made. Julie's guidance—which was never laced with an ulterior motive or pressure—led me to discover that the underlying theme of *all* of my research interests is directly tied to my personal experiences: how underrepresented and marginalized students experience educational belonging. Julie has played a supportive role in my research, and the cross-cultural experiences I have had working with her have made me a better scholar and helped me envision a positive academic career trajectory.

Julie Schell: A Cross-Cultural Experience at The University of Nevada Reno

The beginning of the school year at UT Austin is always an exciting one for me. Having chosen higher education as the field I would dedicate my life to, being on a college campus on the first day of school is exhilarating. I always try to arrive at our classroom early so that I can personally introduce myself to each student, make sure I know how to pronounce each of their names clearly and correctly, welcome them to the class, and make eye contact and shake hands depending on cultural preferences (for some students, shaking hands or strong eye contact can be culturally inappropriate).

In 2002, on my first day of class as a doctoral student at Teachers College, Columbia University in *College Student Development Theory*, my professor, Dr. Lee Knefelkamp, completed a version of this first-day ceremony. I was surprised as I watched her take her time making the rounds, eagerly waiting for my turn to say hello and join the community of practice she was building for us. I have spent the majority of my waking life in classrooms with most of the moments forgotten—but this one endured.

As I replicate this ritual each year, I am actively trying to ensure that each of my students understands that they belong in our classroom. I emphasize in my syllabus that I believe it is my job to “learn” my students: I pay attention to their behavior traces—for example, their body language, how often they speak up, how comfortable they seem to feel, and how they use language. I relish the opportunity to see the ways they change as the subject matter I love unfolds and comes alive through their own viewpoints. Trained in a strong John Deweyan and Gloria Ladson-Billings tradition (under Dr. Anna Neumann), I have always practiced culturally responsive teaching, and privileged student experience and culture as content just as valuable as any theory, principle, or construct we will study

in a given course. I love to see how students' minds intersect with the ideas of the theorists, researchers, and scholars who watch over our field.

During my first day introductions in 2016, I met Jessica. Like I did with every student, I took a mental note of our interaction so that I could look back at the end of the semester and get a sense of *how* she learned, as much as *what* she learned. I could tell as I reached my hand across the desk that she was nervous and surprised by the gesture. I had no idea at the time that the course would provide Jessica the window to belonging that it did. For all its wonders, higher education can sometimes be a frightening and lonely place for some students who feel ostracized rather than a sense of belonging. While there are many programmatic structures to help students feel belonging, I learned early on that faculty can and do play a key role in cultivating that culture.

I went to college at the University of Nevada Reno in the early 1990s—which at the time, was a conservative college town. When I tried to come out as an LGBTQ person on campus, I was surprised by the vitriol and hatred I faced. I felt safest in my classrooms, which were focused on science and math. During a particularly rough time, the only place I felt welcome was in my introductory physics course with Dr. Ronald Phaneuf, which happened to be in a large auditorium. I came early, sat in the front row, and went to every office hour available with the professor, staying as late as I could. He sat with me day after day, earnestly trying to explain the beauty he saw in physics as well as the role it plays in our lives. He was a different gender, was a few decades my senior, was the chair of the department in a discipline I really did not understand, and had a wife and children. We never spoke of anything other than physics, and despite the unlikely match, he would emerge as one of the most important cross-cultural mentors of my life. Even though our interactions were only about physics, as I look back, my persistence in showing up for office hours, sitting in the front row, and e-mailing outside of class was exhibiting a desire line: a hidden path or habit trace that humans create through their behaviors or actions but they do not outright state or share. At the time I was not aware of that; however, as a teacher I can now spot when students dig this same kind of habit trace in my classroom.

Those moments of pedagogical care in Dr. Phaneuf's classroom and office hours set me on a journey to dedicate my life to understanding the power of teaching and learning. I would go on to take a higher-level physics course with Dr. Phaneuf, dedicate my dissertation on teaching and learning to him, and ironically, complete a post-doctoral fellowship in a physics education lab at Harvard University. This story exemplifies the bridge that a pedagogy of belonging can create between cross-demographic faculty and student pairs and the thriving that can unfold from such connections.

Realizing the Importance of Educational Belonging During a Cross-Cultural Experience

Technology and Innovation—where we first met—was not a class focused specifically on cultural topics. Neither was Julie's physics course. The mentoring in both cases had very little to do with any of the personal life struggles either of us were experiencing outside the classroom. This is a key point: cross-cultural mentoring can start with a simple understanding and awareness by faculty that students have lives outside academia and may have be facing serious struggles that are not showing externally. It is not always necessary for students to fully disclose those struggles to faculty in order for strong, life-changing, cross-cultural interactions to take shape.

We have experienced different challenges related to educational belonging; yet, these differences have helped facilitate a unique and important mentoring relationship. Over the past few years, our

working relationship has been largely through email, texting, and other online communication platforms. When we do have the opportunity to meet in person, however, there is no disconnect or discomfort.

Having this kind of faculty-student, cross-cultural mentorship is especially important because of what research on educational belonging in graduate school has shown—that overall, Ph.D. students desire more support and mentoring from faculty throughout their program than what they receive (Nyquist & Woodford, 2000). Due to a fear of appearing weak, few students feel they can rely on their faculty mentors for assistance in “times of weakness, doubt or crisis” (Barna, 2000, p. 5).

Stressing the importance of cross-cultural mentoring relationships is not to say that there is not value in having a mentor with similar cultural or demographic traits; after all, representation for minoritized populations in particular is critical. Jessica, for example, was impacted by the fact that she never had an Asian American teacher growing up. Faculty and students in cross-cultural mentoring relationships can have similar identities as well as different ones—Julie and Jessica are both women in education who have struggled at times with minoritized identities. But their wide array of cross-cultural differences, in addition to their similarities, strengthen their relationship because they each bring different experiences and perspectives to the table.

Sense of Belonging in Higher Education

Different social and academic interactions shape how students experience belonging in college. Students who feel a strong sense of belonging often have enhanced “affiliation and identity with their colleges” (Hurtado & Carter, 1997, p. 328). This impacts their level of stress and access to coping resources. Various stresses can occur during college that are associated with moving, adjusting to a rigorous curricula and new classes, navigating a new social environment, and needing to independently manage time (Garriott & Nisle, 2017). This section will look explore the cognitive and affective dimensions of sense of belonging, how a sense of belonging is formed, and the importance of belonging in doctoral programs.

Cognitive and Affective Dimensions

Bollen and Hoyle’s (1990) work on cohesion—theoretically defined as the “extent to which individual group members feel “stuck to,’ or part of, particular social groups”—provides a framework for understanding the phenomena of a sense of belonging in higher education (p. 482). Experiencing a sense of belonging is both cognitive and affective (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990). Along the cognitive dimension, individuals form a sense of belonging by taking in and processing information from experiences within a group. Individuals are then able to evaluate and judge their perceived belonging, or lack thereof.

Along the affective dimension, individuals develop a “morale,” or feelings about their judgements of belonging that motivate further action. For example, if a student’s sense of belonging is low in higher education, it may lead to feelings of isolation and pain. This can in turn influence a student’s decision to prematurely leave college (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Strayhorn, 2018).

Forming a Sense of Belonging

Sense of belonging can be defined as “the experience of personal involvement in a system or environment so that persons feel themselves to be an integral part of that system or environment” (Hagerty, Lynch-Sauer, Patusky, Bouwsema, & Collier, 1992, p. 173). These systems can include relationships or organizations, in either natural or cultural environments.

Following Bollen and Hoyle’s (1990) conception of sense of belonging, a student—attending the first class of the semester, on their first day of school—will accumulate a variety of information from their environment. For example, they will take in information about the subject matter, their classmates, the setup of the room, the professor, various personal interactions, and more. The student will process this information and evaluate (or make judgements) about how “stuck” they are or how well they fit in with the group, judging how much or how little they belong. As a student’s sense of belonging forms, and the affective dimension emerges in feelings or morale, a student’s actions and behaviors in and outside of the classroom will be influenced (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990).

Belonging in Doctoral Programs

While a growing body of literature highlights the importance of non-cognitive factors—such as sense of belonging—for undergraduate students, much less research exists on graduate students (Pascale, 2018). As many doctoral students quickly discover, however, finding a sense of belonging in graduate school is just as critical for academic success and program completion.

For students in Ph.D. programs, a 50% attrition rate (Cassuto, 2013) serves as a bleak reminder that earning a doctorate is a difficult journey. Doctoral students can experience extreme isolation and paranoia, often resulting from a sink-or-swim departmental philosophy or culture built around critique (Patterson, 2016). But Ph.D. students are willing to make great sacrifices—with time, finances, and personal relationships—in order to pursue their degree and academic goals (Barna, 2000).

Hagerty et al. (1992) described sense of belonging through two dimensions: valued involvement (experiencing the feeling of value, need, and acceptance) and fit—the perception that personal characteristics “articulate with or complement the system or environment” (p. 173). Faculty advisors can help encourage the positive beliefs students have about themselves, their ability to succeed in a Ph.D. program, and combat extreme isolation and feelings of imposter syndrome. This can facilitate the development of a sense of belonging for graduate students. Pascale (2018) found that having a close relationship with faculty was critical to creating a sense of belonging for graduate students.

Connectedly, positive relationships with faculty advisors leads to higher rates of completion for doctoral students. Lovitts (2001) asserted that graduate students who did *not* finish their degrees were more likely to describe impersonal advisors who lacked investment in student interests, research, and professional development. Numerous studies (Girves & Wemmerus, 1988; Golde, 2005; Jacks, Chubin, Porter, & Connolly, 1983) have found a relationship between lower attrition rates for doctoral students and positive relationships with their advisors. When graduate students have the perception that their advisor is supportive, they develop a stronger sense of belonging as well as a more positive view of their successes as a student (Curtin, Stewart, & Ostrove, 2013). Despite having very different backgrounds, life experiences, and personalities, the faculty-student relationship works well because of the mutual respect for each other’s talents and strengths.

Deploying a Pedagogy of Belonging

Students' sense of belonging can be forged through campus activities and university-wide interventions, as well as through interactions with individual faculty members. There is no single prescription for deploying a pedagogy of belonging, nor a specific method or approach to teaching that encourages students' perceived sense of "stickiness" to the community we create in our classrooms. But faculty can design pedagogies of belonging by creating practices that help them learn their students.

Ways that faculty deploy a pedagogy of belonging include:

- Sharing your intention to learn about them on your syllabus
- Observing student habit traces as opportunities to create belonging
- Knowing and referring to students by name and pronouncing their names correctly
- Internalizing the content of your students' work in your classroom, and referring to or taking note of standout features
- Encouraging students who are excelling or struggling
- Inviting students to collaborate on research or other projects
- Talking with students outside of class about academic content
- Knowing and caring about their lives
- Being culturally competent and responsive, and owning and apologizing for cross-cultural mistakes when you make them

Dr. Cassandre Alvarado, Executive Director of Student Success at UT Austin, reflects that "the effects of feeling like you are known by your faculty carry well beyond graduation from our institutions" (Alvarado, 2019, para. 4). As mentioned above, one of the easiest ways for faculty to help improve student success outcomes in particular is to learn and use their names (Alvarado, 2019). A recent survey of UT Austin alumni found that undergraduates felt that "having a professor who cared about them as a person" was critical to their well-being and ability to thrive (Gallop Organization, 2017). In addition, having this experience strongly related to the likelihood that alumni would thrive in various well-being areas, such as socially, financially, physically, and within their communities (Alvarado, 2019).

Implications for Practice

Having cross-cultural mentoring relationships between faculty mentors and doctoral students with distinct rather than matched demographics can help foster a sense of belonging for students. This is critical for increased rates of retention and graduation for Ph.D. students.

Starting with pedagogy, faculty can create open lines of communication, in which mentors take a vested interest in learning about their individual students on a deeper level than just assigning grades. When students feel valued and cared about in their educational setting, they are more likely to excel and flourish.

Taking the time to internalize students' work can provide insight for faculty on how to encourage students, whether they are excelling or struggling. Some students may perform well academically while personally struggling, which may be more difficult to decipher. However, by being in tune with their students, faculty will be able to better catch warning signs in students who are struggling personally.

If Ph.D. students live in fear of disappointing their faculty mentor, or worry about appearing weak and unable to succeed, their sense of belonging in the program will be diminished. We want to emphasize that we recognize that the faculty and pedagogical role is not one of parent or mental health counselor. Rather, by fostering a sense of belonging in the academic setting, faculty-doctoral student cross-cultural relationships can go a long way toward ameliorating disparities and encourage successful student outcomes.

In order to help facilitate building cross-cultural bridges with students, faculty need to be educated on what it means to deploy a pedagogy of belonging, and how to best do so. Here are three ways this can be done campus-wide:

1. *Training in concepts of belonging:* During new faculty orientation—or at other faculty training events—the importance of students’ sense of belonging should be addressed. In many cases, faculty engage in tactics such as “weed out” or “sink or swim.” This can unnecessarily harm students—often from minoritized populations—who are talented and capable of succeeding. By implementing the practices outlined above, faculty can identify ways to learn their students and encourage success.
2. *Having specialists in faculty development centers:* Researchers or scholars who specialize in work on belonging can encourage faculty to deploy a pedagogy of belonging. Symposia, round tables, and think tanks can engage and encourage faculty with concrete tips and tactics on ways to modify (often in small ways) their teaching or classroom environment.
3. *Policies and programs that promote mentoring cross-culturally:* This can be done through the creation of cross-cultural mentoring communities, committees, or learning communities, within or across academic disciplines. For a woman doctoral student in STEM, for example, it may be beneficial and uplifting to be in a mentoring relationship with a woman faculty member in her field, with other crossing identities (e.g., age, race, sexual orientation).

Conclusion

Through collaboration on projects, journal articles, or research, faculty can foster an outside-of-class relationship with their doctoral students. This is critical for many Ph.D. students who anticipate a future career in the same area as their faculty mentor. These collaborative experiences can provide a way for faculty and students to learn more about one another and create a more personalized learning environment for both. Faculty who highlight the strengths of their students—even praising those that the faculty may personally be lacking—can provide students with reassurance that they belong in their educational space at the departmental, institutional, and even industry level.

Despite our different identities and backgrounds, we each experienced a sense of belonging that emerged from a positive cross-cultural relationship in higher education. As we have reflected on in this article, finding a sense of belonging is critical for doctoral students. By engaging in and deploying a pedagogy of belonging, faculty mentors can help create cross-cultural bridges with their students to help ensure their success in their graduate program and beyond.

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*A Sage on Two Stages:
What a Black Academic Taught a White Scholar
About Cross-Cultural Mentoring*

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The University of Texas at Austin

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A Sage on Two Stages: What a Black Academic Taught a White Scholar About Cross-Cultural Mentoring

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The most recent edition of Dr. Charles V. Willie and Dr. Richard J. Reddick's *A New Look at Black Families, Sixth Edition* included a new chapter focused on President Obama, his family, and his life as a leader and mentor to his fellow Americans (Willie & Reddick, 2010). Dr. Willie's and Dr. Reddick's (2010) book—in addition to a quasi-admiration for President Obama—inspired me to learn more about the Black community and become a better White supporter of all people of Color. While I was exploring doctoral programs, Dr. Reddick's scholarship had firmly pinned The University of Texas at (UT) Austin on my proverbial academic map. A few years later, the time was right to apply to UT Austin and write a personal statement urging the admissions committee to allow me to work with Dr. Reddick. When I arrived at the College of Education on UT Austin's campus, I was escorted to Dr. Reddick's office where I first saw Dr. Reddick. He introduced himself as Rich, and since then, he has been an exemplary mentor.

In late spring and fall of 2018, I attended two events on UT Austin's campus, both of which involved Rich's participation and contribution. These two events had such a profound impact on me that I decided to write the very manuscript you are reading. Ultimately, my recollection of these two events may be instructive for White allies developing their ability to support communities of Color. I am a White man and Rich is a Black man, and I will discuss our races openly and critically. While Rich has never owed me anything, he has nonetheless provided a series of incredible experiences that has made me a better supporter in the struggle that people of Color face in the United States. If doctoral programs truly are mechanisms for teaching students how to think, the words that follow may serve witness.

Method

In an effort to remove myself from the third-person comfort zone of traditional academic writing, I chose to write this manuscript blending autoethnography and personal narrative, drawn from the works of multiple scholars.

This manuscript loosely follows closely the guidance for writing personal narratives forwarded by Stivers (1993) and Nash (2004). Stivers (1993) wrote, "There is no such thing as removing the observer from the knowledge acquisition process, since to do so would be like trying to see without eyes" (p. 410). In this sense, I sought to convey my own knowledge acquisition process through the telling of a personal narrative, wholly understanding that my own knowledge and experiences are biased and subjective. Furthermore, Stivers (1993) asserted that "It is difficult - maybe impossible - to draw the kind of hard and fast line between a 'fact' and an 'interpretation' that efforts to distinguish 'history' from 'literature' sometimes imply" (p. 410) and being aware of the subjective nature of knowledge acquisition "do mean that there is no such thing as Truth, in the sense of knowledge that transcends the definitions, values, and rules of any or all specific knowledge" (p. 411). In telling my own personal narratives, I acknowledge that any knowledge I disseminate and experiences I convey are my own and represent my own form of Truth, and that this Truth may be instructive for some and less so for others.

Nash (2004) argued that scholarly personal narratives should articulate clear constructs or themes, understanding that personal narratives should be instructive and educational. As a result, both personal narratives I share are connected by three themes which are both illustrative of my experiences and instructive for my audience. Moreover, Nash (2004) argued that personal narratives ought to embrace honesty, vulnerability, and creativity to vividly convey one's experiences. The use of a personal narrative allowed me to write with honesty and vulnerability to creatively share my experiences.

Similarly, autoethnography is a form of qualitative research that seeks to employ detailed self-reflection on personal experiences to make connections to the issues relevant to one's society writ large (Holt, 2003; Wall, 2006). Wall (2006) argued that autoethnography:

...is accomplished through the use of personal writing and reflection, the stories of others (gathered through a series of highly interactive and even therapeutic interviews with individuals and groups), personal poetry, and an understanding of the relevant literature (especially knowledge of the gaps in the literature that can be answered only through personally focused inquiry). (p. 151)

Although my own autoethnography will not include creative works of fiction, this work does contain self-reflection and an articulation of lessons learned. Here is where my work will blend the personal narrative and autoethnography.

Similarly, Holt (2003) explained that autoethnographic research ought to be judged by a number of criteria meant to ensure high-quality writing, and thus, a high quality of shared knowledge and experiences. Of these criteria, Holt (2003) reasoned that the piece should contribute to our understanding of social life, and the text should be artistically shaped, satisfyingly complex, and not boring. I do believe that my autoethnographic approach to personal narratives in a cross-cultural mentoring context is illustrative of my lived experiences, is told with a creative flair, and may provoke emotional and/or intellectual affect.

The First Stage: Alumni College and a Room of Whiteness

Held partially inside the Etter-Harbin Alumni Center on UT Austin's campus, the annual Texas Exes Alumni College bills itself as "a campus learning experience that lets you soak in the best of The University of Texas" (Texas Exes, 2019, para. 1). Rich had informed me that he was speaking at this particular event, and I jumped at the opportunity to attend. The day of the event, I approached the Alumni Center and admired a statue of the man giving the "Hook 'Em" sign and smiling. There was a family of five clad in burnt orange behind the statue, having their picture taken by someone else wearing burnt orange and telling them to "Hook 'Em." The Alumni Center had a statue demonstrating how to "Hook 'Em."

I met with a friend and we found the room, which was filled with rows of seats and circular tables near the rear. There were perhaps 100 burnt orange acolytes performing any number of Texas Longhorn themed rituals: flashing "Hook 'Em," telling stories that start with "When I lived in Jester..." and always introducing oneself with one's year of graduation and academic major (e.g., "Jane Smith, '82, engineering"). Eventually, Rich made his way through the throng of Longhorns and took his place on stage. A massive projection display appeared behind him with "DR. RICHARD J. RED-DICK" emblazoned on the screen. When Rich took his seat, everyone else followed suit while a

shorter White woman took the podium and said, “Ya’ll find your seats now” with typical Texan flair. I was sitting at a table with two people of Color—fellow graduate students—and I saw Rich sitting on stage. I quickly scanned the room. Those three people of Color, at that moment, were the only three people of Color in the room. Out of the hundred Texas Longhorns in attendance, Rich was the only alumni of Color I saw.

In my Ph.D. program, there are many more students of Color than I had encountered in previous programs. In my cohort, over 50% of the students are students of Color. This statistic was part of what sold me on attending UT Austin: I held the perception that my particular program was committed to serve students of Color. The Alumni College reminded me that UT Austin’s alumni base is overwhelmingly White, even though the state of Texas has continued to diversify along racial lines. Having experienced many cross-racial relationships and interactions while at UT Austin, I had completely forgotten about how White UT Austin’s history actually was.

My urge to blame then somehow converted itself to feelings of intense admiration for what Rich was doing. I assumed he knew that he would be speaking in a predominantly White space to an audience of people who were never denied the right to earn a degree based on their skin Color. White folks have always been welcomed at UT Austin, whereas people of Color have historically been minoritized. To date, Blacks and African-Americans are still woefully underrepresented as students at UT Austin, which has made me all the more impressed and inspired by Rich. Yet on stage was a man who had earned admission to the state flagship institution, gained entry to one of the most prestigious honors programs in the United States (Plan II), graduated from the institution, earned a doctorate from perhaps the most prestigious university in the world (Harvard), and still possessed the humility and charity to speak in front of a group of people who had not encountered the hurdles that he had. Initially, seeing the racial demographic of the audience at Alumni College made me wonder: Why would Rich agree to speak here?

In the moment, I thought that it was possible for Rich’s school pride to overcome any hesitation. Perhaps being a Longhorn and a faculty member at his alma mater gave Rich a certain level of comfort in this space. Then, my thoughts turned back to the audience and the fact that Rich had been navigating predominantly White spaces for his entire life. Perhaps, I thought, Rich had simply become accustomed to speaking to White people and did not think about race when speaking at Alumni College.

Months later, a colleague of mine introduced me to the concept of a possibility model. I learned that the creation of the term possibility model may have been originally attributed to Laverne Cox, a Black transgender actress and activist who rejected the term role model and preferred to refer to herself as a “possibility model” (Daily Mail, 2018, para. 3) for other people seeking representation and inspiration. Later, transgender writer and activist Janet Mock expanded on the term “possibility model” by explaining that it refers to “someone who reveals one possible way of being human in this world to you,” whereas the term “role model” signifies modeling how one *should* live one’s life (Point Foundation, 2017, para. 2).

Looking back on Alumni College, I saw Rich as a possibility model. Rich represents one (very unique) way of being human in this world, as he is one of very few Black faculty members at UT Austin or across the U.S. postsecondary professoriate. Recent estimates suggest that between six and eight percent of faculty members at U.S. postsecondary institutions are Black or Hispanic, even though Blacks and Hispanics comprise nearly 20% of the U.S. population (House, 2017).

Considering these statistics, as sobering as they are, and then reflecting back on Alumni College, I understand that what I was witnessing was incredibly unique in the contexts of U.S. higher education. Not only was Rich a possibility model for young Black kids across the country, he had also positioned himself as a possibility model for White people. Yes, a Black man can earn a college degree from UT, a doctorate from Harvard, and tenure at one of the most prestigious public institutions in the country. However, the phenomenon of cultural taxation was a concept that often and unfairly minoritizes faculty of college on college campuses (Padilla, 1994).

Adjacently, before I arrived on UT Austin's campus, I had never heard of cultural taxation. I was ashamed of my ignorance, but I had tried to make up for lost time by reading Caroline Turner, Tiffany Joseph, and of course, Rich Reddick. Padilla (1994) introduced the concept of cultural taxation in the following way:

One of my other concerns—which is just as great as the biases about what constitutes acceptable research and publication outlets—has to do with what I will refer to here as the "cultural taxation" that is so prevalent in academia and in organizations that employ ethnic scholars. This "taxation" poses a significant dilemma for ethnic scholars because we frequently find ourselves having to respond to situations that are imposed on us by the administration, which assumes that we are best suited for specific tasks because of our race/ethnicity or our presumed knowledge of cultural differences. (p. 26)

Elaborating on Padilla (1994), Shavers, Butler, and Moore (2014) addressed the phenomenon of cultural taxation as it applies to Black faculty members (such as Rich):

Black academicians, in particular, are often expected to engage in service activities that are not expected of their White counterparts. Additionally, they are presumed to mentor African American students, serve on diversity committees, and participate in other service activities that need diverse representation. (p. 41)

I had viewed Rich's speaking engagement at Alumni College as another cultural tax. This realization was sobering for me, as there had been moments in the past where I needed to ask Rich a question but was fearful that I would consume his time. I did not want Rich to pay a cultural tax, but I had mistakenly (naively) viewed my mentoring relationship with Rich as cultural taxation. I am still working through my feelings and perception of this issue, but I have come to learn that mentorship may not be cultural taxation. Instead, a cross-racial mentoring relationship may be an opportunity for members of two different races to learn from each other and grow intellectually and emotionally. It has taken me years of reflection to arrive at this conclusion and cease feeling guilty for communicating with Rich.

Also, my presence at Alumni College was not directly levying a cultural tax on Rich. Instead, I was participating in an academic event and learning more about cross-cultural and cross-racial communication from an exemplary speaker. Realizing that it could be beneficial for more people to have these cross-racial experiences, I have since taken a more active approach in promoting and attending events where Rich or another Black academic is imparting wisdom. As our country rapidly diversifies, leaders of U.S. higher education—of all races—must provide opportunities for academics of Color to share their experiences, especially with predominantly White audiences. I have personally learned a considerable amount about the experiences of people of Color by listening. Subsequently, I

have tried to ease the burden of cultural taxation by seeking opportunities to learn from faculty of Color, including attending events such as Alumni College.

When Rich took the stage, I felt the need to put my notebook away and dedicate my full attention. Wilken (2013) described this feeling as a desire to pay analytic and holistic attention. For Wilken (2013), the attention one pays to a particular person, event, or task can shape the emotions that individuals experience. Wilken (2013) explained:

Individuals with an analytic attentional style pay more attention to focal objects and less attention to the surrounding context. On the other hand, individuals with a holistic attentional style pay more attention to the context and the relationship between focal objects and the context” (p. 7).

Wilken (2013) also asserted that one’s emotions can be influenced—both positively and negatively—depending on the type of attention one is paying.

In terms of analytic attention, I had already taken note of the grandeur of the Alumni Center, the abundance of White alumni, and the lack of representation of people of Color. However, if I had split my attention by taking descriptive notes and writing down potential research topics, I may have missed an important detail. By paying holistic attention and opting not to take notes (as is common in the qualitative tradition), I allowed myself to fully experience the event. Here, a critical finding of this personal narrative emerges: the necessity for researchers to pay both analytic and holistic attention during events or in spaces that will likely evoke feeling.

During the address, Rich spoke about broad topics important to the system of higher education in the United States, including declining state appropriations and the underrepresentation of students of Color and low-income students on college campuses across the country. When Rich spoke of these issues, many of the alumni in the room shook their heads in disbelief. I overheard one man to say another person, “When I was here, tuition was a hundred dollars.” I couldn’t help but be reminded that I was living in the world of higher education, while Rich knew that many people outside of higher education don’t think to look under the hood and see why the engine is burning so much oil. The brilliance of Rich’s lecture was in its simplicity and relevance, which is a lesson I will take with me wherever I go.

When Rich concluded, the moderator of the event informed the audience that there would be time for questions and answers. Immediately, several White hands flew into the air. As I expected, many of these questions were personal opinions masquerading as inquiries, and Rich did a fine job of informing their perspectives without condescension. In fact, one of the White men stood and bluntly said, “I don’t think college is for everyone.” The irony was not lost, as I heard a few laughs from the back of the room. A prestigious degree was fitting for this man, but of course, college might not be for everyone.

When the Q&A concluded, the alumni scattered. Eventually, Rich made it a point to greet me and the other students to thank us for coming. I had nothing intelligent to say, so I shook his hand and continued to think. It was similar to seeing your favorite band, and then the lead singer pulls the setlist from the stage and hands it to you. I felt privileged that Rich even knew my name, and here he was, thanking me. It is a humbling feeling that has persisted for over three years.

Upon leaving, I was re-immersed in burnt orange and “Hook ‘Ems” as I crossed San Jacinto and returned to my car. I-35 was jammed on the way home, and when I-35 is jammed, I usually take voice memos. I pulled out my phone and began to speak. Just ahead of me was a massive silver Chevy Suburban with a “TEXAS EXES LIFE MEMBER” license plate holder and two little burnt orange Longhorns pasted onto its rear window. Loud and proud. I heard the ping of the microphone activating, and I said to myself, “You should write something about Rich and Alumni College.”

The Second Stage: The Precursors and Predominant Blackness

In 1885, UT Austin rejected an African-American applicant because of the Color of his skin (The University of Texas at Austin, 2016). Over a half a century later, Heman Sweatt sought admission to UT Austin’s Law School and was denied for the same reason. The year was 1946, Heman was African-American, and no African-Americans had been ever been admitted to UT Austin’s Law School. Heman fought the school’s decision, took his case to the Supreme Court, and eventually won, helping overturn the regrettable *Plessy v. Ferguson* (The University of Texas at Austin, 2013).

The direct beneficiaries of Heman Sweatt’s journey are the Precursors, a group of African-American alumni who were among the first to attend and integrate UT Austin in the 1960s. In 2017, the UT Press published *As We Saw It: The Story of Integration at the University of Texas at Austin*, chronicling the stories of the Precursors and their on- and off-campus experiences during the Civil Rights Era. In Fall 2018, the Precursors, along with UT Austin’s Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, held an event to “Celebrate 1968” and Black alumni during a homecoming weekend. Rich was invited to sit on a panel with the Precursors featured in *As We Saw It*.

During Rich’s advisee retreat in late summer of 2018, he mentioned the upcoming “Celebrate 1968” panel discussion. As soon as I learned of the event, I made an honest attempt at promoting it through word of mouth and over email. As I mentioned in the first part of this personal narrative, seeing Rich speak at Alumni College compelled me to take a more active approach in promoting and attending events featuring academics of Color. The “Celebrate 1968” event felt like the perfect opportunity. Had I not learned of the “Celebrate 1968” event and Rich’s involvement, I may have never explored UT Austin’s history, and experienced a deeper sense of appreciation and gratitude for what Heman Sweatt and the Precursors did for higher education in Texas and beyond.

The day of the “Celebrate 1968” event was rainy and overcast. The event was to be held at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs in its Bass Lecture Hall. Stubbornly, I wore shorts and a t-shirt, as the Texas summer hadn’t quite tapped out yet. Serendipitously, the rain let up on my walk to the venue. Also, serendipitously, my path toward the venue passed the Martin Luther King, Jr. statue. Along with the Barbara Jordan’s likeness near the Texas Union, the MLK statue was one of the lone statues still standing on the UT Austin campus. One year earlier, UT Austin President Greg Fenves ordered the removal of three statues from UT Austin’s campus—Robert E. Lee, Albert Sidney Johnston and John Reagan. Fenves reasoned that the statues were being removed because they represented parts of U.S. history that “run counter to the university’s core values” (as quoted in Watkins, 2017, para. 2). Fenves later elaborated on this rationale, arguing that “We do not choose our history, but we choose what we honor and celebrate on our campus” (Watkins, 2017, para. 3).

Passing the MLK statue reminded me of what was being celebrated at the LBJ School on that particular day. 1968 was not that long ago; for a frame of reference, Simon and Garfunkel, The Beatles,

Diana Ross, and Herb Alpert all had singles on the Billboard Hot 100 Chart that year (Billboard, 2019), and Bob Dylan was touring the country on the success of his 1967 album, *John Wesley Harding*. At the time of “Celebrate 1968,” both Simon and Garfunkel were still strumming their Martins, two Beatles were still touring and selling out stadiums, Diana Ross scored a number one single on the Billboard Top Dance Chart in August 2018, and Herb Alpert had just released a best-selling Christmas album featuring his trademark Tijuana brass sound. As The Beatles might put it, 1968 was practically yesterday.

I climbed the slanted sidewalk running alongside the stadium and began to see several dapper-looking Black folks. The men were dressed in suits and the women wore floral dresses or quasi-evening gowns that would have fit right in at a wedding or a Sunday sermon. Seeing how formally the Black attendees had dressed made me realize how disrespectful my clothing was. I had known that “Celebrate 1968” was a celebration (as evident in its name), but I hadn’t thought to dress as if I was celebrating anything. For that, I was ashamed of myself—I will never make that mistake again. Yet, continuing in the day’s theme of serendipity, I saw a familiar face in the LBJ School parking lot: Rich was entering the building just as I was arriving.

“Hey man!” I exclaimed with a smile.

“Oh, what’s up, man?” Rich replied. By year two of our interactions, he was no longer Dr. Reddick. He had become Rich, and our greetings had informalized to the point of “what’s ups” and “hey mans.”

“You look sharp, like you’re ready to moderate some panel or something,” I joked nervously, drawing attention to our contrasting wardrobe decisions.

“Man, this jacket is hotter than hell,” he replied. “You made a good choice with those shorts.”

His words made me feel less stupid for failing to recognize the formality of the event and the respect that I should have paid. We walked in together, and I followed him downstairs and toward the Bass Lecture Hall. Filling each corridor of the building were Black people of all ages, nearly all of whom were formally dressed and smiling. Laughter was omnipresent as people exchanged warm greetings, in contrast to the robotic introductions I overheard at the Alumni College event (e.g., “Jane Smith, ‘82, Engineering”). It seemed like that everyone knew everyone else.

In the previous personal narrative, I recounted witnessing people taking a photo in front of the “Hook ‘Em” statue just outside of the Alumni Center. When Rich and I reached the bottom of the stairs, I was immediately witness to another photo. Near the hall, there were three rows of Black people arranging themselves for a picture. Everyone in the shot was laughing, with a few folks draping their arms around each other. “Bill! Bill, you gotta get in here!” exclaimed one woman in the group, waving her arms toward a man whose face lit up in response. He walked briskly toward the group and was greeted warmly by several other folks. Seconds later, another person was ushered into the group. Everyone wanted everyone to be in the photo. There was something touching and profound about that.

“I’m gonna get in there,” Rich said, slapping me on the shoulder and entering the lecture hall. I had noticed that no one had asked me what I was doing or if I was looking for someone. Folks saw me there and acknowledged me with a smile or with a nod. Prior to arriving at the venue, I had

anticipated having to answer a question or two about what a White man was doing attending an event that was celebrating Black history. I had falsely assumed that I would be questioned or not welcome. My understanding that the “Celebrate 1968” event would be a predominantly Black environment had produced a sense of anxiety, enough so that I felt I would need to justify my presence. Again, I was wrong.

As I entered the auditorium (still the only White person I could see), I saw a familiar face – my friend James. I had met James through Rich, who had worked with him on several research projects relating to students of Color. Over the years, James and I developed a sort of rapport, meaningful enough for us to join the same fantasy football league and share a few laughs along the way. I was so thankful that I knew someone I could sit with.

“James!” I exclaimed, approaching him in the aisle and shaking his hand.

“Hey there, young man,” he replied, “Good to see you.”

We sat together and waited for the event to begin. I looked through the program and was excited to see that Peniel Joseph was giving an address before Rich’s panel. Peniel Joseph is a professor in the LBJ School who has written several award-winning books that speak in support of the Black community in the U.S. and against the history of minoritization that these people have faced. In short, Peniel Joseph is a very big deal, and I was fortunate to be able to see him speak in person.

The first speaker took the microphone and introduced herself—she was an older Black woman, and she spoke with a measured patience and tenderness that really conveyed the mood of the event. She identified herself as a Precursor and launched into a series of memories of her time as an undergraduate at UT Austin. She mentioned specific people, places, plates of food, and the cafeteria staff who served them. The woman talked about the music of the day, where the Precursors would go to dance, and the time when a White man in a truck threw rocks through her apartment window. She spoke as if 1968 was yesterday. When she introduced Peniel Joseph, there was almost an exasperated thankfulness for his presence. Her effusive praise and appreciation for Dr. Joseph really made me think about what kind of difference I was making and for whom. What had I done of any importance? The tone of the woman’s voice conveyed a sense of passing a torch to the next generation of Black intellectuals and leaders who continue to move our collective society toward equity and inclusion.

Peniel Joseph has a stage presence and a delivery rarely experienced. Equipped with a wireless microphone, Peniel spoke with his hands and from his heart about how 1968 seemed like just yesterday. He sketched an image of a country torn across racial, religious, economic, and political lines. He articulated the ineffectiveness of the executive leadership in the United States in bringing folks together instead of tearing people apart. Drawing on his background as a public policy expert, Peniel quoted facts and figures about police brutality against Blacks, the socioeconomic discrimination faced by Blacks, and the inequitable public policies that have been largely responsible for the subjugation of the Black community within the broader United States society. Like the rest of the audience, I thought Peniel was talking about 1968.

“These aren’t statistics from 1968. They’re from 2018.”

There was a collective gasp that arose from the auditorium and escaped through the exit doors near the stage. When Peniel concluded his address, the audience clapped in unison: the feeling of collective understanding of Peniel's words was palpable. I clapped but also knew that I had no right to associate myself and my limited societal oppression with a room filled of people who knew societal oppression all too well. This phenomenon is still something I struggle with—what does it mean to be a White ally? As problematic as the term “ally” is, as it connotes a status and not a progress, what would it mean to be a supporter of people of Color and mentors like Rich? Extending the analogy of my particular circumstances, should White people clap too? Although I am still learning how to be a supporter of Black people and people of Color, I was glad I was sitting in the Bass Lecture Hall on that day.

The older woman who had introduced Peniel Joseph took the podium, thanked Peniel once again for his address, and introduced a group of Precursors and Dr. Richard J. Reddick. To drive the point home, I assume that Rich needs to pay the folks who print UT Austin business cards a bit extra because I believe his title would qualify as a novella in some literary circles. Rich is an associate professor of *this*, holds courtesy appointments in *that*, serves on a committee that does *this*, and works as a program coordinator doing *that*. He also finds time to be a possibility model for countless Black kids who aspire to be him one day.

A few of the Precursors rose from their seats, and there was a brief silence as Rich approached the podium. In the row in front of where James and I were sitting, there was an elderly Black woman and a young Black boy. The boy had pulled a Jolly Rancher from his pocket and was feverishly fiddling with the plastic wrapper. The sound that a Jolly Rancher wrapper makes is immediately recognizable and infinitely annoying. A few seconds into the epic struggle, the elderly woman snapped the piece of candy from the boy's fingers, slipped the candy from the wrapper with ease, and pointed the boy's head toward the stage.

“You put this in your mouth and listen to him. He's the man.”

Entranced, the boy sucked on the Jolly Rancher. His eyes barely blinked as Rich introduced himself and encouraged the Precursor participants to leave their seats and join him. As each Precursor was introduced, the boy's eyes did not divert from Rich. Although it may have appeared strange, I couldn't help but watch the boy watching Rich and witness the present and the future in one fleeting but profound moment.

Leaning back in my chair, I began to understand why Caroline Turner has been writing about faculty of Color for so long. Young people of Color deserve possibility models, and the way the young Black boy looked at Rich was all the evidence I needed to confirm that. In my three decades of life, I had never seen a young man of Color in awe of an older man of Color. This lack of cultural experience is my shortcoming, as I grew up in predominantly White environments and had never thought to crack the window open and take a look around. I should have opened the window years ago.

Inadvertently, Rich had taught me something about mentorship. Just as the audience had openly expressed their admiration for Peniel Joseph just minutes earlier, I had learned how I needed to actively explore more opportunities to witness the wonder of a young person of Color admiring another person of Color. And instead of asking Rich questions about race and culturally responsive curriculum, I needed to engage in spaces of Color to mitigate the cultural taxation that folks like Rich and Peniel Joseph likely pay on a daily basis working at a predominantly White institution.

Of cultural taxation, Joseph and Hirshfield (2011) wrote:

All faculty, not only faculty of colour and white allies, must concern themselves with diversity-related issues to create cultures of inclusivity in academia. Understanding how cultural taxation affects faculty of colour is an important step in that direction. (p. 137)

Being an aspiring supporter of people of Color, I needed to immerse myself in racial discussions more often. In the months since the event, I have thought about the young Black boy and hoped he would find more possibility models. But daily, more Black boys enter this world. For me, this means that being a White ally is not a status, stage, or level. Just because I had attended the “Celebrate 1968” event did not mean I could check a box reading “White ally.” Allyship and being supportive is an ongoing process, and seeing the young boy and Rich was an inspirational moment in my development.

Rich’s panel discussion was wonderful. When time was up, time was not up. Although the Precursors were scheduled for thirty minutes, everyone wanted more. The discussion couldn’t stop. The stories needed to be told. There is a metaphor in there, somewhere. Eventually, Rich thanked the panel and so did the audience. As we applauded, I saw a White woman three rows and two aisles across from me. I also overheard Spanish behind me, and I turned to see two Hispanic folks with their heads leaned toward each other. The space was more diverse than I thought, and perhaps I had seen what I anticipated: A predominantly Black space with a small dot of Whiteness. For the fourth or fifth time in a few hours, I was wrong. All kinds of folks had shown up.

I navigated the aisle and turned to the rear auditorium door. I looked back and saw Rich hugging one of the Precursors, and the young boy pulling another Jolly Rancher from his shirt pocket. Raindrops fell on my shorts and t-shirt, but I was okay with that.

Findings and Critical Reflections

I have deliberately chosen to keep these sections brief and to the point. Each theme is disparate but equally illustrative of my experiences: anticipating difference but not discomfort, paying analytic and holistic attention, and eliminating cultural taxation.

Anticipating Difference, Not Discomfort

Throughout the events of both personal narratives, I experienced difference, which I had confused with discomfort. I was not uncomfortable at the Alumni College event—I was surrounded by a privileged, predominantly White group whose outward appearance suggested wealth and membership to a community of which I did not feel a part. Similarly, I anticipated having my presence questioned in a predominantly Black space, leading to discomfort. Instead, this situation was different for me, not uncomfortable for me.

From this experience, I learned that individuals seeking cross-cultural mentoring and related experiences should enter into relationships and social situations anticipating difference, not discomfort. Granted, certain cross-cultural relationships and social situations may feel uncomfortable, but one’s

mindset should be as optimistic and open as possible. As long as cross-cultural interactions are perceived as learning experiences, anticipated discomfort can be mitigated by the excitement of an increased understanding of people from all walks of life.

Paying Analytic and Holistic Attention

Had I not paid analytic and holistic attention during both events in the aforementioned personal narratives, I would likely not have made as many meaningful connections between the two events. For instance, observing specific focal objects (e.g., the “Hook ‘Em” statue or the young Black boy’s Jolly Rancher) alongside my acknowledging of holistic moods and the overall feeling of the environment really improved my ability to reflect. I will never forget the statue or the Jolly Rancher. As a result, I will never forget the presumed family taking a picture in front of the statue, nor will I ever forget the young boy in awe of Rich, which changed the way I see mentoring relationships.

Mitigating Cultural Taxation

My physical presence at the “Celebrate 1968” event did occupy a physical seat. However, I was not “taxing” Rich, nor was I levying a tax against any other person of Color in the audience or on the stage. I benefited greatly and learned much simply by being present. Supporters of people of Color—specifically White people—need to explore opportunities to mitigate the cultural tax that academics of Color pay on a daily basis. These opportunities should include White people seeking participation in audiences or cultural events during which people of Color are positioned in ways that educate and enlighten. Eliminating the cultural taxation of people of Color must include a White willingness to learn from people of Color in ways that do not burden this community. Both personal narratives in this study include descriptions of such events that, when attended by White people, can help foster a sense of cross-racial understanding and societal change.

Concluding Thoughts

A sage is someone who has attained a level of knowledge rivaled by a philosopher or deep thinker. When Rich wears his Harvard University graduation garb for his “History of Higher Education” course, he looks like a sage. He looks learned. He is. I will not forget the two stages on which this sage stood and demonstrated how a Black academic can influence and educate both predominantly White and Black audiences. Thinking of sages, I am reminded that many ancient Greek and Roman philosophers were also artists. In some ways, I don’t think I will develop the sort of intellectual artistry that Rich has developed. But, I will try, and I think this quasi-autoethnography is one effort toward becoming a better person and one who will make a difference beyond tapping white computer keys and seeing words appear on a black monitor mere feet from an open window.

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