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LEARNING FROM THE INSIDE OUT:
A NARRATIVE STUDY OF COLLEGE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

A DISSERTATION

Submitted by

Anne Benoit

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

School of Education

LESLEY UNIVERSITY

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Required Approvals

In the judgment of the following signatories, this dissertation submitted on August 3rd, 2013, meets the academic standards that have been established for the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

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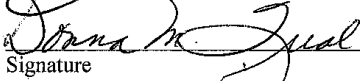
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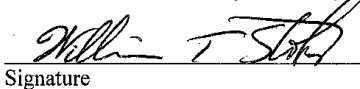
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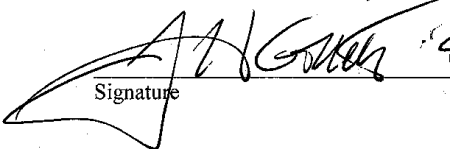
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Abstract

Historically, the “development” of college faculty members has involved further learning in their academic disciplines (Gaff & Simpson, 1994; Lewis, 1996); subsequent efforts to enhance faculty learning have been informed by Gaff’s (1975) three-part model of faculty development. However, how faculty members “develop” as teachers is still far from clear. This study uses an adult developmental approach to understand and explore “the who, the self that teaches” (Palmer, 1998, p. 4) at the intersection of faculty personal and professional learning. This critical event narrative study of ten college teachers sought to understand how faculty members from 4-year liberal arts teaching-intensive institutions make meaning of their development. Through semi-structured interviews lasting 1 to 3 hours, participants were asked to identify key moments in their learning. Data were analyzed using a two-phase Critical Event protocol which focused on high points, low points, and turning points in participants’ learning and development as teachers. The findings were broadened through cross-case analysis and discussed in light of adult learning and teaching development literature. Key findings included the salience of several influences on college teacher learning and development: prior teaching experience in various contexts, experiences of fit or lack of fit, context challenges or changes in teaching context; mental models of teaching/observation of teachers across educational experiences; participants’ experiences as students; teaching mentors; and informal learning interactions with colleagues. The findings lend support to the salience of social cognitive and situated learning theories for adults yet emphasize the relational component of such learning. The study has implications for adult learning, faculty/academic developers, and higher education administrators.

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Through the Lesley doctoral program, I was able to "meet" via Skype such luminaries as Stephen Brookfield, Elizabeth Minnich, Larry Daloz, and Jennifer Tanner. Thank you all for broadening both my horizons and my thinking immeasurably.

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Anne Benoit

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Chapter 1: Context of the Study

What is education? I should suppose that education was the curriculum one had to run through in order to catch up with oneself.

—Søren Kierkegaard (1954), *Fear and Trembling*

Background of the Study

The seeds of this study began from listening to faculty members talk about their teaching, learning, and practice. I was at first surprised that they *wanted* to talk about their teaching—especially their teaching challenges. In listening to them, I began to notice the inherent variability not only in their experiences and insights but in the language they used to talk about them. When such dialogues include meaning-seeking questions and probes, it becomes obvious, for example, when the language of “the learning-centered paradigm” (Barr & Tagg, 1995) or “transformative learning” (Mezirow, 1991) is being parroted or whether the person has an understanding of what the concepts really “mean” and “look like” in practice. What also became apparent is that expert teachers understand subtle distinctions between often conflated ideas in teaching—for example, they know that classroom activity is not necessarily synonymous with engagement.

I also started to think about how rarely those in higher education “perception-check” when they talk about teaching and learning; instead, most assume that others mean the same things they do when using particular terms. One way to maintain the status quo, of course, is to ensure consensus of meaning and shared conceptual understanding are never achieved.

In thinking about the study, I wondered how faculty members from diverse backgrounds and disciplinary training came to make sense of their learning—and by extension, their personal and professional worlds. I found it curious how people from the same background can perceive the world differently, while those from disparate backgrounds and experiences can arrive at the same understandings.

I know from my own experience working with learners in various contexts that some people seem more naturally reflective than others, but I did not realize until this study that reflective ability may, in fact, require successful developmental integration across the cognitive and affective domains. Sensemaking, as it is understood in adult learning and development, is hard work. The challenges in making meaning of experience became evident when I listened to the participants' stories.

I began to wonder too about a potential relationship between what faculty members "see" in their teaching and what they value and believe. In observing teaching and talking with faculty about their teaching, I began to understand how differently college teachers perceive their teaching and the teaching environment. I wanted to know more about perception and meaning-making and how those might be related to good teaching.

I was also curious about how faculty members who are designated as exceptional teachers are able to be so responsive and flexible in their teaching—how they seem to "read" the environment of the classroom and all that occurs within it in a qualitatively different way that transcends cognitive processing of mental models from prior experience. Yet it is not just the perceiving that's important; it's the ability to accurately determine what something "means" in that context with those particular learners. And I learned too from my participants that even those we might term "expert" get it wrong some of the time.

Consider a situation in which a faculty member exits class and is asked how the session went. The teacher indicates it was an excellent class, yet when you ask the students the same question, you hear a very different response. How is such a disjuncture between what one thinks is so and what is really "so" explained? One key insight from the interviews was that participants who described themselves as committed to teaching improvement (which several participants saw as connected to their own overall learning and development) sought feedback from others even if such feedback

caused them to question what they knew or believed to be true about themselves or their teaching. It was evident that they worked at and for this knowledge, seeking clarity about and alignment with what was “true” beyond the limiting influence of their own presuppositions or personal biography. In essence, their desire to “know” the reality of the situation was stronger than their need to maintain a particular self-image. This suggests that openness to teaching development (or likely, any kind of development) requires a strong core self that is stable yet fluid and dynamic. Such an integrated self is not possible, however, if the teacher lives and works in a compartmentalized way. In hearing participants talk about their learning and growth, I wondered if there is a relationship between a will to know and a will to grow as people and as teachers.

As I wanted to know more about the shaping experiences and influences on college teacher learning and development, it seemed fitting to design a study to explore how faculty members make meaning of their learning and development as teachers. It is my hope that this study provides another “lens” on faculty learning and teaching development that may be of value to others.

While faculty development is a relatively “young” discipline in comparison to the academic disciplines, its work has been informed by tumultuous changes in the external environment and within higher education itself. Chapter One explores these internal and external impacts and discusses the multiple contexts which have come to shape and influence the learning and development of faculty members. In order to come forward to the present, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of the forces that have supported and constrained efforts to enhance faculty learning and teaching development over time. The chapter begins with a brief review of Gaff’s (1975) model of faculty development which underscores academic/faculty development work. It then traces the evolution of faculty development in the United States across the decades and explores the particular challenges higher education has addressed based on changing student demographics and

the external environment. The chapter then positions the study within an adult learning context and articulates the need for the study, the statement of the problem, the study purpose, and guiding questions for the inquiry. The second half of the chapter briefly reviews the research approach, study significance, researcher assumptions and perspective, study limitations, key terms and definitions, and the organization of the dissertation.

Gaff's Framework of Faculty Development Dimensions

Gaff's early publication, *Toward Faculty Renewal* (1975), articulated a conceptual framework comprising three broad areas which continues to guide the work of faculty developers: *Faculty Professional Development, Instructional Development, and Leadership/Organizational Development*. Most campus programs have included a combination of two or more of these learning areas. In order to foster faculty members' ownership of their learning, it has been important that programming and teaching center leadership represented (or at least were perceived to represent) faculty interests. In order to accomplish this, faculty advisory committees have often been created to provide guidance and insight into programming. However, in order to "position" faculty learning and development as separate from the formal leadership reporting process, Center directors have been mindful of the need for faculty development programs to operate apart from an institution's leadership structure, as well as from the faculty evaluation, review, and tenure process (Schroeder, 2011).

The Evolution of Faculty Development in Higher Education

The public has lost much of its affection for higher education. What was taken for granted thirty years ago must be shown to be beneficial... Today most legislators have tasted the college experience, and some of them are not pleased with what they got. Still others hear undergraduates complain about professors who do not keep office hours or graduate assistants who cannot teach. The public has grown weary of higher education. While much of what the media serves up is exaggerated, or even inaccurate, American citizens resent what appears to them as rising costs and a lowering of quality. (Gaff & Simpson, 1994, p. 173, on the higher education landscape of the 1990s)

In the above excerpt, Jerry Gaff and Ronald Simpson, seminal researchers in faculty development, were highlighting the dissatisfaction of the public with what were perceived as deficiencies in the higher education system several decades ago. The comments were themselves reminiscent of the previous criticisms of colleges and universities in the 1960s and 1970s which led to institutional reforms and deliberate efforts to enhance teaching quality (Gaff & Simpson, 1994). College campuses in the U.S. were then sites of protests related to a number of issues that ultimately rippled across higher education: the Vietnam War, student perceptions of colleges as bureaucratic and impersonal, and the exposure of middle class white students to racial injustice. According to Linda Churney (1979) of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, “it was over the issue of race that student protests began in 1960. Racism was not new to American society in the 1960s, but students became less tolerant of it and the institutions which seemed to perpetuate it” (p. 3).

Demonstrations were held on college campuses that employed leading scholars in well-known programs. Student protests were related to the distancing of professors from students (via course teaching assistants), large lecture classes, and the perceived elitism and classism of higher education in general (Gaff & Simpson, 1994). At institutions like the University of California at Berkeley and Columbia University, for example, attention was also focused on uninspired professors and irrelevant courses, which led to a re-examination of faculty roles and responsibilities. Such protests “exposed the myth that all that was required to be a good teacher [was] to know one’s subject” (Gaff & Simpson, 1994, p. 168). Teaching, it was discovered, involved more than subject knowledge, groundbreaking research, numerous publications, or discipline prominence.

Society was changing, and traditional undergraduate students, as well as graduate students, no longer resembled their counterparts from the 1940s and 1950s. More was being demanded of faculty members, even those well-known experts who were awarded Nobel Prizes and release time from

teaching (Gaff & Simpson, 1994). The result of these social forces as they manifested on college campuses was an initial leveling of the system and a breakdown of traditional social structures both within higher education and in society at large (Berquist, 1992). Faculty development efforts under these conditions became a means of institutional survival during a time of great upheaval and uncertainty.

In the 1970s, many campuses, still swelling with baby boomer enrollments, entered a period of retrenchment in response to the external economic environment. Institutions that had made efforts to address teaching quality were forced to do more with less in light of financial constraints (Astin, et al., 1974). At the same time, the number of matriculating “nontraditional” students posed a new challenge for higher education and highlighted the need for more innovative and student-centered approaches. In the early to mid-1970s, adult students began arriving on colleges campuses, often enrolling in traditional undergraduate courses, as continuing education and adult programs were not yet prevalent on most campuses. These students, many of whom were women, used educational opportunities to make major changes in their lives. Some of these students were leaving bad marriages or rebelling against restrictions imposed by social or gender roles, but few of them were the first in their family to attend college. As a result of their social class status and family members’ experiences with higher education, these students were less likely to tolerate ineffective teaching or disengaged faculty members. This demand for instructional quality led institutions to explore the then-emerging undergraduate research which suggested that teaching and learning were complex activities that could and should be learned and studied.

In the mid to late 1970s, several well-known private foundations and federal agencies began providing funds for emerging faculty development programs. Foundations and agencies involved in early funding initiatives included these: The Danforth Foundation, Exxon Education Foundation,

The Lilly Endowment, The W. K. Kellogg Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The National Endowment for the Humanities, The National Science Foundation, and The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) (Gaff and Simpson, 1994). Such support lent a degree of legitimacy to teaching improvement efforts and moved faculty development closer to the center of higher education's evolving mission.

In the 1980s, institutions faced new challenges related to curricula—namely, coherence and quality of general education, assessment of academic majors, perspectives of race, gender, and ethnicity missing from the curricula, emerging global considerations, and evolving needs related to literacy skills for students and teaching skills for faculty (Gaff & Simpson, 1994). Such initiatives, under the auspices of “instructional development,” were sometimes executed from an academic dean's office, but they were just as likely to operate within program areas like Writing, Freshman Seminar, or Core/Liberal Arts Curriculum (Gaff & Simpson, 1994). Based on shifting priorities related to curricula and program quality, it was soon obvious that curriculum development and assessment would become part of faculty development's role.

In the 1990s, two well-known organizations related to education—Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association-College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREFF) and the American Council on Education (ACE)—joined forces to establish award programs to recognize the best faculty development practices in the United States. External recognition of quality in faculty development programs on college campuses signaled that the field had moved from an ancillary activity to an integral part of higher education institutions.

Since the 1990s, many colleges and universities have recognized the need for an internal institutional division to spearhead faculty development programming, often through the establishment of centers dedicated to teaching and learning (CTLs). These centers were often funded through

designated and institutional resource allocations, as well as from start-up grants from The Danforth and Davis Foundations (Gaff & Simpson, 1994).

Faculty developers have since been tasked with a broad range of responsibilities that far exceed new faculty orientation and teaching with technology. They have had to balance the often competing needs of institutions, faculty, students, and the external environment. Developers have also needed to respond to trends and social forces, use data to guide programs, recognize the multiple roles of faculty members, enhance their own understanding of teaching and learning, and use their knowledge of faculty learners' needs in combination with institutional priorities to develop or align their programming.

New Challenges: Campus Diversity and Preparedness

As faculty development has evolved, additional challenges have arisen with the arrival of increasing numbers of nontraditional undergraduate students—namely, first generation students, bilingual students, biracial students, and those from disparate economic backgrounds. Administrators and developers responded to these challenges, and issues related to sociocultural influences on teaching, learning, and institutional operations became a focus in research and practice contexts (Jacobson, Borgford-Parnell, Frank, Peck, & Reddick, 2001).

The entry of multicultural students, faculty, and staff also brought concerns related to culture, socioeconomics, race, and gender to the surface, requiring the industry to explore the ways in which higher education and its educators would need to respond to campus and educative challenges related to access, diversity, and variability in both undergraduate and graduate students' preparedness for academic work (Sorcinelli, 2007).

From Past to Present: The Current Landscape

In 2013, higher education continues to respond to criticisms related to perceived value versus cost, inadequate completion and persistence rates, a lack of defined learning outcomes, lackluster teaching, and little data on student learning as a whole (The Spellings Report, 2006; Arum & Roksa, 2010; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Mullen, 2010). A further influence on higher education has been a report issued by the Lumina Foundation (2010) which cautioned that less than 47 percent of Americans will have earned college degrees by 2025, leaving a projected shortfall of 23 million degree holders that will be needed to adequately staff the American workforce. The Foundation's findings have compelled program development and curricular planning to meet high-need workforce professions; it also, however, underscored the ongoing conflict between the view of higher education as the site of broad learning versus as a path to a degree for the purpose of workforce participation. Yet external drivers of change, however immediate and salient, must penetrate and unravel layers of resistance involving multiple contexts if they are to impact teaching quality and student learning.

Anna Neumann (2005), Professor of Higher Education at Columbia University, points to the underlying assumption that "faculty work implies faculty learning" (p. 64). Historically, faculty learning has referred to activities that expanded and deepened faculty members' expertise in their subject or discipline area. Institutional initiatives to enhance ongoing faculty learning have traditionally been limited to support for travel to professional meetings and conferences, paid sabbatical leaves, advanced degree funding, training for leadership roles, and funding or release time for research projects. These were standard practices and the extent of professional development from the founding of American higher education until the mid-1960s (Gaff & Simpson, 1994; Lewis, 1996).

An essential quality of learning is the ability to profit from one's experiences; the same concept might be applied more broadly to learning organizations and even for industry sectors as a whole. Unfortunately, as Christopher Lucas (1994) notes in his history of American colleges and universities, faculty members work within a system which is reluctant to embrace change and new ways of thinking. It is not surprising, then, that the impetus for teaching improvement has consistently come from the external environment rather than from within higher education itself. As higher education institutions respond to calls for increased accountability in teaching effectiveness and documentation of student learning, it is clear that the rules—and the roles—are changing.

Overview of Contexts that Impact Faculty Learning

Faculty members operate within a number of professional contexts which can compel or impede ongoing learning and development. The historical role of faculty, institutional culture, and disciplinary membership influence faculty member behaviors; yet even within academic disciplines, faculty members “represent unique constellations of theoretical choices, epistemological commitments, and beliefs about what is important to study and how to study it” (Lattuca, 2005, p. 19). Faculty learning then can be viewed as situated in a number of intersecting, sometimes contradictory, contexts. Yet as Stephen Brookfield (1995a) notes, context is neither benign nor value-neutral; a context has the power to constrain personal and professional learning, as well as to alter the content, meaning, and interpretation of what is to be learned.

Clearly, imperatives to enhance and develop teaching have highlighted the tensions between the hierarchical and divided dimensions of research and teaching in the faculty role, illuminating teaching's historically secondary position in relation to research in higher education. Perhaps it is teaching's close association with the K-12 profession, with its feminized role, low wages, and diminished social status, that accounts for some degree of resistance. Or perhaps resistance is

buttressed by the lesser—and for many, merely tolerated—role of teaching in faculty life that has done little to secure a scholar’s advancement and tenure. Faculty “success” in research-intensive institutions has normally been defined not only by the number and quality of publications and grants secured but also by release from teaching responsibilities.

Early conceptions of discipline-based faculty learning as described by Gaff and Simpson (1994) have been incorporated into Ernest Boyer’s (1990) three-part model of scholarship, teaching, and service which has served as the guiding framework for the modern faculty role. However, the primacy of research and scholarship has remained, evident in that they have traditionally been more heavily weighted in performance evaluation for tenure and promotion decisions. The result has been what Nancy Trautmann (2008) calls “the undervaluation of teaching in the reward system for faculty” (p. 45). It is not surprising then that faculty members have internalized this implicit hierarchy in their belief systems in enacting their role and in their efforts to meet their institutions’ requirements for professional advancement.

Julian Rotter (1954) notes that when faced with a conflict between beliefs and experience, people are more likely to operate from their beliefs. Faculty members’ beliefs not only influence their teaching but also their views of ongoing professional learning. Rosemary Caffarella and Lynn Zinn (1999) contend that faculty member beliefs and values about professional development can influence motivation for learning; further, as Sorcinelli et al. (2006) maintain, faculty members’ beliefs about their disciplinary learning are stronger than their beliefs about learning and development in their teaching. As beliefs structure and underscore behavior (Bandura, 1986), an overemphasis on scholarship in the conception and reality of the faculty role can itself serve as a deterrent to teaching enhancement. Further, if “adequate” teaching, variably defined, has been the norm for evaluation,

carrying little consequence for advancement and job security, faculty members may be unaware of the need for professional learning in their own teaching (Wenger & Snyder, 2000; Holton, 2002).

Faculty members' disciplinary world views of teaching, learning, and knowledge construction could also be considered a barrier to teaching development. Members of academic disciplinary communities share values, norms, practices, and world views (Lattuca, 2005); in addition, a discipline may have its own standards or expectations regarding how best to teach its accepted body of knowledge. As studies of disciplinary differences in teaching suggest (Neumann, Parry & Becher, 2002; Trigwell, 2002; Lueddeke, 2003; Lindblom-Ylänne, Trigwell, Nevgi & Ashwin, 2006), academic disciplines can have an impact on faculty members' conceptions of and approaches to teaching.

Disciplinary world views as they are enacted in teaching could make some disciplines potentially less amenable to teaching development. Lisa Lattuca (2005) of the University of Michigan notes that the departmental and institutional contexts within which faculty members work can effectively "reify or bury new ideas" (p. 20). Further, the culture of the discipline, and by extension, the academic department, can serve as additional constraints. Faculty members who might be genuinely interested in teaching enhancement could be concerned that seeking consultative services for their teaching might be perceived as a betrayal of department, supervisor, or academic tribe (Biglan, 1983; Becher, 1989). As a result, Ylijoki (2000) contends that enhancing teaching quality in some departments will require influencing the discipline at the cultural level which has the power to shape and reinforce the identities of its members.

While there is no singular or unified faculty identity, issues of professional identity are significant considerations in faculty teaching and learning. Faculty members' identification with the "expert" role can not only serve as an obstacle to teaching development but also contributes to the

perception that faculty development is a deficit rather than enhancement activity. If the greater part of a faculty member's overall identity is comprised of alignment with the faculty expert role conjoined with membership in a particular disciplinary community, the result may be increased territoriality and resistance to change efforts. Elizabeth Minnich (2005), Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) scholar, underscores the difficulty that vertical or hierarchical departments and institutions in higher education will face in responding to imminent and future changes. As interdisciplinary/cross-disciplinary dialogues and partnerships will become increasingly important in addressing challenges, disciplinary and departmental insularity will need to be addressed to facilitate not only teaching enhancement but also broader campus change efforts.

Adult Learning Context and Need for the Study

In addition to the numerous challenges in the professional contexts within which they work, faculty members' prior experience and unique biographies represent another important dimension that can have an inhibiting or persisting influence on college teachers' readiness and willingness to learn. While it might be common practice to view faculty members as compartmentalized learners devoid of influences or considerations beyond the professional domain, it is instead appropriate and necessary to view faculty members as adult learners—that is, as multi-dimensional and complex human beings in various stages of development. Sue Clegg (2008) contends that class, gender, and family responsibilities, acknowledged or not, have continued salience in faculty members' professional lives. Sharan Merriam (2004) adds considerations of culture and race, spiritual belief system, age, affect, and life experience in conjunction with cognition to the list of factors that can impact how, what, and whether adults learn. While it is common for teaching and learning centers to include the development of the faculty member as a “person” as part of its mission, programming in this area is often limited to faculty renewal, vitality, spirituality, and work-life balance concerns.

An early researcher in faculty development who proposed an inclusive model which highlighted the development of the faculty member as person is Norbert Ralph. Ralph's "Stages of Faculty Development" (1973) model was drawn from the work of Jane Loevinger (1976), William Perry (1970), and Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan (1971) and took as its premise that faculty development programs "must be based on an understanding of personality development as a whole, not just on adapting to a professional role" (p. 61). Influenced by theories of adult learning and development, Ralph posited that "development means dealing with experience in increasingly sophisticated and complex ways and being able to integrate this complexity into stable structures" (p. 62). His conceptualization of faculty learning and development included the need to "examine the form or structure of faculty assumptions about social reality and how these change through life" (p. 62).

Few researchers since Ralph have explored the personal development of faculty members (Sorcinelli, 1982; Schuster, 1989; van der Bogert, et al., 1990). Limited too has been research within or beyond the faculty development literature that addresses faculty members as adult learners (Svinicki, 1996; Cranton, 1994, 1996, 1997; Lawler & King, 2000; Cranton & King, 2003) or that examines some element of faculty teacher or teaching development using a particular adult learning lens (Saroyan, Amundsen, & Li, 1997; Robertson, 1997 & 1999; Boud & Walker, 1998). As the learning and development of college teachers cannot be understood or enhanced apart from their life contexts, this study uses an adult developmental approach to understand and explore what Parker Palmer (1998) calls "the who, the self that teaches" at the intersection of faculty personal and professional learning (p. 4).

Statement of the Problem

Despite efforts to enhance teaching effectiveness, meaningful change in faculty learning and college teaching has been slow to arrive. Patricia Cranton and Kathleen King (2003) point to the tension educators of adults face between addressing college teachers' immediate instructional needs and providing learning opportunities that speak to their development: "Professional development activities that focus on the *how to* rather than the broader issues of practice are an attempt to make knowledge about teaching instrumental" (p. 31).

Palmer (1998) notes that "tips, tricks, and techniques" are ineffective in teacher or teaching development (p. 11): "Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique," he says, but instead emanates from "the identity and integrity of the teacher" (p. 10). A focus on the efficacious rather than the developmental might explain why professional development in a number of adult learning contexts "tends to be seen as not valuable, perhaps because [adult educators] are not themselves grounded in adult learning theory" (Cranton & King, 2003, p. 31). Therefore, teaching enhancement initiatives that highlight the performative and instrumental while neglecting the significance of faculty members' development and experience as adult learners will necessarily be limited in advancing faculty learning about teaching. As Merriam (2004) maintains, "the more we know about the identity of the learner, the context of this learning, and the learning process itself, the better able we are to design effective learning experiences" (p. 199).

The Study Purpose and Guiding Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore how college faculty members from teaching-intensive liberal arts colleges made meaning of their learning and development as teachers. To that end, a qualitative narrative study was designed to explore significant events and influences on the

learning and development of a purposeful sample of ten active college teachers. Data were gathered through the use of a semi-structured interview protocol to address the following guiding questions:

1. What kinds of experiences do participants identify as meaningful in their learning and development as teachers?
2. What influences on their learning and development do participants identify as significant?
3. What insights into college teaching development and adult learning emerge from participants' experiences?
4. What implications for teaching development and adult learning can be identified based on the study findings and participants' learning experiences?

The Research Approach

Qualitative research is grounded in constructivist assumptions about knowledge and the nature of knowing. The complexities of human experience manifested in teaching require attention to personal, historical, professional, and disciplinary contexts; as a result, a narrative approach was appropriate to understand how college faculty members learn and develop. In addition, narrative inquiry provides a method to explore participants' experiences of identity development (McAdams, 1993; Singer, 2004; Pals, 2006) and emphasizes process and change over time (Elliot, 2005). Each participant's developmental journey, like that of any adult learner, is unique (Daloz, 1999). Because narrative studies provide access to reflective and "retrospective meaning-making," it is a fitting approach for exploring the learning and development of faculty learners (Chase, 2008, p. 64).

Significance of the Study

This study has potential significance for adult learning, academic/faculty development, and higher education administrators. There are few studies of college teacher learning and development that explore a relationship between faculty members' professional learning and their development

and learning as adults. The study and its approach provide another lens on faculty learning and development and also contribute to the literature on meaning-making as it relates to how adults and professionals learn.

The interview portion of the study provided an opportunity for participants to reflect on their teaching, learning, and development. As one participant noted at the end of his interview, “These are questions faculty members should be asked before they even begin teaching.” Lastly, the Critical Event (Woods, 1993a) approach could provide a useful model for academic developers/consultants who seek a mechanism to uncover and identify the experiences and influences that have shaped their faculty members’ thinking, development, and teaching practice.

Researcher Assumptions

The researcher’s assumptions guiding the approach to the study and the interpretation of the findings were these:

1. Adult learning and development continue across the lifespan.
2. The pace of adult learners’ development varies.
3. Adult learners construct and re-construct experience and meaning in a variety of ways.
4. Adults’ learning and development occur individually and in concert with others and are influenced by the environment.
5. Learning in adulthood occurs asynchronously across a number of dimensions.
6. Age, experience, social class, and advanced education are not guarantees of adult development.
7. Integrated adult development supports teaching effectiveness/expertise, openness to other perspectives, reflective capacity, and motivation for ongoing personal and professional learning.

Researcher Perspective

At the time of the study, I was employed as a faculty member in a small liberal arts college similar in nature to the participants' institutions. The knowledge gained from this experience allowed me to understand the intricacies and idiosyncrasies of working in a teaching-intensive environment which differs in many ways from research-intensive institutions. While such knowledge is valuable in providing insight into participants' experiences, having such knowledge could be considered a liability in the research process, as it has the potential to bias interpretation. In order to counter such a possibility, I engaged in ongoing journaling and memoing throughout the study to explore assumptions and interpretations that might be influenced by similar experiences and institutional situativeness. In addition, I engaged in dialogues and perception checks with colleagues, classmates, and committee members to explore the possible ways in which my understanding and interpretation of the data might have been impacted by my preconceptions and experience. More broadly, to address potential subjectivities and strengthen the study's credibility, procedures were implemented to ensure the integrity of the findings and interpretations. These procedures are articulated in the methods chapter.

Study Limitations

The focus of the study was a small sample of college teachers. As a result, the outcomes were influenced by the contexts, personal experiences, institutional cultures, and backgrounds of the participants. Consequently, the findings cannot be extended or generalized to faculty members in different institutional classifications or to adult learners in general.

As the participants began to enroll in the study, it soon became clear that the sample comprised only mid-career faculty members, which was not an intentional part of the study design;

therefore, different findings might have resulted had a more diverse sample of faculty from across career stages been included.

Key Terms and Definitions

Cognitive-Affective Integration: Developmental alignment of cognitive and affective domains characterized by cognitive complexity (dialectical thinking/post-formal and reflective cognition) and affective capacities in the intrapersonal and interpersonal realms (Labouvie-Vief & Diehl, 2000).

Cognitive Complexity: Within the field of social psychology, the degree to which people differentiate between diverse components of their social environment—specifically, the capacity to interpret social behavior in a multi-dimensional way (Bieri, 1966).

Cognitive Dissonance: The experience of a gap between what one believes and one's expectations or between what one believes should be the case and what appears, in reality, to be true (Festinger, 1957).

Constructed Knowing: View of knowledge as contextual and created by the knower which highlights subjective and objective ways of knowing as valuable and valid (Belenky et al., 1986).

Constructivism: A system in which knowing is considered to be part of the active process of meaning-making which assumes meaning does not reside in the thing or experience but is constructed by the individual (Steffe & Gale, 1995).

Development: The process and pattern of changes that occur over the lifespan, resulting in qualitatively different and more complex ways of engaging and making meaning of the self and the world (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2009).

Dialectical Thinking: Considered a post-formal cognitive stage, a mode of cognition in which contradictions and ambiguity are expected and which allows for the acceptance of alternative truths or ways of thinking and knowing (Benack & Basseches, 1989).

Disjuncture/Disjunctive Experience: An incident in one's meaning system which occurs when our biographical repertoire is no longer sufficient to automatically cope with a situation. One result of a "disconnect" between one's history and experience is a disturbance in a person's automatic sense-making process (Jarvis, 2006).

Embeddedness: Bounded state in which the self is aligned with its own subjective perceptions, resulting in a person's inability to see his/her own situativeness or world view. The result is the tendency to project one's perceptions onto the world with the result that one's perceptions and beliefs are taken to constitute objective reality. Embeddedness impacts a person's ability to recognize or observe his/her own assumptions and preconceptions and influences meaning-making capacity (Kegan, 1982).

Epistemology: The overarching structure and system of beliefs and experiences that form one's world view and influence meaning-making and development; "how we know what we know" (Crotty, 1998, p. 8).

Interpret: To apply a particular meaning or significance to a lived experience; how sense is made of life events or experience (Ochberg, 1996).

Learner-Centered Instruction: Teaching approaches that focus on the learner by shifting the classroom dynamic away from teacher-led interaction toward engagement in learning. It is characterized by an emphasis on student learning, how learning occurs, effective teaching for learning, and ways to promote motivation, learning, and success for all learners (Henson, 2003).

Lumina Foundation: An independent private foundation committed to increasing the proportion of Americans who have high-quality college-level learning.

Meaning-making: The process of sensemaking and interpretation of experience in light of one's biography, culture, formal and informal education, personal history, group membership, and

sociocultural context; meaning-making has three dimensions: cognition, affect, and motivation (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2009).

Meaning Perspectives (or Frames of Reference): The structure of assumptions and expectations through which individuals filter their sense impressions and experience (Mezirow, 2000, p. 16).

Meaning Schemes: Specific beliefs, feelings, attitudes, and value judgments believed to comprise one's point of view (Mezirow, 2000, p. 18).

Narrative: An exploration of the way people impose meaning and order on their life experiences (Bamberg, 2006).

Postformal Cognitive Development: Stage of development beyond Piaget's formal operations characterized by the ability to reflect on one's thinking and to recognize knowledge and knowledge systems as incomplete and relative. It extends beyond the logic and problem-solving of formal operations and includes problem-posing and problem-finding (Arlin, 1975; Sinnott, 1998).

Teacher-Centered Instruction: Teaching approaches marked by transmission of information, passive student behavior, and teacher- or content-centered strategies and methods (Knowles, 1998; Weimer, 2002).

Way of Knowing: The meaning-making system through which experience is filtered and understood (Drago-Severson, 2004).

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter One provided the background, context, and structure for the current study. Chapter Two presents a conceptual review of the relevant literatures, while Chapter Three describes the methodology, including specifics related to the coding, data analysis, and category development of the data which served as the basis for the study's findings. Chapter Four presents the findings from

the Critical Event protocol, while Chapter Five discusses participants' experiences and learning in light of adult learning and development theory. Chapter Six presents the implications of the study for adult learning and college teaching development, along with recommendations for future research that emerged from the inquiry and its outcomes.

Chapter 2: Review of Selected Literature

We do not think of the ordinary person as preoccupied with such difficult and profound questions as *What is truth? What is authority? To whom do I listen? What counts for me as evidence? How do I know what I know?* Yet to ask ourselves these questions and to reflect on our answers is more than intellectual exercise, for our basic assumptions about the nature of truth and reality and the origins of knowledge shape the way we see the world and ourselves as participants in it. They affect our definitions of ourselves, our sense of control over life events, [and] our views of teaching and learning.

—Belenky, Clinchy, & Goldberger (1986, p. 3)

There are more than a few challenges evident in attempting to study, understand, and influence faculty learning. Perhaps, as Cheryl Amundsen and Mary Wilson (2012) suggest in their comprehensive conceptual review of the educational development literature in higher education, we are not asking the “right” questions. When faculty learning is aligned with adult learning and development, different questions emerge, yet viewing faculty learning from an adult developmental perspective enhances the dialogue and suggests insights that may inform a better understanding of faculty learners as individuals and members of a professional collective. This chapter lays the groundwork to establish a relationship between faculty learning and adult development through discussion of definitional challenges, teacher beliefs and conceptions, select adult development theories, and adult meaning-making.

Definitional Challenges

First principles, Clarice. Simplicity. Read Marcus Aurelius. Of each particular thing ask, *What is it in itself? What is its nature?*

—Dr. Hannibal Lecter (Harris, 1988, p. 227)

Faculty Learning. A principle difficulty in understanding—and subsequently influencing—the development of faculty is that there is no encompassing definition of faculty learning. While conceptions of faculty learning and development are often viewed as aligned with Gaff’s (1975) three-part framework, Robert Menges and Ann Austin (2001) offer a reminder that it is rare for

developers and administrators to talk in depth about what it really “means” for professors to learn. Marilla Svinicki’s (1996) work with faculty learners led to her conclusion that faculty learning is subject to the same principles of learning as their students, while Jan Vermunt and Maaike Endedijk’s (2011) study of teacher learning suggests that learning patterns in teaching development are variably influenced by personal and contextual factors. As a result, faculty members bring to their learning “different prior knowledge, experiences, and values,” making their learning and development as teachers highly unpredictable (Kiss, 2012, p. 30).

Learning for faculty members often refers to skills training, professional development in curriculum work or leadership, scholarly development, or career-stage learning. However, Stephen Brookfield (1986) cautions against confusing adults’ learning and development with “instrumental learning that is learning how to perform at an improved level of competence in some pre-defined skill domain” (p. 99), as such a perspective raises questions related to who defines competence and how improvement or mastery is assessed. Moreover, learning that involves knowledge acquisition and skill enhancement—what Portnow et al. (1998) call *informational learning*—is different from learning connected to development that “leads to deep and pervasive shifts in a [person’s] perspective and understanding” (Portnow et al., 1998, p. 22).

Studies of faculty learning often decontextualize faculty members and their experience, attempting to study teaching development and college teacher learning as though they were externalized components that could be understood and influenced apart from the faculty members themselves. From his work in teaching development and teacher learning, Martin Haberman (1992) notes that “unless the nature of the learner is known, little can be taught or learned” (p. 30). Sorcinelli et al. (2006) add that attempts to influence faculty learners and their development must

recognize and acknowledge the multiple roles and situative personal/professional contexts in which faculty members live, work, and learn.

Teaching. Another definitional difficulty is that within faculty development—perhaps even across the higher education sector—there is no cohesive or inclusive definition of teaching. Alenoush Saroyan and Cheryl Amundsen (2001) note that teaching is more than intentional action; it involves complex cognition (Cross, 1990; Pratt, 1997) and imagination (Shulman, 1987) guided by personal theories and assumptions (Ramsden, 1992; Pratt, 1997). In addition, Saroyan and Amundsen (2001) suggest the teaching task is often influenced by external and contextual factors, such as the culture of the institution, department norms, and unexpected changes at the course, program, or institutional level (p. 347).

Conceptions of teaching are often based on the teaching context, disciplinary world view, or type of institution in which teaching occurs. Attempts to uncover the essence of teaching are further challenged because teaching is often conflated with student learning. Subsequently, if the intended learning as defined by the teacher's goals was not achieved, then teaching either did not occur or could not be considered effective. However, conflation of the terms presupposes a *post hoc ergo propter hoc* (after it, therefore, because of it) logic system that assumes learning is a direct result of teaching. Such logic is rarely true in the empirical world and even less likely when applied to separate but interactive constructs such as teaching and learning in which human beings constitute the primary variables (Morrison, 2008).

Lesley Kuhn (2008) explains that activities in which individuals and their endeavors are primary are inherently complex; moreover, attempts to study or focus on one area “will not reduce the multi-dimensionality, nonlinearity, interconnectedness, or unpredictability encountered” (p. 183).

Teaching and learning, then, while connected and related, maintain their own coherence and essentiality (Haggis, 2008).

As educational researcher Brent Davis (2003) notes, teaching is “a complex phenomenon and therefore irreducible. It transcends its parts, and so cannot be studied strictly in terms of a compilation of those parts” (p. 17). Kiss (2012), in his study of the complexity of teacher learning, concurs that “teaching and learning are never straightforward and linear processes” but instead are characterized by uncertainty and interconnectedness (p. 29). Davis and colleague Dennis Sumara (2007) further suggest the need for conceptions that recognize teaching and teaching development as sites of contradiction comprised of “accidental and deliberate events, tacit and explicit knowledge, and private and public happenings” (p. 55).

Teacher beliefs and conceptions of teaching.

Conceptions are specific meanings attached to phenomena which then mediate our response to situations involving those phenomena. We form conceptions of virtually every aspect of our perceived world, and in so doing, use those abstract representations to delimit something from, and relate it to, other aspects of our world. In effect, we view the world through the lenses of our conceptions, interpreting and acting in accordance with our understanding of the world.

—Daniel Pratt (1992, p. 204)

Teacher beliefs and conceptions of teaching have been studied for decades (Kane et al., 2002). Depending upon the research tradition and researcher epistemology, the language used to investigate these constructs might differ—for example, a number of studies have been conducted on teacher thinking, implicit theories, theories of mind, professional knowledge landscapes, schemata for teaching, thinking dispositions, and teaching knowledge structures (Fox, 1983; Nespor, 1987; Sherman et al., 1987; Livingston & Borko, 1989; Cole, 1990; Dunkin, 1990; Floden & Klinzing, 1990; Pajares, 1992; Connelly & Clandinin, 1994; Carter & Doyle, 1996; Clandinin & Connelly, 1996).

Studies of teaching beliefs and conceptions often seek to understand the connection between faculty members' conceptions of teaching (Samuelowicz & Bain, 1992; Prosser, Trigwell, & Taylor, 1994; Kember, 1997; Kane et al., 2002; Norton et al., 2005; Gonzalez, 2011) or teaching approach (Prosser & Trigwell, 1997; Kember & Kwan, 2000; Neumann, 2001; Trigwell, 2002; Lueddeke, 2003; Trigwell & Prosser, 2004; Lindblom-Ylänne et al., 2006) and teaching practice. Vivian Richardson (1996) maintains that the beliefs teachers hold "drive classroom actions and influence the teacher change process" (p. 102), while Frank Pajares (1992) contends that although a lack of clarity related to terminology in this area has impeded progress, teacher beliefs form an important construct that furthers understanding of teacher learning.

In her dissertation on K-12 teacher development, Jennifer Berger (2002) concludes the relationship between teachers' conceptions of teaching and their teaching approach is both multifaceted and recursive (pp. 5-6), resulting in innumerable and individualized factors that impact teaching decisions. The powerful combination of faculty members' beliefs and experiences from grade school through graduate training results in concretized models or gestalts that influence and shape how faculty members see themselves as teachers and conceive of the teaching role (Berger, 2002). Importantly, these mental models also guide how faculty members view their discipline and their students in the teaching transaction.

A positive outcome of teaching belief and conception research has been an increased understanding of the importance of faculty members' beliefs and conceptions as they are enacted in teaching (Kember & Kwan, 2000; Carnell, 2007; Virtanen & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2010; Gonzalez, 2011; Vermunt & Endedijk, 2011). Studies in this area point to some level of agreement among researchers that faculty conceptions of teaching, teaching beliefs, and teaching approaches can be characterized as teacher/content-centered or student/learning-centered (Kember, 1997; Carnell, 2007;

Law et al., 2007; Parpala and Lindblom-Ylänne, 2007; Virtanen & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2010; Gonzalez, 2011). A finding from this research body that could merit further inquiry is the suggestion that teachers perceived as performing beyond the “competent” level of practice possess sophisticated and integrated conceptions of teaching, as opposed to the one dimensional or simplistic constructs identified in new or inexperienced teachers (Dunkin, 1990; Dunkin & Precians, 1992; Entwistle & Walker, 2000).

Teaching belief and conception research, while meaningful for thinking about teaching development, has its critics (Kember, 1997; Kane, et al., 2002; Devlin, 2006). Marcia Devlin (2006) suggests that the research into teaching conceptions and beliefs has evolved from potentially inaccurate assumptions. First, she claims that the research body is based on a purported causal relationship between teaching conceptions, teaching practice, and student learning. In addition, she suggests that research in this area assumes that student-centered conceptions of teaching are “better” and more desirable, which has not yet been established across academic disciplines and teaching contexts. Further, Kane et al. (2002) and Devlin (2006) maintain that much research into teacher conceptions is based on espoused or personal theories rather than on teachers’ theories-in-action observed in the practice setting. In addition, Norton et al. (2005) identify marked variability in beliefs and conceptions across institutions, discipline areas, and years of teaching experience, making it unlikely that findings from such studies can be generalized across institutional settings and academic areas.

More broadly, studies of teacher conceptions and beliefs often privilege a cognitive perspective both in the way college teacher learning is studied and in how teachers are believed to learn about teaching. Such a perspective disregards the influence of life experience and the interactive impact of the affective dimension on teachers’ cognitive development. A further

limitation of this research body is that investigations of teaching conceptions and beliefs do not acknowledge or probe the values that underscore and shape faculty beliefs, making change at the conceptual level exceedingly difficult (Hunt, 1977; Berger, 2002). In addition, while faculty values expressed as beliefs about teaching can drive behavior, they are also inextricably linked to issues of identity (Erikson, 1964) which Roberts and Caspi (2003) identify as a major integrative factor in adult development.

Teaching effectiveness. In higher education institutions, teaching effectiveness is of particular concern to faculty members, as evaluation of their teaching could impact job security and professional advancement opportunities. In the external environment, as institutions are being asked to produce evidence of student learning—and by extension, effective teaching—how teaching effectiveness is characterized and evaluated becomes increasingly important. However, teaching effectiveness constitutes a particularly thorny construct challenge, as the language employed related to “good” teaching and “effective” teaching is often used interchangeably in the literature (Biggs, 1989; Ramsden & Martin, 1996; Yates, 2005). Bartram and Bailey (2009) attempt to distinguish the two concepts, defining teaching effectiveness as related to the achievement of a particular learning outcome, while good teaching involves the teacher’s ability to produce a positive affective response in students (p. 173). Biggs (1999) sees good teaching as “getting students to use higher cognitive level processes” (p. 9), while Bhatti (2012) maintains that good teaching “represents professors’ intentions, efforts, and interactions with students to facilitate student learning and to bring about qualitative change in student thinking” (p. 44).

Studies of good teaching appear to comprise three categories. The first involves research on college teachers’ views of effective teaching (Kember & Kwan, 2000; Carnell, 2007). The second research strand explores the beliefs and practices of award-winning or exemplary college teachers

(Dunkin & Precians, 1992; Hativa, Barak, & Simhi, 2001; Bain, 2004; Kane, Sandretto, & Heath, 2004), while the third body of studies focuses on undergraduate students' perceptions of effective instructors or good teaching (Reid & Johnston, 1999; Young & Shaw, 1999; Entwistle, Skinner, Entwistle, & Orr, 2000; Bartram & Bailey, 2009). Yet regardless of the angle from which the construct is studied, research findings in this area remain inconsistent and difficult to generalize (Bhatti, 2012).

Teaching effectiveness could be considered context- and discipline-dependent, as teaching goals and approaches are often defined or constrained by disciplinary knowledge bodies, institutional culture, professional program requirements, and the immediate teaching context. For example, in some academic programs, learning is expected to “look” a certain way and will be demonstrated and assessed in a particular form according to the standards of a discipline or the requirements of an external regulatory body.

Some college teachers from various disciplines see their subject areas as organized and stable collections of facts, skills, and concepts (Leinhardt & Smith, 1985; Ball, 1988; Florio & Lensmire, 1990) with commensurate teaching approaches that are necessarily prescriptive and rule-based (Hollingsworth, 1998). Consequently, professors in such discipline areas could find it unsettling to be exposed to information about forms of instruction that are not highly sequenced or structured (Florio & Lensmire, 1990).

Teachers often have a personal connection to their subject area and curriculum, which Palmer (1998) notes can intersect with their personal and professional identity; as a result, being asked to rethink their understanding of teaching could be perceived as personally or professionally threatening to their disciplinary epistemologies and world views. As a result, making a change in one's teaching

is a momentous decision, and some faculty members may have difficulty making sense of what it would mean to teach their subject differently.

Studies of exceptional and award-winning college teachers (Bain, 2004; Hativa, Barak, & Simhi, 2001; Kane et al., 2004; Layne, 2012) seek to uncover behaviors that others might emulate for similar success. Yet as developers and educational researchers likely know, the same behaviors and approaches rarely work with all learners, in all content areas, or in variable teaching contexts. The personality of exceptional teachers is seldom considered in these studies, although personality factors are believed to correlate with adult learners' open or closed dispositions to their ongoing growth and development (Helsen & Shrivastava, 2011).

Effective teaching at a basic level requires a combination of knowledge and skills, but it cannot be understood or conceptualized apart from the teacher's purposes, values, or commitments (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1995). Contrary to views of teaching as singularly approach- or behavior-driven, teaching practice is a multidimensional construct that involves numerous competencies in combination with the teacher's personal qualities. While training in course planning and pedagogical knowledge is an important component in college teacher learning, such training is insufficient for faculty learning about teaching (Ho et al., 2001).

Several researchers suggest that the concept of effective teaching remains incomplete (Young & Shaw, 1999; Gonzalez, 2011; Bhatti, 2012), as effectiveness is often characterized by specific approaches applied in narrow contexts or by generalizations that do little to add to collective understanding but appear somehow connected to student-centered or learning-centered instruction (Carpenter & Tait, 2001; Devlin & Samarawickrema, 2010). Studies conducted on effective teaching that draw upon the perspectives of both students and professors in some instances report overlapping

characterizations, but participants from the respective groups do not ultimately value the same traits, behaviors, attitudes, or qualities in teaching (Feldman, 1988; Layne, 2012).

Maryellen Weimer (2013) maintains that effective teaching defies definition because, according to researchers, there are too many variables in the equation. Regardless of the teacher's approach, the learner must be willing and ready to learn what the teacher is teaching (Labaree, 2000); yet even when these two conditions for learning are met, there is still no guarantee that learning will occur. Weimer (2013) further contends that students can and do learn from what might be characterized as ineffective instruction, as learners at every age level are the final arbiters of what and whether they will learn.

What Does It Mean to Be “Developed”?

Faculty development. In the field of academic or faculty development, definitions of development might differ based upon who is asked. Developers, administrators, and faculty themselves will likely have diverse perceptions of what faculty development “means” depending not only on their conceptions of teaching and learning but also what they perceive as their role in maintaining or changing a particular working or implicit definition. Yet regardless of whether one's view is aligned with teaching and learning as process or product-related, an integrative conception of faculty learning considers the professional learning of faculty members as inseparable from and intricately connected to their personal learning and life roles beyond the workplace (van der Bogert et al., 1990).

Adult learning and development. From a developmental perspective, adult learning has been explored through a number of theoretical lenses. From biological and psychological approaches to sociocultural and integrative models, studies of adult learning and development continue to branch off to investigate more nuanced elements of what it means for adults to learn and grow. However,

collective understandings of what it means to “develop” are, of course, culturally bound and therefore relative. Mark Tennant and Philip Pogson (1995) contend that conceptions of development are inherently contestable; “because different versions of development serve the interests of different groups, it is as much a political as it is a psychological construct” (pp. 198-199). Tennant (1988) elsewhere advises that those who work with adult learners need to be attentive to the ways in which their own theories might shape and maintain “conventionally held views about what it means to be a mature and healthy adult” (p. 65). Such considerations of normativity have particular salience for current and future faculty development work with international graduate students and faculty, as well as with first generation faculty.

Development is often equated with change, leading to a qualitatively different, more complex, and more inclusive way of making sense of the self and the world (Perry, 1968; Kegan, 1982; Daloz, 1986; Mezirow, 1991). From this perspective, development involves a constellation of levers and forces that interact with an adult’s learning biography and prior experience to influence learning. Each adult learning theory views developmental movement from a particular vantage point. Adult learning itself is a tapestry of many colors, borrowing freely from and dialoging with other literature and research bodies to better understand considerations of person and context, cognitive and psychological growth, culture and class, personal and professional learning, and the individual-social interaction in adults’ learning and development.

Within adult learning, development is conceptualized based upon which lens is applied to the phenomenon. In Jean Piaget’s (1952) cognitive theory, development is attained if the formal operations stage is reached, resulting in a learner’s ability to reason, assimilate, and accommodate. From a humanist perspective, development refers to an individual’s satisfaction of common hierarchical needs, resulting in actualized potentials (Rogers, 1961 & 1983; Maslow, 1970). In

human development, maturity in adults is equated with generativity, wisdom, competence, and ego development (Erikson, 1964; Loevinger, 1976; Sternberg, 1986; Helsen & Shrivastava, 2001).

Theories of personality development seek to understand the traits and tendencies that make individuals human (Allport, 1961; Eysenck, 1970). The individual's personality in early adulthood, in combination with contextual factors, is believed to result in a number of potential developmental paths (Helsen & Shrivastava, 2001). Yet most perspectives on development share a common view that it involves movement from an alignment with externally defined authority and value systems to an internally referenced framework that guides the learner's evolution and navigation (Perry, 1968; Kegan, 1982; Basseches, 1986; Daloz, 1999).

Conceptualizations of adult development. Development has been defined by Richard Lerner (1998) as “systematic change within an individual that results from a dynamic interaction of heredity and environmental influences” (cited in Bee & Bjorkland, 2004, p. 14). Tennant and Pogson's (1995) view of development is reminiscent of Piaget's (1972) perspective, with development occurring from an interaction between

the organism, with its constitutionally endowed equipment, and the social environment, with its historical and cultural formations. Development thus proceeds through a constant interaction between the person and the environment (Tennant & Pogson, 1995, p. 195).

However, change and development should not be considered synonymous. A learner's development involves change, but a change in the learner does not always result in development (Lerner, 2002; Overton, 2010).

Robert Kegan (1982) sees development as a resolution of self-other balances, resulting in the self's ability to view itself as both agent and object. Importantly, achieving self-other balance negotiation permits the self to see its own perceptions and assumptions while still taking action within its life structure. Necessary for this resolution, however, is the self's extrication from its “cultures of embeddedness” in which it often unconsciously resides. These cultures might be

personal, cultural, disciplinary, intellectual, professional, institutional, or societal. For Kegan (1994), development represents a series of transformations in how the self operates and is viewed in relation to others. In his model of constructive-developmental theory (1982), development involves movement through orders of consciousness which represent successful mastery of challenges in domains of dependence, independence, and interdependence.

While William Perry's (1970) framework of intellectual and ethical development focuses on learner movement from dualism to multiplicity, the work of Klaus Riegel (1973), Suzanne Benack and Michael Basseches (1989), Jan Sinnott (1998), and Michael Commons and Sara Ross (2008) extends adult cognitive development beyond Piaget's (1952) formal operations stage. This branch of research investigates post-formal adult development which is marked by the ability to operate within ambiguity and contradiction and to engage in dialectical thinking—that is, thinking that goes beyond abstract formal reasoning and is believed to support the capacity for reflection and contextual ways of knowing (Riegel, 1973; Basseches, 1984; Labouvie-Vief, DeVoe, & Bulka, 1989; Labouvie-Vief & Diehl, 2000). While post-formal cognitive skills are considered a hallmark of adult development, Gisela Labouvie-Vief's (1980, 1992) studies of adult development from a contextual perspective suggest a connection and interactive relationship between complex cognitive function and affective development in adults.

Psychological lenses on development. At the core of adult learning—or any learning—is the individual learner. The learner exists within what James Marcia (1980) terms a “self-structure” which he defines as “an internal, self-constructed dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history” (p. 159). Guided by and operating within this self-structure, the learner seeks to know the self and the social world, striving for clarity and understanding through a process termed “meaning making” (Merriam et al., 2009). While this striving on the surface might appear simple,

aligning the self's perception with the empirical world with any degree of accuracy is quite challenging perhaps because, as Peter Jarvis (2001) notes, the ability to make sense of knowledge and experience is often affected by the learner's psychological, cultural, and professional history.

The psychological development models focus on the internal process of development with an emphasis on the individual and the individual in relation to others. Erik Erikson's (1963) stage model of psychosocial development is one of the best known frameworks, providing insight into the life tasks he believes necessary in order to function and thrive in society. Issues of identity development, relational competencies, and generativity are especially relevant for faculty members and their learning, as identity forms the structure for personal and social identification, goals, and priorities that guide behavior (Erikson, 1964; Baumeister, 1986).

Erikson's (1963) theory includes eight developmental stages, each of which represents a prominent issue or crisis in need of resolution. While Erikson places issues of identity in the adolescent period, adult learning researchers include identity as a key component in understanding adult learners and their developmental paths (Merriam et al., 2009). For Erikson (1963), young adulthood has been the appointed time to address intimacy tensions, while middle adulthood is the period during which adults confront challenges in generativity and vitality. In older age, adults must resolve integrity challenges, which Erikson states lead to the capacity for wisdom. While Erikson (1963) presents his framework according to stages that need to be resolved for maturity, he notes that individuals often revisit the conflicts from earlier life stages in order to successfully resolve them in light of new knowledge, experience, and understanding.

In contrast, Daniel Levinson et al.'s (1978) age-graded model of development represents a sequence of transitional and static periods that tend to correlate with age and life task. Levinson views the individual's life structure as a pattern that alternates between periods of stability and

change. In his model, early life transition arises between 17 and 22, while entry into adult life and the work world occurs from 22 to 28. The age period of 28 to 33 marks the age-30 transition, whereas the culminating life structure transition transpires between age 33 and 40. The late adulthood period is believed to occur around age 60. Changes that affect the life structure in Levinson's model include marriage and children, occupational stages, friendships, religion, and community involvement (Merriam et al., 2009).

While Levinson's early work, *The Seasons of a Man's Life* (Levinson et al., 1978), focused exclusively on men, his later research partnership included studies of women (Levinson & Levinson, 1996). He and his colleague maintain that men and women follow the same patterns in building and maintaining the life structure, although they note that the structure and transitional periods in development "operate somewhat differently in females and males" (p. 36).

Sociocultural lenses. A sociocultural approach addresses how interaction with the social world impacts adult development (Shaffer, 2005). This approach considers the influences of age, gender, race, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation on adults' interaction with the world and explores society's role in defining and shaping the development of adults (Merriam et al., 2009). Researchers using this lens have paid increasing attention to the social and political contexts of adult learning and development, including systems of privilege that often provide greater advantages to some adult learners than others (Tisdell, 1993 & 1995; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998). Merriam et al. (2009) suggest that research on personal and sociocultural influences on adult learning has reframed concepts of race, gender, and other factors as social constructs, effectively moving sociocultural conceptions of adult learning and development from the individual to the social level.

Included in the sociocultural perspective on adult learning and development is attention to the timing of life events and the salience of adult social roles. Social roles refer to the roles adults hold at

work, at home, and in society. Changes in one area of life can affect the others, requiring adjustment and accommodation in an adult's learning. Role considerations are relevant for faculty learners in that their experience or situativeness as parents or caregivers in their personal world or as a junior faculty or tenured professor in their professional world shapes their perspective on learning and their participation in learning events. While early studies of social roles focused on role loss or gain, attention has shifted to considerations of role transition (Ferraro, 2001; Bee & Bjorkland, 2004). For faculty learners, the ability to balance these multiple personal and professional roles will be necessary for their ongoing learning and development (Sorcinelli, 2007).

The timing of life events is also an important consideration in both transition to the faculty role and in subsequent faculty learning. Bernice Neugarten (1976) points out that “every society is age-graded, and every society has a system of social expectations regarding age-appropriate behavior” with each age status having “its recognized rights, duties, and obligations” (p. 16). Particularly important for adult learners is whether life events occur “on-time” or “off-time”—that is, when culturally accepted or societally expected age- or stage-related events or tasks occur off-time, learners are less open to learning due to the coping required from stressful events that might be considered atypical for a particular life stage. Life event timing could be significant for faculty in induction/socialization phases, career stage learning, traditional vs. nontraditional paths to the professorate, work-life balance needs, and the tenure process.

The Challenge of Learning from Experience

Faculty members learn and develop within a number of personal and professional contexts which can impact their readiness and motivation for learning. Brookfield (1995a) notes that when investigating adult learners and their learning across the life course, considerations of personality, philosophy, culture, and race become far more significant than age or educational level (p. 1). Such

factors influence how faculty members view, understand, and experience learning. Eduard Lindeman (1926), considered a pioneer in the field of adult education, claims experience "is the adult learner's living textbook" (p. 7).

Learning from experience has become an accepted tenet in adult learning and development and is believed to be a distinguishing feature of adult learning (McClusky, 1964; Brookfield, 1987; Jarvis, 1987); however, what is learned from experience and how adults make sense of those experiences are still far from clear. Lindeman (1929) contends that meaning for adult learners "must reside in the things for which people strive, the goals which they set for themselves, [and] their wants, needs, desires and wishes" (p. 13). This assumes, of course, that all adults know what they want or need to learn, how they learn, and how best to accomplish that learning. Moreover, such a contention does not consider the contexts within which adults learn or the potential personal or professional constraints—actual or perceived—on their learning.

One of the earliest educational theorists to link learning, life experience, and meaning-making is John Dewey. Dewey (1917) describes learning as the "reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases [the learner's] ability to direct the course of subsequent experience" (pp. 89-90). Dewey (1938) later notes, "Every experience is a moving force. Its value can be judged only on the ground of what it moves toward and into" (p. 31).

Yet according to Brookfield (1985), experience is shaped by cultural and historical influences which form social filters that adult learners must learn to recognize and navigate. These filters on experience and knowledge change and evolve throughout life as adults grow and develop (Tennant & Pogson, 1995). To complicate matters, adult learners possess their own personal and subjective filters based on their biography, culture, and history through which they perceive and interpret their

experience and which variably influence how adults assign meaning to and extract meaning from experience (Tennant & Pogson, 1995). Brookfield (1995a) contends “how we sense and interpret what happens to us and to the world around us is a function of structures of understanding and perceptual filters that are so culturally embedded that we are scarcely aware of their existence or operation” (p. 4).

As adult learners, faculty members are presumed to bring vast reservoirs of experience to their learning. However, Brookfield (1995a) maintains that the length or repetition of experience is not indicative of its potency or impact on learning or development. Merriam, Mott, and Lee (1996) suggest that certain life experiences can themselves serve as barriers to learning. While faculty members’ experience as students, in combination with other factors, shape the development of their teaching persona and pedagogical predispositions (Wright & Tuska, 1968; Stephens, 1969; Nemser, 1983; Flores & Day, 2006), it is clear that the amount of experience they have in life or as teachers does not inevitably lead to teaching improvement or teaching excellence over time. Instead, as Brookfield (1995a) notes, faculty members may experience the same year of teaching multiplied by 30 years. Brookfield (1995a) further maintains that if years of teaching practice are conducted without what he calls “critical reflection on assumptions,” such experiences become not only habitual but can serve as continued confirmation of faculty members’ perceptions of students as passive, stupid, or unmotivated (p. 4).

Cognitive learning theorists emphasize the interactive relationship between learning and experience (Bruner, 1965; Piaget, 1978), while other theoretical perspectives highlight the emotional and dynamic nature of the learning-experience interaction (Rogers, 1951; Maslow, 1968). Psycho-developmentalists like Laurent Daloz (1999) contend that individuals develop best under their own power despite the personal, social, structural, and psychological forces that adult learners must

recognize and navigate as they make sense of their experience (p. 183). In doing so, adults must mediate and reconstruct their experiences in order for significant learning to occur (Tennant & Pogson, 1995, p. 151).

Sharan Merriam and Carolyn Clark's (1993) study of adults and their learning from experience suggests that for learning to be meaningful, "it must personally affect the learner, resulting in an expanded sense of self or life perspective"; importantly, for those who design learning events for faculty, the researchers note that to be meaningful, the learning "must be subjectively valued by the learner" (p. 129).

What learners find meaningful, however, varies tremendously. Because human beings possess differing personal and social filters on their experiences, it is possible for them to have diverse interpretations of the same information or event (Merriam & Heuer, 1996). Not only might people who share the same experience make sense of it differently—if sensemaking occurs at all—Jarvis (1987) notes they might have opposite interpretations of the same event, its significance, or its meaning (p. 73). Such insights can potentially explain how faculty learners can come away from a learning event with contradictory perceptions of what was said, what was meant, and what might be salient or timely for their learning. As a result of this variability, it can be inferred that what developers and administrators intend to be learned is far from guaranteed when creating learning opportunities for faculty.

Perspectives on Meaning Making

Truth is a word we give to a pattern that makes sense to us.

—Laurent Daloz (1999, p. 25)

Understanding how adults make sense of their experience requires a better understanding of the process of meaning-making, which Maddi (1970) considers a uniquely human endeavor. Sharan Merriam and Barbara Heuer (1996) maintain that human beings have an innate need to make

meaning both individually and collectively. They further suggest that meaning-making has three aspects or dimensions: cognitive, affective, and motivational (p. 244). Stern (1971) notes that human beings attach their own personal meaning and value to knowledge and experience. Meaning, then, cannot be considered inherent in an event or information source; instead, events and information become meaningful when interpreted as meaningful by the individual (Stern, 1971, p. 12).

Experience can play an important role in making meaning, but meaning-making also involves the synthesis of experience with cognition, affect, biography, personality, and context. Merriam and Heuer (1996) suggest that meaning-making is a circular and iterative process; yet it could be postulated that meaning-making at complex levels transcends the cognitive realm and therefore requires concurrent development across dimensions in order to perform well.

Victor Frankl (1977), existential psychologist and well-known concentration camp survivor, posited as a result of his internment experience that human beings have a will to meaning. Robert Kegan (1982) extends this idea from the person as meaning-maker to the person as incarnation of meaning when he says that individuals don't just make meaning but are themselves "the composing of meaning" (p. 11). Kegan (1982) explains that meaning-making occurs in a "zone of mediation which is located between an event and the learner's reaction to it—the place where the event is privately composed, made sense of, the place where it actually becomes an event for the person" (p. 2). Kegan (1982) further postulates that meaning-making "may very well be the fundamental context of personality development" (p. 264). A potential connection between teachers' ways of knowing (in Kegan's model, termed orders of consciousness) and personality could have interesting implications for teaching development research. Kegan's (1982) contention that learners make meaning of their experience in interaction with the social world is echoed by Peter Jarvis (1987):

Two factors can be concluded: first, that the experience that the participants have is itself socially constructed and is mediated through the channels of perception; secondly, that the

experiences do not have meaning in themselves and that the participants seek to define their situations and to impose meaning upon them. Thus their situations are socially defined, and the meanings that individuals impose upon them are socially constructed. (p. 76)

Battista and Almond's (1973) relativity model connects an adult's meaning-making to his/her system of beliefs. Their model suggests that it is a person's commitment to *any* belief system—not the content of the beliefs themselves—that not only serves as a source of meaning but also shapes and influences individual meaning-making. Battista and Almond's model emphasizes the process of meaning-making rather than the resulting outcome or product. Researchers in this area have sought to understand how belief systems develop within particular social contexts (Battista & Almond, 1973, p. 414).

Another key theorist that explores meaning-making as it relates to development is Jack Mezirow (1991) who describes meaning-making as an interpretive act: "To make meaning is to construe or interpret experience—in other words, to give it coherence" (p. 4). Mezirow (1991) maintains that the interpretive process in meaning-making primarily involves perception and cognition. He further suggests that meaning-making can be intentional or unintentional (p. 34).

Usher (1993) explains that not only is meaning contextual, but the environments in which meaning is made are themselves meaningful and therefore important for understanding faculty learning as situated within institutional and professional contexts:

When we interpret 'our' experience, we do so from a particular context or standpoint. The context is both a material and linguistic location, a bank of cultural significations, deposits of already existing meanings including the meanings of one's own experiential history. It is from this bank that interpretation draws in projecting meaning. (p. 170)

Meaning-Making, Adult Learning, and Developmental Change

Meaning-making appears intrinsically connected to development and learning, most especially in learning that has an impact on the learner's way of thinking and being in the world.

Carl Rogers (1983) calls such learning "significant" in that it "makes a difference in the behavior, the

attitudes, perhaps even the personality of the learner” (p. 20). Rogers (1951) elaborates that “a person learns significantly only those things which he [or she] perceives as being involved in the maintenance of, or enhancement of, the structure of self” (p. 388).

Merriam and Clark’s (1993) study of adult meaning-making suggests that for meaning-making to intersect with development, the self—or some aspect of the self-structure—must be challenged by the event or experience. When learning has an impact on the learner’s identity, meaning-making, and ability to function in the world, then learning has aligned with development.

For Mezirow (1991), adult learning involves making meaning of experience: “Meaning-making is central to what learning is all about” (p. 11). He further contends that “the process of learning to make meaning is focused, shaped, and delimited by our frames of reference” (p. 223). In his theory of transformative learning, the frames of reference he speaks of are known as *meaning perspectives* and *meaning schemes*. Mezirow (1991) maintains that if one’s meaning perspective cannot accommodate or make sense of an experience, one’s perspective can be changed through a process of critical reflection on assumptions. It is this process, Mezirow contends, that leads to what he terms “perspective transformation.” The outcome of such a transformation is a “more inclusive, discriminating, permeable, and integrative perspective” (1991, p. 14).

In Mezirow’s view (1991), “a strong case can be made for calling perspective transformation the central process of adult development” (p. 155). More broadly, when viewed from this lens, development involves adult learners’ increased ability to reflect on their experiences, to make meaning of their experiences, and to subsequently take action based on what has been learned (Merriam & Heuer, 1996).

Mezirow (1991) views development in adulthood as movement toward “developmentally progressive meaning perspectives” which he considers to be more complex and inclusive

perspectives that adults might choose because they want to better understand the meaning of their own experience (p. 192). Yet Mezirow's contention that individuals might choose a more inclusive and integrative perspective does not take into account that the development of such inclusive perspectives might require correlative development in other dimensions that would position the learner to manifest this capacity.

Similarly, Jarvis (1992) considers learning "the essence of everyday living and conscious experience" (p. 11). He notes that learning involves a process of transforming experience into knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and beliefs. For Jarvis (1992), learning is "the continuing process of making sense of everyday experience" which he believes occurs "at the intersection of a conscious human life with time, space, society, and relationship." Ultimately, for Jarvis (1992), learning is "a process of giving meaning to, or seeking to understand, life experience" (p. 11).

Daloz (1986) also views a connection between meaning-making, adult learning, and development. He states, "We develop by progressively taking apart and putting together the structures that give our lives meaning" (p. 236). Similar to Mezirow's perspective, Daloz (1986) perceives growth as "a series of transformations in our ways of making meaning" (p. 137). Daloz (1986) explains his view of what is involved in learning and change:

Significant learning and growth involve qualitative, developmental change in the way the world is viewed. We grow through a progression of transformations in our meaning-making apparatus, from relatively narrow and self-centered filters through increasingly inclusive, differentiated, and compassionate perspectives. (p. 149)

Daloz (1986) shares with Kegan (1994) a perspective of development that involves a synthesis of an old and new form which results in a revised and integrated structure from which the individual will then make new meaning.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed theoretical frameworks in adult learning in an effort to enhance understanding of how faculty learn and develop. Using various lenses on faculty learning was necessary, as no single theory can sufficiently explain the dimensions and considerations inherent in teaching development and teacher learning (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1995).

Faculty members as learners and developing teachers are influenced by a number of personal/professional factors and contextual impacts. The tradition of assuming advanced subject knowledge (knowing that) prepares faculty members to translate their considerable disciplinary knowledge into teaching (knowing how) highlights a key impediment to faculty learning and development. Moreover, this chapter also emphasized the importance of learner biography and experience and their subsequent impact on faculty members' meaning-making. Finally, when viewing faculty learning and development as connected to their learning and development as adults, it becomes evident that their learning as teachers is culturally mediated and imbued with personal and experiential meaning (Trahar, 2011).

Chapter Three provides an overview and description of the analytic framework and methods. Chapter Four presents the findings of the study, with an emphasis on exploring faculty participants' salient learning influences and experiences. Chapter Five broadens the findings to connect participants' learning to key areas of adult learning and teaching development, while Chapter Six provides conclusions and implications, as well as recommendations for future research that emerged from the study and its findings.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Story is the very stuff of teaching, the landscape within which we live as teachers and researchers and within which the work of teachers can be seen as making sense.

—Freema Elbaz (1991, p. 3)

This study sought to uncover how college faculty members learn and develop as teachers. To that end, a qualitative critical event narrative study was designed to explore significant events and influences on the learning and development of a sample of college teachers. Data were gathered through the use of a semi-structured interview protocol to address the overarching inquiry questions:

1. What kinds of experiences do participants identify as meaningful in their learning and development as teachers?
2. What influences on their learning and development do participants identify as significant?
3. What insights into college teaching development and adult learning emerge from participants' experiences?
4. What implications for teaching development and adult learning can be identified based on the study findings and participants' learning experiences?

This chapter describes the study methodology and includes discussion of the following: 1). Rationale for the research approach; 2). Overview of narrative inquiry; 3). Introduction to the Critical Event Approach; 4). Data needed to conduct the study; 5). Description of the sample; 6). Data collection; 7). Data analysis; 8). Ethical considerations; 9). Trustworthiness Criteria; and 10). Study Limitations. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of the section information.

Rationale for Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research presumes an exploratory stance in research and emphasizes the discovery and interpretation of participants' experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Merriam (2009) notes that qualitative research is concerned with “how meaning is constructed [and]

how people make sense of their lives and their worlds. The primary goal of a qualitative study is to uncover and interpret these meanings” (p. 24).

Qualitative research has its origin in anthropology and sociology and emphasizes both the human and the social (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Several fundamental assumptions of qualitative research guided the choice of framework:

1. It attempts to understand the process by which events and actions take place.
2. It attempts to develop contextual understanding.
3. It requires interaction between the participants and the researcher.
4. It adopts an interpretive rather than hypothesis-testing approach.
5. It allows for flexibility in design and analysis.

Qualitative research has the potential to bring to light participants’ positioning and presentation of self, as well as to identify key learning moments in the life course (Goffman, 1959). As a result, a qualitative approach was selected for the study to elicit the rich and meaningful data from the participants’ responses needed to explore their personal and professional experiences of learning.

Overview of Narrative Inquiry

Narrative has a long history, as human beings have a need to story and structure their experiences (Bruner, 1990). Narrative inquiry does not refer to one particular approach; instead, it is a collection of approaches that spans methods and disciplines from literature and linguistics to sociology and psychology (Reissman, 1993). Multidimensional and interdisciplinary, narrative inquiry is believed to have emerged in educational research in the 1990s (Monteagudo, 2011). According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), “Experience happens narratively. Narrative inquiry is a

form of narrative experience. Therefore, educational experience should be studied narratively” (p. 19).

Narrative inquiry is situated in the stories of human experience and records experience through “the construction and reconstruction of personal stories” that have been most influential (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 1). Narrative provides a vehicle for participant reflection on practice and identity, eliciting participant stories that reveal negotiation, conformity, challenge, and development. Yet participant stories are not merely personal; they are influenced by the collective narratives and contexts in which the participants live and work. Further, Amsterdam and Bruner (2000) believe that reflection on teaching provides insight into practice as not only part of a larger or context-specific professional field but as a way of thinking or “a way of life” in teaching (p. 282).

Bruner (1984) maintains that it is impossible to separate the life as lived from the life as told in narrative. While people structure their experiences and evolve their narratives over time, they strive to maintain some degree of coherence. Polkinghorne (1988) suggests narrative is a schematic “through which life events are conjoined into coherent, meaningful, unified themes” (p. 126). Yet while attempting to present and maintain a unified self within the broader context, teachers are subject to conforming influences in their teaching development, resulting in what Strauss (1959) calls status forced identities. However, these identities too are far from fixed. As Erikson (1956) points out, identity is neither established nor maintained for long but is continually reformulated over time.

Conflicts between teachers’ personal and professional identities can emerge from narrative studies. Such conflicts can potentially uncover participants’ thinking, beliefs, or actions related to what “should” be part of their practice as opposed to what actually occurs in their teaching. One possible benefit of a narrative approach is the potential to access the gap between faculty members’

espoused theories versus their theories-in-use which Kegan and Lahey (2001) suggest may result from teachers' competing psychological commitments.

Bruner (1986) describes narrative as a way of knowing which straddles two uniquely human landscapes: action and consciousness. However, narrative cannot be viewed as an objective retelling of life. Instead, it is a particular version of how life is experienced and understood by participants (Webster & Mertova, 2007). While human beings strive to make sense of their experiences through narrative, Bell (2002) notes that people choose specific aspects of experience to focus on based on the stories available to them at the time of the telling.

Rosenthal (1993) concurs with Mishler (1986) that what participants choose to share is not random; everything said or unsaid by participants serves a purpose in the narrative. One purpose is to articulate, strengthen, or validate the identity that is evident from the story's self-presentation.

Neisser and Fivush (1994) maintain that key events in narrative are significant because they provide an opportunity for building structures of understanding:

Particular events become more important parts of our life because they provide some meaningful information about who we are, and the narrative forms for representing and recounting these events provide a particular structure for understanding and conveying this meaning. (p. 136)

Sarbin (1986) goes further to suggest that narrative structures serve to guide cognition, perception, imagination, and moral decision-making.

Narrative research does not seek to produce certain conclusions but instead attempts to capture a multitude of voices (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The narrative approach acknowledges that while participants are located in a particular time and place, similar interactions or experiences might have very different meanings within the same or different contexts (Webster & Mertova, 2007). This variability was evident in the current study, for example, in the participants' variable responses to students' negative evaluation of their teaching.

Narrative inquiries are sensitive to complex problems, approaching them as multilayered, as well as personal and social. Importantly, narrative allows for exploration of the underlying insights and assumptions that participants reveal through their stories (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Grumet (1976) notes that there are compelling reasons to use narrative inquiry in educational studies. As narratives highlight teachers' stories, they bring to light the ways in which teachers' values, attitudes, and instructional choices might be invisible to them.

Giele (2008) maintains that narrative inquiry facilitates insight into the forces that shape individuals over the life course. Whether viewed as living texts or fictions, narratives reveal the way individuals interpret and order their experiences, providing information about their values and interests. The subjective retelling of participants' experience illuminates a view from within; a further benefit for this study is the narrative approach's sensitivity to the dimensions of change over time (Kohli, 1981). Narrative inquiries address not only the personal stories of participants but also the cultures and contexts within which participants are constructing and reconstructing their experience (Jonassen, 1997). The result, according to Mishler (1986), is "a particular personal-social identity being claimed" (p. 243).

Daniel McAdams' (1997) work in narrative psychology, drawn from Erikson's (1968) psychosocial development model, is also prominent in narrative research, as narrative psychology explores identity development across the lifespan. McAdams (2006) describes narrative identity as the story people live by, often highlighting themes of autonomy and affiliation. An exploration of teachers' critical events fits nicely within McAdams' conceptual framework, as his model includes a focus on high points, low points, beginning points, end points, and turning points in the life story. The themes derived from such events support continuity and change over time (McAdams, 1996).

What is most important, McAdams contends, is not so much the actual event that occurs in the nuclear episode but instead what it symbolizes in the context of a person's overall story. While McAdams' (1996) believes life stories originate with the family of origin and expand one's self-definition over time, Clandinin and Connelly (1996) point to the ways in which teacher identity is influenced socially and personally by experience and shaped by the teaching context. Identity is both expressed in narrative and constructed by it, resulting in what Freeman (1993) calls "rewriting" the self through the narrative retelling.

Introduction to Critical Event Approach

Within narrative inquiry, participants' experiences and meaningful events are highlighted and revisited in their stories. Critical events are viewed as instrumental in influencing and altering individuals' understanding. As events are critical components of individuals' lives, using them as a way to understand participants' experiences provides insight into their learning and development.

In collecting the data for this type of analysis, participants are asked to identify and describe a high point, low point, and turning point in their development. Applying a critical event approach allows the researcher to find an entry point into qualitative responses during the "burrowing" stage to generate findings and to structure an analysis of large amounts of data.

Critical events, sometimes referred to as critical incidents, have their origin in the work of John Flanagan (1954) and aviation psychology. Flanagan developed a method of analysis called the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) which sought to analyze incidents that were characterized as successes or failures in the aviation field. In Flanagan's framework, critical incident analysis usually includes three key features: a description of the situation, the actions or behavior of the actor, and the result or outcome (Fountain, 1999). The technique has been applied most often in human resource management, organizational psychology, and healthcare.

A critical event is defined as an event which has the “right mix of ingredients at the right time and in the right context” (Woods, 1993a, p. 102). A critical event is believed to carry with it the seed of new understanding; because it is underscored in the participants’ retelling of their experience from the present perspective, it holds a prominent place in their memory. According to Bohl (1995), what makes the event critical is its impact on the storyteller. Critical events are often characterized by a conflict between an individual’s experience and belief system, resulting in a struggle to accommodate a challenge to his/her worldview (Fay, 2000).

According to Woods (1993b), “Events are exceptional by virtue of their criticality. This relates not so much to the content (which might be extraordinary) as to the profound effects it has on the people involved” (p. 356). In his research on critical events, Woods (1993b) identifies several characteristics. They are largely unplanned, unpredictable, and unanticipated, and while they occur in a particular social context, critical events can be intensely personal and emotionally charged.

Critical events can have a substantial impact on those involved and can only be identified as significant after the event has occurred. The more time and distance from the event participants have, the more their highlighting of the event, in all its detail, will suggest its importance to their learning and development. “The longer the time that passes between the event and recall of the event, the more profound the effect of the event has been and the more warranted is the label *critical event*” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 74). Strauss (1959) posits that there is a gap between an event and an individual’s understanding of the event, which comprises the interpretative and retrospective space in which narrative is situated.

Critical event analysis aligns well with a narrative approach because narratives are inherently temporal (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). When applying a critical event analysis within a narrative

inquiry, it is important to “allow time and experience to work their way into the inquiry” to ensure that “stories are told that reflect experience and understanding” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 86).

The importance of critical events has been identified by Strauss (1959), Becker (1966), Measor (1985), and Sparkes (1988). Critical events in teaching have been studied by Measor (1985) who categories such events as extrinsic, intrinsic, or personal. She suggests that there are six events that can be identified as critical periods in teacher learning and development.

Entering the Profession	First Teaching Practice	The First 18 Months of Teaching
Three Years into Teaching	Mid-Career Experiences	The Pre-Retirement Period

Figure 1. Measor’s (1985) six critical events in teaching.

Several researchers suggest that critical event/critical incident analysis has particular relevance to teacher and teaching development (Tripp, 1994; Brookfield, 1995b; Francis, 1997; Griffin, 2003). In education and studies of teaching, Woods (1993a) believes critical events encourage understanding in teaching and learning and are critical for teacher development and change. He notes critical events are useful in teaching and learning research because they allow for holistic access to complex and human-centered information. In addition, critical events are crucial for teacher development and teacher learning because, Woods (1993a) believes, they support teachers in maintaining a particular definition of personal reality and identity apart from the pressures of the surrounding educational environment.

Combining a critical event approach with narrative inquiry allows researchers access to participants’ internal and day-to-day realities of teaching. Carter (1993) maintains the use of story in

teaching research represents “a way of knowing and thinking that is particularly suited to explicating the issues [teachers deal with]” (p. 6). Naidu and Cunnington (2004) suggest that using narrative in reflection on professional practice can lead to improvement, while McNamara (2005) contends that narrative approaches come closer to capturing the reality of teaching and can unearth the culture in which it occurs; in addition, McNamara notes that what is revealed through teachers’ stories can be effectively used to guide the design and programming of professional development. Gough (1997) further states that one chief advantage in narrative studies of teachers and teaching is the ability to uncover multiple possibilities which exist and play out in real life teaching experiences. Shields et al. (2005) maintain that stories of teachers’ experience can support teacher change through providing new perspectives on their experiences:

New positionings make available to teachers different concepts, metaphors, images and language. Teachers can then re-story their experiences and take on different ways of seeing the world as their own. A profound change will involve more than just technical changes, strategies, or interaction patterns. There will be an emotional and conceptual aspect to the changes, as repositioning affects our sense of who we are. (p. 148)

While perceived as variable by nature, critical events appear to have a certain logic and symmetry, suggesting potential underlying configurations that could be identified through further research (Woods, 1993b). Analysis of critical events in teaching development may provide insights into implicit patterns that could be used to develop stages or typologies related to college teacher learning and development.

Data Needed for the Study

This exploratory study focused on the experiences and learning events of ten faculty members from similar New England teaching-intensive four-year liberal arts institutions. The study sought to uncover the salient influences on faculty members’ growth and development as college teachers. The information needed to conduct the study included participant perceptions of their learning and

development as teachers, critical events in their experience as developing teachers, demographic information related to their age, race, gender, years teaching, years at current institution, discipline area, type of doctoral institution, doctoral completion year, and prior teaching experience.

Description of the Sample

Study participants were recruited based on their meeting the inclusion criteria and for their willingness to be a part of a purposeful sample that would provide what Michael Patton (2002) calls “information-rich cases” (p. 230). Purposeful sampling, also known as judgment sampling, involves the intentional selection of a population because of the likelihood the particular participants can respond to the research questions (Marshall, 1996, p. 523). The inclusion criteria called for the recruitment of active full-time faculty members from any academic discipline currently working in New England teaching-focused liberal arts colleges holding faculty rank of assistant professor or above. Table 1 shows a summary of the participant demographic and professional information.

Table 1

Participant Demographics and Professional Information

Characteristic	Summary
Age range	39–59
Gender	8 Female 2 Male
Ethnicity	2 African American 1 Black African 7 Caucasian
Degree	7 Ph.D. 3 Ed.D.
Doctoral completion year	1996–2012

Characteristic	Summary
Academic discipline area	1 American Studies 2 Education 2 Education Leadership 2 English 1 Psychology 1 Science 1 Sociology
Current faculty rank	2 Assistant professor 6 Associate professor 2 Full professor
Doctoral institution type	7 Research I 3 University
Taught as part of doctoral training	4 Yes 6 No
Taught outside higher education	7 Yes 3 No
Formal pre-doctoral training in teaching	4 Yes 6 No
Current instructional level	9 Baccalaureate 1 Doctoral
Years at current institution	1–25
Years teaching	10–35

Data Collection Methods and Participant Recruitment

Potential participants were identified through referral from others in the researcher's personal and professional networks, organizations, associations, and alumni groups. Fifteen faculty members were contacted and invited to be part of the study. Upon vetting the participants, three did not meet the inclusion criteria—one was a full-time instructor that did not hold faculty rank and two did not teach in small liberal arts teaching-intensive institutions. An additional two faculty members who did

qualify for participation were not available for interviews during the data collection period and were therefore not included in the study.

Ten of the remaining participants contacted agreed to participate in the study, and individual emails were sent providing an overview of the inquiry and spelling out the extent of time and commitment required (see Appendix A). The first participant agreed to serve as a pilot test of the initial interview protocol. The participant provided feedback on the clarity of the questions, which were then refined before the next round of interviews began. The pilot interview also provided information about additional questions that could be added to the protocol to better address the areas of the inquiry's scope. As the first participant was not re-interviewed, the additional questions added to the interview protocol were sent to the pilot participant, who subsequently emailed her responses to the newly included questions. Copies of the demographic data form, informed consent document, and interview protocol are included in Appendices B through D.

The demographic profile and informed consent document were executed before each interview began. The researcher met with each participant once between October of 2012 and January of 2013, and meetings were scheduled according to participant availability and location. Semi-structured interviews lasting between 1 and 3 hours were held in participants' private faculty offices. Field notes were taken at each session, and the interviews were audiotaped using a digital recorder and transcribed verbatim by the researcher within a few weeks of each interview. The accuracy of transcriptions was checked through review of the digital recordings, and transcripts were corrected as needed. In an effort to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of participants, demographic data sheets were labeled with numeric codes. Pseudonyms chosen by the participants were attached to interview texts, study summaries, memos, and field notes. In addition, password protected files were created in which the study data were stored.

Transcriptions and Narrative Summaries

Once the interviews were transcribed, narrative sketches in the form of an interview summary were composed for each participant. Summaries contained an overview of the interview text content, along with key insights and themes from the interview that stood out to the researcher. A copy of the individual summaries was sent to participants for their review as a form of member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Two of the ten participants replied with corrections and clarifications which were then incorporated into the revised narrative summaries.

Interpretive memos related to interview texts, field notes, and preliminary observations were composed during the data collection, coding, and analysis cycles. A research journal was also kept during the study to capture insights, connections, patterns, and questions about the data.

Data Analysis

Elliot Mishler (1986) recommends leaving the interview narratives in their context for as long as possible, which he and Joseph Maxwell (1996) believe supports the identification of relationships between different elements of a narrative text. Before applying the Critical Event protocol, all transcripts were read and re-read in their entirety, and pre-coding was performed which involves a holistic reading of the texts to highlight initial impressions related to the data (Layder, 1998). Interpretive notes were recorded in the margins of each interview text. At various points in the analytic cycles, the digital interview tapes were also reviewed which was helpful in “hearing” subtle potential themes that were not immediately evident in the initial reading and pre-coding of the interview texts.

The first phase of Critical Event analysis calls for “burrowing”—Connelly and Clandinin’s (1990) term for a specific focus on the qualities of an event, its meaning, and its influence on the participants. Burrowing allows for the application of an interpretive lens on specific segments of

qualitative transcripts, providing an economical way to enter the data that does not compromise their integrity or the study findings (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Locating an entry point into this type of study is important, as narratives can produce extensive amounts of data, leading to endless interpreting and categorizing of the data. Focusing on critical events essentially imposes a filter on participants' responses that highlights key experiences and influences on participant learning and development while considering the critical learning events in light of the entirety of their stories.

A Critical Event protocol asks participants to share responses related to what they perceive as high points, low points, and turning points in their development which were identified and extracted from the transcripts. The participant responses for each critical event question were then copied and pasted into a separate Microsoft Word file. The responses to each critical event question were then read and re-read, and marginal notes were made related to the type of event discussed, the context of the event, when it occurred in the course of their career, the outcome, and its perceived impact on the participant.

As participant responses related to their critical events were at times extensive, a summary (or paraphrase statement) of the high point, low point, and turning point event was created for each participant to facilitate data organization and comparison. The summaries of the critical events were then placed in a matrix, and another cycle of coding began. Matrix summaries were then analyzed, and interpretive notes and memos were created in an attempt to identify the nature of the events and their significance. Codes for participant responses were then developed for each critical event question based on the type of event and its perceived impact on participant learning. As codes were created, they were placed within evolving categories which described the type or quality of experiences and their influence on participants. Final categories were then developed that encompassed the coded responses related to high point, low point, and turning point experiences.

Not uncommon in qualitative studies, some question responses in the protocol generated a substantial number of codes that were later collapsed into more inclusive codes. On one occasion, an original single code was identified as containing and categorizing all of the other codes in a particular response group. For example, in the high point responses, *Experiences of Teaching Success* was originally a single code among several others that emerged in the high point answers. When the responses were interpreted and the codes were narrowed, it became evident that the code actually encompassed all of the other codes in the responses. As a result, *Experiences of Teaching Success* became an overarching category in the findings. (A matrix of the codes and categories is included in Appendix E.)

The Critical Event analysis resulted in the identification of three categories for the high point, low point, and turning point experiences. The categories identified from the analysis are included in Table 2.

Table 2

Findings from Critical Event Protocol

Critical event	Categories
High points	Experiences of Teaching Success Recognition of Fit “Negative” Event → Positive Learning
Low points	Teacher Self or Teaching Challenge Student Engagement or Performance Challenge Context or Fit Challenge
Turning points	Experiences of Confidence or Confidence-Building The Influence of Others Reframing Experiences

Once the final categories were confirmed, the write up of the findings began. When the results and findings were complete and documented in Chapter Four, Phase II of the Critical Event

narrative approach, “broadening,” began. In this phase, findings and select categories were extended out to the relevant existing literature on college teacher learning and adult development, providing the basis for the discussion in Chapter Five. A copy of the flowchart of the analysis process is included in Appendix F.

Ethical Considerations

Social science researchers have an obligation to protect participants from harm and possible consequences of their participation in their studies. One way this is achieved is through a thorough institutional research review process. This study was submitted for review to the Lesley University Institutional Review Board and was granted approval before data collection began.

An ethical research process requires that participants be made aware of any risks or dangers in participating in a study, as well as the level of commitment and involvement expected for participation. Participants in this study were informed of their rights and protections prior to their agreement to participate. Participants were given time prior to the interview to review and sign the informed consent document which outlined the study and explained the requirements for participation. In addition, participants were informed that no incentive was being offered to participate.

Once transcription of the interviews was completed, participants had the opportunity to view a narrative summary of their responses to check for accuracy and potential identifiers that could put their identities at risk. Finally, researchers need to use caution in securing and storing study data, and in this inquiry, study documents and participant information were stored at the researcher’s home office in password protected files.

Trustworthiness Criteria

Qualitative research uses trustworthiness as a defining feature of evaluation. Guba and Lincoln (1998) highlight that trustworthiness in qualitative studies is assessed in terms of four criteria: *Credibility, Dependability, Confirmability, and Transferability*. In addition, narrative inquiries have additional standards for trustworthiness similar to those found in qualitative research: *Verisimilitude, Authenticity (or Believability), and Supportability*.

This brief discussion of trustworthiness includes a definition of each related term, followed by a table which indicates the ways in which this study met each requirement for qualitative and narrative trustworthiness.

Qualitative Research Evaluation Markers

Credibility: An assessment of the findings as believable or accurate from the standpoint of the participants and the reader which is established through alignment of the research design, research questions, analytic approach, and research purpose (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Dependability: The assurance that the findings are consistent with the actual data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Confirmability: Represents the qualitative version of “objectivity” and relates to the findings emerging from the research and data as opposed to generated from or influenced by the researcher’s biases, assumptions, or subjectivity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Transferability: Represents the potential for qualitative studies to be “transferred” to another setting or context (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Narrative Research Evaluation Markers

Verisimilitude: The achievement of “life-likeness” in participants’ stories to the extent that the stories resonate with the reader, demonstrating a level of plausibility (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

Authenticity: The reader's assessment of the participants' stories and contexts as true, real, and honest. It is also known as a standard of **Believability** in narrative research (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

Supportability: The narrative equivalent of dependability, supportability is achieved if the reader has confidence that the findings and interpretations are well-grounded in the data (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

Table 3 lists the markers of qualitative and narrative trustworthiness, along with the means by which these were achieved in the current study.

Table 3

Alignment of Study Trustworthiness Markers With Research Activities

Qualitative standard	<i>Credibility</i>	<i>Dependability</i>	<i>Confirmability</i>	<i>Transferability</i>
Narrative standard	Verisimilitude Authenticity/ Believability	Supportability	Supportability	Verisimilitude Authenticity/ Believability
Demonstrated by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple data forms collected • Perception checks • Peer debriefing • Member checking • Negative case analysis • Alignment of research questions, method, study purpose, and analytic approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit trail • Transparency • Tracking changes in interpretation over time • Findings and responses grounded in the data • Member checks • Thick description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit trail • Findings and responses grounded in participants' responses • Memos • Interpretive journaling • Field notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of multiple cases in study design & in report of the findings • Purposeful sampling • Thick description • Enough detail that participants' experiences are believable and recognizable to others familiar with participants' context or role

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations are inherent in the study, which are detailed below.

1. The sample size, although robust for certain kinds of qualitative inquiries, would not produce findings that are considered “generalizable” in the traditional sense.
2. While fifteen participants were recruited, those that ultimately agreed to participate self-selected to be part of the study. Had other faculty members from different academic disciplines or cultural backgrounds been included, the outcomes would perhaps have provided alternative views on the phenomenon under study.
3. Each participant was interviewed only once. The outcomes and findings might have varied or been enhanced if the protocol had been applied in two or more interviews with each participant.
4. Although not intentional to the design, the participants who agreed to be part of the study were all mid-career faculty, regardless of rank. The inclusion of other faculty at varying career stages might have influenced the outcomes of the current study.
5. In drawing conclusions about the participants’ teaching practice, the data source was limited to participants’ statements about and reflections on their teaching. Observation of their teaching would have strengthened claims about their theories-in-use versus their espoused theories in their teaching.
6. While intentional to the design, all participants were faculty members at small liberal arts institutions. Clearly, if faculty members from other institutional categories had been included in the study, the findings would likely have been quite different.
7. Lastly, challenges of subjectivity exist in all research paradigms. Patton (1990) contends that it is impossible for researchers to enter a research site or project—literally or

figuratively—without his/her own preconceptions or biases. In the current study, a research journal and interpretive memoing were used to track the researcher's insights, assumptions, and potential preconceptions that could influence the analysis of the data and subsequent findings of the study. Further, analytic processes and results were submitted for external audit and review by the researcher's committee members during the course of the study. Even with these limitations, this inquiry was systematically planned and conducted and is supported by an audit trail that strengthens its findings and results.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a detailed account of the inquiry's methodology. A critical event narrative framework was selected to explore the ways in which college faculty members learn and develop as teachers. The purposeful participant sample was comprised of ten faculty members currently teaching in four-year liberal arts institutions. The data collected for the study included interview responses, faculty member demographics, faculty rank, academic discipline area, prior teaching experience, and critical learning experiences. In the burrowing phase, the data from the critical event protocol were analyzed and compared, resulting in the development of categories that served as the foundation for the findings chapter. In the broadening phase, the findings across cases and select categories were discussed in light of the literature on college teacher development and adult learning.

The qualitative and narrative standards for evaluation were achieved through various strategies, including member checking, memoing, journaling, peer debriefing, audit trails, and portraying the participants and their learning contexts using rich and detailed description. It is hoped that the findings will contribute to and enhance the ongoing and important dialogue on college teacher learning and development.

Chapter 4: The Findings

Consciously, we teach what we know; unconsciously, we teach who we are.

—Don Hamachek (1999, p. 209)

Organization and Overview of the Chapter

This chapter begins with a brief profile introducing each participant. It then proceeds to present participants' responses to a Critical Event protocol which asked participants to discuss key moments in their learning and development—namely, what they considered to be high points, low points, and turning points in their learning. Participant responses related to each category of critical event are presented, along with descriptive and interpretive commentary if the contexts and significance of the events were shared in the responses.

The critical event protocol requires “burrowing” into the data to highlight flashpoints in participant learning and development that they deemed important. Their responses were then organized into a matrix and coded by question, resulting in categories that captured the responses to each event question. Unlike other qualitative analysis methods, in Critical Event analysis, only participant responses related to the critical event questions can be included in the first phase of analysis and the report of the initial findings.

The events chosen by participants varied depending upon their biographies, department, discipline, faculty status, institution, prior teaching experience, and any number of other personal/professional variables. In addition, not uncommon in narrative inquiries, the events participants pointed to occurred over the course of their careers and include not only college teaching and professional learning but also doctoral program, faculty socialization, and prior teaching experiences. Using a Critical Event protocol permits the researcher to explore differences in participants' interpretation and meaning-making of the events and the personal or contextual factors that might influence their response to the event. Importantly, the approach allows for attention to

language, event type, context, biography, and meaning-making structures that can be discussed in light of adult learning and development frameworks.

Participant Profiles

Profile 1: Valerie, Associate Professor of Biology—Traditional path to the doctorate.

Valerie speaks with energy and passion. In her interview, she describes her path from her training in the sciences to her engagement in teaching. As a young graduate student, she did not know whether she would like teaching, but after undertaking an ambitious research agenda, soon realized research did not have the level of “relationship” she needed: “I found myself doing a lot of research, but I was very bored. It didn’t really have that connection that I yearned for. Teaching was very much addictive, that connection with people who are learning from you.” Innately curious, she is fascinated by people and understands that teachers and learners always have a motivation for their behaviors. Valerie mentioned how draining working with students can be in the classroom and outside of it for teachers who try to be engaging and interactive. She explains that “fatigue” is part of what gets in the way of pursuing her own ongoing and professional learning. She believes she has a “teacher personality” and sees part of her job as fostering transformation in her students which Valerie says involves facilitating change in students’ views of themselves, their abilities, their skills, and their confidence: “Helping them to grow—that is just thrilling to me.”

Profile 2: Carolyn, Associate Professor of Sociology—Traditional path to the doctorate.

Carolyn is one of the youngest participants in the study and describes herself as very introverted and shy. She describes her path to teaching—and to the professorate—as “not planned.” An influential professor and advisor had told Carolyn, “You are going to be a faculty member,” and Carolyn’s response to that prediction was “Yeah, right.” This began Carolyn’s thinking about the professorate as a possible path. “I never believed her,” she says, partly because the thought of standing up in front

of people and talking all day was a terrifying prospect for her. Carolyn's journey from her undergraduate years to her current faculty role has been one of confidence-building and negotiating professional acculturation. Her transition to her first faculty position was not a smooth experience for Carolyn, but her story highlights the role of supervisors, institutions, and department cultures as facilitating or constraining influences in the socialization of new faculty members.

Profile 3: Louisa, Associate Professor, American Studies—Traditional path to the doctorate. Louisa described herself as a big reader who was introverted and quiet as a child. Louisa has been intentionally working on her teaching and has come to understand much more about teaching over the past few years as a result of interactions with colleagues and through professional learning opportunities. She has come to realize that the majority of faculty members teach as part of the faculty role, and when viewed as a shared practice, there is nothing mysterious about it per se. A key learning for Louisa has been that one's academic discipline can be slotted into broader notions of teaching practice rather than the reverse. Another big learning for Louisa has been that teachers teach the way they learn—and the way their discipline demands—rather than how they should teach for student learning. Further key insights have been gleaned by “putting herself in the student's seat” through auditing a class given by a colleague from another department. From this experience, she saw firsthand the nonverbal and perhaps unintentional feedback that faculty members give to students which shuts them down and turns them off to learning.

Profile 4: Miriam, Assistant Professor of Education—Non-traditional path to the doctorate. Miriam is soft-spoken and contemplative. She has had experience working in various education programs, including K-12, corrections education, and community programs. Working with a variety of learners in different settings positioned Miriam to develop knowledge and skills from experience that have informed her teaching approaches with students. Miriam was raised in strict

Orthodox Judaism, and she believes this has influenced her growth as a person and as a teacher. She notes that she was shy and introverted as a child—“a watcher,” she says, which she uses in her teaching. She notes that she waits and listens before she speaks, which provides her with a great deal of information she can apply in her work with students. While she has undergone formal training in teaching, she often tries not to use her “book knowledge” or theory when initially getting to know learners. She has become more confident in using her instincts and intuition as a starting point in figuring out who the student is, what the concerns or challenges are, and where the learner wants to go in his/her learning. Because Miriam describes her high school and early college experiences as tumultuous, it seems a natural fit that she has a passion for working with undergraduate students that are in the midst of intense identity work.

Profile 5: Mary, Professor of Education—Non-traditional path to the doctorate; first generation student. With a background in K-12 education, Mary strives to keep learning. She acknowledges that she has been very influenced by her background “both in the way I liked to learn, which was very hands-on, and in the aspect of educating the whole.” Her early teaching experiences and practices were informed by attention to different domains of learning at different points in her teaching development. As a beginning teacher, her focus was on the physical dimension of learning, then on the emotional; currently, she consciously attends to the “intellectual, cognitive, content, and thinking aspects.” Mary notes that she is fascinated by “the whole element of cognition and how it starts so young and how it’s influenced in so many ways.” Mary finds learning personally satisfying: “I get a lot of satisfaction from it,” she says. “I think I do it more for me than anybody else. It feels good.” Yet from her interview comments, it is clear that Mary’s personal and professional learning find their way back to her teaching and other work with students.

Profile 6: Tara, Associate Professor of Psychology—Non-traditional path to the doctorate; first generation student. Tara intended to be a special education teacher and pursued certification in that area after having done volunteer work at camps with kids with multiple handicaps. After earning her bachelor's degree, she took on her first job, which involved teaching, administration, assessment, family intervention, and program development. She worked in that job for two years and realized she “needed to learn more stuff.” Tara realized at a young age that a piece of her undergraduate work and teacher training was missing: a better understanding of emotional disturbances. A key learning for Tara has been the acknowledgment that a learner's outside life impacts the learning interaction—as well as the “content” that a teacher might respond to in the learning moment. Further, Tara notes the influence of her students and their learning on her own personal learning and teaching development, stating that she learns from students every day, as well as from her colleagues. Tara's path as teacher and as learner has been one of self-discovery. She points to the importance of teachers' staying current with their own “stuff,” not only in the teaching moment but in reflection, as an important component of teacher growth and development: “Your feelings are where the truth is,” she says, and perceiving, paying attention to the self and the learner, as well as the content, allows a teacher to be responsive and creative in meeting a learner's needs.

Profile 7: Graham, Professor of Literature—Traditional path to the doctorate; first generation student. Graham discovered his love for literature in his teens and thought that teaching would be a way to “talk about vital things.” Graham aligns with the term “professor” rather than “teacher” because for him, the term teacher “suggests standing up and wagging your finger at people.” Yet Graham turns the construct of “professor” on its head, pointing to what he calls the illusion of power and status of the “professor” and how that might interfere with what he is trying to do with students. Graham has learned over many years that students' learning and development are

connected and take time to percolate and come together. “Real learning,” from his experience, is deep and wide and beyond the facts that might be learned about history and literature if viewed as separate from the experiences they chronicle.” Attending to learners, the context, the multiple “texts” of a class, and uncovering who students are—and want to be—are insights that Graham has internalized in his teaching. Finding out what students care about, what they think and mean are methods he uses to achieve his goals. The course texts, which he believes speak to something primal and eternal, are instruments of what he calls “the deeper purpose” in his work with learners.

Profile 8: Marie, Assistant Professor of Adult Learning and Leadership—Non-traditional path to the doctorate; first generation student. Marie brings a focus on student learning and development to her teaching and work with undergraduate learners. A key theme that runs through her interview is that “time is short.” This orientation stems from early experiences of loss that guide her thinking about what message she wants to express and what experiences she wants to imprint on her interactions with others. Marie feels an increased urgency in her mission since becoming a mother. Marie is highly cognizant of the relational aspects of teaching and advising, evident in attention to what she terms “mattering.” She points to experiences with her own teachers and mentors who were important resources for her personal and professional learning and has come to understand the import of caring and attending not only to students but to the self in teaching. For her, the teaching interaction involves reciprocal learning between the faculty member and the students. In addition to the positive learning and confidence-building that mentors and advisors provided her with, she also speaks of what might be termed “miseducative” learning experiences that have challenged her view of herself. Marie uses a journal for reflection and processing of her insights and experiences and acknowledges that she seeks to discover others’ experiences so that she might enhance her own ongoing learning.

Profile 9: Edmond, Associate Professor of English—Non-traditional path to the doctorate. Edmond describes himself as an anachronism in the modern world. There were several signs in his early life that teaching and scholarship pursuits might be an appropriate path for his talents. Earning an alternative certificate in K-12 teaching, he learned the “nuts and bolts” of classroom management and the structures of how to set up a learning environment, but his real learning, he says, came from his early teaching in the classroom. Edmond considered himself rather naïve when he began teaching at the high school level. He says that what he learned from his experience was “the type of stuff that a book can’t prepare you for.” Edmond notes that he has become more realistic about his teaching now and more grounded in how to successfully balance the course content, pace, and instructional planning to ensure the commitment and rigor he requires of his students. In return, he says, he makes an effort to guide his students through the narratives of the texts and the course in ways he hopes will find connection to students’ later life experiences.

Profile 10: Janet, Associate Professor, Adult Learning and Leadership—Non-traditional path to the doctorate. Janet worked for a number of years in higher education before pursuing her doctorate. She believes that this exposure positioned her well, as she had a level of clarity about what she wanted from doctoral work and what she was going to get from the experience. Janet speaks frequently about multiple perspectives and sees education as a way to develop openness to other views, as well as to support learners in coming to a better understanding of their own assumptions and perspectives. She sees her role as facilitative and believes she holds high expectations for learners. In addition, she tries to foster learner self-direction and seeks “to find out what is good and true in [students’] thinking and writing.” Janet believes she has made some progress in relinquishing some of the control in the learning to the learners. She understands that learners have responsibilities in the transaction and must be prepared to take ownership of their learning and their progress. Her

own development has been supported and encouraged through feedback and informal learning interactions, as well as from reflection on her learning and practice.

High Points in Teaching and Teacher Development

Participants were asked to identify and discuss what they perceived as a high point in their learning. As was the case with the low point and turning point questions, participants were given the freedom to interpret what high point “meant” to them in terms of their own meaning systems. The high point responses comprised three categories which are included in Table 4, along with the response count for each category.

Table 4

High Point Categories and Response Count

Category	Response count
I. Experiences of teaching success	6
II. Recognition of fit	2
III. “Negative” event → positive learning	2

Category I: Experiences of Teaching Success

When asked to recall what they considered a high point in their learning or teaching development, six of the ten participants reported an experience of teaching success. Such a finding on its face is neither surprising nor remarkable. However, in delving into those experiences, the nature of the events and the meaning participants attached to the events were quite variable.

Valerie, Biology. In the course of her interview, Valerie mentioned that she had initial misgivings about teaching. Trained as a scientist and researcher, she said she “didn’t feel ready [to teach] at the time. I wanted to figure things out, make sure I was really polished with what I was going to teach about.” Not uncommon in her discipline, Valerie expressed concern about *what* she would teach rather than *how* she would teach it. Her high point event describing her interaction with

a student when Valerie was a teaching assistant in graduate school suggests she became enthralled by the power faculty members have to impact not only a student's academic learning but also his/her confidence and view of self as learner:

I was like 22 at the time and not at all skilled as a teacher—not remotely, but I was working with this one girl who just knew up and down that she couldn't do it—couldn't pass this biology test. On the first test, she got an F-, not even an F, an F-, and she had studied so hard for it but just could not get the concepts. So I actually sat down with her several times and really started working with her and trying to understand why she couldn't get certain concepts and doing the best that I could to try and nurture her along. The next exam, she got a B+—I'm tearing up a little now talking about it—and she went into tears, she was so happy. Seeing that I was able to help someone do something she never thought she could do was a real high point.

Mary, Education. Mary's high point experience occurred outside of an academic context during her training for K-12 teaching. The programs she worked in at the time emphasized physical and socio-emotional learning and development:

Some of the high points when I look back in my teaching were in the nontraditional realms, so my project-adventure stuff where people were overcoming their fears or challenging themselves, you know, and I helped facilitate that for them.

In addition to building confidence in her teaching role and enhancing her teaching abilities, Mary incorporated these early experiences into her conception of teaching and integrated them into her later practice. Mary says these experiences teaching outside of the academic realm helped her to understand through direct experience that learners grow and development within several interactive dimensions, what she terms the SPIES model of integrated learning: “the social, physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects of learning and development.” Her exposure to the SPIES model as a young teacher “made sense” to Mary as she began to develop a framework for her teaching.

Miriam, Education. Miriam's high point event suggests a holistic conception of practice and demonstrates her view of teaching for development, as well as for content. Moreover, her high point

response highlights that learning, when it involves self-knowledge and identity development, does not always have a positive or desirable outcome:

It's so wonderful when I feel like I'm helping somebody get to their next step—helping a student come to, you know, listen to himself and get there. With another student, helping her see—you know, she really wanted to be [at the university], but it wasn't working at all. And finally after two years of work, we got to the point of her realizing that this really wasn't the right place and that she really needed to be doing something else, which she did. So those are like high points for me of 'being with' a student long enough.

Louisa, American Studies. Louisa's high point event points to her perception of a teaching success in which students were able to respond to exam questions in a particular way:

I'd say my high point was my American Studies class this semester when I read their exams, and they'd actually answered the question the way I wanted them to answer it. So they were able to use research and make connections. That was the first time in that class they were able to do that, to make the connections and actually understand the question they were being asked; they were thinking like mini-cultural theorists.

Louisa does not articulate how this event connected to her broader learning about teaching and learning, but elsewhere in the interview, she mentions the value of such "small successes" as motivating her to experiment with her teaching.

Carolyn, Sociology. Carolyn describes her high point moment as related to an upper-class student's success in presenting the results of a research project which she completed with Carolyn's guidance:

All of our students had to do their own research project for their capstone. So I had, I don't know...five or six of them who all did their research, but I had one in particular I had worked with maybe three of her four years, and she did this really awesome project on images of black women in the media and ended up presenting it at a conference on campus and off campus and now is in grad school working on her Ph.D.

While Carolyn's event would be meaningful and satisfying for a faculty member in general, I wasn't quite clear what made the event so significant for her. As a result, I probed with a follow-up question about why she chose this event for her response. Her answer was compelling and indicated that the moment was, in fact, a vindication of sorts based on her negative experience in her first faculty role:

Well, she was one of the best students I ever taught, and (chuckles) it was my last year in that place; there was turmoil in the department and people that were saying that I was not a good teacher, that I didn't help the students. And then when she presented at this conference on campus, she was clearly very well-prepared, very well-rehearsed. She knew how to answer things, and I just kind of sat in the back and watched it all, and people afterwards were coming up to her, telling her how prepared she was, and she was like, 'It wasn't me; it was Dr. Carolyn.'

Janet, Adult Learning and Leadership. Janet's high point event was related to her doctoral students' demonstrating their learning and understanding in terms that aligned with not only the program objectives but with Janet's own values as an educator. The students' learning reflections made visible to Janet that there had been a change in her students' thinking and knowledge structures related to doctoral education, themselves as emerging scholars, and the nature of doctoral learning and inquiry:

The first semester of the doctoral program at the end of the last class that I co-taught, I asked them four questions: *What are 3-4 things you've learned? What was the best piece of advice you got, and how did it come true? What evidence do you have that you're becoming a scholar? What do you want to work on next semester?* Their responses to all of the questions talked about things we really cared about and that were in the course objectives. They were able to see that this is a different level of work. It's not just about grades. The authority in the room is not going to just tell you how you are doing. YOU need to keep an eye on how you're doing. That shows some shift in the continuum. I think that they're making a little shift. Students said, 'I'm more open to multiple perspectives.' They said they now ask all their friends, 'How do you know that? What's your source?' This is what you do when you're a scholar. So I just heard answers that made me think, 'Ok, we are moving these students from students to scholar-practitioners.' The high point—what gave me such a high this semester—was the answers to the reflection questions at the end of class. These were real high points for me.

Category II: Recognition of Fit

Two participants described a moment of "fit" as their high point experience.

Marie, Adult Learning and Leadership. For Marie, her first teaching experience at the undergraduate level was a recognition and indication that she had found her career path. The language she uses to describe the moment evokes the essence of the idealized self and peak experience found in the work of Carl Rogers (1961) and Abraham Maslow (1954):

An opportunity came up to teach because the person who was going to teach [the course] quit, and at the time, I was an advisor [in that area], and the call went out: *Can anyone teach this course? Marie, can you teach the course?* I have no idea. I'm an advisor, so I have to know some of this stuff, so we'll learn it together—let's try it for a semester. I walked into that classroom, and I was actualized in that space because something came alive in me—something that was born in me in that classroom when I connected with those students. And it wasn't about me; I always started, 'How are you guys doing? What's going on in your classes? Ok, how does this connect to [our work]? Give me some examples. What are your stories? I'll tell you some of mine.'

Tara, Psychology. Tara's high point reflects a moment of recognition in which her preparation, path, institution, and her work with adult undergraduate students were converging at a meaningful intersection in her career:

So I think when I evolved as a professional person through working at this job and took on the whole structure and philosophy of teaching for transformative learning, that was when I knew this was the right fit. Working with these folks was the right fit for me because you [need to] let go of yourself in this environment of being 'the teacher' that's imposing what I think is good for the student. [In the past, it was] I'm gonna assess, and then I'm going to implement according to my assessment, and you live with it. That's not how it works with adults.

Category III: “Negative” Event → Positive Learning

The final two participants noted high point events which were initially perceived as “negative” or challenging but were subsequently reframed to support an expanded understanding of some aspect of teaching and learning or themselves as teachers.

Edmond, English. Edmond remembers a charged moment in his teaching when he forgot his notes for a 2 ½ hour lecture one day and was filled with anxiety and panic. He immediately realized that the topic of the day's class was the novel he had written about in his doctoral thesis, so in effect, he had no need to worry about the content. The experience, however, caused him to think about why he—and perhaps teachers at all levels—tend to over-prepare for their teaching and what excessive preparation might “mean”; moreover, he notes insights about quantity versus quality and content versus process that he says he would not have had without the benefit of prior teaching experience:

The experience made me realize that at times, I might have been too exhaustive in my preparation for class. What I took from the experience was the knowledge that teaching

should be less rigid and compartmentalized and more fluid and intuitive. When I started teaching at the high school, I didn't have a lot of hands-on experience, and teaching is very hands-on. Every day, you learn something new even if you are not conscious of it. I think because of that, I prepared a lot. When I taught, I had pages and pages of notes—questions and answers—and my students would tease me about it. I did it because I thought it authenticated me in some way, but then I realized it wasn't about the amount of material I was giving; it was my ability to explain it and not help myself access it but help the students access it. And I think even when I began to teach at the college level, I think it was still something that off-put me a bit. At the beginning, I would overcompensate and have all the pages marked and reams of notes and discussion points and quotations, and at some point, I realized that hitting them with a hundred pages of information and hoping that something sticks is no better than hitting them with one essential quotation that helps them understand everything that's going on. That was something I didn't understand until I had more teaching experience.

Graham, Literature. Graham characterized his high point as connected to a former student's negative evaluation of his class and his teaching:

I had a very difficult student at [my institution] one semester that was very oppositional and unsatisfied and just didn't get it; she gave me a terrible evaluation. It happens. A year later, she was speaking to another professor in my department who came to see me and told me, 'I just heard the most wonderful things about you from [the student],' and I said, 'Really? All she did was give me grief.'

The negative evaluation did not shake Graham's confidence, which he had cultivated over many years and through working in a variety of educational settings; it was the student's reversal in her attitude towards him and his class that he found puzzling. In making sense of the experience, he arrived at a profound realization about learners and learning:

I realized that it had taken all that time before whatever it was that had been gurgling in her had been able to come to the surface so that she could find her own response to have been different from what she thought it all to have been. It was one that I remember because, you know, sometimes it takes a year and a half before what you have been saying gets through, and when it does, you might never know because they're long gone.

Low Points in Teaching or Teacher Development

In their responses to the question about a low point in their teaching life or development, respondent answers aligned with three categories (see Table 5).

Table 5

Low Point Categories and Response Count

Category	Response count
I. Teaching self or teaching challenge	4
II. Student engagement or performance challenge	4
III. Culture or fit challenge	2

Participant responses to the question about a significant low point in their teaching life were unanimously related to various challenges participants faced. However, these challenges were not only illustrative of teaching moments. Instead, perceived challenges ranged from the faculty member as teacher or a teaching challenge and students' engagement and performance to institutional/departmental challenges, prior teaching, and doctoral program experiences.

Category I: Teacher Self or Teaching Challenges

Four participants identified a challenge related to themselves as teachers or their teaching practice.

Valerie, Biology. Valerie describes a low point in her teaching life that exposed her assumptions about undergraduate students and their level of preparedness for college work when she began to work with students at a new university:

At my current institution, I was not ready for college students who were not ready for school. I was used to a situation where I get up and I lecture, I give them an assignment, and they are self-motivated enough to figure it out for themselves. Well, with this particular class, I gave them an in-class assignment where they had to go through their textbooks and look for specific information. And just about all 30 students got extremely annoyed with me, and they kept yelling, 'Well, where is it in the book? What do you mean, look it up? I have no idea where it is in the book.' It never dawned on me that this was something these kids couldn't do.

Valerie notes she was irritated by the students' response and admitted that she was a little angry at having to accommodate the students in what she then perceived was an extreme and

unnecessary way. However, she realized that if she did not adapt to the situation and context, the learners would suffer, and her teaching would be ineffective. When asked what it was about the experience that made it meaningful for her, she noted her own emotional response, as well as the emotional intensity of the students' reaction, served as motivations to investigate the situation in more depth:

I think honestly it was probably motivated by their anger and their reaction towards me because I didn't want that to happen again. And I felt bad that they were so frustrated with me too. So for me, it was on an emotional level that I was reacted to so negatively that I had to do something to correct that. So I kind of took it upon myself—if the entire class is yelling at me, obviously it's me in that situation. If it's one or two people, then the hell with them, but if the entire class is yelling it, *I'm* doing something wrong, and how do I prevent that from happening again?

A key takeaway from the experience for Valerie was a realization that she needed to adjust her expectations and accept the reality of the learners in front of her: “Now it just is. I have to start where they are. If I want you to become a good learner, I have to start from square one.”

Tara, Psychology. Tara's low point occurred when she was 25 years old. She was teaching in an intensive special needs program at an inner city high school and experienced challenges for which her teacher training and prior teaching experience had not prepared her. The stressors in the teaching context were many, and Tara notes that she was “over her head” in any number of ways:

I had this classroom in one of the toughest neighborhoods—a special needs class, every one of them high risk, high maintenance, and if they didn't make it in my class, the next step was—they were all adjudicated at the time—they would be in prison. They gave me an aide that was 64 and spoke limited English. She was initially very frightened of the kids. What the hell did I know? I was in this room with a very diverse bunch of kids who had experienced poverty that I never knew. They'd been through seven teachers. I lasted the year, but I ended up with terrible ulcers and wasn't sleeping; I was so ill all the time. I was over my head. It was incredibly stressful, and I had to be a different person. I had them the full day, breakfast, lunch, taking them to the bus so they didn't kill anyone; I had to be present during gym so they wouldn't hurt each other or somebody else. You always had to be ‘on,’ and you had to be on your game and thinking several steps ahead. And to be therapeutic all alone with 21 teenage boys that were such a challenge—that was a low point because I felt very incompetent, very overwhelmed.

Tara's experience highlights the constraining influences of context on teacher behaviors. Yet Tara indicated she is not sure anyone could have been prepared for such an environment. As she puts it, she "just didn't have enough time on the planet to know how to handle these very complex things."

Miriam, Education. Miriam responded that her low point was not exactly about teaching but about the profession and the perceived value of her work as a college teacher in comparison to other careers:

This probably is not related, and it's not really about teaching. Ok, so looking at teaching experience in kind of a broad way, one of the problems I have with the profession is that it doesn't pay a lot of money and, you know, it's hard because sometimes I take that as—I get defensive about it because there are other fields of work that are more valued in our society, you know, when you're a doctor or a lawyer, you know, you get paid many, many more times than what I get paid, so I struggle with that a little bit because it makes me angry and doesn't seem right.

Edmond, English. Edmond's low point occurred when he was teaching in the K-12 system. He had attempted to befriend a troubled student who was having difficulty at home and at school. In the course of building a rapport with the student, Edmond discovered one day that the boy had brought a weapon to school. Edmond felt compelled to intercede and followed standard protocols, although in the end, the boy was not punished beyond the walls of the school. Edmond's experience led him to reflect on the nature of teaching and teachers' responsibilities related to the learners and context dimensions teachers have to be able to handle effectively:

Maybe it had to do with his age—but he was never sent to a correctional institution. His family was brought in, counseling, all of this stuff. At that moment, I think I became aware—I understood why they did it; they didn't want to screw up his life, but part of me felt like, *Was it being disingenuous not dealing with it?* And I remember talking to colleagues of mine who were older than me and much more savvy, and they said, 'Look it; you did everything you could in the moment; now let it go. The system will fix it.' I literally had someone say that to me, and I thought, *Jesus Christ, if that's the way the system fixes things, then this system is more broken than I thought it was.* I think that was my first experience of flaws in the education system itself.

In discussing his low point, Edmond explained that he had shortly thereafter given his notice at the school to pursue doctoral study. The boy from his story returned to the school to see him, and

he located Edmond in the school cafeteria. Edmond was unsettled because he was not quite sure why the boy wanted to see him or what his intention was:

I was surprised to see him, I didn't know how he was going to react, I didn't know if he was mad or pissed at me, I didn't know—I was thinking of the other kids in the room. There was all this stuff going on in my mind. In that moment, I was wierded out because I didn't know if that person was going to be the one I had seen at the locker, and it's no different, I'm sure, than the horrible situations we see on TV now, and you never know what is going to happen, and you try to anticipate it or resolve it or deal with it before it happens, but sometimes you can't control those situations.

Edmond went on to describe the insights gleaned from the experience and its influence on his thinking about teaching:

That's the type of stuff that a book can't prepare you for. That's the type of stuff that sitting in a classroom with seasoned teachers doesn't prepare you for because they are never going to talk about that stuff because if they talk about that stuff, you will never go into the profession; you will be too fearful to go into the profession.

In terms of his learning, he says the experience made him realize that teachers have to be prepared for the unexpected: “that moment you are never going to be able to rationalize or understand but you still have to be able to handle it in some way.”

Category II: Student Engagement and Performance

Four participants noted challenges with student engagement or student performance as their low point.

Graham, Literature. Graham recalled having two sections of the same course—one group that was lively and participative and another that would not engage with him, the material, or each other:

I had two classes—one was great, they were all extroverting and had lots of ideas, and the other [class], they just would not say anything. I tried everything. They just would not talk to each other; I couldn't even divide them into groups; ah, I didn't know what to do. That was a real low point.

Instead of allowing the situation to continue, as a novice teacher might, Graham sought to solve the problem in collaboration with the students:

It was about 4-5 weeks in. I said, ‘People, we have a problem.’ I had tried everything I could think of, but we had a problem, and so I asked them, ‘How do you want to do this?’ In the end, we worked something out together.

Louisa, American Studies. Louisa states that she experiences ongoing low points: “I get them every semester when they’re just not as inspired as I need them to be...they’re just disengaged and disinterested. I think that to me is a low point.” Louisa’s response to the question also included challenges with student performance and the pace at which her students were learning—or not learning. In explaining her response, she tries to make sense of her tendency to take such performance challenges personally:

When they’re not moving as quickly as I’d hoped, I want to get them to understand. So that to me is a low point because they’re not quite getting it no matter how many times we circle out, and I have been criticized by my students before because I get—it seems like it personally upsets me when they don’t get it. So it comes across when I explain to them what they didn’t do, so yeah, I don’t mean to take it personally, but I DO take it personally because it’s a failure on my part when they don’t get it. So I get frustrated because I can HEAR them getting it, and they’ll give it back to me [in class], but then there’s something that happens between leaving that class and going and doing the work.

Louisa appears to be grappling with an expectation of linearity in student learning, assuming, for example, that “good learners” will process, integrate, and demonstrate their learning at a predetermined pace and in particular ways.

Janet, Adult Learning and Leadership. Janet’s low point involved her students’ outcomes on their first major assignment of the semester. She notes that the students had been doing well: “I was so excited because they were so committed, onboard, bonded, and participative—I just expected more and better.” Yet Janet realized that the students were new to doctoral study, so although frustrated, she came to understand that she needed to adjust her expectations accordingly:

This semester, a real low point was reading one of their big assignments. It was so discouraging. I had to keep telling myself, ‘Janet, they are in their first semester; you cannot have these expectations that these [assignments] are going to be wonderful.’ I had to reset, recalibrate my expectations.

Janet's experience serves as a reminder that at times "experts" must remember what it was like to be a novice, especially when learning to think in complex ways.

Carolyn, Sociology. Carolyn experienced a low point when she was disappointed at the outcome of her students' performance on a test. She notes in her response her consternation related to how students can fail an exam in which they have access to their notes and text:

I think when you really think that you've taught them the content and the material and then you give that first paper or that first test and you give them back, and it's like they all failed—and it was open book, open notes; how can you fail an open book, open note test? So I think when you put a lot of work into something and then it just doesn't, for whatever reason, compute.

Category III: Culture or Fit Challenges

Two of the ten participants pointed to challenges and influences beyond the classroom and their own teaching when discussing their low points. For one respondent, the challenge had to do with the broader culture of the school, while the other participant's challenge occurred at the program level.

Mary, Education. Mary's low point related to school culture. She notes the impact culture and policy decisions can have on teachers' energy and continued motivation for teaching:

I think a lot of the low points have to do with school culture—you know, things that were happening outside of the classroom that work their way in sometimes. It was a lot of policy-level stuff; I was at two places where I sort of saw my job, you know, dwindling away, and the challenges to continue to do what I was doing enthusiastically and energetically, knowing that when you step outside of that classroom, there's this whole black cloud hanging over everything. I think those were probably the lowest points.

Marie, Adult Learning and Leadership. Marie's low point occurred during her doctoral program. She describes the experience of attending graduate school while she also worked with undergraduate students at the same institution. She notes that she "tried so hard to fit in that space," and the effort to do so as a learner made her exhausted and stressed. Marie explained that success and acceptance in the program and in the institution required her to leave behind large parts of

herself. For Marie, the lack of fit involved more than just the discomfort a learner might experience when engaged in complex learning. Instead, she felt that she and her learning didn't matter:

So having both the experience as learner and working professional where you don't matter, your work doesn't matter, I began to really question my sense of worth personally, and it impacted how I showed up professionally and physically and spiritually.

Her low point response also describes what she sees as a connection between the difficulty she encountered during doctoral study and the toll it took on her health and spirit:

There was a point where, I guess, the weight of that was so great that it impacted me—it impacted my health, and in 2007, I had a breast cancer scare. And so for me, there is a direct connection between stress and one's health. I tried so hard to fit in that space and to walk away from what was comfortable, meaningful to me; there was that negative impact. I guess Mezirow would call it the disorienting dilemma, but it wasn't a dilemma for me; it was more disorienting than anything else.

Marie's key learning, which she says she realized from reflecting on the experience, was that she began to appreciate “just how important it was to really think about what it means to ‘matter’ in a space.”

Marie says this experience had a profound influence on her development as a teacher, her conception of the faculty role, and her thinking about the kind of environment she wanted to create for her students and their learning. As a result, she tries in her teaching to be conscious of ensuring that her students don't ever have the experience of what it is like to be disregarded—as she terms it, not to “matter”—in a learning space.

Turning Points in Teaching or Teacher Development

Participant responses involving their turning point experiences clustered into three categories (see Table 6).

Table 6

Turning Point Categories and Response Count

Category	Response count
I. Experiences of confidence or confidence-building	4
II. The influence of others	1
III. Reframing experiences	5

Category I: Experiences of Confidence & Confidence-Building

Four participants highlighted experiences of confidence or confidence-building as a turning point in their learning and development as teachers.

Miriam, Education. Miriam's turning point event involved a situation in which she learned to trust her intuition and experience in addressing a learner's needs:

I was teaching in the county house of corrections, and I was working with a man who could not read at all, and on the spot, I made up a way to teach him to read. You know, I started grabbing newspaper articles and newspapers. I started writing down things he said and had him look at it. It's like I just jumped into this intuitive mode and realized that we were in this together—I didn't have to know how to do this. I had to just do what felt right, what worked. And it did work. I think it takes some maturity to do that. I wanted to do it 'right,' and I wanted to be a *good* teacher, and so [before that] I did what I was taught to do [as a trained teacher]; you know, I followed A, B, and C because I thought I was supposed to do that. It wasn't until I got more and more experience that I realized that I really could rely on my experience.

Miriam's high point event speaks to the ability of experienced teachers to use what Connelly, Clandinin, and He (1997) call *personal practical knowledge* in their teaching which highlights teachers' knowledge and ways of knowing as informed by and inseparable from their personal and life experience (p. 666). Further, it speaks to the potential developmental connection between teachers' growth outside the classroom and their ability to trust the intuition gleaned from both their own lives and their teaching.

Carolyn, Sociology. Carolyn's turning point event occurred at her first institution and served as a welcome albeit belated vote of confidence in her abilities. In explaining the context of her

turning point response, she notes that when she accepted her first faculty job, she was hired to teach particular courses in her discipline. When she arrived on campus, however, she was told that she would be teaching different classes. After a substantial period of time in her role, she finally was offered the opportunity to teach the courses for which she had initially been hired:

One turning point would be when I was finally allowed to teach the classes I was hired to teach...so the research methods class and the capstone class...it was validation that the people in the department realized that I could actually *teach* the classes.

Unfortunately, because Carolyn's experience at the college had not started out well, she had already been thinking about leaving her institution when this turning point experience occurred.

Mary, Education. Mary's turning point involved an interaction with her then-department head when the chair came to observe Mary's teaching:

The department chair came in to observe me; the students were working in cooperative groups and, you know, the structure was all there; there were guidelines, there were materials, they were engaged, and she walked in and said, 'I'm here to observe you.' I told her to have a seat, and she said, 'Well, I'll come back when you're really teaching.' And I was like, 'This is what my classroom looks like most of the time; you know, come in and see.' But what she was looking for was a lecture; she wanted to sit and watch me lecture. I was doing learning activities, so the students were engaged in heavy, meaningful learning, but she didn't view it that way. And so, again, it was probably one of those freeing moments. You know, this is who I am and how I teach but measure my students at the end. They'll be able to tell you anything, and you know, really, the content is there, the rigor is there; it just looks different than your traditional view. It was sort of validating, *This is who I am as a teacher, and if you don't like it, let me know, and I'll go somewhere else.*

Mary went on to say that the same department head had attempted to "push her pedagogic beliefs on everybody," and Mary noted that "some followed her, and some held on to their own beliefs. I'm proud to say I held onto my own beliefs [laughs]."

Janet, Adult Learning and Leadership. Janet's turning point was related to insights about herself and her capabilities that emerged during her doctoral work. She notes that in graduate school, "I never felt like a knower. I don't know why; I can't go back that far. When I passed my comps, I was one of nine who passed, and I thought, *Ok, I must know something.*" In her description of her

turning point, Janet relates that she had a meaningful realization that prompted her to change her thinking about her own abilities:

Early on in my doctoral program, I had an epiphany at the end of the first semester of grad school. I had written 16 papers—4 courses—I think one paper a month, and at some point in December, I said, ‘Oh, I’m not a writer.’ As the words came out of my mouth, I thought, *I just wrote 16 papers—how—I have evidence that I am a writer.* But then I had to qualify that and say, ‘Well, maybe not a *good* writer.’ So I had to change my story—because I was in a reflective mode, a self-reflective mode, I saw right away that that was not a truth anymore. *How can I say I’m not a writer? I just wrote 16 papers—*so these little bitty things added to my self-confidence.

Janet’s experiences and insights required her to revise her view of herself as writer, as knower, and as scholar—as she puts it, “to change her story.” She notes that these insights and changes in her self-concept were necessary for her to develop the confidence needed for both her teaching and her scholarship.

While it might appear that Janet’s confidence-building as a doctoral student was unrelated to her teaching, Janet notes that she had struggled with self-confidence. In her turning point response, she relates that this success in graduate school was crucial in enhancing her confidence in herself, and by extension, her confidence in teaching: “The biggest thing that has influenced my ability to go INTO the classroom is doctoral study. I grew up; I got my self-confidence that I never had before.”

Category II: The Influence of Others

While throughout the interviews, participants spoke convincingly and often about the influence of others on their development as teachers, only one participant mentioned the impact of others on their learning and development as a turning point experience.

Louisa, American Studies. Many people have contributed to Louisa’s learning since she arrived at her new institution. She notes her interactions with others at her college and in external learning opportunities have been influential in her learning as teacher and her thinking about teaching:

Just talking to lots of other people and hearing how they teach and also reframing the conversation...so changing it from ‘My students can’t do’ to ‘What ways can I help my students engage with.’ I think that, for me, was a turning point.

Louisa acknowledges the role of certain colleagues in her development who provided time and space “to just let me process things.” In addition, Louisa mentions in her response that she worked informally with a colleague on her campus which she says provided her with important feedback on her teaching. She notes, however, that her learning from the interaction would not have been possible without mutual trust and professional goodwill:

I was very welcoming of her in my class because we did trust each other—more correctly, I trusted her—and I trusted her to be a good student; I trusted her to do the things she said she was going to do, and then I got the benefit of her feeling like she could be open with me about my teaching—whether it was a positive or a negative thing.

Category III: Reframing Experiences

The final turning point category, *Reframing Experiences*, refers to events in which participants’ thinking or meaning structures were altered, confronted, or expanded. For five participants, these served as catalytic events for rethinking some aspect of themselves as teachers, their practice or purpose, or their beliefs about students and learning.

Valerie, Biology. Valerie’s turning point experience prompted a confrontation with her image of herself as a “good” teacher. When she changed institutions, she was shocked by the student evaluations she received and questioned her ability to be effective in her new setting:

It was between the first semester and second semester at my current institution. The first year, I came in with certain expectations of what these kids should be able to do. As a result, the evaluations were horrible, absolutely horrible. And it was really embarrassing. My feelings were hurt, and I’m willing to admit that. I felt a little humiliated because the institution I came from before, all the kids loved me to death. So to get this blow that said, ‘No, you’re not as good as you think you are’ kinda makes you want to change a little bit.

While her description sounds as if Valerie’s response was rational and logical, leading to a quick resolution, in fact, she needed time to process the event alone and with colleagues. She admits that she was angry both at herself and at her students and acknowledges that it would have been easy

for her to blame the students and continue doing what she had been doing. When she calmed down, she spent time “networking with colleagues, trying to do something with my pedagogy in order to better meet the needs of the students.”

From this experience, Valerie learned that “it takes a certain amount of courage to realize that you are not as perfect as you think you are.” While self-confrontation is a painful process, “you have to actually face and encounter that pain in order to become a better teacher.” She notes her own discomfort and her empathy for the students because they weren’t getting the education they were paying for served as motivation for her to make changes in her teaching.

Graham, Literature. Graham’s turning point involved teaching in a nontraditional setting for troubled young people which provided him with a different understanding of learning:

When I first entered teaching, it was all about system, and it was all about insisting that people met my standards. When I worked with disturbed adolescents, I began to realize that my standards didn’t matter quite so much. Their thoughts were really rich and wonderful and incredible, but their ability to systematically put them down in any form that was acceptable was a much bigger challenge, and I realized then that it was a heck of a time for me. In fact, it was a—I didn’t do very well in that job, but I learned a lot. What I learned there was that when people are ready, when they’ve worked through all their garbage—or enough of their garbage—and they said, ‘I want to learn more about that,’ then the amount of material they could get through is extraordinary. It’s lightning-like. And I realized that real learning didn’t depend upon passing exams. Real learning was much deeper than that. It was something held in the soul, and so I abandoned a lot of my more formal ideas—not completely—I want people to write sentences, you know, that you can actually understand; that would be nice. But if there’s nothing alive behind the sentences, who cares? If it’s a great idea, it *really* deserves a chance to emerge.

As a result of this experience when he was a young teacher, Graham radically reframed his thinking about teaching and learning. He sees his role now as one who “invites” students into the learning. He points out that his goal is to find out what students think about the world and their place in it and how they might see themselves represented in the course texts that Graham believes speak to and about the human experience.

Graham has realized over time that self-knowledge—in teachers and in learners—is paramount to learning, and he uses his vast experience with learners in various settings to create an environment in which students can come to know their own minds and hearts, as well as each other. As guide and one who provides what Winnicott (1965) calls a “holding space” for learning, Graham hopes students will come to realize that they are on a journey of coming to know, understand, and connect their interior and exterior worlds.

Marie, Adult Learning and Leadership. Marie’s turning point, which occurred during her doctoral training, was an extremely painful experience for her:

The turning point actually came from my experience as learner in my doctoral program and being at a research university with a very high research objective. That was a very new environment for me. The issues of power and privilege were very, very different—I had never experienced anything like it. The Ivy League experience is so far beyond the paradigm I was used to, let’s say it that way. So to not only be a doctoral student in that space but also working in that space as a professional, I quickly learned that the issue of mattering that I talked about was not something that they privileged in that space—conversations around spirituality, that sort of thing, took on a very different view there. It was highly intellectualist in that space, so hearing anything different from that is usually seen as ‘unsophisticated thinking’ or something along those lines, so I quickly—just to give you the turning point—I learned that I didn’t matter, and my work didn’t matter.

The experience impacted Marie not only as a learner but as “a black woman, a black scholar” who was trying to find her way in a world that consistently provided disjunctive and negative feedback about the perceived value of what and how she “knows.”

Marie said she had to process the experience and make sense of it in a way that was meaningful for her:

I had to ask myself, ‘Ok, what is going on here? Why am I feeling less of myself as I’m going through this process in this space? What is the emotional fortitude that one has to have in order to be an effective faculty member, staff member, administrator in a space like this?’

In coming to terms with the messages she received about herself as learner in the doctoral space, Marie realized that she would need to integrate her academic and personal learning in a way

that honored both new knowledge and her own experience. In resolving the duality, Marie sought ways to bring herself and her “ways of knowing” into the classroom with her:

When I’m hearing [students’] stories, I hear and understand that it’s ok and it’s appropriate sometimes to sort of bring myself into the work and to listen to that voice and the spiritual piece that’s an integral part of my pedagogy.

Marie learned from her turning point experience that “there are some spaces in which you cannot articulate [this knowing], but it can still be felt.” Despite the distressing nature of her turning point event, Marie has used her learning to enhance her teaching and to think more critically and intentionally about how to create a welcoming and accepting space for her students—a space in which she is a guide and a presence, as well as a valued and knowledgeable member of the community whose learning also “matters.”

Edmond, English. Unlike the other participants in this category, Edmond did not point to one specific event; instead, he described his turning point this way:

I would love to provide a single moment, but it was more like waves of moments experienced in my early years as an educator. I allowed myself to be transformed by those experiences and began to take on a less idealistic and more practical and essential teaching philosophy.

When asked to elaborate on the changes he notices in himself, his teaching, or his thinking about teaching over time, Edmond reflected on himself as a beginning teacher:

I think I romanticized the learning process. I didn’t have that sense of inhibition from reading all of the education books and saying, ‘You have to hit your mark and do this and this and this.’ And to an extent, that might have served to my advantage because I walked in there with no sense of perspiration but more of a sense of ambition.

From his experience in the classroom before he began his doctoral work, Edmond points to one of the biggest things he’s learned about learning and teaching:

The learning process is never-ending for students and for professors, and it requires commitment—my commitment to the students, and my ability to secure a commitment from them in return.

His comments about a teacher's need to commit in order to secure students' commitment in their learning are reminiscent of John Dewey's (1925) profound insight that "one could go through the defects and mistakes of teaching and learning generally and find that they are associated with failure to secure emotional participation" (p. 15).

Edmond says his early teaching experiences moved his learning forward on a number of levels. He became comfortable with taking calculated risks, and he learned the importance of being able to deal with many different personalities in the classroom. Through those early teaching experiences, he developed a certain level of confidence because, he says, he "didn't know enough to be anxious." He acknowledges that he and his students were learning together in those early years, but one ultimate take-away from his experience was the understanding that he would need to learn how to "earn students' respect" rather than demand it.

Tara, Psychology. Tara's turning point occurred when she was a young teacher in a day treatment center. She was working with a more senior teacher who was in her 50s or 60s while Tara was "still a kid." She describes the teacher as having "this calm, strong, easy approach with kids." Students would get agitated, Tara said, and the teacher would say, "Come, sit over here," and people would relax in her presence. Working with this seasoned teacher, Tara recalls a key moment leading to the change in her thinking:

I remember one time, and this was so effective—she put two kids together and said, 'Go work that out,' and I thought, *Wow, that's really loosey goosey; my God, that's risky.* The message she gave them was 'I trust you to handle your affairs; I trust that you can figure this out, that you are competent to figure this out.'

Shortly thereafter, Tara experienced her turning point, which she described this way:

There was this one little turn, like the shower screw. The simple phrase: *Go with the kids; go with them*, and that was it. It meant you don't set up your lesson, and you don't impose things on these children. The whole prescriptive thing took on another meaning. Ok, so going with them means they guide you, and you have to follow them.

Tara's turning point experience was a further movement away from the behaviorist model of her teacher training and served to open a space in her meaning structure to think differently about teaching and to consider what student-centered teaching might really involve.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings of a Critical Event protocol applied to a sample of ten college teachers. Participants were asked to reflect upon and describe what they perceived as high points, low points, and turning points in their learning and development as teachers. The findings indicated that faculty members are motivated to reframe their thinking about teaching—and by extension, their teaching practice—through a variety of experiences, interactions, and challenges, both personal and professional.

In Chapter Five, the data is “broadened,” allowing for inclusion and comparison of participant experiences and insights across interview texts that relate to select analytic categories. The chapter includes a discussion of similarities and differences across cases and is informed by relevant literature in teaching development and adult development.

Chapter 5: Discussion of the Findings

We do not grow absolutely, chronologically. We grow sometimes in one dimension and not in another, unevenly. We are mature in one realm, childish in another. The past, present, and future mingle and pull us backward, forward, or fix us in the present.

—Anaïs Nin (1972), *The Diary of Anaïs Nin*

Chapter Four discussed the findings of the Critical Event protocol which focused on participants' responses to what they considered high points, low points, and turning points in their teaching development.

In this chapter, participants' learning and development are explored in light of the study's first two guiding research questions.

Guiding Question 1: What Kinds of Experiences Do Participants Identify As Meaningful in Their Learning and Development as College Teachers?

Experiences of confidence. Confidence in teaching is often believed to develop inevitably over time and as a result of experience. McAlpine and Weston's (2000) research suggests teaching confidence is connected to a willingness to experiment and take risks. Sadler's (2008) study of college teacher development points to a relationship between faculty members' confidence as teachers and their content and pedagogical knowledge, intimating that comfort with and mastery of content necessarily lead to confidence. Yet few participants in this study mentioned advanced content knowledge as salient for or a concern in their teaching development or teaching confidence. As Edmond succinctly summarizes the disparity between content knowledge and teaching practice, "There's a difference between *knowing it* and *being able to teach it*."

The study participants' experiences of confidence ranged from confidence-building and success in teaching and doctoral work to confidence in themselves as adults in the world. Miriam's confidence-building related to her willingness and ability to trust her instincts gleaned from her both

her personal development and teaching experience to solve the challenge of teaching an adult to read—a task she notes was beyond her training and knowledge base. Yet Miriam notes that confidence in her teaching experience intersected with her own development: “I don’t think I could’ve done it right out of college. I was too nervous and scared.”

Valerie’s high point experience in helping a student learn a concept that she had been unable to master was a source of confidence to Valerie as a beginning teacher, while Louisa speaks of confidence not just in her teaching development but in the person she is “becoming” in her teaching: “Being happy with who I am makes me such a different teacher because I’m not constantly trying to pretend to be somebody; I’m not constantly performing who I think I’m supposed to be.” As an example, Louisa states she is no longer afraid to tell her students she doesn’t “know” something—an action she says would have provoked tremendous anxiety in her several years ago and points to the development of personal authenticity which she believes is connected to her current openness to enhance her teaching.

Carolyn mentioned two instances of confidence-building. In the first situation, she was finally “allowed” to teach the courses she was hired to teach which served as validation from her supervisor and coworkers that, as Carolyn put it, “I actually knew what I was doing.” In the second situation, she notes her move to a new institution, in combination with her own development, has made her more confident and “a little less sensitive” to the comments and feedback of others. A developmental movement is evident in Carolyn, as she was no longer granting inordinate power in her self-definition to what others thought of her.

Mary’s opportunity to teach other courses in her discipline extended her understanding of her teaching practice. The confidence she gained from this experience—in conjunction with previous teaching experiences across her career—allowed her to stand up for her beliefs about how best to

teach her students when an administrator pressured her to teach in a more “traditional” way. Yet it can be inferred that Mary’s own development intersected with her teaching development, as the ability to stand up for her beliefs—especially in opposition to an authority figure in her professional life—is indicative of an integrated self that has established its identity.

Janet notes her developing confidence in graduate school enhanced her sense of personal and academic competence which she believes supports her teaching:

It was a turning point in my ‘self-esteem self’ which allows me to be a scholar, which allows me to be a teacher, which gives me permission to be who I want to be as opposed to I’m not good enough, which was the story I had to change.

Janet notes her personal confidence has developed over time, and she mentions that it had previously been difficult for her to call herself a “teacher”—a role she holds in high esteem:

When I got more self-confidence, I could—I always said I was an educator ever since kindergarten. I know in my gut that I’m an educator, but to say I am a teacher or I am able to teach is different.

Janet describes the distinction between being a teacher and being an educator this way: “I think that educators can design curriculum, support learners, mentor people, tutor people, and never stand up in front of a classroom and teach.” Like Louisa, Janet has learned that being a teacher “takes courage” and a willingness to “say you don’t know, to be vulnerable.”

Just as Edmond’s anxiety when he forgot his notes for class pointed to a confrontation with his own sense of authority, Janet’s description of herself as a beginning teacher is imbued with concern for preparation and control indicative of what the teacher development literature terms “self concerns” which are often a focus in early teaching practice (Fuller & Brown, 1975; Ramsden, 1992; Kugel, 1993; Conway & Clark, 2003):

Oh my god, I am the world’s best preparer. OVER-PREPARED. If this activity goes wrong, I’ve got two more back-ups. Minute-by minute, what I will do at 9:00, what I will do at 9:15. When they say this, this is what I will say—completely over-prepared. *Completely*. It was for security. I have a plan for anything. The first time I went into a classroom, it was—it was a plan for facilitating their learning, but really, it was a plan to stay in control.

Her description speaks to the need for control and the discomfort with the uncertainty in teaching that teachers must eventually negotiate (Dodd, 1995). Over time, however, Janet says she began to relinquish some degree of control to the students; here she expresses a change in her understanding that suggests a conceptual shift in her thinking about her role in teaching: “I think I gave up control; I still over-plan, but I think I gave up some control; I learned that this is not all about me and that students have to bring a lot to the classroom for it to go.”

In contrast to the confidence challenges some of the other participants faced as beginning teachers, Tara felt extremely confident after completing her undergraduate education program and teaching certification requirements when she accepted her first teaching position. She gained further confidence from her first job and a sense of professional authority, she says, because although she was young, she had administrative responsibility for her program. Yet her sense of efficacy was, in fact, connected to her life experience and personal development rather than merely the result of an experience of success in her teaching context:

I put myself through college; I always put myself through school, and I had my own agenda that I followed whether it was supported or not—and often times not; that was ok with me. I was going to do it anyway so. ...I was a rebellious kid too, so it's like I didn't need my parents to tell me much of anything, as it turned out, so I would just proceed. That's how I did it; I would just proceed. That was sort of my mantra.

Edmond describes much of his confidence as emerging from his prior teaching experience. Edmond observes that as he has developed confidence in himself as a teacher, his students have come to trust in his ability to support their success in his class:

I think my kids have confidence in me. They might not always like what I do; they may not like my approach. They might not even like how I'm dealing with a subject in class, but I think they have confidence in me enough to say, 'Let's just keep going with him; this is going to go someplace good.'

Marie's confidence emerged when she resolved the conflict she experienced in her graduate program between her “way of knowing” and the forms of knowledge that were privileged by faculty

members and administrators at her doctoral institution. For her, the ability to use her life experience and to draw from her spiritual foundation have resulted from the integration of her objective and subjective knowledge, culminating in what Belenky et al. (1986) term *constructed knowing*: “My lived experience informs my practice and informs how I LOOK at pedagogy and the meaning and the role in the classroom. It’s not the other way around.”

Graham does not speak explicitly about specific experiences of confidence in his interview; however, his description of his teaching self denotes a level of confidence that novice college teachers might find enviable. He describes himself as undefended when entering a learning space; instead of merely attempting to transmit knowledge or information that he thinks is important, he seeks “to find out what is there” in the classroom. He notes that real learner-centeredness is about “what students need to learn, not what we need to teach.” Graham speaks of the importance of genuineness, honesty, and attention to learners which suggests a level of comfort with himself that allows him to be flexible in response to whatever arises in class.

Participant responses to negative evaluation of their teaching. Hativa’s (2000) study of college teachers implies teaching confidence is itself variable but highly influenced by students’ feedback on teaching—particularly negative feedback. This suggests that teachers’ confidence does not develop or exist apart from teaching performance, which aligns with views of teaching development as external rather than internal to the teacher.

While several study participants mentioned the impact of students’ evaluation of their teaching on their learning or motivation, its impact on participants’ confidence, in fact, depended more upon their development as adults than on their level of teaching confidence or years of teaching. Valerie used the negative feedback to self-assess and make what she saw as necessary adjustments in her approach to working with students in a new context. However, Louisa took the negative

feedback at her new institution more personally because, she says, she was already feeling incompetent as a teacher and faculty member:

Coming here and getting bad evaluations was such a shock. It was just—I wasn't doing anything differently; I was doing exactly the same stuff. It was SUCH a shock to suddenly realize I was getting [low scores], and I was being told I was the worst teacher they ever had; it was just devastating.

What made the experience significant for Louisa was that the feedback she received resonated with her own doubts about herself:

When I came to [my current institution], my confidence was really low anyway, and [the negative evaluations] just piled on top of it, and I was absolutely sure that I was the worst professor ever. I had no idea what I was doing, and I got super-defensive. I was bad at every element of my job, and then to have the students tell me that I was bad at every element of my job only just reinforced what I already knew.

Louisa acknowledged that her reaction to the negative evaluations was connected to her own developmental tasks and personal learning, making the experience emotionally challenging for her.

By contrast, Graham used the same experience to reflect upon how his student came to make sense of their previous work together, viewing him differently from the vantage point of further experience and learning. The situation reminded him of his own learning when he was a college student:

It was another recognition, I think—a reminder. I mean, yeah, I know that from my own learning. After I'd taken my undergrad finals, I went off and did a bit of a summer job, and every so often, I'd sit up and go, 'OH, *that's* what that meant—bang! Gotta use that information'—and then I had to get back to whatever it was, washing dishes, etc. So I knew that from my own experience.

Participants' experiences of confidence in teaching can be viewed as aligned with their development outside of teaching. As adult learners, faculty members' efficacy and negotiation of personal authority will necessarily be evident in their teaching. Further, participants' experiences suggest the importance of the intrapersonal domain (particularly self-knowledge and self-awareness) in their teaching confidence and in their own growth and development as adults.

Experiences of fit and lack of fit. Participants mentioned experiences of fit or lack of fit as important for their learning and development. Tara and Marie note crystalized moments in which they recognized their fit with the teaching role or the teaching context, while Louisa acknowledged a sense of fit with her new institution, noting, “I am at exactly the type of school I should be at.” Miriam and Mary mention a sense of fit with their respective departments which they say enhances their openness to learning individually and in community.

Several participants commented on a lack of fit during their educational and career experiences. Valerie and Marie mention graduate school experiences in which lack of fit became evident. Valerie’s experience involved her observation of how graduate students and post-doctorals were treated at her research-intensive institution, which she says offended her sense of fairness and equity. She notes that the experience is part of the reason why she did not seek a faculty position at a large university but instead sought a teaching position at a small liberal arts college. Marie’s experience of feeling unwelcome and “less than” in her graduate program prompted painful self-doubt and inner exploration. Successful negotiation of the meaning of the experience has informed both her teaching persona and her work with students, serving as a reminder for her to be conscious of the power of the teaching role and its impact on students’ openness to learning.

Louisa and Carolyn’s experience of lack of fit with their previous departments served as an impetus for them to move on to other institutions. Edmond also mentions a lack of fit with his department that became evident when he joined his campus: “A lot of it was dealing with personality and personal issues that have nothing to do with me standing up in front of a room full of kids.” Graham’s lack of fit occurred much earlier in his life when he was a student at a prestigious boarding school:

They didn't know what to do with me because I was a 'poor boy,' you see. I might not fit in. Several of my colleagues didn't; they dropped out. We were not their people, and of course, they were not my people either.

For Janet, the lack of fit related more to her personal discomfort with a particular teaching approach—namely, lecturing—than with institutional or departmental challenges. As she describes here, her discomfort was perhaps not so much about the instructional method itself but more about her ambivalent self-identification as authority and expert:

I have a lot of insecurities in teaching. One is being a knower. I don't feel like a knower, like an expert. So last year actually I committed to having a short lecturette—I call them lecturettes to let myself off the hook—for my own growth and development. It's like, I know this, and I want you to know it—even as a lecturette.

However, Janet's ability to identify an area in which she recognizes she is in need of expansion or development (i.e., her "learning edge") is itself suggestive of development in the intrapersonal and metacognitive realms.

The importance of fit. Weimer (2010) points to the need for collegial co-workers and departments in higher education, as colleague and department challenges can serve as an energy drain on faculty members which can impact faculty vitality and effectiveness. Biglan (1983) and Becher (1989) note the influence of academic departments on faculty learning and efficacy, while Sadler (2008) views faculty members' position or role in the academic department as shaping their teaching development. Henkel (2000) and Becher and Trowler (2001) consider faculty members' perceptions of themselves within their disciplinary communities as an important factor in how they acclimate to a teaching culture and an institutional teaching role.

As the faculty role continues to evolve, fit with role, department, and institution becomes increasingly more important. Weimer (2010) points to the influence of both institutional health and institutional fit on faculty members, while Crone (2010) highlights institutional fit as a critical component of faculty well-being and success. The majority of study participants indicated that they

would not remain in a position in which the daily environment was not conducive to their learning and esteem.

Context challenges and changes. Institutional context is believed to have an impact on teaching decisions and faculty role conception (Cox et al, 2011). Trigwell et al. (1999) postulate a connection between faculty members' perceptions of the teaching environment and their approaches to teaching. Faculty members are clearly shaped and influenced by the context of their environment, yet new faculty members and their prior learning, in turn, can potentially alter the new institutional context they enter (Remmik & Karm, 2012). However, as Harrison and McKeon (2010) note, new or novice college teachers, as peripheral members of the practice community (Wenger, 1998), may be inhibited from altering the teaching culture or advancing teaching innovation because of their perceived status in the academic hierarchy at departmental or institutional levels.

Four of the ten participants mentioned a change in institutional context or pointed to the salience of a particular aspect of their teaching context as significant for their learning and development. Valerie experienced a temporary set-back in her teaching when she changed institutions, while Louisa experienced a longer period of difficulty when she transitioned to her current institution: "The first semester was the worst, but there were probably three to four tough semesters altogether." Edmond too acknowledged difficulty in transitioning to his current institution, noting that he had a challenging first semester as he sought to understand and relate to the students. When he joined the faculty at his college, he says, no one made him aware of the types of resources available or guided him in how to succeed in the environment. Without a "playbook," he says, "it was difficult to adjust."

Participants' perceived lack of support in their transition and socialization at the departmental and institutional levels supports Remmik and Karm's (2012) findings related to early career faculty.

The researchers note that new and novice faculty expect interest in their work and learning, but “if no interest emerges, then the need and wish for it disappears” (p. 129). The result, of course, is that faculty commitment also disappears which can immediately or eventually lead to increased levels of faculty attrition.

In contrast to the other participants’ challenges when they changed institutional contexts, Carolyn thrived when she transitioned to her new college:

My experience here is in almost every meeting, almost everything I say is latched onto, so I think I’m much more—here more-so than at my other place—I’m seen as a leader in terms of teaching stuff and learning stuff.

While a change from one institutional context to another can present challenges for college teachers and their development, for Carolyn and other faculty members in general, it can also provide an opportunity to start anew, recreating themselves and clarifying their purpose in an environment which might be more suitable.

Graham’s context challenge spoke more to the lack of an established teaching culture at his institution. He notes, “If you got a bunch of people together on my campus, the last thing they would talk about is teaching, it seems to me.” Mary’s challenges were connected to the politics of administrative decisions at her previous institutions, which she says made it difficult to sustain her enthusiasm in and for teaching, while Miriam’s challenge involved feeling underpaid and undervalued in her professional role.

Section summary. Participants identified experiences of confidence, fit or lack of fit, and changes in institutional or teaching context as important for their learning and development as teachers. Participants’ confidence developed in response to both positive and negative experiences in their teaching and learning but was also underscored by participants’ development as adults. Experiences of fit for some participants were unanimously positive and invigorating, while participants that experienced a lack of fit were motivated to make a change or to rethink some aspect

of themselves, their teaching, or the environment. In addition, participants noted both positive and negative learning when they moved to new institutions and highlighted the importance of formal and informal induction and socialization mechanisms at departmental and institutional levels. Other sources of challenge included the impact of institutional teaching culture and policy decisions on teaching motivation and the perceived economic value of faculty work.

Guiding Question 2: What Influences on Their Learning and Development do Participants Identify as Significant?

Key influences on participants' development. Participants identified several influences related to their teacher or teaching models from their experience as important for their conceptions of teaching and subsequent teaching practice.

Experience as student. Faculty members' experience as students both early on and into their doctoral programs served as an influence on their development as teachers. Participants point to the knowledge of teaching gleaned from positive and negative interactions with their own teachers as providing a starting point for their conception of the teaching role and alignment with particular teaching approaches. Entwistle, Skinner, Entwistle, and Orr (2000) found both new and established college teachers are influenced by their initial beliefs about teaching and their experiences as students (p. 9). These "gestalts" or mental models are particularly salient as teachers begin teaching (Flores & Day, 2006).

Graham's construct of "teacher" has a decidedly negative connotation and stems from an early experience he had in elementary school. The influence of the interaction shaped his thinking about the type of teacher he would become and his belief in the importance of the teacher's integrity in teaching:

In primary school, I was bored and probably a little angry as a kid. I was definitely bored when I realized that in some cases, I knew more than the teachers and that they would lie

about it, which got me even more enraged. I was having an argument with a little chum named _____. The teacher came over and asked, ‘What are you arguing about?’ And I said, ‘He says the capital of the United States is New York; I say it’s Washington, D.C.’ I KNEW it was Washington, D.C., and the teacher said, ‘Huh, that’s silly; everybody knows the capital of the U.S. is New York.’ I said, ‘NO, IT ISN’T! IT’S WASHINGTON, D.C.!’ The teacher said, ‘Well...well, the commercial capital is New York,’ and she marched away. I was 5 years old, and I knew then that I knew more than she did in certain important ways—not in all ways, obviously—and that she lied to me.

Additionally, Graham’s experience as a “poor boy” on a scholarship early on as a young student and in his doctoral training taught him about how a learner experiences “difference.” He notes that this experience of “otherness” provided him with what he calls “a peek behind the veil” at the reality of the unconscious paradigms that guide much thinking and behavior in education:

I recognized that class gaps mattered. Sometimes they mattered more to people than the ability of the individual concerned. I recognized that a lot of education was built on hypocrisy, so you can excel, but only when we say so and in the ways that we say are appropriate for you which damps down spirits. I learned that there were orthodoxies—some written and some unwritten—and actually, they tended to destroy the people that subscribed to them and that they bred terrible mediocrity.

Graham’s insight into the paradigms and constructs within which he studied and worked is suggestive of dialectical thinking and contextualized knowing.

Louisa also mentions that her experiences as a student played a role in how she approaches teaching: “I picked up all the bad habits I’d learned as a student, so I taught the way that I’d been taught.” Louisa’s insight into such influences on her teaching echoes Sternberg and Grigorenko’s (1997) contention that college teachers reward and value the preferred styles and abilities that they internalized from role models through their experience as learners (p. 709).

Carolyn’s models of “teacher” and teaching were shaped by her interactions with several professors in college and graduate school, one of whom she identifies as “like me” and the other as “not like me.” She describes the similar professor as “very structured and organized,” while the dissimilar professor had “this very big personality, so [she was] somebody everyone wanted to be

around.” This self-identification through opposites shows Carolyn’s attempt to locate and align with a model that fit her personality and disposition.

As Carolyn’s story of her experience as a student will attest, the affective domain can either enhance or obstruct learning (Wolfe, 2006). As an undergraduate student, she took a class with the professor with the big personality: “I would always sit up front and take my notes and not really say anything, and she would force me to talk and call me out; it was very embarrassing.” Later in the interview, Carolyn mentions a similar scenario in which she revisits this situation in a slightly different form from her perspective as a new professor. Because the original learning situation contained an emotional charge—what Wolfe (2006) calls “an emotional hook” (p. 37)—for Carolyn, she was understandably hesitant as a beginning teacher to confront students or their behavior even when it was required. In describing the negotiation of her personal and professional authority over time, she acknowledges a shift in herself:

Now more so than in the past, I’m much better at like classroom management and not really caring if I have to say something to somebody in class...like Oh well, whereas I would say I was always worried about if somebody said something inappropriate in class, I would think, ‘I should say something to them,’ but I don’t want to call them out in front of everybody, and I don’t want to make them feel bad...and like now, if you say something inappropriate, I’m going to say, ‘That’s inappropriate,’ and it’s not that you want to shame them, it’s just—it’s my classroom, and it needs to be addressed. So I would say that’s sort of different.

For Valerie, her learning as teacher and her thinking about teaching involved exploring her own assumptions about disciplinary thinking and its impact on her conceptions of teaching and learning. She notes, “We usually teach the way we learn, and I’ve tried to get out of that habit.”

Valerie describes her introduction to teaching through her graduate program, and like others in similar disciplines, she had difficulty navigating the tension between disciplinary expectations related to content versus how to teach it effectively:

When I first started teaching—Biological Science—I was thrown into the classroom. That’s very common. The instruction I was given was on how to carry out the lesson plan, not how to teach the lesson plan. ‘Carrying out’ the lesson plan is you talk about this point,

that point, and the other. Coverage and content. All those things that go in with really helping the student to learn were not things I was given; they were not the tools I was given. It was more like ‘Here, throw this at them, and you’re done.’

Valerie’s experience of learning to teach as a graduate student is congruent with Remmik and Karm’s (2012) contention that teaching induction within a particular subject-specific domain like science is bounded within established teaching traditions and practices (p. 125). Further, Kember (1997) notes that teaching approaches within such disciplinary paradigms tend to be teacher-centered, as they often involve imparting information or transmitting structured knowledge. However, in describing her teaching development over time, Valerie highlights the importance of two key influences on her learning and development as teacher: her own motivation to improve and her experience with students in which traditional models of teaching in her discipline were ineffective.

Edmond’s experience as student and the type of child he was have played a role in his development as a teacher. He described himself as a curious and inquisitive child who had “a desire to know things and to understand things.” Yet in terms of schooling, Edmond notes that while he enjoyed learning, he did not necessarily enjoy the formal student role:

I was not so much a student who loved being in a classroom, because I wasn’t. I loved to learn, and I loved to read. I was one of those students that got an assignment in class to read particular chapters in a book, and I’d do that and tell myself, ‘I didn’t really enjoy that so now I’m going to get another book that I think is more interesting.’

Edmond says that he brings the same inquisitiveness and curiosity to his teaching, resulting in a dogged determination to “get his students to a threshold of knowledge” to satisfy the goals of the course.

Marie was influenced by both positive and negative interactions with teachers, advisors, and professors. Seeing female faculty members of color for the first time was a revelation for Marie as an undergraduate student; their behaviors and “ways of being professors” presented tangible models for how she might inhabit the faculty role.

Similar to the way in which Carolyn's advisor/professor influenced her thinking about possibilities for herself, Marie's mentors, advisors, and professors also prompted her to consider higher education as a potential career path. Carolyn and Marie's experience in which their meaning systems were enhanced to include an option that was not then available to them is reminiscent of mentors' work with learners in the realm of what Hazel Markus and Paula Nurius (1986) term their "possible selves" (p. 954).

Marie's role models were not all positive, however. An undergraduate experience with a psychology professor whom she perceived as demeaning and humiliating to his students served as a negative gestalt for her—both a powerful example of the type of professor she did not want to become and an impetus to forge a path to a faculty position so that she could provide students with what she calls "a counter-narrative" to the influence of such professors.

Learning through observation. Mary points to the influences of the teaching styles and approaches that she observed when she was a teacher-in-training and a beginning teacher as informing her development as a teacher, with each exposure to another way of teaching or thinking about teaching serving to increase the number of possible strategies she might use. Lortie (1975) terms such learning an "apprenticeship of observation" and believes that such observations of teaching play a role in the way teachers shape their identities and influence how they respond to classroom situations as beginning teachers.

Flores & Day (2006) note the influence of significant others, such as teaching mentors, relatives, or family members who were teachers, as a major socializing agent in teaching (p. 221). Miriam, Louisa, and Janet were influenced by teachers in their schooling and in their home lives. Miriam's mother and aunt were both teachers, and she notes that in the Jewish tradition, teaching is highly esteemed and venerated. Miriam believes having models, people she could look up to, has not

only influenced the type of teacher she would become but also “contributed to my wanting to do this work.” Flores & Day (2006) further suggest that teachers who are able to recognize the influence of significant others (namely, teaching mentors or relatives who were teachers) often feel a personal commitment to the teaching role and to their own development within it (p. 225).

Janet states that the influence of her mother and her teachers on her ideas about teaching and learning has been powerful. While these meaningful others served as role models for her, Janet also acknowledges that she too was learning from her observations of them as teachers and as human beings. In discussing her teachers and their impact on her, Janet is filled with emotion:

(Tearing up) I have known since I was born that I was going to be a teacher—always... always. I can remember the name of almost every teacher I had. I can only name two teachers that I thought were terrible teachers, and I was always critical of them. ...I *love* learning. I *love* all my teachers. Observation was a big thing because when I say I loved all my teachers, I mean I was observing them.

Unlike Miriam and Janet, Louisa mentioned in passing during the interview that her mother was a teacher but did not indicate that her mother necessarily served as a role model for her teaching persona or her teaching practice. However, from Louisa’s description below, it is obvious that her mother’s influence was implicit and perhaps related to Louisa’s tendency to be exceedingly hard on herself while she develops as teacher and scholar:

I’ve realized that I am *really, really, really* critical of myself in all ways. Sometimes it drives me crazy, but I get that from my mother, right? My mother’s— the first thing out of her mouth is always a criticism, right? I’m used to criticizing myself, and I realize that that is both my biggest strength and weakness. I’m really reflective, but I’m also super self-critical, and I always assume the worst.

Tara’s experience as learner, in combination with her training as a K-12 teacher, provided early models which shaped her teacher self and initial approach to teaching. The first influence on her thinking about a career in the classroom with special needs students, however, came from an unexpected source:

I always knew I was going to be a special education teacher. I knew from the beginning—I remember at 10 years old, I saw a movie with Judy Garland in it, and that’s when I knew. Isn’t that crazy? [laughs] So yeah, I watched a movie with Judy Garland working with—she was a teacher aide for a classroom of students at that time, you said retarded—of children who were intellectually disabled. And I thought, *Oh, that’s really good—kids I never even considered.* I remember thinking, *Wow, I didn’t know those kinds of kids were around; who are those kids?* ‘Cause in those days, those kids were hidden away, so I said, ‘Oh, that’s what I’m gonna do.’

Tara notes that her initial role conception and models for teaching were guided by the philosophy prevalent in education at the time of her training:

I started off with very prescriptive teaching, assess and teach to the assessment, assess again, teach the assessment. Early on, it was my job to remediate, to improve, and to have goals and objectives, you know, that were reachable and defined.

However, as Tara has continued to learn about teaching, she has been introduced to various teaching structures and approaches which have dramatically altered her thinking and her teaching practice. As a result, she now uses more relational approaches with learners because she has come to believe that significant learning occurs through relationship. Otero and Chambers-Otero (2000) contend that all learning occurs within relationships, “but the quality of that relationship and therefore the quality of learning varies greatly” (p. 4).

The role of others in participant learning and development. Similar to the findings of Remmik and Karm’s (2012) study, participants highlighted the meaningful learning they experienced through their interactions with others as they have developed their teaching. In the current study, participants underscored mentoring, informal learning, and co-teaching opportunities as particularly important sources of learning about teaching.

Learning from teaching mentors. Mentoring is considered a crucial component of faculty success (Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007). While mentoring can be formal or informal, it can substantially enhance the learning of faculty members. Through dialogic interaction and modeling, faculty mentors often transmit tacit knowledge about teaching, the institutional culture, and the faculty role.

Johnson (2006) contends that dialogue as a social learning interaction contributes to the growth and development of adult learners' brains (p. 65). Through providing challenge and support, mentors can raise questions that stimulate the process of reflection and self-understanding believed essential for good teaching (Johnson, 2006).

Seven participants highlighted the importance of mentoring in their learning as teachers, while one participant was chagrined that mentoring was not available. For the majority of participants for whom mentoring was significant, learning occurred through observation, talk about teaching, or sharing of resources. Participants noted their learning through meaningful relationships positioned them to consider or question their approaches to numerous aspects of their teaching or themselves as teachers.

Tara's mentors taught her that different teaching situations call for different approaches and styles. Mary's mentors offered feedback and support, while Miriam's mentors within her department and in her outside life have guided her growth and development over the course of her teaching career. Carolyn's mentors ranged from her professors and advisors to a formal mentor with whom she was paired when she began working at her first institution.

Marie's mentors, especially during her undergraduate years, enhanced her identity development as a young woman of color, supporting Witt Smith, Smith, and Markham's (2010) finding that same race/same-gender mentoring provides more psycho-social support than other mentoring arrangements.

Graham recalls receiving guidance and materials from a teaching mentor when he was a young professor and notes that learning that "comes with a human face attached is what you tend to remember."

While the majority of participants mentioned the influence of one significant mentor, Louisa identified four different individuals at her college outside of her academic department that have been instrumental in her learning since arriving at her new institution, illustrating a more modern mentoring model that de Janasz and Sullivan (2004) term “multiple mentoring.” In contrast to a traditional one-on-one configuration that was often hierarchical in nature, multiple mentoring involves relationships with a number of mentors or several co-mentoring arrangements which have the potential to broaden and enhance a faculty member’s learning across domains.

One participant, Edmond, was less than happy that mentoring was not available to him when he transitioned to his college. He had a mentor in his K-12 preparation, and he notes that there were a few people in his graduate training who supported his learning as a doctoral student in certain knowledge areas. However, in his current role, he feels that he did not get what he needed to acclimate to his department or his institution:

In my current job, I don’t think I was mentored in any way that I should have been to help me assimilate. I had a difficult time relating to the student demographics, as well as dealing with some of the indecisiveness in my academic area. There were a lot of issues going on that I either didn’t have the knowledge of or wasn’t made aware of because I was a newbie, and it became difficult to adjust because it’s not like there’s a game plan. That was probably an area for me that was lacking. I don’t think I received the degree of mentorship or stewardship that I should have, and I knew something was missing.

A compelling finding in the current study was that not one participant mentioned receiving sustained—or even intermittent—mentoring in teaching from an administrator or department chair. This differed from Remmik & Karm’s (2012) findings, as their participants reported supervisor support in planning and teaching was not only available but was extremely beneficial for their learning and induction as novice college teachers (p. 128).

Informal learning. Coombs (1985) considers informal learning the most prevalent form of learning for adults. Informal learning, also known as “everyday learning,” occurs in the daily interactions and private contexts within which people work and live (Illeris, 2004, p. 151). This type

of learning takes place apart from the formal or institutionally sanctioned learning programs that might be offered to faculty on college campuses. Further, informal learning can occur or flourish in environments that are not considered particularly conducive to individual or organizational learning (Marsick & Watkins, 1990, p. 12).

Informal learning includes what Marsick and Watkins (2001) call *incidental learning*, which they define as learning that occurs as a by-product of some other activity (p. 25). For example, a new faculty member could be working with a department colleague on program or curriculum work; during the course of this interaction, the new faculty member “learns” through the interaction about department or disciplinary norms for behavior, teaching, or assessment. Such learning would likely not be deliberate or intentional but instead a fortuitous by-product of an interaction designed for another purpose. Marsick & Watkins (1990) note that incidental learning is always happening even though most people are unaware of it (p. 12).

Informal learning can either enhance or contradict learning acquired from formal, departmental, institutional, or disciplinary sources (Schugurensky, 2000). In addition, informal learning interactions can result in distorted learning, as learners’ existing knowledge that is based on misconception or misunderstanding can continue to derail not only their own learning but the learning of those around them (Wolfe, 2006, p. 37).

Six of the ten participants highlighted interaction with faculty colleagues as meaningful for their learning. Tara had the opportunity to enhance her learning about teaching and learning from a department colleague in an informal tutorial format, while at her new institution, Louisa worked informally with a colleague outside of her department who was knowledgeable about teaching and learning. Mary notes that she learns from her department members when they gather to “norm” student assignments, as well as from interactions with colleagues outside of her department. Janet

tries to learn from each encounter and then makes an effort to “pay that learning forward” by sharing what she has learned with others, while Marie seeks out more experienced colleagues when she needs help with her teaching or with navigating her campus. Valerie points to the importance of informal conversations about teaching with her colleagues as key to her ongoing learning.

Teachers’ learning is enhanced when it occurs through interaction with trusted and meaningful others (Le Cornu & Collins, 2004). McLaughlin (1997) posits the value of “learning relationships” in which teachers provide each other with the opportunity to both “learn new practices and to unlearn old assumptions, beliefs, and practices” (p. 84).

Palmer (1998) notes that “good talk about teaching can take many forms...and it can transform teaching and learning” (p. 160). For Valerie, it is the “back-porch conversations” with close colleagues that feed her learning:

Through those conversations, we bring to the table different insights and different points of view on what is going on with the students and why that might be happening. Then we also swap different ways that we can actually go about teaching.

Valerie notes, however, that such teaching conversations are not possible if faculty members are unwilling to admit they are struggling. Moreover, because such conversations and requests for support have the potential to expose vulnerability and “not knowing” in a culture that not only values “knowing” but expects it, her comments point to the trust and mutual positive regard essential for meaningful faculty learning about teaching.

While Valerie’s talks with colleagues about teaching are usually unplanned, Tara engages in daily “learning conversations” with a trusted department member to debrief and process the day’s teaching and learning experiences. The two participants that value informal learning through talk about teaching note that such interactions often involve questioning, clarifying, and seeking insight from a person outside of the teaching transaction.

Learning conversations such as these might be considered a form of self-reflection-in-dialogue (Habermas, 1971). Le Cornu (1999) believes there is a strong connection between a teacher's self-esteem and his/her ability or willingness to reflect on their teaching in the presence of another, as exposing one's thinking, behaviors, and reactions requires a strong ego and a certain degree of self-knowledge. However, Le Cornu's (1999) insight conflates willingness to reflect with the ability to engage in reflection—an assumption that has not yet been fully explored in the K-12, college teaching, or adult development literature.

Co-teaching. Co-teaching, or team-teaching, refers to the active collaboration of two or more teachers who prepare a course or lesson and then teach it together in some mutually agreeable format. Some benefits of co-teaching include sharing ideas in teaching, examining elements of one's practice, dialogic learning, and exploring assumptions about subject, method, or teaching (Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Rytivaara & Kershner, 2012).

Of the five participants who had one or more co-teaching experiences, the majority expressed a positive outcome in some aspect of their learning as a result of the experience. Tara learned from her co-teacher the importance of becoming conscious of one's teaching style; as a result of her co-teaching interaction, she realized that learners can be shut down to learning when confronted with an authoritative or overly directive approach that is not appropriate to the teaching context.

Graham team taught with colleagues from another department whom he describes as “wonderful folks that were very generous.” Through co-teaching, Graham was exposed to other models of teaching that prompted new insights about how he might work more effectively with his students. Yet it can be argued that Graham's early experiences as student and educator outside of the higher education context influenced his ability to “make sense” of and entertain the possibility of alternative teaching structures and approaches to teaching.

Unlike the other participants who had co-taught with colleagues both within and outside of their departments, Mary was asked to co-teach with her direct supervisor. Mary explains, however, that the invitation to co-teach contained an ulterior motive:

The education chair was teaching a graduate class, and she said to me, 'I'm gonna have you team teach with me, and if you do really well, then maybe I'll give you a job.' So I felt like this team teaching was a spring board, a test. She and I had very different teaching styles. She was very direct, rigid, and traditional, and I was very much less so, but it was interesting.

Carolyn had co-teaching experiences at both of her institutions. Co-teaching with colleagues at her first institution served as a welcome endorsement of her teaching approach and ability in an environment she perceived as less than supportive: "I team taught with a couple of people and to kind of have them validate, like, 'Oh yeah, that's a really good idea!' or 'That's a really good way to approach that topic' was helpful."

Janet's co-teaching experiences have evolved from challenging to rewarding, occurring both before and after her doctoral training. In her first co-teaching experience at her previous institution, she was asked to co-teach a course with a woman whom Janet greatly admired. Janet agreed but had some difficulty navigating the experience as a full participant. When asked what the experience was like for her, she described it this way:

It was silencing; I just thought she was so smart and so on top of things, and by working with her, I found out she was so different from me as a learner and a thinker. She's much more spontaneous, and I'm much more deliberative.

In this situation, Janet did not feel that she and the woman were peers, which likely impacted not only the quality of the experience but also her ability to learn in and from it in ways that were meaningful for her:

When I started teaching with her, I thought I had everything to learn, and I did not think I had very many skills myself. She really had to work hard, I think, at sort of drawing me out, and what worked best was when she gave me an assignment.

Janet clearly felt unequal to both the task and her co-teacher: “It was hard for me to volunteer for things ‘cause I just thought she could do it so much better; why would I get in the way of someone who could do it better?” As Janet was then battling a lack of confidence, she says of the experience, “I always felt like—not like a servant but a second—second. Not even a co-teacher. She wanted a co-teacher, I think, and I felt like an assistant teacher. I just couldn’t own it.”

Years later and at a new institution, Janet recently co-taught with a faculty member at her college. Buttressed by experience and growth as teacher and scholar, Janet brought the original co-teaching experience full circle, using what she learned to mentor a junior colleague:

Something that I did this year which I didn’t realize until this very moment, and it was a little recursive—I mentored a co-teacher in a qualitative research class. I thought I just mentored her because I wanted her to teach for me in general, but she didn’t know if she was comfortable teaching doctoral students, and I said, ‘Oh, let’s co-teach this class.’

Janet had become “a knower.” Passing on her learning through mentoring another, Janet is demonstrating Erikson’s (1965) stage of *generativity* which is marked by concern not only for one’s capacity to create and thrive but also for one’s contribution to the learning and development of the next generation.

Similar to Janet’s first experience, Carolyn’s second co-teaching experience at her new institution was more challenging than enlarging. In collaborating with a seasoned teacher from another department who had a background in teaching and learning, Carolyn describes here the inherent tension between their different approaches:

She and I had a very interesting dynamic because we’re very different in how we approach the students when we’re teaching. Since she’s coming from ___ department, she’s much more nurturing and is willing to give them a little more ‘slack’ on things, and I have a harder time with that, and so I’ve seen by team teaching with her this semester, if we were to do it again, I can’t do it that way. It’s too ‘loosey goosey,’ and I think from my experiences that if students know there are deadlines and they lose points when it’s late, then they’re more likely to meet that deadline, whereas in that class, we were like, ‘You know, there’s a paper due today, and some of you didn’t turn it in. You better bring it next time.’ There’s no real consequence for turning something in late, so we’re getting a lot of late papers. So I just think

it's made me think differently about why it might be important to have structure and deadlines and how that might be impacting students.

Unlike the other participants' experiences with co-teaching, Carolyn's exposure to another approach served as a confirmation of her way of thinking about teaching rather than an enhancement of her existing meaning scheme (Mezirow, 2000).

Co-teaching can provide the opportunity for faculty members to expand their ideas about teaching through exposure to another's world view and conceptions of teaching that might be very different from their own. However, because learning from co-teaching involves meaning-making, problems can occur when a faculty member's meaning structure seeks a recognizable pattern in the other teacher's approach but is unable to find a match (Wolfe, 2006). When a match cannot be identified in the parts or the whole, then the information or pattern does not "make sense," and significant learning will not occur. In fact, Wolfe (2006) suggests that adult learners tend to "compartmentalize" information that appears to contradict their existing knowledge (p. 38), effectively burying it and ensuring it won't be used, connected, or built upon in new learning.

While it is possible that exposure to other approaches and styles through co-teaching has the potential to expand faculty members' thinking about their teaching, participants' experiences of co-teaching suggest that such an outcome is far from guaranteed. Co-teaching instead could serve as further reification of faculty members' conceptions of teaching and justification for their current teaching approaches.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed and expanded the study findings in relation to select analytic categories. Participants indicated their gestalts and models of teaching, as well as their own experiences as students from elementary to graduate school, served as important influences on their learning and development as teachers. Participants also highlighted the significance of mentors and

informal learning interactions with colleagues as salient in their learning as teachers and in the development of their teaching practice. Further, participants pointed to co-teaching experiences as a potential source of meaningful learning about teaching and learning.

Chapter Six explores the implications of the participants' experiences and learning as they align with adult learning and teaching development. The chapter also presents recommendations for teaching development, along with suggestions for further research in light of the study and its findings. The study concludes with a brief final reflection on the research.

Chapter 6: Implications and Recommendations

Say not, ‘I have found the truth,’ but rather, ‘I have found a truth.’

—Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet* (1965, p. 55)

Overview of the Chapter

The final chapter moves beyond the findings and discussion to conclusions and implications about faculty learning and teaching development. To that end, the chapter begins with a summary of the key findings as they address the third guiding question of the study which explores the insights related to teaching development and adult learning suggested by the participants’ experiences. The chapter then addresses the fourth guiding question regarding the study’s implications for teaching development and adult learning. The chapter proceeds with recommendations for academic developers and higher education administrators, followed by suggestions for further research that emerged during the study and analysis of its findings. It concludes with a brief final reflection on the research.

Guiding Question 3: What Insights into College Teaching Development and Adult Learning Emerge From Participants’ Experiences?

Finding 1: Teaching confidence develops from experience of teaching practice in conjunction with college teachers’ development as adults. Teaching confidence is considered a crucial component of teaching practice, yet it is an unexplored dimension of teaching (Sadler, 2008). Studies of teacher confidence relate to behavior management and content knowledge, something new teachers face, or focus on the efficacy of the teacher—that is, the teacher’s belief in his/her ability to accomplish a specific goal in a particular context (Fuller, 1970; Eraut, 1994; Akerlind, 2003; Lindblom-Ylänne et al, 2006). Most studies of teaching confidence (Hativa, 2000; McAlpine & Weston, 2000; Pintrich & McKeachie, 2000; Gordon et al., 2007; Carnell, 2007) view confidence in

teaching as separate from the development of the teacher as a person. In the current study, teaching confidence correlated with the participants' development as adults. This was evident in Graham's ability to respond to any situation in his teaching, as well as in Marie's integration of her subjective and objective knowledge in her own learning. Janet's coming to confidence played an integral role in her ability to even enter the teaching transaction, while Miriam's confidence allowed her to solve a teaching challenge beyond her training and expertise.

Finding 2: Perceived fit or lack of fit influences teaching development. Issues of fit and lack of fit emerged as a key finding in participants' experiences as developing teachers. Two participants, Carolyn and Louisa, left their institutions due to perceived lack of fit. Two other participants, Mary and Miriam, noted the benefit of fit at the departmental level as it enhanced their ability and willingness to learn with and from others. Another two participants, Tara and Marie, noted the power of a perceived fit with the teaching role, institution, or level of student as motivating their learning.

While the participants in this study discussed challenges and benefits of fit within one type of institutional category, fit can certainly be an issue across institution types and academic departments. College teachers may be a poor fit with a particular institutional culture, as well as with the role requirements of a specific higher education setting. Participants' experiences of fit as salient for their learning and development support the claims of Crone (2010) and Weimer (2010) of the importance of fit for faculty success and well-being.

Finding 3: The teaching context and changes in context impact teaching development. Trigwell et al. (1999) note the importance of faculty perceptions of the teaching environment on approaches to teaching, while Cox et al. (2011) believe the context within which teaching occurs impacts faculty role conception and teaching decisions. Participants noted a change in context as

salient in their development as teachers. In this study, the context change primarily involved transition to a new institution which some participants found challenging. Edmond, Louisa, and Valerie required time and support to adjust to their new teaching contexts, while Carolyn's experience of a change in institutional setting was positive and affirming.

Finding 4: College teachers' observations and models of "teacher" and their experience as students influence their conceptions of teaching. Participants' mental models of "teacher" and their experience as students played a role in how they conceived of the teaching role. Particularly salient in role conception and learning through an apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) is the influence of meaningful others who were teachers—teaching mentors or family members—on those who teach. This influence was identified in the stories of Miriam, Janet, Marie, Carolyn, and Mary.

Disciplinary models of teaching were also important for initial role conceptions for Valerie, Louisa, Graham, Edmond, and Tara. However, for some participants, disciplinary models had to be reframed in order to develop more inclusive or student-centered conceptions of teaching.

A further influence on some participants' teaching and development has been the experience of "difference." Four participants identified themselves as first generation students and faculty members. For Graham, Mary, Marie, and Tara, their working class backgrounds set them apart from others as students and new faculty, but eventually, their abilities to navigate and identify resources to succeed brought them a level of confidence and efficacy that translates to the classroom. While three of the participants were faculty of color, only one, Marie, made reference to her race throughout the interview.

Finding 5: College teachers learn through meaningful and sustained interaction with trusted others. Participants highlighted the influence of meaningful others in their learning and development, lending support to the salience of social cognitive and situated learning theories for

adult learners (Vygotsky, 1978; Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Wenger, 1998; Marsick & Watkins, 2001). However, participants' experiences of learning in community or through informal interaction with colleagues emphasized the relational element of such learning, suggesting that participants would not or could not learn from just anybody. The learning relationships they described were underscored by trust which positioned the participants to cultivate learning agency and supported them in becoming what Levinson (1978) terms "self-generating" learners (Tennant & Pogson, 1995).

Sadler's (2008) study of teaching development also highlights the role of colleagues in faculty learning. However, his participants emphasized the strategic and tactical nature of the knowledge shared by colleagues rather than the opportunities for self-exploration that my participants mentioned as part of their learning through interpersonal interaction. This finding also confirms Cozolino and Sprokay's (2006) contention that adult learners require trusting relationships to enhance and further their learning. Such an insight may explain why mentoring programs in which faculty are matched with mentors are not always or necessarily successful in supporting meaningful learning for faculty members beyond initial orientation and navigation of a particular environment.

Guiding Question 4: What Implications for Teaching Development and Adult Learning Can Be Identified From the Study Findings and Participants' Learning Experiences?

This study has implications for teaching development, adult learning, academic/faculty developers, and higher education administrators.

Implications for teaching development and adult learning. The theoretical literature on meaning-making in adult learning and development points to the variability with which adults perceive what they find meaningful or important in their learning. The findings in Chapter Four concur with the literature on meaning-making and adult experiential learning (Merriam & Clark,

1993; Merriam, Mott & Lee, 1996; Fenwick, 2000), as participants assigned significance to learning events, challenges, and influences spanning from their formal classroom learning and prior teaching experiences to their informal personal and professional learning interactions.

Most study participants spoke of their teaching and development in terms of “what matters,” which included elements of content and curriculum, connections and relationships, and concepts and skills. Participants’ conceptions of what mattered in their learning, their teaching, and their development as teachers were both variable and individualized across interviews. Intrator and Kunzman (2006) suggest that uncovering what matters to teachers is important for quality professional development because teachers seek development opportunities that “probe their sense of purpose and invite deliberation about what matters most in good teaching” (p. 190).

Faculty learning as personal and professional. The findings also support the contention that adults learn and develop at the intersection of their personal and professional lives (van der Bogert et al., 1990; Palmer, 2007). Palmer (2007) notes that meaningful change in teaching comes from within rather than from without (p. 19), while van de Bogert et al. (1990) maintain that “personal development...is the most fundamental level at which one can undergo change” (p. 94). Therefore, events and experiences that might appear unrelated to faculty members’ “professional learning” or teaching development may, in fact, be necessary components of their learning as teachers (Kiss, 2012). In the current study, this was evident in the ways in which life experiences manifested in the teaching of Graham, Tara, Mary, and Miriam. Further, faculty learning that involves some form of self-confrontation, as was the case for Carolyn, Janet, Valerie, Edmond, Louisa, and Marie, highlights the influence of faculty members’ personal development on their professional learning and growth.

Participant responses further suggest that the integration of personal and professional learning and adult development could be important—perhaps even necessary—for “good” teaching and openness to ongoing learning.

Impacts on faculty learning and teaching development. Faculty learning and development are influenced by faculty members’ biographies and professional histories (Flores & Day, 2006), as well as by their institutional and teaching contexts. Moreover, faculty members’ personal and professional histories, in combination with their disciplinary world views, influence how they make meaning of their teaching and their learning about teaching.

Participants’ experiences of learning and development suggest that when experiences are aligned with identity tasks and the negotiation of self-other balances, such as those faced by Carolyn, Valerie, Janet, Marie, and Louisa early in their careers, the result is often emotionally charged. In addition, when Mary, Tara, Edmond, Miriam, and Graham faced challenging or disjunctive experiences, their development appeared to facilitate the processing and resolution of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957), suggesting that identity achievement and developmental integration serve as a buffer against excessive personalizing of a perceived challenge or failure.

Learning in the gap. Training in teaching, course planning, and evaluation could be considered merely baseline knowledge for faculty learning about teaching. Much training in teaching describes teaching behaviors and strategies as they would be applied in the most ideal situations. As evident in the results of the narrative data, participants’ experiences teaching in a variety of contexts revealed that a key turning point in their understanding of teaching involved a willingness and readiness to make sense of the conflict between what they called “the everyday reality of teaching” and the “ideal” circumstances in teaching for which Edmond, Mary, Tara, and Miriam had been formally trained and prepared. Such experiences of disorientation were also meaningful for Graham

and Valerie in their development as teachers, as they learned that uncertainty and ambiguity are essential components of teaching practice (Lortie, 1975; Cohen, 1988). Participants' willingness to "not know" likely created a space—a gap in their meaning system—which, when resolved, extended their developmental trajectory in teaching. The ability to identify and subsequently navigate such a gap may be a developmental imperative for good teaching and openness to ongoing learning.

Implications for academic/faculty developers. Teaching development efforts that do not acknowledge college teachers as adult learners will fail to have an effect on broader teaching and learning. Developers should gain a better understanding of adult learning and development literatures to inform both programming and how faculty "learning" and development might be more inclusively conceptualized.

The literature in adult learning maintains that adults must perceive learning opportunities and content as meaningful and personally relevant. Therefore, teaching centers should conduct needs assessments for new and continuing faculty to discover what faculty learners' prioritize as important for their own learning.

In conjunction with faculty members and chairs, developers should seek to identify constraints and barriers to faculty learning and development and bring these to the attention of administrators to enhance collaborative problem-solving.

Participants mentioned time as one of the biggest constraints on their teaching development. They also pointed to learning events and opportunities in which "work" was required as a disincentive to participation. Developers should plan programming that includes opportunities for what their faculty perceive as meaningful dialogues and activities related to teaching. Such programming can enhance collaboration and provide the chance for faculty to identify others with whom they could form learning relationships.

Faculty members' views of their content and assumptions about learning in their discipline influence their teaching approaches and conceptions. Developers should create mechanisms to explore the epistemologies and world views of faculty members to gain insight into their conceptions of teaching and views of learning from disciplinary perspectives.

Teaching development requires change, and change requires learning. Developers should enhance their understanding of the change process in adult learners in order to better support faculty learning and growth.

Developers' own assumptions and personalized conceptions of teaching and learning may cause blind spots in recognizing a faculty learner's learning needs or openness to development. Therefore, acclimation to the development role should include opportunities to explore and uncover developers' own assumptions around teaching and learning.

Faculty change in teaching and in other domains of life necessarily involves loss and the release of sometimes long-held beliefs about the self, one's knowledge, and one's understanding of what is "true" about the world. Developers need to be prepared to support this transition by providing what Kegan (1994) terms a developmental "bridge" between faculty learners' old way and new way of knowing and teaching.

Implications for higher education administrators. This study points to the value of faculty learning through interpersonal interaction. Administrators should be informed about the importance of learning in community for faculty teaching development and provide opportunities for faculty to collaborate and learn from each other in ways and about topics that are meaningful to them.

There are numerous contextual barriers that can potentially inhibit faculty learning and development. It is important for administrators to be open to hearing what constraints are considered most prohibitive in particular institutional contexts. Once administrators know what the barriers are,

they should be willing to take action to address the institutional barriers that impede faculty learning and development.

The longstanding nature of the faculty reward structure makes it difficult to suddenly change what behaviors and achievements are rewarded. However, if institutions are serious about enhancing teaching and learning, then teaching and its development need to be incentivized and explicitly valued across institution types. Administrators can include an expectation of “good teaching” in role descriptions for future faculty and in review and promotion decisions.

Palmer (1998) notes that good talk about teaching will only occur “if leaders expect it, invite it, and provide hospitable space for the conversation to occur” (p. 160). Administrators need to ensure that the institution is a facilitating environment for faculty learning and development. This requires providing structures, supports, tools, time, and resources to enhance faculty learning.

There is a pervasive and unquestioned assumption that because new or transitioning faculty members are already “professionals” and adults that they are not in need of support when joining an institution. This is markedly untrue based on the participants’ experiences of transition at the departmental and institutional levels. Administrators need to ensure better outreach, induction, and mentoring so that new and transitioning faculty members have an increased chance of success within particular institutional contexts.

Howard (2012) notes that faculty members of the future will be required to adapt to changing student demographics and various teaching modalities. In addition, they will need to have the capacity to effectively collaborate to further not only their own learning but that of their students and colleagues. Perhaps the time is at hand to revisit the efficacy of disciplinary specializations and move toward more interdisciplinary models in doctoral preparation and faculty roles.

Recommendations for Further Research

Several areas for additional research emerge as promising based on the study and its findings:

Participants in the current study were mid-career faculty regardless of rank; in addition, all were working in small liberal arts colleges. Replication studies that include varying career stage faculty members and other institution types would provide a fuller picture of faculty learning and teaching development.

As participants mentioned the impact of their prior teaching experiences in various contexts as not only meaningful for their learning and development but for their “understanding” of learning, additional studies investigating prior teaching beyond higher education could not only reveal this experience as a “flashpoint” in faculty members’ teaching development but also potentially uncover a connection between such experiences and more inclusive conceptions of teaching.

There was variation in study participants’ paths to the doctorate, with four traveling a traditional path and six pursuing the doctorate later in life. Further research could shed light on whether there is a connection between faculty members’ paths to the professorate and a) disciplinary impacts on their teaching approach or teaching stance and b). the potential salience of life experience on their teaching.

Four of the ten participants identified themselves as first generation faculty members. Little work has been done in this area since Law and Dews’ (1995) collection of essays by working class academics, but the results of such inquiries could enhance understanding of first generation faculty members’ experiences of socialization and induction to higher education and the faculty role. Such studies could also potentially reveal the experience of “difference” as correlating with faculty teaching stance and teaching approach.

Faculty role identification may be connected to conceptions of teaching. Further research on how faculty members primarily self-identify as teachers or scholars could reveal recognizable patterns related to particular sub-groups' openness to teaching development and valuation of the teaching role.

Teachers perceived as performing beyond the “competent” level of practice are believed to possess sophisticated and integrated conceptions of teaching, as opposed to the one dimensional or simplistic constructs identified in new or inexperienced teachers. Further inquiry into this area may produce interesting results for college teaching development.

Final Reflection on the Research

There were many gems that emerged throughout the study, many of which I could not pursue due to the study design and analysis protocol. However, it is clear that this study merely skimmed the surface of the topic and that there is much more to know about how college teachers learn and develop. This research has shown me the value and necessity of exploring faculty learning and development from the place where meaning begins—on the inside.

Appendix A
Recruitment Email for Study

September 8, 2012

Dear Professor _____:

You were referred to me by _____ who suggested that you would be a knowledgeable participant for my dissertation study of college teacher learning and development. My study requires that I interview full-time faculty members holding the rank of Assistant Professor or above who would be willing to discuss their growth and learning as college teachers.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you about the study at your convenience to explain the parameters and degree of commitment involved and will contact you by phone within the next week.

If for some reason you are unable to participate, I would appreciate your referral to another faculty member within your institution or beyond who might be suitable for the study.

Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Anne Benoit

Anne Benoit
Doctoral Candidate
Lesley University

Appendix B

Demographic Data Collection Form

Participant ID Number: _____

Pseudonym: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

Current Institution: _____

Current Faculty Rank:

____ Assistant Professor

____ Associate Professor

____ Full Professor

Years at Current Institution: _____

Gender: M _____ F _____

Ethnicity: ____ African American ____ Asian ____ Black African ____ Caucasian

____ Hispanic ____ Latino ____ Pacific Islander ____ Other: _____

Degree: ____ Ph.D. ____ Ed.D. ____ Other: _____

Doctoral Completion Year: _____ Age at Completion: _____

Doctoral Institution Type: _____

Discipline Area: _____

Total Years Teaching: _____

Taught During/As Part of Graduate Study: ____ Yes ____ No

Taught Prior to Doctoral Study: ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, type of setting or program: _____

Formal training in Teaching: ____ Yes ____ No

Other Institutions Where You've Taught

Institution Type

Appendix C

Informed Consent to Participate in a Dissertation Research Study

Lesley University Graduate School of Education

Dear Professor _____:

My name is Anne Benoit, and I am a doctoral candidate in Educational Studies at Lesley University. I am conducting research on the development and learning of college teachers. I would welcome the opportunity to talk with you about your experiences and invite you to participate in the study which is described below.

Once you agree to participate, you will be contacted to schedule an interview which will last between 60-120 minutes and will be tape recorded. Interviews will be held at a location and time convenient for you.

In order to protect your privacy, identity, and anonymity, you will be asked to provide a pseudonym as the name by which you would like to be referred to in the study.

Once the interview is transcribed, you may be contacted again via phone or email to enhance or clarify your statements. You will have an opportunity to review your own responses and statements in the form of a narrative summary of your interview to ensure accuracy. Once the study is complete, you will have the chance to read the study outcomes and findings if you are interested in doing so.

Participation in the study is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without penalty.

All information provided by you will be treated in a confidential manner, and no real names will appear on the transcripts of the interview or in the discussion of the study results. In addition, your institution will not be identified in the study.

While portions of the study may be presented publicly or later published, no identifying information will be included. Portions of the study or your transcripts may be used in the future in later studies.

There are no risks anticipated with participating in the study, and no incentive for participation is being offered.

If you have questions about the study or your potential participation, feel free to contact me via phone at W: **617-333-2038** or C: **(781) xxx-xxxx** or via email at abenoit3@lesley.edu or Robyn Cruz, co-chair of the Lesley University IRB, via email at rcruz@lesley.edu.

Please read and sign below if you are willing to participate:

I, _____ (print full name), hereby agree to participate in the project described above. I give my permission to be interviewed and understand that it will be tape recorded. I understand that my responses will be kept and secured for an undetermined period of time.

I understand the nature and intent of the study and have been given the chance to ask questions. I understand whom to contact if I have any future questions. I also understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without consequence, and I can expect to receive a copy of this consent form.

Participant's Signature: _____

Researcher Signature: *Anne Benoit*

Date: _____

Appendix D

Interview Protocol

Dissertation Study 2012-2013

What was your path to the classroom?

What was your image of yourself as a beginning teacher?

What do you see as your role as a teacher?

Can you share a story about a high point in your teaching that stands out for you?

Can you recall a low point in your teaching experience?

Can you identify a turning point in your development as a teacher?

What is your image of yourself now as a teacher?

How has your view of yourself as a teacher changed since you began teaching?

When did you become aware of a change in yourself as a teacher?

What stands out for you most in your learning as a teacher?

What role have others played in your learning and development as a teacher?

What was your family's reaction to your path/career decision?

What kinds of formal/informal learning opportunities do you try to take advantage of?

How prepared did you feel to enter the classroom?

What would motivate you to take advantage of professional learning opportunities?

What holds you back from ongoing learning?

What have you learned about yourself from being in the classroom?

What is your definition of a "good teacher?"

How have you changed as a result of being in the classroom (or working with students)?

What role, if any, have key life events played in your development as a teacher?

Is there anything we haven't talked about that you think is important to mention?

Appendix E

Critical Event Analysis Codes to Categories

HIGH POINTS

Corresponding Question: What would you identify as a high point in your teaching development?

<i>Category I: Experiences of Teaching Success</i>		<i>Category II: Recognition of Fit</i>		<i>Category III: “Negative” Event → Positive Learning</i>	
Code	Descriptive Tag	Code	Descriptive Tag	Code	Descriptive Tag
HSS	Helping Students Succeed	FWI	Fit with Institution	LOP	Lack of Preparedness
OC	Overcoming a Challenge	FFR	Fit with Faculty Role	SET	Student Evaluation of Teaching
RPPL	Realizing Power to Promote Learning	FWT	Fit with Teaching	CATL	Confronting Assumptions about Teaching/Learning
SDL	Students Demonstrate Learning				
TFD	Teaching for Development				

LOW POINTS

Corresponding Question: What would you identify as a low point in your teaching development?

<i>Category I: Teacher Self/Teaching Challenges</i>		<i>Category II: Student Engagement/Performance Challenges</i>		<i>Category III: Culture or Fit Challenge</i>	
Code	Descriptive Tag	Code	Descriptive Tag	Code	Descriptive Tag
AAS	Assumptions about Students	POL	Pace of Learning Challenge	CCS	Challenge with Chair/Supervisor
COC	Change of Context Challenge	SEC	Student Engagement Challenge	CWD	Challenge with Department
FOI	Feeling of Incompetence	ESL	Expectations for Student Learning	CES	Challenge with Educational System
SET	Student Evaluation of Teaching	SPC	Student Performance Challenge	CWI	Challenge with Institution
				CSC	Challenge with School Culture

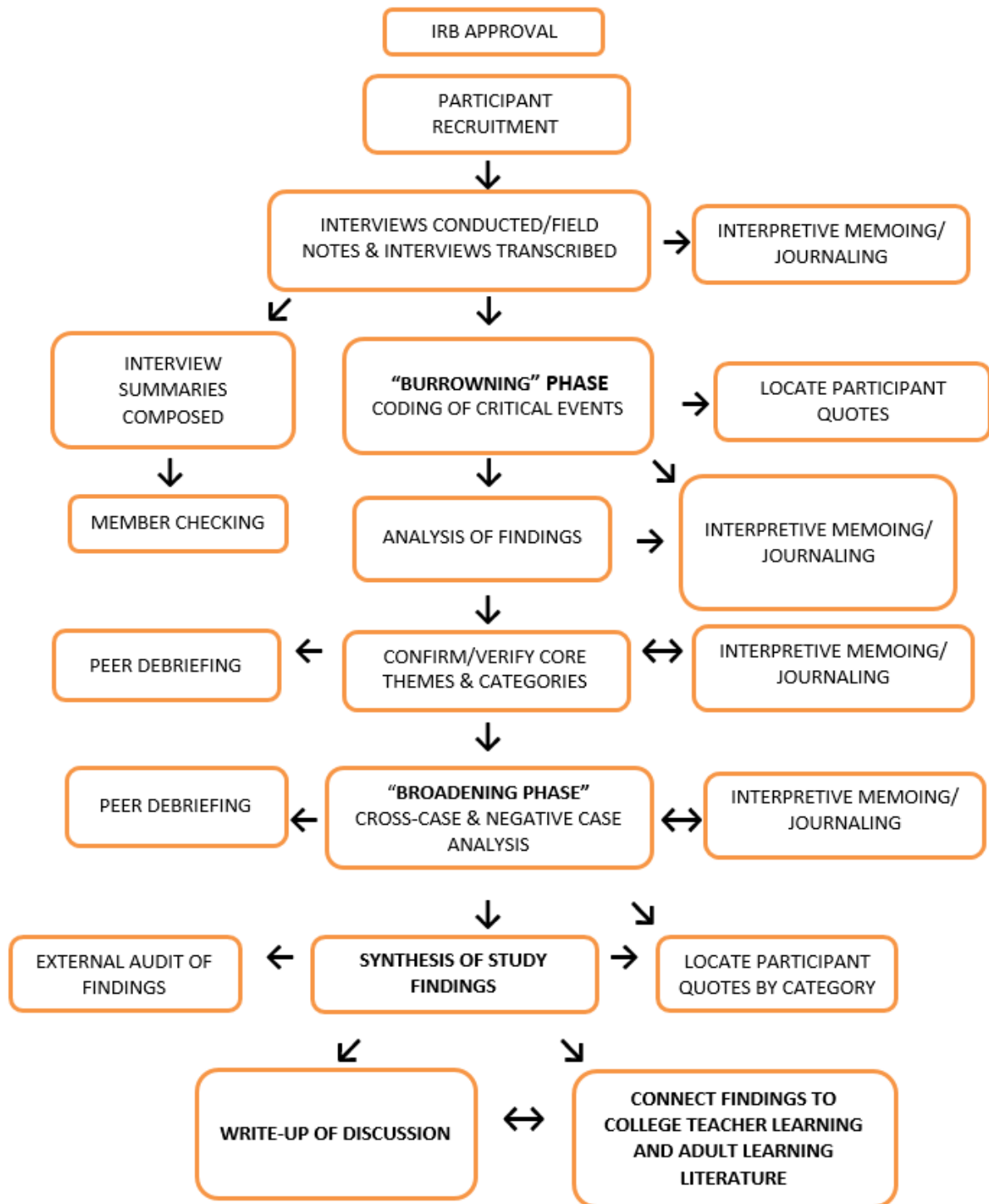
TURNING POINTS

Corresponding Question: What would you identify as a turning point in your teaching development?

<i>Category I: Experiences of Confidence or Confidence-Building</i>		<i>Category II: The Influence of Others</i>		<i>Category III: Reframing Experiences</i>	
Code	Descriptive Tag	Code	Descriptive Tag	Code	Descriptive Tag
FPR	Fulfilling Professional Role	BPC	Back Porch Conversations	CDC	Confrontation with Dominant Culture
LAL	Learning about Learning	IGT	Influence/Gestalt of Teachers	CSI	Confrontation with Self-Image as Teacher
SSD	Seeing Self Differently	IOS	Influence of Students	CUK	Choosing Unknown over Known
STB	Standing up for Teaching Beliefs	EAS	Experience as Student	RTI	Rethinking Teacher Identity/Role
TTE	Team/Co-Teaching Experience	LTC	Learning Through Conversations	RTL	Rethinking Teaching or Learning
TTI	Trusting Teacher Instincts	MNI	Motivated by Negative Influence	SET	Student Evaluation of Teaching
		ROC	Role of Colleagues	UPC	Unpacking Professor Construct
		RAF	Role of Advisors/Faculty Members		
		SLS	Structured Learning Situations		
		STM	Sharing Teaching Materials		
		TM	Teaching Mentors		

Appendix F

Analysis Flowchart of Critical Event Narrative Study



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