EXPLORING FACULTY BELIEFS REGARDING TEACHING AFRICAN AMERICAN FRESHMEN TO INTERPRET SOCIAL CUES AT A MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION

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Through the use of critical qualitative methodology, this dissertation explored faculty beliefs at an urban, minority-serving institution regarding the ability of African American first-time, full-time freshmen to interpret social cues in higher education contexts. Specifically, this study examined [1] faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and [2] how faculty members teach students to interpret or read social cues as they relate to higher education contexts. The definition of literacy is considered in broad terms as a transaction between a reader and either the spoken word or a given context (verbal and nonverbal).

This examination found that participants: [1] lean toward a deficit approach when discussing their students’ abilities, [2] compared the younger students’ abilities to the older students, [3] differ in what they say they do and what they might actually do when faced with a social scenario, and [4] arrived at teaching unintentionally or did not set out to be teacher when pursuing a degree. In the end, there is a need for higher education teacher training and more faculty development, at the college-level, before they enter the field.
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BY

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Doctoral Director:
Sonya L. Armstrong
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“If you take care of her, you will raise her.” ~Henrietta Browning

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To the ancestors: Rejoice!
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CHAPTER 1

LITERACY AS SOCIAL PRACTICE NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXTS

According to the National Center for Education Statistics report, *Projections of Education Statistics to 2022*, between 2011 and 2022, African American enrollment in institutions of higher education is expected to increase from 3,135,000 in 2011 to 13,492,000 in 2022 (Hussar & Bailey, 2013). This represents an increase of 26 percent. As an African American instructor at a four-year urban, minority-serving institution with a large number of African American students, I find myself constantly wanting to communicate to students how to navigate, socially, the spaces of higher education. The interactions with students that will be introduced through the vignettes that are presented in various places in this dissertation are examples of the types of interactions that I and other faculty members at my institution have encountered with students. We find that our discussions about our students are rooted in the idea that many of our students have a difficult time interacting with their instructors, and instructors have reached a stalemate concerning how to help students shape their social literacy skills. We have started the conversation but some feel unarmed to address such sensitive topics such as language and behavior with our students. We talk about ourselves as students and how and when we learned the social ways of the college culture. Still, we have not been able to meet this issue head on.
As a child coming of age in the 1990s, I remember watching television shows like *The Cosby Show* and *A Different World* (Gray, 1995). I remember wearing Historically Black College/University (HBCU) paraphernalia. It seemed that going to college was inevitable, and it seemed that going to an HBCU located in the South was the norm for African American children. My parents were born and raised in the small town of Camden, Arkansas, during the time of segregation. They lived in proximity to their teachers “in town,” and they talked about how Grambling University, which is known for its superior marching band, would come to their town during homecoming and participate in the parade. As early as five years old, I remember hearing my parents talk about their childhood experiences, especially in the high school marching band. It was at that time, and listening to their discussions, that I decided that I wanted to attend Grambling University and play the clarinet, which was the instrument that my mother played in her high school band. I did not attend Grambling University, but I did attend a minority-serving, predominately Black institution. When applying to college, the major criterion was not the research activity or academic prestige of the university; it was about where I could experience much of Black college life.

My parents always talked about the importance of going to college and getting a four-year degree. They preached the sermon of going to college, but they did not talk about the different types of colleges because in their eyes, all colleges were equal. They did not quite understand that some four-year colleges were considered more prestigious. They did not quite understand that some colleges provided more guidance for students who came from places where they might not have been told about all of the nuances of college life, but they still were able to impart the values that would start their children on the journey.
Now, as an African American, first-generation, college graduate, and instructor of the same population, I still ask myself when and how I learned to negotiate this mainstream context (higher education). The conversations that my parents had with my siblings and me were about going to college. Perhaps they thought that if they planted the seed, the rest would emerge organically. My sister, who is nine and a half years older, attended an HBCU in Alabama during the time when I was an adolescent at home watching television. The age difference did not allow us to talk about things with much depth when she came home for vacation, but she did either confirm ideas or dispel myths about parts of college for me. My questions were typically focused on the social aspects of college life (joining sororities, step shows, and the like) and rarely if ever did I ask about the academic or cultural side of college life. She did not discuss her interactions with instructors, and I did not ask, so in that sense, I was much like the students who attend my university. I entered college with limited exposure to the cultural side of college life, but somehow I learned to navigate it successfully. Much like my students, I speak African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in social settings, and at times, with my African American colleagues at work when students are not present. I am seeking an advanced degree while working a full-time job. However, as an undergraduate student, I understood the importance of perception and building relationships as much, if not more, as I understood the importance of getting good grades. I am not aware of how and when I learned this valuable lesson. I know my parents emphasized hard work and integrity, but how I made those connections is still a mystery. That is what leads me to this study. If educators can agree that students need help developing their social skills and can agree about the importance of having social skills when navigating mainstream contexts, such as higher education, can they agree
that, in the eloquent words of Alice Walker (2006), we [might] be the ones we have been waiting for to provide the help to students.

Although this dissertation does not seek to explore the debate between popular culture and society, the many places that students receive information about “the world” and/or college is worth mentioning. According to a 2012 survey, conducted by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program at the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), of First-Year Students at Black Colleges and Universities, 7.1% of first-year African American students at Black Colleges and Universities spend 20+ hours watching television (Hurtado, Eagan, Pryor, Whang, & Tran, 2012). One might consider the amount of time students spend watching television as another place students use to build schema about a particular context or experience (Kelly, 1997). The impact *A Different World* had on those students coming of age or entering college in the 1980s and 1990s may not be known. *A Different World* was simply one source a student may have gone to get information about college. This dissertation seeks to explore another place that students get this “real world” introduction or information, which is college itself and more directly their college instructors. This information may be further developed in additional studies stemming from this dissertation research. This dissertation study is intended to be the first phase in a series of studies focusing on ways that African American, first-time, full-time college freshmen may gain exposure to college culture.

This chapter serves as an introduction to the research and the focus of this dissertation. Specifically, this dissertation explores literacy as a social practice in higher education contexts. The statement of the problem, theoretical framework, glossary of terminology, research questions, and significance of the study are presented in this chapter along with an exploration
of the guiding literature that helps to frame this study as one of literacy, although a comprehensive discussion of related literature will be reviewed in detail in Chapter 2. To begin to explore literacy as a social practice and, therefore, a means of building social capital, it is necessary to define literacy and define the needs of college students, which also includes a discussion of college faculty.

This dissertation hopes to add to the body of established literature in the field of literacy by [1] offering a means for considering literacy in more broad terms, [2] discovering if faculty recognize, assess, and address the ways that students interpret social cues, and [3] offering a foundation for establishing a model for identifying characteristics of faculty who explicitly socialize their students to the ways and cultural norms of higher education. The findings have the potential to impact credentialing of higher education teaching faculty, training and professional development, faculty orientation, and student orientation efforts. Specifically, freshman seminar courses and first-year experience course designs may be impacted by the findings as well. At the conclusion of Chapter 1, a brief summary of ideas presented in the chapter is provided in addition to a preview of the following chapters of this dissertation.

Statement of the Problem: Students’ Different Ways of Interpreting Social Cues in Higher Education Contexts

The literature suggests that students may have a difficult time negotiating or interpreting (reading) academic settings that require literacy skills that may be different from those used in their social/home environments (Alim Samy & Smitherman, 2012; Darder, 2012; Lee, 1995; Lee, Spencer, & Harpalani, 2003; Smitherman, 1977, 1995). The literacy skills that they bring to the college environment tend to be incongruent with the codes of power, language privileged
by westernized values, which are used in the university setting due to the variations in ways cultures use literacy (Alim Samy & Smitherman, 2012; Delpit, 1995a; Heath, 1983, 1989; Smitherman, 1977). Lee et al. (2003) suggest,

Adolescents who experience marginalized minority group status (e.g., African Americans) face additional sources of stress—such as mixed messages about appropriate belief systems and cultural displays—as they move across settings, and uneven and sometimes confusing responsibilities for peripheral participation in adult life activities. (p. 6)

First-time, full-time freshmen tend to be in a stage of transition and are still trying to balance the many expectations placed on them by family, community, and college life. This issue is especially challenging for low-income communities (Burton, Allison, & Obeidallah, 1995). This incongruence tends to be illuminated by the way these students interact in social situations, organizations, and with those in authority.

This study examined faculty beliefs about their students and their students’ literacy skills. To be able to identify what is considered appropriate in a particular environment requires the reading of cues (this way of reading will be explored in Chapter 2). Through qualitative methodology, this study explores [1] faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and [2] how faculty members teach students to interpret (read) social cues as they relate to higher education contexts. Furthermore, this study uses the concept of social capital and its possible accumulation as a foundation for exploring the effects of literacy in higher education contexts. This study explored the perceptions that faculty members at a minority-serving institution have of their African American first-time, full-time students’ social literacy skills. Students may know that college is supposed to be different from high school, but how different may be a mystery.
The language and social skills that dominate the college environment may be different from those that provided students success in their homes and communities and provided them success in high school. This lack of experience with or misunderstanding about literacy as a social practice may have long-term implications for these students academically and possibly professionally. So how do these students get this information? As evidenced by the participants’ responses in this study, they expected students to arrive to college with the ability to negotiate the environment socially and academically. They expected students to be able to demonstrate this ability in writing and while speaking.

Students are expected to be independent and self-regulators. In reality, some students have not yet developed these abilities, know that they exist, or know that they are expected. Some students do not understand the social norms (including language and writing) that govern college and how this misunderstanding may work against them as they try to build social capital on campus.

Needs of First-Year Students

According to the 2014 *Projections of Education Statistics to 2022*, the enrollment of first-time freshmen is expected to increase from 3,093,000 in 2011 to 3,578,000 in 2022 (Hussar & Bailey, 2013). This represents an increase of 16 percent. If this projection comes to fruition, the conversation about preparing students with limited exposure to college for the social literacy expectations must begin as soon as possible. Many college instructors may enter their classrooms and find students with limited information about college life and the literacies, which, in this study, include language and social skills (Gee, 2001; Lindquist & Seitz, 2009) that are needed to be successful in college. College students may also enter the classroom and
find an instructor who is prepared to teach content but not ready to teach them about the college culture. For faculty, the language and social skills that dominate the college environment have become almost second nature and they may not understand why students are having such a difficult time making the necessary transitions.

Some students have a difficult time initiating communication, or using codes of power, with their instructors and other university professionals, and as a result, both parties may experience frustration. Both students and faculty may become discouraged, and faculty may feel that they do not have the necessary information or training to address their concerns with students. According to Delpit (1995a), “power plays a critical role in our society and in our educational system” (p.xv). The higher education context pretends to be informal and a space free from judgment. However, the higher education context is filled with power relationships and replicates the ideas of the larger society (Gee, 2001; Lindquist & Seitz, 2009; Reason, Terenzini, & Domingo, 2006).

Theoretical Framework

Chapter 2 will provide an in-depth examination of literature related to theory and methodology. This present section serves as a means for the reader to begin to situate this study and the remainder of this chapter in the theoretical scholarship that will be reviewed in Chapter 2. Therefore, this section is not intended to replace or replicate Chapter 2, but simply to help the reader make meaning of the remainder of this chapter. Specifically, the work of Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b) will be examined as the foundation for the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum, which is a means of considering the data for this study. In addition,
cultural literacy is examined as a way of thinking about literacy in broad terms and as a social practice.

Delpit-Gee

Although this study explores the breadth and depth of literacy scholarship, the perspectives of literacy scholars Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) and Gee (1989a, 1989b, 1998, 1999, 2001) are used to create a continuum, which will be presented and explored in Chapter 2. The continuum was used to help analyze the data and provide implications and recommendations for the field of literacy and preparation and development of postsecondary teachers; therefore, the reader will notice that these two scholars’ works are consistently referenced throughout this dissertation perhaps a bit more than others. Also, the reader will notice that specific works, Delpit’s (1995a) “The Politics of Teaching Literate Discourse,” Gee’s (1989a) “Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics: Introduction,” and Gee’s (1989b) “What is Literacy?” are used to support the continuum because it is within this work that Delpit (1995a) specifically outlines the ideas from Gee’s (1989a, 1989b) work that give her pause. These two references best illuminate the similarities and divergence between their perspectives in practice.

Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) and Gee (1989a, 1989b, 1998, 1999, 2001) both explore literacy through a sociocultural lens; however, their ideas tend to diverge when discussing the role of the teacher in addressing the literacy needs of those who are socialized outside of mainstream environments. Gee’s (1989a, 1989b, 1998, 1999, 2001) work is theoretical in his approach to literacy and even perhaps literacy instruction. Delpit’s (1995a, 1995b, 2002) work is theoretical; however, she also includes a practical piece to her ideas about literacy. Both
Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) and Gee (1989a, 1989b, 1998, 1999) see their work as being rooted in social justice, but they go about enacting their ideas in different ways. The goal of this section is to introduce the perspectives of both Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b), highlight the similarities and differences in their perspectives, and explore the emerging Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum that was used in this study as a means of analyzing the data and offering a contribution to the literature.

Lisa Delpit

Delpit’s work (1995a, 1995b, 2002) communicates her position on helping African American children acquire what she calls codes of power, mainstream discourse, and the teacher’s role in the pursuit. Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) states that teachers must explicitly teach students who are socialized outside of mainstream Discourse, particularly African American children who are the focus of her work, to negotiate their home language with the codes of power that are used to test and judge them in mainstream contexts. Discourse (with a capital D or referred to as Big D Discourses) describes language used in mainstream contexts (Gee, 1989a, 1989b, 1998, 1999, 2001). A complete definition of Discourse (Big D) can be found in the Glossary of Terminology section of this dissertation. Delpit (1995b) explicitly addresses the differences in the ways that cultures use language with the following example:

Other researchers have identified differences in middle-class and working-class speech to children…Middle class parents are likely to give the directive to a child to take his bath as, “Isn’t it time for your bath?” By contrast, a black mother, in whose house I was recently a guest, said to her eight-year-old son, “Boy, get your rusty behind in that bathtub.” (p. 34)
Delpit (1995b) references Heath’s work, not by specific year, in her explanation of this example by saying, “Consequently, as Heath suggests, upon entering school the child from such a family may not understand the indirect statement of the teacher as a direct command” (p. 34). Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) addresses the instructional needs of African American children in her work. The instructional needs that Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) addresses are relevant to African American students entering college where the communication and instruction are even more likely to resemble the ‘middle-class America’ implicit way of communicating commands. According to Delpit (1995b), unless these students were taught in a school where the teacher takes an explicit instructional approach, these students are likely to grow up and enter college with the same dilemmas, which makes her work relevant to a study focusing on how teachers of African American first-time, full-time college freshmen approach socializing these students. Thus, using Delpit’s explicit approach has relevance in a higher education context. Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) takes issue with an implicit instructional approach to teaching African American students to navigate the codes of power. Delpit’s (1995a) position on such a teaching approach is that it is mostly rooted in theory but does not take into account the implications of not explicitly talking to students about mainstream perceptions based on literacy. According to Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002), it is socially unjust not to require students to use the codes that will be used by society to judge them and exclude them. Delpit (1995a) is concerned with scholars such as Gee (1989a, 1989b, 1998) who [1] address literacy *solely* from a theoretical perspective and [2] believe that in order to acquire another Discourse, one has to shed his or her cultural discourse.
In her article, “The Politics of Teaching Literate Discourse,” Delpit (1995a) explicitly addresses her concerns with Gee’s (1989a) arguments for an apprentice approach to teaching minorities mainstream Discourse. Delpit (1995A) states,

There are two aspects of Gee’s arguments, which I find problematic. First is Gee’s notion that people who have not been born into dominant discourses will find it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to acquire such a discourse. He argues strongly that discourses cannot be “overtly” taught, particularly in a classroom, but can only be acquired by enculturation in the home or by “apprenticeship” into social practice. The second argument of Gee’s work that I find troubling suggests that an individual who is born into one discourse with one set of values may experience major conflicts when attempting to acquire another discourse with another set of values. (pp. 546-547)

Delpit (1995a) sees the apprentice approach as relying too heavily on the idea that if teachers model Discourse, students will automatically try to replicate what they see their teachers doing. Her concern is that the apprentice model is too implicit. As Gee (1989a, 1989b) states, mainstream Discourse is the language of the middleclass and is replicated in other mainstream environments. If students enter school from working-class homes, they may have more than likely not been able to acquire the mainstream Discourse that is at work in the school. If this is the case, they might not even recognize what is happening in an apprenticeship situation.

Delpit (2002) is also very explicit about how she feels about people from outside of cultural groups having a position on the best ways to help socialize minority groups. Delpit (1995a, 1995b) states that teachers of color must be included in discussions about the best ways to instruct students of color.
James Paul Gee

Gee’s (1989a, 1989b, 1998, 2001, 2007) approach is more theoretical than practical. Gee (1989a, 1989b, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2011) expands the idea of literacy as being more than a person’s ability to display basic skills in reading and writing, but he states that any useful definition of literacy must include one’s ability to demonstrate the “right type of reading, writing, and speaking” based on context. Gee’s notion of literacy includes the idea that context matters and he argues that to be literate in one context might not equate to being literate in another context. Gee (1989a) provides the following example:

It is a truism that a person can know perfectly good grammar of a language and not know how to use that language. If I enter my neighborhood bar and say to my tattooed drinking buddy, as I sit down, “May I have a match please?,” my grammar is perfect, but what I have said is wrong nonetheless. It is not just how you say it, but what you are and do when you say it. If I enter my neighborhood bar and say to my drinking buddy, as I sit down, “Gimme a match, wouldya?,” while placing a napkin on the bar stool to avoid getting my newly pressed designer jeans dirty, I have said the right thing, but my “saying-doing” combination is nonetheless all wrong. (p. 525)

Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) might point out that although Gee’s (1989a) idea of speaking and acting is as a connected activity, his example is based on stereotypical ideas of the bar culture. Gee’s (1989a) example leaves out mention of culture, which is a part of language use. Is this a White bar? Is this a sports bar? All of these things determine the “rightness” or “wrongness” of his actions. In addition, schema matters when determining the “right” language to use. For example, as an African American woman, in my experience, it would not be far-fetched to enter a local bar or lounge in an urban neighborhood and request a match by saying, “May I have a match please?” I have personally seen tattooed individuals [1] dust off a bar stool before sitting and [2] even request a damp napkin to wipe off a bar stool before sitting. I do,
however, recognize that at the time of Gee’s (1989a) example, tattoos may have not been as common and carried a different social stigma. It is not clear if Gee’s (1989a, 1989b) perception is based on apprenticeship or even the particular culture of a particular space that may not have transferability to another but similar space. To teach a person how to apply the “right” type of literacy based on context, Gee (1989a, 1989b) offered apprenticeships or enculturation as the best method of instruction for groups who have been socialized outside of mainstream, or as he calls it Discourse, contexts.

In his 1989 entries in the *Journal of Education*, “Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics: Introduction” and “What is Literacy,” Gee offers his instructional approaches to literacy instruction, which are influenced by Cazden (1988) and Heath (1983). Gee (1989a) states,

> Discourses are not mastered by overt instruction (even less so than languages, and hardly anyone ever fluently acquired a second language sitting in a classroom), but by enculturation (“apprenticeship”) into social practices through scaffolded and supported interaction with people who already mastered the Discourse (Cazden, 1988; Heath, 1983). (p. 527)

Gee (1989a, 1989b) takes the position that [1] Discourse cannot be overtly taught and [2] college is a bit late to attempt to socialize someone. Gee (1989a) also takes the position that acquiring Discourse may put “minorities and women” in a conflict because they would be required to relieve themselves of the discourse that is attached to their culture or gender. In addition, according to Gee (1989a), “Second, though true acquisition is probably not possible, “mushfake” Discourse is possible” (p. 533). A “mushfake” Discourse is a hybrid of discourse and Discourse (Gee, 1989a).

The two long quotations of Delpit’s (1995a) and Gee’s (1989a, 1989b) perspectives on D/discourse acquisition will be further discussed in Chapter 2. In short, Delpit (1995a, 1995b,

There are various ways to address the literacy demands of students who are socialized outside of mainstream contexts. Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b) have similar ideas theoretically. However, Delpit (1995a) approaches literacy acquisition as a set of teacher characteristics, and Gee (1989a, 1989b) approaches literacy acquisition from a much more theoretical space where apprenticeships or hybrid acquisition is a more realistic goal. The goal of exploring Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b) in this way is not to privilege one approach over the other. Rather the goal is to offer a starting point for instructors to begin to consider their own approaches to literacy instruction.

**Cultural Literacy**

The idea of cultural literacy offers yet another approach to providing access to mainstream Discourse for those socialized outside of this context. Cultural literacy is tied directly to the continuum because Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) and Gee (1989a, 1989b, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2011) both have a position about what information should be taught when attempting to help students acquire mainstream Discourse. Gee (1989a) directly addresses his concerns with the cultural literacy approach because, according to Gee (1989a), Hirsch’s idea presents literacy and Discourse as bodies of knowledge. Gee (1989a) explicitly says that
Discourses are not bodies of knowledge and cannot be overtly taught in a classroom. Hirsch (1980) approached literacy from the position of cultural literacy, which is the arrangement of specific facts and details.

In 1980, Hirsch published “Culture and Literacy” in the Journal of Basic Writing. The article later evolved into a dictionary of facts, dates, and other information that Hirsch deemed necessary for every American to know in order to be considered literate (Hirsch, 1988, 2002). Hirsch’s (1988, 2002) book was the result of his work with marginalized children. The information in the Dictionary of Cultural Literacy ranges from biblical books, names, and dates to historical occurrences, literature, and other information Hirsch deemed noteworthy. As noted on the front cover of the 1988 updated and expanded addition, the book “Includes 5,000 essential names, phrases, dates, and concepts….What Every American Needs to Know” (Hirsch, 1988). In a discussion of cultural literacy, Lindquist and Seitz (2009) state, “cultural literacies have socioeconomic dimensions for their practitioners...forms of reading and writing are used to guard the gates of social institutions” (p. 101). Although he includes a statement about the necessity to expand the list as needed, Hirsch’s cultural literacy idea assumes that social injustice can be solved if minority groups learn the ways of the dominant culture.

Minority groups find that they must operate in a sort of double consciousness, which W.E.B. Dubois described in 1903 as seeing one’s self through “the revelation of the other world” or someone else’s perspectives, ideas, and possible stereotypical views (Dubois, 1994, p. 7). Specifically, double consciousness is a “sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity” (Dubois, 1994, p. 7). A more recent example of double consciousness would be the 2013 Trayvon Martin case in Florida as it embodies every word of Dubois’s definition of double
consciousness. The case represented, for many African Americans, a reminder that they must always consider how “the other” sees them. Moreover, that within that consideration, every move they make has to be strategic so that it does not further a stereotype. Not being strategic and tactical may have dire consequences for the individual, the gender, and the race.

For many African Americans, and specifically college students described in this study, they are possibly in an identity conflict because they are not sure how others see them. They are constantly attempting to negotiate an identity that may be linked to language, race, gender, class, and stereotypes with an identity that may be linked to upward mobility. They may find that they are constantly appraising themselves through a lens that is not their own or through the eyes of the mainstream. The concept of cultural literacy, as Hirsch (1980, 2002) has described it, acts as the outside lens. It communicates to the world that these facts that he has determined to be universal are the measuring sticks for American literacy and to know them remedies social injustice and leads to success. Those who do not know these facts are illiterate. A concern with the concept of cultural literacy includes questions about who determines and deems the information universal. If the people who oppress minority groups then develop this universal information that the minority groups must know, education becomes a way to indoctrinate instead of elevate, and as Gee (1989b) states, “If you have no access to the social practice, you don’t get in the Discourse, you don’t have it” (p. 537). Some may say that these ideas about cultural literacy require African American students to change or choose between their rich personal cultures and accept the ways of the dominant culture (Gee, 1989a, 1989b; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995, 2002, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Young, 2004). Or at the very least, African American students must learn how to negotiate multiple cultures for the purpose of access and economic stability in mainstream contexts. In regard to education, they
must learn to play the game while in school communicating with instructors and other people in power, on their jobs, and in other environments governed by the dominant Discourse (Delpit, 1995a; Gee, 2001). Outside of these spaces, they are free to switch to their own comfortable codes, or are they? The need to straddle two worlds is not only necessary in professional environments (in this study, educational environments are considered professional). This tight rope act is necessary when negotiating the world (Delpit, 1995a, 1995b, 2002; Freire, 1970; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2002). The Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum also represents the balancing act that teachers participate in when trying to determine the best ways to approach teaching social literacy to their students and offers a foundation for establishing a model for identifying characteristics of faculty who explicitly socialize their students to the ways and cultural norms of higher education. The continuum is also used, in addition to the critical discourse analysis, as a means to analyze the data.

Treatment of Data

As will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4, Discourse will be analyzed using critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a lens through which to look deeply at the data. Considering both the work of Fairclough (2003, 2012) and Gee (2011), the CDA will be used as a means of looking at the data and unearthing the larger story that is being told. Fairclough’s (2003, 2012) social activity and Gee’s (2011) building tasks will be used as two means to help the researcher analyze the data. For the purpose just outlined, the CDA is considered a methodology, but the study is not necessarily a CDA. To make it plain, or for clarity, the CDA
is conceptualized as one way of looking at the data, but not the only way. It is conceptualized as a means of organizing the emerging themes.

Glossary of Terminology

Although this dissertation tends to provide an explanation and definition within the body as each term is introduced, a glossary is provided so that terminology and definitions can be accessed in a central location.

**Capital.** According to Bourdieu (1986), capital, in abstract non-material ways, can be broken up into two categories, which are social and cultural. Cultural capital can be the result of cultural literacy. The more one knows and understands about the mainstream culture, the more capital, monetary or social, one can acquire. Social capital refers to the social networks people are able to gain membership in based on the relationships they build based on other forms of capital. For the purpose of this study, capital is explored in terms of social and cultural acquisition for the purpose of upward mobility socially and economically.

**Codes of power.** Codes of power are used to describe the power in language use. The language of power in mainstream environments, which in this study includes higher education contexts, is typically Standard English or the language privileged by westernized values (Alim Samy & Smitherman, 2012; Delpit, 1995a, 2002; Smitherman, 1977).

**Discourse/discourse.** This dissertation uses D/discourse in the ways defined by Gee (2001). The Discourse (with a capital D) is used to describe the dominant language used in mainstream contexts. The discourse (with a lower case d) is used to describe social languages that may be used in a community or informal contexts. The dominant Discourse used in the
context of higher education is typically Standard English. According to Gee, language is used as a “test” to identify members from pretenders and even apprentices.

**First-time, full-time freshmen/first-year students.** The terms first-time, full-time freshmen and first-year students are both used to communicate the enrollment status of college students. Both terms are used to identify students who are entering college for the first-time as freshmen and enrolled full-time (at least 12 credit hours per semester). The study site uses both terms interchangeably.

**Outside of the classroom.** The interview consists of questions that ask faculty to reflect on their interactions with students inside of the classroom and outside of the classroom. For the purpose of this study, outside of the classroom is defined as office hours or other interactions on campus that take place outside of the physical classroom. Therefore, interacting with students in the cafeteria or student union building are examples of outside of the classroom, but outside of the classroom does not include social settings such as parties and other similar social gatherings.

**Literacy.** This dissertation seeks to broaden the standard definition by defining literacy as a transaction between a learner and either the spoken word or a given context. An expanded discussion will follow in the next section.

**Social literacy.** Social literacy refers to the skills that people use during the transaction between either the spoken word and/or a given context.

**Research Questions**

This dissertation study seeks to address the following research questions using qualitative research methods that include a structured interview schedule, vignette responses,
and responses to true or false questions. All research instruments will be discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation and included in Appendix A and Appendix B.

1. To what extent do college faculty members see literacy as a social practice?
2. What are college faculty members’ perceptions of the quality of their students’ social literacy skills?
3. In what ways do college faculty members respond to their students’ interpretation of social cues inside and outside of the classroom?
4. To what extent do college faculty members explicitly provide their students with opportunities to practice the social literacies necessary for success in college and beyond?
5. To what extent do college faculty members see their role as important in socializing their students to undergraduate culture?

Significance of the Study

As previously mentioned in the opening of this chapter, this study seeks to add to the body of established literature in the field of literacy by [1] offering a means for considering literacy in more broad terms, [2] discovering if faculty recognize, assess, and address the ways that students interpret social cues, and [3] offering a foundation for establishing a model for identifying characteristics of faculty who explicitly socialize their students to the ways and cultural norms of higher education. The findings have the potential to impact credentialing of higher education teaching faculty, training and professional development, faculty orientation, and student orientation efforts.
Defining Literacy

The purpose of this section is to situate this study and its definition of literacy in context. The standard definition of literacy has been described as one’s ability to read and write at a basic level (Bigelow & Schwarz, 2010; Kruidenier, MacArthur, & Wrigley, 2010; Reader, 2010). This dissertation seeks to broaden the standard definition by defining literacy as a transaction or interaction between a learner and either the spoken word or a given context. Street (2003) describes New Literacy Studies “as a new tradition in considering the nature of literacy, focusing not so much on acquisition of skills, as in dominant approaches, but rather on what it means to think of literacy as a social practice” (p. 77). With the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in 2009, the word ‘literacy’ is the latest trend in education. Literacy is often tacked onto a word to indicate awareness. For example, financial literacy is used to indicate awareness about financial responsibility. The United States Mint even has lesson plans to help teachers provide financial literacy instruction to elementary and high school students. Information literacy has been introduced as “the ability to recognise information needs and to identify, evaluate and use information effectively” (Bruce, 1999, p. 33). Digital literacy is used to refer to the “ways people incorporate the Internet into their daily lives” (Hargittai, 2005, p. 371). Health literacy is defined as “the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information well enough to make appropriate health decisions” (Witte, 2010, p. 3). Some college instructors find it difficult to situate the term ‘literacy’ socially; to do so equates literacy with power and acknowledges the social benefits of being literate (Lindquist & Seitz, 2009). Context is also a large part of situating literacy socially. As Street (2003) offers in his definition of literacy from a social perspective, “The alternative,
ideological model of literacy, offers a more culturally sensitive view of literacy practices and how they vary from one context to another” (p. 77). The way that literacy is defined and explored in this study includes the connection between power and literacy.

The definition of literacy that will be used in this study is aligned to the ideological model of literacy in that it takes a sociocultural approach to literacy exploration, understands that literacy is rooted in experiences, and acknowledges power (Alvermann, 2009; Street, 1984, 1995, 2003). As defined in this study, literacy is not singular but incorporates how one experiences and transacts meaning from talk, print, media, and simply being present (physically, mentally, and emotionally) in an environment.

Education, particularly the basic skills that were once defined as ‘literate’ (i.e., reading and writing) have been described as prerequisite to freedom and necessary for power, especially for minority groups (Delpit, 1995a, 1995b; Freire, 1970; Street, 2003). Those who are able to gain these basic skills may be able to situate themselves in positions for upward mobility and be able to accumulate capital (cultural, social, and economic). They may be better able to negotiate the world for a variety of purposes. Those who are not able to obtain these basics skills may find that they are vulnerable, especially when attempting to navigate a literate world with different literacy skills.

Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited by the purposeful sampling used to identify participants. Specifically, only tenured faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences who teach general education courses in either the humanities or social science areas were asked to participate in
this study. In addition, this study focused on faculty who teach at an urban four-year institution where the majority of the students are African American. This study was also delimited concerning the literature surveyed. This study, at its core, is a literacy study that takes place in a higher education environment; therefore, much of the literature surveyed is from, but not limited to, the field of literacy, but there are connections made to [1] the higher education literature and [2] literacy scholars who explore literacy theory in higher education contexts.

Dissertation Framework

This dissertation is organized in the following ways. Chapter 1 introduced the dissertation study. Specifically, Chapter 1 outlined the statement of the problem, the research questions, and the glossary of terms; it also introduced the theoretical framework. Chapter 2 provides an in-depth review of literature related to theory and research methodology. Chapter 2 also provides evidence of how this dissertation study is situated within and moves beyond the existing scholarship. Chapter 3 identifies and discusses the research methodology and instruments, in detail, that were used in this study. Chapter 3 also provides a detailed description of the study site. In Chapter 4, an in-depth analysis of the research data and findings are provided. Chapter 5 concludes the research study and provides recommendations for additional research.

Chapter 1 Summary

Chapter 1 presented the introduction, statement of the problem, research questions, and a brief overview of the guiding literature that helped frame this study. Chapter 1
also gave a brief overview of the treatment of the data. Also provided in Chapter 1 was a
glossary of terms that are consistently used throughout this dissertation. The goal of doing such
in Chapter 1 is to build the foundation for the remainder of this dissertation.
CHAPTER 2

INTERPRETATION AS A MEANS OF READING SOCIAL CUES

This study explored literacy as a social practice by [1] examining faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and [2] examining how faculty members teach students to interpret (read) social cues as they relate to higher education contexts. The definition of literacy is considered in broad terms as a transaction or interaction between a learner and either the spoken word or a given context (verbal and nonverbal). This dissertation approached faculty-student interaction from the perspective of the faculty. By doing so, this study has the potential to add a new perspective to the existing scholarship.

This chapter identifies possible gaps in literacy research that addresses literacy as a social practice beginning with an examination of the research on college faculty, their expectations of college students, and research on the first-year college student. Exploring college faculty and the first-year college student before theory and methods was done because the college faculty and college student literature sets the context for examining theory and methods. Within each section, previous research studies, methods, and findings are discussed. This review of literature serves three main purposes: [1] to begin to identify a call for additional research, [2] to help provide a framework for exploring literacy as a social practice, and [3] to help situate this study, theoretically and methodologically, within the existing literacy scholarship.
Call for Research: Gaps in Literacy Research

Based on a review of literature presented in this chapter, it became apparent that there is a need for research that explores faculty beliefs about their role in helping socialize students to the culture of higher education. Student exposure and instructor expectations may not be aligned when students enter college for the first time. Much of the research in the field of literacy that explores student-teacher interaction does so in elementary or secondary settings (Compton-Lilly, 2008; Delpit, 1995a, 1995b, 2002; Gee, 2001; Godley, Carpenter, & Werner, 2007; Goodman & Goodman, 2004; Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala, & Cox, 2004; Gutierrez, Rymes, & Larson, 1995.; Hillard, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2002; Leana, 2011; Lee, 1995; Moje, 2007; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Rainey & Moje, 2012; Rogers, 2002a, 2002b; Ruddell & Unrau, 1994). However, at the core of their work, these scholars are all discussing an issue, reading social cues, that is relevant in higher education contexts; therefore, their work is applied in a new way in this study as it focuses on the student-teacher interaction that occurs in higher education contexts.

The adult education literature focuses on the nontraditional student population and nontraditional educational settings, which again is different from what is being addressed in this study (Baumgartner, 2001; Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey, 2008; Bonner, 1982; Brookfield, 1986; Finger, 1989; Gurin, Dey, Gurin, & Hurtado, 2003; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Huerta-Macias, 2003; Hugo, 2002; Hurtado, 2005; Johnson-Bailey, 2002; Kilgore, 2004; Kuh & Ardiolo, 1979; Merriam, 2001; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007; Price; 2001; Quaye, Tambascia, Poon & Talesh, 2009; Saenz, Ngai Hoi, & Hurtado, 2007). What does not appear to be addressed in much of the reviewed adult education
scholarship is [1] student-teacher interaction in higher education contexts, and [2] literacy in
higher education contexts. The next two sections will examine that literature base.

Student-Faculty Interaction in Higher Education Contexts

Much of the literature that discusses faculty-student interactions in higher education
contexts filters the discussion through a broader discussion of the college student (Johnson-
Bailey, 2002; Quaye et al., 2009). The faculty-student interactions are generally presented
from the student perspective. For this reason, the following discussion provides both student
and faculty perspectives. Students are discussed concerning their needs and misunderstandings
about college and faculty are discussed concerning their reaction to students’ needs.

College faculty members tend to develop as teachers in stages (Chickering & Gamson,
1987; Kugel, 1993), but they may expect students to arrive to college already developed.
According to Bartholomae (1986), the student must “invent the university” by using the
language that instructors use each time the student speaks, and, especially, each time the
student writes for the instructor but often without the help of the instructor. Instructors expect
students to contextualize, use prior knowledge and the like to make meaning, information but
to communicate that information in a decontextualized way, which means to translate their
personal meaning in a way that is mainstream (Bartholomae, 1986). For those college students
who do not have the necessary exposure, their invention of the university may not be aligned
with how the university actually exists.

Educators may assume that social skills are automatically learned when students are
academically successful. The first two years of college is the time when students learn the
most (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), which makes this time in a student’s academic life important and ripe with opportunities to introduce the social aspects of literacy as they are often practiced in college. Instructors have the expectation that students are able to be assigned an activity, identify the strategies to meet the goals of the activity, and carry out the activity with little to no assistance (Carson, Chase, Gibson, & Hargrove, 1992; Chase, Gibson, & Carson, 1994; Orlando, Caverly, Swetnam, & Flippo, 1989; Rose, 1979, 1985). When students find that they need assistance, the instructor expects students to be able to isolate their issues and communicate their needs effectively. The ability to do this tends to be difficult for even advanced students.

The literacy skills that students arrive with may not match the instructor’s expectations according to data collected by The Cooperative Institutional Research Program at the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) (Hurtado et al., 2012). Rose (1979) questions the “institutional context” by asking, “What are the demands on students? What methods might help them effectively respond? And how can they develop a critical frame of mind in and through that response?” (p. 107). This dissertation, like the HERI survey and Rose (1979), seeks to understand faculty experiences and perceptions about students. However, this dissertation study took a qualitative approach and focused more on literacy in broad terms, as previously defined.

**Literacy Expectations in Higher Education**

Taking a moment to consider how students are prepared for the rigors of college life is important, especially when considering the first day of college expectations of many college faculty members. According to Delpit (1995a), “some children come to school with more
accoutrements of the culture of power already in place—‘cultural capital,’ as some critical theorists refer to it—some with less” (p. 28). Steele (1997, 2003) explores the reality that the longer African Americans stay in school, regardless of social class; they tend to suffer from a decline in success in school even at the college level. Some college faculty members state that they would be satisfied if students arrived to college with basic skills in reading and writing and understood how to communicate their needs (Carson et al., 1992; Chase et al., 1994; Kuh & Ardiaolo, 1979; Orlando et al., 1989). However, this may not be the case. The type of behavior, academic and social, that college faculty members expect is actually more advanced than basic and not at all like what some students experienced in high school or in their off-campus social environments. Conley (2007) notes, “one of the major reasons that students falter in college is the gap between their high school experiences and college expectations” (p. 2). An example of the mismatch in advanced social literacy skills that college faculty expect is the case of a student who enters class late. Instead of finding a seat quietly, the student stands in front of the class and begins to ask the instructor questions about the handouts or information that was discussed before the student arrived. The procedure for entering class late and the expected behavior may not have been explicitly communicated with the class; however, a student who violates the “norm” risks being judged by not only the instructor but also the entire class. This type of reading of the text takes explicit instruction or an advanced ability to read and construct meaning from a hidden text (Gee, 2001; Ruddell & Unrau, 1994; Stanovich, 2004). ‘Reading’ and ‘text’ are explored as two ‘things’ that are not only related to words on a page. According to Ruddell and Unrau (1994) and Stanovich (2004), people participate in the same cognitive act when they physically read words on a page as they do when they interpret an environment. Essentially, ‘reading’ and ‘text’ can be used to represent the initiation of the
cognitive act of reading an environment, which can be considered a ‘text.’ These ideas became apparent during the responses given by the participants in this study, which will be provided in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Theory suggests that the language and social skills that college requires may pose conflicts socially and culturally (Delpit, 2002; Gee, 1998, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Smitherman, 1977, 1995, 2000, 2003) and these conflicts may make it difficult for instructors and students to communicate; thus, making it difficult for students to build the social capital that they may need in the future. Many college students gain information about college from older siblings, parents, peers, and teachers (Conley, 2005). Secondary teachers and administrators may also think that it is the parents’ and community’s responsibility to socialize their students. In addition, college instructors may think that students enter the environment already having been socialized, which further widens the crack that this population of students typically slips between and gets lost (Clark, 2005; Compton-Lilly, Rogers, & Lewis, 2012; Hurtado et al., 2012; Lee, 1995; Lynn, 2006; Rogers, 2002a, 2002b). Limited exposure to undergraduate culture may cause students to misinterpret the culture at play in this environment and adds another layer to the first-year college student experience.

First-Year College Students

For many students, college is a new environment, and the first-time, full-time freshman is thought to be entering college directly out of high school. College campuses replicate and to an extent form a culture. There are expectations, social practices, and languages that are in place on college campuses. It is expected that students understand protocol and how to communicate with various entities. It is also expected that students understand the social
practices of college life, which may be different depending on the campus, students who attend, and location. Typically, Standard English, defined as “the written and oral dialects of English privileged in the U.S. academic, civic, and professional institutions and the mainstream media,” is the dominant language used verbally and in writing when addressing “official business” (Godley et al., 2007, p. 104). Identifying and negotiating the cultural norms that govern this environment can be difficult (Reason et al., 2006). As discussed in Lindquist and Seitz (2009), students with “no prior access or exposure to middle-class literacy as it is enacted in a university setting may be at a disadvantage because if you want to show that you have the literacy of an educated person, certain kinds of knowledge can actually count against you” (p. 103). Beyond academic instruction, college tends to be the place where students practice the (social) skills that they will need to be successful in life during and after college (Bartholomae, 1986; Clark, 2005; Delpit, 1995a, 1995b; Gee, 1989a, 1989b; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Students may be taught the language of a discipline, but they may not be taught the language of power (Moje, 2007; Nist, 1993; Ostrove & Long, 2007). In addition, they may not be taught how to use the language and translate the information that they learned into capital. According to Lindquist and Seitz, “Schools are important institutions in setting the terms of literacy as capital” (2009, p. 107). Educational settings that focus on teaching literacy skills also communicate something about capital.

Mismatched Social Literacy Skills

It may be necessary for college students to become bilingual in order to be successful in a global society (Darder, 2012). These students must attempt to identify a way to make their
home cultures and the new school culture fit together in some sort of harmony. Higher education is a culture in and of itself. In addition to the norms associated with academia and those who dare to maneuver within it, the cultures that students bring to this environment add an additional layer to the already murky waters. To illuminate this idea better, the following vignette is offered. Vignettes are commonly used in the field of education to help replicate realistic classroom experiences (see Burden & Byrd, 2013; Chapman, 1981; Maxwell, Meiser, & McKnight, 2011). The use of vignettes in research is common in the behavioral sciences as will be discussed in detail later in this chapter and again in Chapter 3.

A student arrives in his or her instructor’s office during office hours. The instructor is sitting at her desk on the telephone. The instructor’s desk is facing the office door so she can see individuals as they arrive. Although the instructor is on a call, the student walks in the office and begins to talk to the instructor.

Typically, one might think that it is customary to [1] knock on the door and wait to be acknowledged or invited in before entering the office, or [2] have a seat outside of the office and wait for the instructor to complete the call prior to entering the office and beginning to speak to the instructor. Although these alternatives to interrupting the instructor’s call may be thought to be “known” or explicit, what this vignette has revealed is that they are not always explicit and this disconnect leads to misinterpretation and frustration. The interaction between the student and the instructor actually illustrates an example of reading and text. The student needed to read the text that was created between the student and the instructor who is on the phone, which takes a type of literacy or way of knowing that is not always innate. Text can be defined as both spoken and written (Fairclough, 2003; Halliday, 1978). Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002), Gee (1998, 2001), and Lindquist and Seitz (2009) explore the literacy skills that students
arrive to school with as either a barrier or key to success in school. In this instance, the student and the instructor are both standing at a fork in the road, and the assistance that this student receives in this regard may depend on how both the student and the instructor handle the situation. The instructor can simply attempt to address the student’s question while still on the telephone (no reading instruction or practice reading) or the instructor can ask the student to have a seat outside of the office and wait until he or she has completed the call (reading instruction and practice). Once the instructor identifies that she is on a call, the student can initiate his departure to seats outside of the office and wait until the instructor has completed the call. This situation can become one of the explicit teaching moments that Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) discusses in her work and what Gee (1998, 2001) refers to as apprenticeships in his work.

Theoretical Research

The literature reviewed for this study is placed into two major categories: theoretical and methodological. The literature discussed in this particular section will be examined theoretically. The following section will then focus on methodology. The purpose for examining literature in these two categories is to [1] establish a theoretical foundation for this study and [2] support the methodology used in this study. By establishing a theoretical foundation first, the theory-to-practice transition becomes clearer. To be able to establish a place within the literacy scholarship, at this point, creating a theoretical foundation is important and purposeful. Because this study examines literacy, learning, culture, socialization, and education contexts, the theories that will be discussed will establish the connection between these variables and how they influence learning.
Within this section, theoretical research will be examined. Specifically, sociocultural research will be unpacked. The discussion of sociocultural research will be explored in relation to sociocultural theory, literacy and power, explicit vs implicit instruction, and capital.

**Sociocultural Theory**

The use of sociocultural theory has become common in explorations of learning as it evolves out of and within social contexts (Bourdieu, 1986; Delpit, 1995a, 1995b, 2002; Gee, 1989a, 1989b, 1998, 2001; Lewis & Moje, 2003; Nasir & Hand, 2006; Purcell-Gates, 1995, 2002; Stanovich, 2004). The use of sociocultural theories in this study will allow for a comprehensive view of literacy as a social practice as defined in Chapter 1; consequences for not interpreting social cues; capital; literacy and identity; and reading research.

Learning does not occur in isolation of the learner’s experience, but is influenced by social context (Rosenblatt, 1994). The human being is seen as part of a larger context or “nature” (Rosenblatt, 1994) who makes sense of new situations by applying it to previous exposure (Rosenblatt, 1994; Stanovich, 2004).

**Literacy and Power**

Delpit (1995a, 1995b) explores the added layer of race when considering the impact of the vignette provided previously in this dissertation. According to Delpit (1995a), some students have already been socialized before they enter school or college specifically. When adding the additional layer of race to the discussion of exposure, the discussion becomes sensitive, and Omi and Winant (1994) might add that people then have to address the ways that race is often overlooked as a superficial feature when it does have implications for how actions
of one may be interpreted as actions of the whole. As Delpit (1995a) points out, “A White applicant who exhibits problems is an individual with problems” (p. 38). Therefore, their issues with negotiating codes of power may be interpreted as an individual mistake that has limited implications for access and opportunity for the cultural group. Also, when White students use little d discourse (discourse that Gee refers to as informal or social language), it does not sound like “nails on the chalk board” (Young, 2004) because it is more aligned with the mainstream way of speaking both formally and informally (Brock, McMillon, Pennington, Townsend, & Lapp, 2009; Young, 2004). Although one may argue that this is true for poor Whites (see Purcell-Gates, 1995; 2002), people of color tend to become representatives for their cultural group. Their individual missteps with codes of power become missteps that speak for the cultural group. Constant interactions with people of color who make consistent errors may result in assumptions held by the mainstream about the culture as a whole. Some members of minority groups do not realize this idea, and this failure to display their ability to use codes of power, or Standard English, further places the group at a disadvantage socially and economically (Delpit, 1995a, 1995b; Gee, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995, 2002, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). As Delpit (1995a) describes, “When I speak, therefore, of the culture of power, I don’t speak of how I wish things to be but of how they are. I further believe that to act as if power does not exist is to ensure that the power status quo remains the same” (p. 39). Therefore, a teacher who does not find a way to teach students to become fluent in the codes of power that govern mainstream contexts may actually be ensuring that the power differential or status quo continues to exist.

The African American culture is rich with ideas and practices that the mainstream culture attempts to replicate, often unsuccessfully, or create a pathological approach to viewing
the culture (Young, 2004). However, how much is the success of African American students hindered due to their, often times innocently, not knowing (or having a difficult time reading) what is considered ‘appropriate’ in various situations and environments? How educators make intentional efforts to reach these students and help them understand how to approach challenging situations and even challenge the current situation, without advancing stereotypes about them held by the mainstream, may make the difference in the opportunities they have and the potential social, cultural, and material capital that they can gain (Lewis & Moje, 2003; Moje, 2007). In this instance, literacy has social benefits that can be transformed into capital. How these students become literate in the academic context of higher education is of growing concern as the population of students entering college without this form of literacy continues to be the focus of much talk among college instructors. Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b) are used to as a means to explore ways instructors can facilitate this type of literacy learning.

**Delpit-Gee Theory-to-Practice Theory**

The Delpit-Gee graphic representation of their key theoretical positions about literacy (Figure 1) and the practical continuum emerged from the perspectives, in their own words, of Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b) in the two articles identified previously in Chapter 1. Interestingly, on a larger theoretical continuum, Delpit and Gee, based on core similarities regarding the need to help minority discourse students acquire mainstream Discourse, might be placed on the same side. When narrowing the lens and creating a practical continuum, the distance between these two scholars widens. To show their similarities and differences, a theory to practice approach is created in the form of a Venn diagram (see Figure 1).
In theory, Delpit and Gee share similar ideas regarding the conception of literacy as being more than the ability to demonstrate basic skills in reading and writing. Both of their perspectives speak to the social aspects of literacy and the power that demonstrating certain or more acceptable literacy skills provides. Delpit (1995a) and Gee’s (1989a, 1989b) key ideas, theoretically, are similar enough to make it difficult to situate them on opposite ends of a continuum. Their theoretical approaches to literacy overlap. Figure 1 illustrates the similarities. For both scholars, context matters, discourse are ‘tested,’ literacy is more than reading and writing, and discourse carries social power and economic success. Context refers to the way the environment shapes how one uses literacy. Discourse is ‘tested’ by those who have already achieved membership in a particular discourse community to determine if the person enacting a particular discourse is a member or a pretender. Literacy is more than the ability to demonstrate basic skills in reading and writing, but it also has a social aspect as it communicates membership.

To highlight their theoretical perspectives, the Delpit-Gee theoretical representation was developed (see Figure 1).
Figure 1: Delpit-Gee key theoretical positions about literacy.

A Venn diagram that situates the overlap side by side is used to show [1] that both Delpit and Gee’s key approaches to literacy, in theory, overlap in multiple places and [2] that this theoretical representation can be considered a snapshot of a larger continuum where they both are in proximity to each other.

Delpit (1995a) specifically addresses Gee’s (1989a, 1989b) ideas about literacy and literacy instruction. In this work, Delpit (1995a) highlights how her beliefs about literacy instruction for people of color diverge from Gee’s (1989a, 1989b). The following two passages from Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b) are believed to embody the divergence in the ways these two scholars approach literacy or D/discourse instruction.

Delpit (1995a) states,

There are two aspects of Gee’s arguments, which I find problematic. First is Gee’s notion that people who have not been born into dominant discourses will find it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to acquire such a discourse. He argues strongly that discourses cannot be “overtly” taught, particularly in a classroom, but can only be acquired by enculturation in the home or by “apprenticeship” into social practice. Those who wish to gain access to the
goods and status connected to a dominant discourse must have access to the social practices related to the discourse. That is, to lean the “rules” required for admission into a particular dominant discourse, individuals must already have access to the social institutions connected to that discourse— if “you’re not already in, don’t expect to get in.” The second argument of Gee’s work that I find troubling suggests that an individual who is born into one discourse with one set of values may experience major conflicts when attempting to acquire another discourse with another set of values. Gee defines this as especially pertinent to “women and minorities,” who, when they seek to acquire status discourses, may be faced with adopting values that deny their primary identities. When teachers believe that this acceptance of self-deprecatory values is inevitable in order for people of color to acquire status discourses, then their sense of justice and fair play might hinder their teaching these discourse. (p. 547)

Gee (1989a) states,

Discourses are not mastered by overt instruction (even less so than languages, and hardly anyone ever fluently acquired a second language sitting in a classroom), but by enculturation (“apprenticeship”) into social practices through scaffolded and supported interaction with people who already mastered the Discourse (Cazden, 1988; Heath, 1983). This is how we all acquired our native language and our home-based Discourse. It is how we acquire all later, more public-oriented Discourses. If you have no access to the social practice, you don’t get in the Discourse, you don’t have it. You cannot overtly teach anyone a Discourse, in a classroom or anywhere else. Discourses are not bodies of knowledge like physics or archeology or linguistics. Therefore, ironically, while you can overtly teach someone linguistics, a body of knowledge, you can’t teach them to be a linguist, that is to use a Discourse. The most you can do is to let them practice being a linguist with you. (p. 527)

From these two pieces of work, Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b), both Figures 1 and 2 were developed. Again, the use of the progressing Venn diagram was used to illustrate that when looking at their key ideas about literacy, both Delpit’s and Gee’s ideas overlap. Also, the theoretical representation is a snapshot of what may be considered a larger continuum with Delpit and Gee, theoretically, being located on the same end. The use of the balance beam (see Figure 2) for the practical continuum was selected because both Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b) appear to try to find a way to help balance multiple D/discourses, identities
associated with those D/discourses, and instruction. The practical continuum focuses on the teacher’s identity and approach to instruction.

According to Gee (1989a), one’s ability to use the Discourse fluently announces him or her as a member of an environment or as one who is not fluent. Students typically take on the role of apprentices when instructors act as mentors (Gee, 2001). When thinking about instruction, Gee (1989a) states that inside of a classroom is too late to master Discourse, and instructors can only act as mentors and let students practice Discourse. By college, if one has not mastered Discourse, instructors should provide apprenticeships, but students should be encouraged to “mushfake,” which is “make do in the absence of the real thing” or “fake it until they make it” (Gee, 1989a, 1998, 2001). For some researchers, Delpit and Ladson-Billings in particular, this is a troubling position because if the “test” were of one’s ability to use Discourse fluently, “mushfake” would still ensure that students fail the “test.” Those students who are more likely to fail the “test” are those students who are not born with it or who do not have exposure to the Discourse (Gee, 1989a, 1998, 2001). According to Gee (1989a), those who are more likely not to have the exposure to Discourse are women and other minorities. Therefore, the education and economic crisis hindering African Americans from economic growth (even when obtaining a college degree) continues if the person cannot display fluency of Discourse (Delpit, 1995a, 1995b; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Young, 2004). Moreover, this places obstacles in the way of their ability to build the social capital that may help them access resources and opportunities that may still be locked away even with a college degree.

As Gee (1989a) argues, Discourse cannot be taught in a classroom but through allowing students to become apprentices in the environment. In order for apprenticeships to be
successful, instructors have to allow students take on the role of apprentice. It is dangerous for instructors to make assumptions about student skills and learning capacity based on language use. Therefore, students learn Discourse use through acting it out through apprenticeships with those who are fluent in the Discourse. This also assumes that instructors are in fact fluent in the Discourse and reflective in how they provide apprenticeship opportunities for their students. There are multiple ways that people recognize others in the ways that Gee (2011) discusses in his work. Delpit (1995a) provides codes of power as one way that people identify themselves as members of a group. According to Gee (2011), the issue is a problem of “recognition and being recognized” (p. 24). The student in the example located earlier in this dissertation is being recognized by the teacher, but as what and is this the way that he or she was intending or wants to be recognized? In the discussion of “real Indians,” Gee (2011) provides a discussion of the recognition work that Native Americans do to be recognized by their kinsmen as being “real Indian.” Particularly, the recognition work includes ways of “doing.” “A ‘real Indian’ is not something one can simply be. Rather it is something that one becomes or is in the doing (italics in the original) of it, that is, in the performance…If one does not continue to ‘practice’ being a ‘real Indian,’ one ceases to be one” (p. 24). Much of Gee’s work is rooted in the idea of practice and performance of a Discourse or way of being. The way one is with the world is often a performance of a Discourse that provides membership into networks. The membership in turn provides capital. Thinking back to the vignette, the student may have not performed the college Discourse well enough to be considered a member; thus, missing an opportunity to gain capital. According to Gee’s (2011) “real Indian” discussion, one can fail the “test,” but will get other chances to display the characteristics that the group deems acceptable for recognition. Unfortunately, in college and in other similar spaces, one encounter may block other
opportunities that might have evolved from the encounter if the student had simply waited to be recognized.

The research exploring literacy, language, and Discourse argues that for one to master the dominant Discourse, he or she must sacrifice his or her own Discourse, which is connected to his or her identity (Gee, 1989a, 1989b, 2001; Smitherman, 1977, 1995, 2000, 2003). This may also cause students to resist learning and using the language of the environment. It may also cause teachers who teach from a social justice perspective (Moje, 2007; Young, 2004) to resist teaching students in an explicit way. Delpit (1995a) states, “Acquiring the ability to function in a dominant discourse need not mean that one must reject one’s home identity and values, for discourses are not static, but are shaped, however reluctantly, by those who participate within them and by the form of their participation” (p. 552). This is similar to the debates about English Language Learners and second language immersion programs and African Americans (students) being allowed to use African American Vernacular English/Black English Vernacular in schools and other formal environments. Revisiting Gee’s comments about Discourses and communicating identity and belonging, the idea that teaching young African American students the ability to use the dominant language (Big D or Standard English) is a means of devaluing their home language is hard to understand. Teaching African American youth the ability to code-switch is teaching them more than the ability to negotiate a language, but it is teaching them the ability to negotiate a society (accumulate capital).

Some linguists argue that the mechanical and grammatical features of Standard English are superficial features. Gee (1989a) argues that these features are often used as the “tests” that were previously mentioned. Delpit (1995a) states that not requiring students to show competency in these “superficial features” does the exact opposite of the goal, but rather it
oppresses these students. Literacy education does much to explore the connection between literacy skills and upward mobility. As Freire (1970) explores, community help must be for the people, by the people. “Outsiders,” those from outside of the community, provide limited service when they attempt to impose their views on a community to which they do not belong. It is also difficult for someone who holds a privileged status to tell someone without such a status that he or she does not need to employ the very skills that the privileged use to secure privilege for them and exclude others. The field of literacy is filled with opportunities to explore the human condition and how it is articulated and/or limited by humans’ ability and/or desire to socialize in environments outside of their norms.

**Explicit Instruction vs. Apprenticeship**

The Delpit-Gee perspectives can also be discussed as explicit instruction vs. apprenticeship. Delpit (1995a) challenges Gee’s (1989a) notion that “true acquisition (which is always full fluency) will rarely if ever happen” with examples of success stories where, with explicit classroom instruction, students from non-dominant discourses acquired the mainstream Discourse and were successful. Delpit (1995a), through discussion with colleagues who had successfully acquired a discourse that they were not born with, identifies the following as characteristics of teachers who have helped students successfully acquire dominant discourses:

1. “Teachers successfully taught what Gee calls the “superficial features” of middle-class discourse—grammar, style, mechanics—features that Gee claims are particularly resistant to classroom instruction” (Delpit, 1995a, p. 549).
2. “Teachers insisted that students be able to speak and write eloquently, maintain neatness, think carefully, exude character, and conduct themselves with decorum” (Delpit, 1995a, p. 549).

3. As reflected by one of her colleagues, [Teachers] “They held visions of us that we could not imagine for ourselves. They were determined that, despite all odds, we would achieve” (Delpit, 1995a, p. 549).

What these characteristics have in common are not just that the teacher is explicitly teaching students about language and grammar, but the teacher believes that success for these students is possible and feels responsible for their journey.

Gee (1989a) also identifies a means for helping students acquire dominant discourse but in a more theoretical way. Gee (1989a, 1989b, 2001) approaches this acquisition from the perspective of apprenticeship or enculturation. Teaching is considered an apprenticeship, which is defined as “someone in a master-apprentice relationship in a social practice (Discourse) wherein you scaffold their growing ability to say, do, value, believe, and so forth, within that Discourse, through demonstrating your mastery and supporting theirs even when it barely exists (i.e., you make it look as if they can do what they really can’t do)” (Gee, 1989b, p. 530). The responsibility of teaching Discourses, according to Gee (1989a), falls under the purview of the “English teachers, language teachers, composition teachers, TESOL teachers, studies-skills teachers” (p. 531). This in and of itself causes pause. Some colleges and universities only require students to take six hours of composition. This may be why Gee (1989a) says that new discourse acquisition is unachievable. He has only identified a small portion of a students’ education as the place where this acquisition should happen. Gee (1989a)
states, “We can pause, also, to remark on the paradox that even though Discourses cannot be overtly taught, and cannot readily be mastered late in the game, the University wants teachers to overtly teach and wants students to demonstrate mastery” (p. 532). Gee (1989a) talks about identity and the tool kit. He states that Discourse is a part of the identity tool kit. If so, it is not farfetched that the university would want students to demonstrate that they can use the tools in the tool kit. If apprenticeships were defined as letting “them practice being a linguist with you,” would the teacher not have to teach the apprentice linguist all of the tools for demonstrating that identity? Would the student not need practice demonstrating that identity in a variety of settings (i.e., English class, psychology class, sociology class, etc.)?

The hallmark of Gee’s (1989a) instructional approach is scaffolded opportunities for students to practice acting out an identity, but how do they know what the identity is if no one ever out right explains to them that this is what a linguist (keeping with Gee’s example) does and says? It may be that the word “apprentice” is problematic and leads one to believe that the teacher just acts out an identity with little to no discussion. The difference between the explicit approach that Delpit (1995a) discusses and the apprenticeship that Gee (1989a) offers is that Gee (1989a) says that an apprenticeship has to be supported interaction with people who have already mastered the Discourse, which means they may be operating inside of the margin. Delpit (1995a) points out that many of the teachers who supported their students’ successful acquisition of the discourse “were denied entry into the larger White world” (p. 549). Therefore, they were teaching from the margins trying to help their students get in. They took responsibility for their students’ life successes. According to Dubois (1903/1994), they were teaching them double-consciousness. They were teaching them that they do not have to believe all of the views and ideas of the mainstream in order to acquire the mainstream way of
communicating and being in the mainstream world. Their students just had to understand that the differences exist and how to negotiate those differences. The Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum is provided below (see Figure 2) to illuminate their approaches to instruction from the perspective of teacher characteristics. From the examples of the way Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b) discussed their approaches to discourse instruction, the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum emerged. The practical continuum places their positions on a balance beam. It becomes apparent that Delpit (1995a) describes teacher characteristics and theory in practical terms and Gee (1989a, 1989b) describes Discourse theory. There is no value placed on one end or the other, meaning that one is not more desirable than the other. They are simply different. However, within this difference is similarity, as they both are seeking to help their students balance discourse, identity, and educational experience.

Consequences of Not Interpreting Social Cues

In light of the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum, it is necessary to consider the implications for those who do not demonstrate mainstream social literacy skills. Adults who have not gained literacy or acquired a basic level of education (high school completion) “on average will cost the nation about $260,000 in lost earnings, taxes, and productivity compared with a high school graduate who does not go to college” (Reader, 2010, p. 1). Higher education has been thought to provide opportunities to elevate; however, college does not always provide equal access to people based on culture and social status. A question of major concern for some colleges and universities is how much will the average college graduate cost the nation if allowed to graduate without demonstrating mastery in the ability to interpret social
"Teachers successfully teach "superficial features" of middle-class discourse-grammar, style, mechanics" (Delpit, 1995a, p. 549).

"Teachers insist that students be able to speak and write eloquently, maintain neatness, think carefully, exercise charity, and conduct themselves with decorum" (Delpit, 1995a, p. 549).

"[Teachers] are determined that, despite all odds, students can achieve" (Delpit, 1995a, p. 549).

"Teachers put in overtime to ensure that the students are able to live up to their expectations" (Delpit, 1995a, p. 549).

"[Teachers] set high standards and then carefully and explicitly instruct students in how to meet them" (Delpit, 1995a, p. 549).

"[Teachers] can discuss openly the injustices of allowing certain people to succeed, based not upon merit but upon which family they were born into, upon which discourse they had as children" (Delpit, 1995a, p. 549).

"Discourses are not mastered by overt instruction" (Gee, 1989a, p. 531).

"Discourses are taught by enculturation (apprenticeship) into social practices through scaffolded and supported interaction with people who have already mastered the Discourse” (Gee, 1989a, p. 531). “..such "superficialities cannot be taught in a regular classroom in any case; they can’t be “picked up” later, outside the full context of an early apprenticeship (at home and at school) in “middle-class-like: school-based ways of doing and being” (Gee, 1989a, p. 531).

"..true acquisition of many mainstream Discourses involves, at least while being in them, active complicity with values that conflict with one’s home-and community-based Discourses, especially for many women and minorities” (Gee, 1989a, p. 531).

Figure 2: Delpit-Gee practical continuum.

cues? Furthermore, how much will this individual lose in potential earnings? Simple tasks such as communicating with classmates and instructors may be transmitted into capital in the university environment. According to Gee (1999), the dominant Discourse constantly issues “tests” to determine who belongs. Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) agrees with the idea that the mainstream constantly “tests” its members or those seeking membership but disagrees about classroom teaching. Students are often “tested” without the proper preparation. Delpit (1995a,
1995b, 2002) finds that the classroom is the right place where Discourses can be taught and pretested. College can be viewed as a testing ground for Discourses, instructors can be viewed as mentors or gatekeepers, and students can be viewed as apprentices or intruders. Gee (1989a) states, “Discourses are connected with displays of an identity; failing to fully display an identity is tantamount to announcing you don’t have that identity, that at best you’re a pretender or a beginner” (p. 529). Students’ literacy skills announce them as pretenders, which may elicit a social or instructional reaction from college faculty.

The literacy skills that students bring to college may serve as barriers or opportunity makers. Delpit notes Gee’s argument “that literacy is much more than reading and writing, but rather that it is part of a larger political entity” (1995b, pp. 545-546). Discourse can be described as an ‘identity kit’ “complete with appropriate costume and instructions on how to act and talk so to take on a particular role that others will recognize” (Gee, 1989b, p. 537). Literacy is described in relation to Discourse and Discourse is described as a social exchange in much of Gee’s work as he states (1989a), “Discourses are ways of being in the world; they are forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities” (p. 526). For example, “It is a truism that a person can know perfectly the grammar of a language and not know how to use that language. It is not just what you say, but how you say it” (Gee, 1989a, p. 525). Often, this “insider” knowledge about appropriate communication for the context is not taught and students suffer.

Much of the literature investigates literacy, language, and the social implications for language choice or language use. The implications are discussed as capital, as will be discussed in the next section. The discussions explore dialectical language use in formal settings where Standard English is dominant. Although the focus tends to be on grammar in
writing, there has been some exploration of verbal language choice (Alim Samy & Smitherman, 2012; Lee, 1995; Smitherman, 1977). Verbal language tends to be the place where students’ language may not be explicitly corrected but still used to inform perceptions about student status. Based on these perceptions, a student may not be able to build the necessary capital that may provide access to various opportunities.

Capital

Bourdieu’s exploration of capital, social and cultural, begins with an exploration of the idea of capital from an economics standpoint. Capital, according to the economic theory, can be converted to money. Cultural capital and social capital are no different concerning the ability to garner access, but they are different methods. For this reason, they will be explored individually. One may be able to transfer cultural or social capital into monetary gains through educational investment, which may lead to employment opportunities. In this instance, it may be determined that depending on the cultural capital or social capital that one possesses; a person may have access to increased profit. It may also be argued that higher education, and the literacy skills that one brings or gains, has the opportunity to provide access to both social and cultural capital.

Social Capital

The effects of literacy can be viewed in the form of capital, or the opportunities, material and non-material, which one may receive because of access to particular skills or status (Bourdieu, 1986). Social capital refers to
Specifically, groups that have been systematically oppressed have sought out education as a means to secure rights and accumulate capital, both material and non-material. Who gets to learn, what they get to learn, and what is important to learn are just a few questions that accompany the debate that surrounds literacy and access to a variety of opportunities and goods, which include college. In addition, the debate has widened to include literacy as a form of capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Delpit, 1995a, 1995b; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Young, 2004).

When exploring literacy as a resource, Bourdieu’s theory of cultural and social capital may be a starting point. However, the work of Freire (1970) explores oppression and humanity through literacy skills acquisition. Freire’s work focuses on adult learning in non-school settings, which is a bit different from the focus of this dissertation; however, this dissertation explores some of the skills that are often learned in social settings but may have professional implications. Thus, Freire’s (1970) ideas about oppression and literacy are worth inclusion.

Freire (1970) discusses the effect literacy has on perceptions of humanity. According to Freire (1970), the literate are perceived as human and literacy breeds humanity or compassion for the oppressed. Humanity and skills may be viewed as forms of capital in an environment where not everyone has access to the same level of resources. In this case, those who have acquired the capital are situated in positions of power. They are able to assert their capital for
the purpose of personal and community growth, or they may use this capital to oppress others systematically. Freire describes the relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor as prescribed. According to Freire (1970), “every prescription represents the imposition of one individual’s choice upon another, transforming the consciousness of the person prescribed to into one that conforms with the prescriber’s consciousness” (p. 47). The capital may be both social and cultural.

Family literacy may also play a role in how much capital one is able to gain based on the literacy practices of the family (Edwards, Paratore, & Roser, 2009; Purcell-Gates, 1995, 2002). Purcell-Gates (1995, 2002) explores literacy as capital in her work with an Appalachian family who had been marginalized by their “immigrant status” and oppressed by their limited literacy skills (Purcell-Gates, 1995). Her qualitative study included interviews and observation methodology. She interviewed the mother who initially sought out literacy instruction at the local university where Purcell-Gates was located. She observed the children, observed the family’s literacy practices, analyzed reading, and writing experiences of both the mother and child, and had conversations with school officials.

To better illustrate literacy’s relationship with capital building, a discussion of the experiences of one of the participants in Purcell-Gates’s (1995) study is provided. The oldest boy in the family attended sessions at the Literacy Center located on the campus of a nearby university. He was reluctant to transfer those skills to his home environment. At home, his mother and father could not read and found other inventive methods to negotiate a literate society. The boy found it difficult to make a personal connection with his father through the literacy skills that he was acquiring through his work at the center. The father seemed less interested in acquiring the skills and the child was able to determine that his literacy skills did
not serve as capital in his relationship with his father, with whom he desperately wanted to make a connection. On the other hand, the mother sought services for herself and her children so that she could better advocate for them in school and in society, but she also had a difficult time getting the child to use the literacy skills that he learned at the center at home. In this example, it may be determined that the child understood something about literacy and capital. In school, he was alienated because of his limited literacy skills. However, at home, an increase in literacy skills that did not match his social network also had the potential to alienate him, especially when exploring his interactions with his father (Purcell-Gates, 1995). It is important to understand the different resources and/or opportunities that may be granted or even withheld based on literacy abilities. What Purcell-Gates (1995) revealed in her work was that literacy needs might be subjective or even contextualized. There are indeed baseline skills that are necessary for negotiating the world; however, it is important to understand the needs of the people when developing resources for literacy acquisition. Furthermore, it is important to include or introduce skill negotiation in literacy instruction so that individuals are able to use the “right” skills in the “right” place.

To the naked eye, as Purcell Gates describes, the members of the Appalachian community may blend in with other students in a classroom; however, when they begin to speak, they make an announcement. They announce that they are pretenders. Similar to the Appalachian community that is the focus of Purcell-Gates’s (1995, 2002) research, some African American college students may physically “blend” in within their environment; however, their literacy skills may make a similar announcement as Purcell Gates’s research population.
Bourdieu (1986) states that cultural capital exists in three forms: objectified, institutionalized, and embodied. Objectified cultural capital refers to “cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 47). Institutionalized capital “confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee [educational qualifications for example]” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 47). In its embodied state, cultural capital includes the “dispositions of the mind and body” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 47). Depending on class and heredity, cultural capital can be transmitted. Although, under certain conditions, cultural capital can be transmitted, the time that it takes to be enjoyed can vary depending on family status and social networks.

Cultural capital is more tangible and solid than social capital. One can reap the benefits from belonging to multiple social groups at one time, and people who were not “born” into certain families or social class situations may acquire membership in those social groups. Because cultural capital takes time to mature (so to speak), one may not be able to move fluidly through a system built on cultural capital because if one is not “born” into the environment or inherits the cultural goods, one may need time to acquire a certain status, through education or money that would afford access to the desired culture. For this reason, this study focused more on social capital as a possible benefit that students may gain from [1] using social literacy skills that are viewed as desirable in higher education contexts and [2] building relationships with teachers and peers in higher education contexts.
Literacy and Identity

Literacy as an identity tool kit can be best described as a set of behaviors and languages that one accesses when necessary (Alim Samy & Smitherman, 2012; Gee, 1989a, 1989b). A student may use a dialect when speaking informally with friends in an informal space. This same student may access Standard English when speaking with someone in a space that the student has identified as formal. The student may also pronounce words differently, dress differently, and behave differently in the formal setting in order to establish identity in the environment. This same negotiation or transformation may take place as the student enters or reenters the informal setting. Gutierrez et al. (1995) state, “power relations are learned and become part of a person’s identity as one participates in the practices of particular communities” (p. 450). Much of one’s self-perceived and social identity is established through learning and the environment.

Where one resides and the dominant culture within the community may influence how one identifies racially and culturally and may determine how literacy functions within that context (Gadsden, 1993; Heath, 1983). Education and literacy provide one with a form of both cultural and social capital. As students seek membership or consequently become potential members of a community, through practice, they develop an identity and adopt the acceptable behavior through sociocultural practices (Gutierrez et al., 1995, p. 448).

If one is to transform learning into mainstream capital, it should be acquired in a context that allows one to scaffold the learning in other similar contexts. Although this is optimal, it may not always be possible. Many students learn social or “soft skills” outside of academic contexts. This is typically where the rub occurs. Students attempt to apply the social
skills that are successful in non-academic settings when negotiating situations and relationships in academic settings. When unsuccessful, some students do not reassess the situation, look back in their tool kits, and select a different strategy. Instead, these students become discouraged and learning is impacted or their academic identities do not take shape. The reading research explores the cognitive processes that facilitate this activity.

**Reading Research**

This study examines faculty beliefs about students’ abilities to interpret social cues in higher education contexts. As will be established in this section, through the literature, reading and interpretation share the same cognitive processes. The literature that explores reading and the cognitive processes that facilitate reading and understanding will help establish interpretation as a form, at least from a cognitive standpoint, of reading.

The teacher’s language choices typically trump the students’ counterscript that they developed. The teacher’s language choices also reflect the teacher’s socialization and epistemological belief about language use, which is typically more aligned with the dominant or standard (Gutierrez et al., 1995). Gutierrez et al. (1995) analyzed activity to “understand better the cultural-historical and sociocultural nature of the activity and the way power is constructed in classrooms” (p. 448). An emerging idea that went unaddressed in this study was the use of popular culture references as a method for opening the *third space* for occupancy. Analysis was useful in this study because it did provide the backdrop for a conversation that included the culture and ways of *reading* that students bring to the classroom. The third space study “presented a framework for redefining what counts as effective classroom practice” (Gutierrez et al., 1995, p. 467). The third space redefines the classroom space and bridges the
social spaces that emerge in the classrooms (Gutierrez et al., 1995), but what is not considered is the bridge between social spaces and the marketplace where language (script) is used as a test (Gee, 2007). This dissertation seeks to explore the next space, college, where teachers may not spend a lot of time constructing this third space. Furthermore, the third space may actually do harm instead of service if the student does not understand that the third space is not the microcosm of the larger society (not the practice space).

“Reading” and “Texts”

This study explores faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and how faculty members teach students to interpret (read) social cues. This dissertation also seeks to broaden the definitions of literacy and to an extent, reading. According to Sadoski and Paivio (2004), “Reading is a cognitive act, but there is nothing about reading that does not occur in other cognitive acts that do not involve reading. We perceive, recognize, interpret, comprehend, appreciate, and remember information that is not in text form” (p. 1329). As already established reading is more than interacting with written text and involves verbal cues and social norms (Fairclough, 2012). It includes the ability to achieve understanding based on implicit cues, and text is not always written. The model that Ruddell and Unrau (1994) offers to help demystify reading as a process for constructing meaning is three-pronged in that it includes the reader, the text, and the teacher as agents. Furthermore, the model includes the classroom as a socially constructed space and how the classroom affects the way that readers make meaning of a text within that space. The process of reading and constructing meaning involves “what we do” (italics added) when we read (Ruddell & Unrau, 1994). The what we
do is much different from the how we do in regard to the reading process. When thinking about what we do, as a part of the process, the reader is invited to think about the process in a processed way. What is meant by a processed way is to observe his or her reading process from the third person point of view or strategically. In other words, the reader must make a conscious effort to identify what happened along the path of constructing meaning. Specifically, a reader who is conscious of his or her process of constructing meaning would be aware of how he or she arrives at understanding. Making an intentional effort on the part of the reader to understand and identify his or her process for making meaning of a text helps the reader replicate the process across contexts, which is an important skill. Thinking back to the example of the student visiting an instructor’s office that was provided earlier in this dissertation, where the student arrives to an instructor’s office, the instructor can begin to help the student with this process and way of reading.

Gee (2001, 2011) and Stanovich (2004) explore “reading” and “text” beyond traditional ideas of reading and text involving print text. Gee (2001) states that it is necessary to define reading broadly in order to address equality. It is necessary to see reading as something that one does when interacting not only with text but also with others. Therefore, language and situated action produce a text that is not necessarily written. Intertextuality is a way that people “read” others (Fairclough, 1992; Gee, 2001). In this instance, intertextuality relates to the way people use background knowledge to make connections across texts. People copy experiences for later use. When faced with an experience, they often move through their stored experiences in order to identify an appropriate action or reaction (Gee, 2007). An issue may arise when the cultural model is not matched appropriately based on the guiding principles of the culture (Gee, 2001; Lee, 1995). This might be the multiple layers of action taking place in the vignette.
presented previously. At its base, this dissertation is a study of how instructors teach students to read and how they read their students.

According to Gee (2001), a complete discussion of reading and writing must include speaking, listening, and social interaction. Furthermore, Gee (2001) also states that language must not only include oral and written but must also include the social languages that people use to interact with the world. Thus, the definition of literacy tends to become complicated due to its broad nature; however, it is necessary to define literacy broadly in order to address equality. It is necessary to see literate behavior (reading) as something that one does when interacting not only with text but also with others. In addition, literacy instruction should extend beyond helping students learn to decode text and compose pieces of writing. Teachers should teach students how to decode language (verbally) and even decode social situations and social actions. Language has multiple functions and is not simply for communicating ideas verbally. Language is actually a vehicle for socializing people and a means for communicating group membership or social capital (Alvermann, 2009; Gee, 2001; Street, 1984, 2003). If this is the case, language in and of itself then has implicit and explicit purposes and sends messages covertly to others (Goodman & Goodman, 2004). This covert communication is situated in action and experience. In addition, the communication is two way. The two-way communication is embedded in the hidden text.

**Hidden Text and Situated Action**

Hidden text is typically explored in relation to reading text and critical thinking. Teachers attempt to probe students to help them identify the hidden text when helping them
learn to read, not decode, a written text. However, the idea of language communicating a hidden text has been explored by Gee (1998, 2001) within his conversations of Discourse. This exchange may happen in situated action. According to Gee (2001), situated action requires schema of some sort, which acts as a trigger or cue. The cue tells the speaker what type of language to use (Big D or little d/social language). The issue occurs when schema, cue, and situation are mismatched. In addition, the schema may not exist. In this case, the individual might wrestle with schemata that are not useful in given situations. Even more complicating are cultural models. Cultural models tend to complicate the matter because culture is not always shared (Lee, 1995). Gee’s (2001) description of literacy as more than interaction with text but a social action rooted in experience that requires the reader to read people, which is not a part of literacy instruction, lays the foundation for a study that situates literacy as a social practice that requires interpretation.

**Reading Social Cues**

As stated in Goodman and Goodman (2004), “Reading, like listening, consists of processing language and constructing meaning” (p. 628). In an attempt to situate social literacies in the context of reading, Goodman and Goodman (2004) offer a means to begin such a task. For example, Goodman and Goodman (2004) state, “Miscue analysis provides evidence that readers integrate cueing systems from the earliest initial attempts at reading” (p. 631). If a miscue is a means to describe an unexpected response in reading, why can it not be extended to consider unexpected responses in social situations? According to Goodman and Goodman (2004), “Humans have schemata for everything they know and do. We have schemata for what language does and how it works. With such schemata, we use language to control the behavior
of others” (p. 632). This may be the intent, but it does not always happen. Considering the idea that humans have schemata for everything they do (Goodman & Goodman, 2004), it must also be considered that in order to build schemata, one must have experience. To that end, experiences build schemata, but experiences are often left to interpretation. Culture, ethnicity, class, religion may shape interpretation. Goodman and Goodman (2004) have laid the framework for considering social faux pas in ways that help teachers begin to formulate a plan for addressing these issues. Although these issues tend to be sensitive in nature because of cultural connections, they can be detrimental if left unaddressed.

Socially Constructed Space

Because Ruddell and Unrau (1994) make a claim that reading involves more than reading the words in a text and includes stance, the classroom as a socially constructed space that includes a cultural model might be the most important aspect of helping students differentiate between the way they read in and outside of the classroom or how they make meaning of a text in and outside of the classroom. Motivation tends to surface in discussions of reading and setting a purpose for reading; however, motivation has much to do with both internal and external factors. The internal factors may be what the reader wants to gain personally from reading the text. This personal gain can range from cultural capital that will help the reader gain entry into exclusive social networks to receiving a passing grade on an assessment. Schema can either assist with the meaning making process or hinder it as Ruddell and Unrau (1994) state, “the power of schemata to shape the meaning-making process during reading can also lead to the loss of important meanings or the misinterpretations of texts” (p. 1475). This is an example of mismatched schema or schema that might not fit within or
represent a cultural model that is in play. This is what makes it necessary to consider reading and meaning making more broadly. Written text and language tend to be explicit when considering the implicitness of a social stance to reading and literacy, but nonverbal text is just as important and influences a student’s experience in education contexts.

Students join networks when entering a classroom space. The classroom space provides students with access to three network opportunities: networks with students, teachers, and formal class-based networks (Balatti, Black, & Falk, 2007). Further, the literacy skills that are necessary for negotiating these networks may be different and at times in conflict. Specifically, students may use informal language to interact, verbally, with their peers (student network) (Linquist & Seitz, 2009; Schwandt, 2007). However, the student may not understand that the informal language that is appropriate to use with peers in informal settings may not be acceptable when attempting to negotiate the network with teachers. In addition, the language that may be acceptable when interacting with the student network may not be acceptable when interacting with this group inside of the class or with the formal class-based network due to the formal space of the classroom (Balatti et al., 2007; Compton-Lilly, 2008; Gee, 2001; Gutierrez et al., 1995; Ruddell & Unrau, 1994). If “learning can produce additional social capital outcomes for students” (Balatti et al., 2007, p. 246) and teachers are typically at the apex of the teaching-learning exchange, they become somewhat responsible for creating opportunities for the type of learning that may be transferable into capital.

Individuals who are able to gain social or cultural capital may find that upward mobility is attainable or access to resources is available. The space where this acquisition occurs tends be a moving target and some people, minorities especially, have to be prepared to aim for the target while it is still in motion if they expect to secure or transfer the capital into economic
capital. If higher education is going to be ‘the space’ then instructors might find that they become a guide for students as they learn to interpret the higher education environment. What the theoretical literature has provided is a foundation for educators to develop strategies or a plan to help students develop social skills. Therefore, the theoretical literature can influence practice and, as it has with this study, can influence research by providing a foundation for the development of research methodology, which will be the focus of the next section.

Research Methodology Related Literature and Other Relevant Studies

Research that intends to uncover ways that African Americans learn to interpret mainstream environments (typically school or work) may employ both a qualitative and quantitative methodology (Botan & Smitherman, 1991; Collins, 1988; Lee, 1995). For example, Lee (1995) used mixed methods to explore if African American high school students’ reading comprehension increased when they were provided culturally relevant scaffold in the form of signifying, a term used to describe a form of African American social discourse (Alim Samy & Smitherman, 2012; Lee, 1995; Smitherman, 1977). Botan and Smitherman (1991) explore the use of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in blue-collar work environments using mixed methods. The work of Heath (1983), Labov (1972), Ogbu (1999), Purcell-Gates (1995), and Rogers (2002a), used interviews to uncover the experiences of their participants based on literacy practices. As previously mentioned in this dissertation, the research exploring minority student experiences tends to take place in primary, elementary, and secondary settings, and excludes or minimally addresses teacher expectations or perceptions from the teachers’ perspective. Furthermore, past studies exploring African American students
tend to focus on the use of AAVE, argue for the acceptance of AAVE as a language, and find that African American children learn in environments where their culture is appreciated and celebrated (Delpit, 1995a; Jonsberg, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Smitherman, 1977, 2003; Young, 2004). What these studies or explorations do not address are ways to help students, particularly college students, navigate the mainstream world while the Ebonics Debate continues. Although the studies previously cited in this section focus on linguistic and contextual influence on language, they do not examine ways to help students negotiate two “worlds.” These studies “fight the good fight” so to speak, but what should be done when the fight is won or until the fight is won is not clear. To begin to consider the path educators can take while the linguists continue “the good fight” is what brings the researcher to this study. This study will examine faculty beliefs about their students’ literacy skills and begin a conversation that explores ways to help students, particularly African American college students, navigate the mainstream world or interpret social cues in a higher education context.

Unlike previous studies, this study seeks to understand how college faculty at a four-year institution recognize, assess, and address the ways that students interpret social cues in an environment where many of the students arrive with limited exposure to the codes of power that govern the environment. Similar qualitative studies such as Delpit (1995a), Purcell-Gates (1995), and Rogers (2002a), explore student experiences and tend to do so with students at the primary and secondary level. In addition, such studies tend to focus on Discourse, and explore context as it functions through Discourse. Also, such studies tend to argue that all modes of D/discourse should be valued. Those studies that explore the experiences of students in higher education contexts do so mainly through quantitative methods. In addition, the experiences of faculty in the quantitative higher education studies are filtered through the experiences of
students. This dissertation study seeks to use qualitative methods and focus on faculty. Chapter 3 will provide more depth concerning the specific methodology used in this study.

**Qualitative Studies**

Discourse analysis is a reoccurring research methodology in the literature surveyed for this study. This section will explore studies where discourse analysis was used. In this study, critical discourse analysis will be used as a way to analyze the data collected from faculty interviews and faculty responses to vignettes. In addition, this section will also discuss the use of interviews and vignettes, which allows this study to add a new piece, methodologically, to the existing literacy research. The use of a discourse analysis can be used with observation or artifacts gathered in a study. It is difficult to observe the interaction between faculty and student that is of concern in this study.

**Critical Discourse Analysis**

A discourse analysis can be used to analyze conversation (Florio-Ruane & Morrell, 2004) and written text (Goldman & Wiley, 2004). The focus of a CDA is to explore “how language as a cultural tool mediates relationships of power and privilege in social interactions, and bodies of knowledge” (Rogers, 2002b, p. 251). Florio-Ruane and Morrell (2004) explore the use of discourse analysis in instructional conversation as a way to “obtain insight into what people believe and how they negotiate, construct, and reconstruct their beliefs” (p. 93). Morrell (2002) used CDA to investigate the use of hip-hop to promote academic literacy with urban youth. Studies of discourse focus on the connection between knowledge and power (Delpit,
1995a, 1995b; Gee, 1989a, 1989b, 1998, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Young, 2004). Studies that employ discourse analysis tend to fall into two major categories: [1] they seek to understand the connection between knowledge, power, student success, and advocacy through family literacy (Heath, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Rogers, 2002a, 2002b) and [2] they seek to understand the discourse used and privileged in the elementary and secondary classroom and its impact on the success of students whose home language is other than that privileged in the classroom (Gee, 2011; Gee & Green, 1998; Gutierrez et al. 1995). The use of discourse analysis is not typically used in higher education classroom settings or to analyze responses to interview questions as it will be used in this study. This methodological choice was made because of the alignment between the goal of discourse analysis as a tool that explores language and relationships of power in social interactions (Rogers, 2002a, 2002b). This will provide a means of analyzing the data gathered from the interviews and vignettes.

Rogers (2002a) conducted a CDA when exploring the “literate lives of a poor, urban minority family as they managed (and are managed by) the various discursive contexts of their lives” (p. 248). Rogers’s (2002a) study explored the mismatch between personal literacies and institutional literacies, much like this study. Rogers (2002a) discovered that the mismatch between family literacy and institutional literacies might leave families vulnerable when attempting to negotiate services and advocate for their children. This data is similar to the work of Purcell-Gates (1995) who also examined the differences and effects of poor family literacy practices. Both Rogers (2002a) and Purcell-Gates (1995) acted on behalf of the participants in their studies or acted as advocates as the participants tried to secure services from an educational context for their children. Rogers (2002a) questioned if her presence in a
meeting between her participants and the school board actually hurt her participants. This dissertation study will not attempt to mediate between the instructor and student. Also, the researcher is not posing as an expert who will or can sanction the instructors’ actions. The researcher is neither a participant nor observer. The researcher is a recorder of information for analysis.

Gutierrez et al. (1995) explore the classroom as a socially constructed space and the impact that this social construction has on language (script) through a discourse analysis of language used in the classroom by both the teacher and students. Specifically, the difference between the decontextualized or monologic script used by the teacher and the contextualized or counterscript developed and used by the students is highlighted. Gutierrez et al. (1995) coined the term “third space” to describe the place where authentic communication happens or “the two scripts intersect” in a classroom between students and teacher (p. 446). The study noted that classroom teachers typically use formal academic language, which may actually intimidate students instead of act as a model for “appropriate” language use. What Gutierrez et al. (1995) highlight in this study is the explicit nature of the teachers’ instruction. For example, when a teacher was leading a current events activity, the teacher modeled the language, physical activity (raising hands and waiting to be acknowledged), and even thinking that was expected. Applying Gee’s (1989a) idea of apprenticeship to the idea of a safe “third space” for two scripts to intersect, might lead one to expect the teacher simply to act out his or her expectations. When a student does not raise his or her hand and wait to be acknowledged before speaking, the teacher may simply move on to a student who is demonstrating the expectation appropriately. This type of action may leave the student unsure about exactly what he or she had done wrong because the student may not have interpreted the teacher’s actions in the same
way (i.e., I did not raise my hand and wait to be called on; therefore, the teacher recognized another student). A student may interpret the teacher’s action as, the teacher does not like me, and so he or she called on another student who he or she likes better.

Young (2004) made observations of language use that may be considered an analysis of discourse in theory. He primarily used the writing of an African American male student and his participation in class discussions as a point of analysis of discourse. The conclusion of Young’s (2004) interaction with this student leads to the very work that this dissertation study seeks to examine and that is teacher-student interaction in higher education contexts and how what teachers implicitly allow in the classroom may impact students.

In Young’s (2004) examination of the language of an African American male student in a freshman composition class, he sought to identify the connection between language, power, and culture and student success in environments where mainstream discourse is dominant (and expected). Young was interested in discovering if the student would be more successful in his class if he did not feel intimidated by what Gutierrez et al. (1995) call teacher script. Essentially, Young (2004) was attempting to create the third space that Gutierrez et al. (1995) examined in their study of language in the classroom.

A young male African American student enrolled in Young’s course was encouraged to use AAVE in class and in writing essays. Young (2004) considered the work of Campbell (1997), Delpit (1995a), Gilyard (1999), and Smitherman (1977, 1995, 2003) when deciding to encourage the use of AAVE and when reflecting on the possible implications that this decision had on the student, the other students in the class, and his own teaching practices. What Young (2004) found was that the African American male student did show increased confidence in his writing ability, and the other (non-African American) students felt that their writing was not as
interesting because they did not use AAVE (Young, 2004). However, Young (2004) reported that the African American male student who he encouraged to write in his own language (AAVE) was still at the school five (5) years later. Young (2004) wondered if he had hurt the student more than helped him. Young (2004) questioned if he had adequately prepared him for communicating in mainstream contexts. Although Young (2004) could not determine either definitively, he did provide a start to a rich discussion and possibly a point of consideration for future studies.

The qualitative studies that examine classroom culture, language use in the classroom, and student teacher interactions employed an analysis of discourse of some sort. Because the focus was more so on language in use, the discourse analysis coupled with a review of artifacts and observation was beneficial. This study seeks to move beyond the examination of tangible artifacts and displays such as language in use, but is more interested in the student-teacher interaction as a means of socializing students and how teachers think they are meeting this need. The apprentice approach is just not enough in some settings, especially when students’ primary mode of socialization has been in environments where mainstream discourse is not privileged.

Research Related to Qualitative Data Collection Methodology

This section explores the research related to qualitative data collection. Specifically, research related to the main data points for this study (interview and vignettes) is explored. This section provides support for the methodological choices made for this study.
Interviews

Interviews are commonly used in qualitative studies (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam et al, 2002; Seidman, 2005). Earlier in this chapter, research studies that used interviews were discussed (Gutierrez et al., 1995; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Rogers, 2002a). Gutierrez et al. (1995) and Rogers (2002a) used interviews in addition to discourse analysis. Interviews may be used to generate a text for analysis (Rogers, 2002a). This study used the interview to generate a text that was analyzed using a critical discourse analysis similar to Rogers (2002a) and Purcell-Gates (1995). Chapter 3 of this dissertation provides detail regarding the use of interviews; therefore, this study is situated within qualitative studies in the field of literacy.

Vignettes

The use of vignettes allows a researcher to assess attitudes about sensitive cultural phenomena (Schoenberg & Ravdal, 1999). Also, educators use vignettes to illustrate or reproduce classroom situations (Rainey & Moje, 2012). Vignettes are common in behavioral science research where cognitive processes are being evaluated (Ganong & Coleman, 2006; Schoenberg & Ravdal, 1999). Moje (2012) uses vignettes to introduce or illustrate socially just pedagogy and interactions between a student and teacher. Similar to Moje (2012), this study uses vignettes to present the type of student-teacher interaction that is difficult to observe. Furthermore, like the behavior sciences (Ganong & Coleman, 2006), this study presents the reader with a list of choices (forced response) representing optional responses to the situation being illustrated in the vignette.
Ganong and Coleman (2006) used multiple segment factorial vignettes (MSFV). The MSFV is similar to factorial vignette design as it connects “elements of experimental designs and probability sampling with the inductive, exploratory approach of qualitative sampling” (Ganong & Coleman, p. 455, 2006). In a MSFV, elements of the vignette are changed and introduced to the participant in segments. The researcher controls the time and sequence of how each segment is introduced and records the participants’ responses. The data is then analyzed using quantitative analysis. Each new segment is coded and the participants’ responses are aligned to the code. This is similar to a content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Unlike Ganong and Coleman (2006), this study will tally and report the responses as percentages (Schoenberg & Ravdal, 1999). Furthermore, the elements of the vignette will not be changed or be presented to the participant in segments.

There are a massive number of quantitative studies in higher education that begin to explore social literacy. Quantitative methodology tends to be favored for larger studies because they allow a researcher to expand the pool of possible participants. Higher education research tends to favor the survey as a method for collection of data on experiences in college. In addition, a researcher may use data sets instead of personally developing or sending out a survey. This study did not take a quantitative approach to data collection because it [1] sought to explore this idea from the perspectives of a smaller pool of participants and [2] sought to explore the perspectives in a detail than would have been allowed by quantitative approaches to data collection. The use of quantitative methodology would not have allowed the in-depth discussions to take place that happened in this study.
Chapter 2 Summary

This chapter provided a review of literature that explores theoretical and methodological research, which helps to frame this dissertation study as one appropriately situated in the field of literacy. Specifically, gaps in literacy research and literature related to college faculty, the first year college student and implications for literacy was reviewed. Theories related to reading were also explored in this chapter. Research related to methodology used in studies examining student experiences and higher education contexts were provided to help support the methodological choices for this study, which will be presented in Chapter 3.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research methodology that was employed to examine [1] faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and [2] how faculty members teach students to interpret (read) social cues as they relate to higher education contexts. This study used critical qualitative methods and collected data at three points: interview, responses to vignettes, and true or false questions. Data were analyzed using a critical lens and employing elements of a critical discourse analysis for all instruments. This chapter presents a description of the context of the study, research design, methodology and data collection, and analysis. In addition, the full research instruments are also provided in the appendices of this dissertation.

Context of the Study

The research site is a four-year public, urban, minority-serving institution. Minority-serving institutions (MSIs) are defined as postsecondary institutions that enroll a high number of minority students and account for twenty-three percent of postsecondary institutions (O’Brien & Zudak, 1998). Although the university has a high population of transfer students, the institution has developed strategic plans to assist in the recruitment of first-time, full-time freshmen. Many of the first-time, full-time freshmen come from the local public school
system, which is one the largest districts in the state. In addition, the population of students is diverse in regard to social class. During the fall 2013 semester, the study site included in its mission statement an interest in providing “access to higher education for students of diverse backgrounds and educational needs, fosters intellectual development and success of its student population through a rigorous, positive, and transformative educational experience.” In the fall 2013 semester, the enrollment at the research site was between 4,000 to 4,340 students. Of the students enrolled, 3,307 were full-time. Full-time in-state undergraduate tuition (based on 15 credit hour enrollment) was $5,563.00.

This study focused on faculty who teach the 1000-level general education courses. The median class size is 20 students per section. A complete overview of faculty will be provided in the next section, and in the section following faculty, a more detailed exploration of the students who attend this university will be provided.

Before describing the demographics of the faculty and students at the research site, a brief point of clarity in regard to language used by the site to describe ethnicity is necessary. This study focused on faculty and is not restricted by ethnicity; however, the student population that the study participants were asked to consider was articulated as ‘first-time, full-time, African American freshmen.’ Throughout this dissertation, African American has been used to describe ethnicity. The research site uses ‘Black.’ It is not clear if ‘Black’ only includes African Americans or includes Africans. What is clear is that ‘Black’ excludes White; therefore, in the following section, ‘Black’ will be used because it is consistent with the way data are reported at the research site. This language does not alter any parts of the study because, again, faculty participants are not limited by ethnicity. This is simply a point of clarity as the language does change from ‘African American’ to ‘Black’ in parts of this chapter.
This study interviewed seven full-time, tenured college faculty members in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) who teach 1000-level general education courses that serve first-time, full-time freshmen at a MSI located in an urban neighborhood in a Midwestern city. A discussion of the participants is provided in the overview of participants section in this chapter. As with the data reported on the student population, the faculty information will reflect data provided by the fall 2013 university fact book (accessible online via the university website). Faculty data reported in the university fact book that was released in the spring 2014 semester reflects the latest published figures, which is from the fall 2013 data collection cycle. College of Arts and Sciences faculty account for 64% of the 343 full-time faculty members employed at the study site during the fall 2011 semester. This data was not included in the fall 2013 fact book. Also not included in the 2013-2014 university fact book is information on racial makeup of faculty. This information is presented in relation to academic rank. It is not clear why only female and Hispanic are represented. Therefore, the fall 2011 data is presented to help identify more faculty characteristics along with the faculty data for fall 2013. Table 1 and Table 2 illustrate both sets of data. Consistent with the data reported for the students who attend the study institution, 50% of the full-time faculty members at the university are Black. Neither the university nor the National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) publishes data reflecting the ethnic breakdown per academic college.
Table 1

Fall 2011 Full-Time Faculty by Ethnicity (N = 343)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pac.Isl.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

Fall 2013 Full-Time Faculty by Academic Rank (N = 420)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Rank</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% Female</th>
<th>% Black</th>
<th>% Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Prof.</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Prof.</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Lecture</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Faculty</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students Who Attend

Data reported in this section reflects information provided by the university fact book (accessible online via the university website) that was released for the fall 2013 semester. Table 3 and Table 4 provide a breakdown of the population of full-time enrolled (FTE) first-time, full-time undergraduate students (in-state) by age and ethnicity.

Of the total number of in-state undergraduates who attend the study site, Blacks account for 51% of the total number of first-time, full-time, freshmen. First-time, full-time, students in general account for 82% of the total undergraduate population enrolled during the fall 2013 semester. This is an increase from previous semesters. The institution serves a large minority population with a large percentage of the students being Black undergraduates between the ages of 18-24 years old. Research regarding higher education reveals that students within this age group typically enter college for the purpose of “identity development and intimacy formation” (Kasworm, 1990, p. 345). The faculty teaching these students should consider the idea that the largest population of students attending college at this institution may need assistance with forming their identities and building relationships. As will be revealed in Chapter 5, age and the idea that older students are better prepared and more serious than younger students was consistent in faculty members’ perceptions of students. It is noteworthy to consider that the university became a residential campus in 1995 when the only residence facility was opened. Until that time, the university was a commuter campus. The participants for this study were faculty during the time when the campus was a commuter campus that served a larger population of nontraditional students.
Table 3

Fall 2013 Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Undergraduate In-State Students by Ethnicity
(N = 225[82%])

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pac.Isl.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4

Fall 2013 Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Undergraduate In-State Students by Age
(N = 225[82%])

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-21</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>No data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>No data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-Over</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>No data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As will be revealed in Chapter 4 when data analysis is discussed, the participants often use the nontraditional population or older students as a measure of the more current traditional undergraduate student.

Participant Overview

In this section, a brief introduction of each participant, referred to by a pseudonym, is provided. This study used purposeful sampling, which is defined as “selecting particular persons, events, or settings for the important information they provide” (Martella, Nelson, Morgan, & Marchand-Martella, 2013). To have participated in this study, participants had to [1] be tenured and [2] currently teach or have taught, within the last academic year, a 1000-level general education course that served first-time, full-time freshmen. The goal here is to introduce the participants so that the data that will be analyzed in Chapter 4 can be contextualized based on demographics and personal experiences. All overviews of participant data presented in this section and in Chapter 4 are organized in alphabetical order and not in the order that the participants were interviewed.

Brian

Brian is an African American male Associate Professor of history who is originally from an urban city in the Midwest. He falls into the 31-40 age group. His undergraduate experience was at a research university located in the Midwest. Brian has been employed at the university for eight years. He wanted to return “home” to teach. He said, “I’m from ______ so when a job opened up here in the city, I took advantage of an opportunity and applied so one of my big things is that I always wanted to teach at home. Teach people who had similar
backgrounds than I had growing up.” From that comment, Brian was asked to describe what he meant by “Teach people who had similar backgrounds that I had growing up.” Brian revealed that his mother attained an undergraduate degree right before he completed his undergraduate education. He still identifies with first-generation students. Brian uses “we” when discussing students and often refers to having a responsibility for moving his race forward in his responses. Brian reports that this task is the responsibility of both himself and his students.

Charlene

Charlene is an African American female Associate Professor of English who is originally from an urban city in the Midwest. She falls into the 51-60 age group. Her background is in journalism. Her undergraduate experience was at a research university also located in the Midwest. Charlene has been employed at the university for sixteen years. She arrived at the university at the suggestion of another professor with whom she worked on a project outside of an education setting. The setting is located just miles from the university. At the time, Charlene did not have permanent employment and stated that she knew little about the university at the time she applied.

Josephine

Josephine is an African born female African American Associate Professor of French who grew up in Europe. She falls into the 51-60 age group. She attended an urban, four-year public institution in the United States to receive a second undergraduate degree; however, she received her first undergraduate degree, Economics, abroad. Josephine has been employed at the university for twenty-one years. She sought employment at the university because she was
familiar with the culture, the quality of the courses, and the available mentorship for a young faculty member. She says that she experienced the environment first hand because she received her second undergraduate degree from the research-site. Both of her parents and grandparents have college degrees. She grew up in a different culture where collaboration was not common and the academic environment was competitive, which also did not encourage collaboration; therefore, she had minimal interaction with her peers.

Richard

Richard is a male African American Associate Professor of political science who is originally from an urban city in the Midwest. He falls into the 41-50 age group. His undergraduate experience was at a “large public university” located on the West coast. His graduate school experience was at a research university in the Midwest. Richard has been employed at the university for twenty-two years. He said that the university where he works was near where he was living and he wanted “to try out if I could teach or not.” His says his employment was “pretty much accidental.” He has a military background and “self-selected into the ROTC clique” as an undergraduate. He reports that he was interested in political science and was attracted to the faculty in his department in terms of “their diversity and diversity of thought…I just wanted to suck up whatever I could learn from them.” He states that if he had questions, he would visit professors during office hours and attend all of his major classes regularly. He did, however, share that in his non-political science classes, he did not attend class as regularly. His questions about reading assignments and why they were selected were born from curiosity and not confrontation. He describes students as “in process” or “transforming.” Richard also uses “we,” but to describe faculty and not race.
Susan

Susan is a female White Associate Professor of history. She falls into the 51-60 age group. She is a second-generation college student and both of her parents have college degrees. Her undergraduate experience was at a “small Catholic liberal arts college on the East coast that had about 4,000 students.” Susan noted that going to college was her “parents’ plan drummed into our head…college was the ticket into the middle class.” “My parents said to me at a young age that your grandfather left you $4,000. And you are not buying a car; you are going to college.” Susan has been employed at the university for eighteen years. When asked about her decision to either seek or accept employment at the university, Susan stated, “they offered a job. Because I was on the job market.”

Thelma

Thelma is a female African American Associate Professor of English who is originally from the South. She falls into the 41-50 age group. Her background is in literature. Her undergraduate experience was at a four-year public university located in the South. Thelma has been employed at the university fourteen years. She wanted to teach at either a Historical Black College/University [HBCU] or a Predominately Black Institution [PBI] and says, “I just wanted to work with Black and Brown students and working class students. I knew I could be most productive with them.” She says specifically sought employment at the current institution because she was familiar with notable faculty in the creative writing arm of the English
department, and she was familiar with the student body. Thelma says that she encourages students to use personal narrative and encourages students to be reflective.

William

William is a White male Associate Professor of history. He falls into the 61-70 age group. His undergraduate experience was at an “urban public school.” William has been employed at the university for eleven years. He said the university where he works was “the best location that was available” when he completed his program and “needed a job obviously.” He had three job offers but selected his current place of employment because he and his wife thought it was the best place to live out of all of the offers. Prior to accepting employment, William stated that he researched the university by going online and reviewing the catalog and speaking with faculty during the day-long interview. He stated, “It seemed very familiar to me because I had gone to an urban public school for my bachelor’s and master’s degrees. It just, you know, was pretty much like where I’d gone except the demographics were slightly different. Urban public university with all that implies.” William is a first-generation college graduate. His undergraduate experiences were described as having two parts. He attended college directly after high school at the age of eighteen, but did not complete. He returned to college at the age of forty-four and completed the undergraduate degree. He describes those two experiences as being very different. “First, I was pretty much the student. I was in awe of these people, and I felt sometimes, I felt pretty dumb. I wasn’t particularly vocal. Second time I was not in awe. I had a career. Loved being back in school the second time. Relationship with faculty was equal. Comfortable with voicing opinion.”
Framing the Study

The context of this research study has been established through the description of both the students who attend and the faculty who teach at the study site. In the following section, the research design will be examined.

Research Design

According to Polkinghorne (2005), “Qualitative research is an umbrella term under which a variety of research methods that use language are clustered” (p. 137). This study is qualitative in nature and critically analyzes faculty interactions with their students in and outside of the classroom by examining [1] faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and [2] how faculty members teach students to interpret (read) social cues as they relate to higher education contexts. A definition for ‘outside of the classroom’ has been established in the glossary that is available in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. This study is critical in nature; therefore, a critical qualitative methodology (CQM) was used and is further detailed in this section.

Qualitative research has been described, historically, as a means for exploring and reporting representations of “the Other” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), “In the colonial context, research becomes an objective way of representing the dark-skinned Other to the White world” (p. 1.). The context of this study is a four-year minority-serving institution located on the south side of an urban Midwestern city. Of those who are classified as first-time, full-time freshmen, 51% are Black, situating them in the definition of “the Other” provided by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) and also supporting the
decision to use qualitative methodology. About half of the faculty members who teach at this institution are not Black. Also, in regard to Denzin and Lincoln’s (2005) “White world,” the Black faculty may be considered tangential members of the “White world” based on their education and profession, which situates them on the inside.

Qualitative data assisted in the examination of [1] faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and [2] how faculty members teach students to interpret (read) social cues in higher education contexts. In addition, qualitative data allowed the researcher to identify characteristics that were consistent with faculty who [1] understand the possible implications for interpreting social cues, [2] understand the possible resulting social capital as critical to student success, and [3] provide students with instruction and opportunity to develop these skills. Because the sample size is small, generalizing about larger groups is not feasible at this point; however, this study does offer a starting point for further research. For this purpose, these characteristics will be discussed in Chapter 5 of this dissertation, recommendations for further research.

Merriam et al. (2002) discuss the purpose of qualitative data as to: “[1] understand processes, [2] describe poorly understood phenomena, [3] understand differences between stated and implemented policies or theories, and [4] discover thus far unspecified contextual variables” (p. 11). Specifically, this study had three points of data collection: a structured interview schedule, vignettes, and true or false questions. Participants were asked questions regarding how they perceived their students, viewed their role in helping students gain the necessary social skills to be successful in college and beyond, and managed or responded to their students’ interpretation of social cues. Furthermore, participants were asked to consider their role in helping students adapt socially to the college environment, how they reflect on
what they do in order to help students gain social skills, and how they reflect on their experiences with gaining the necessary social skills. This portion of the study’s design is similar to the Undergraduate Teaching Faculty: The 2010-2011 HERI Faculty Survey (Hurtado et al., 2012), that was described in Chapter 2 of this dissertation in that it asks participants to explicitly communicate their ideas about their interactions with students. This dissertation study seeks to understand the ways in which learning takes place both intentionally and unintentionally between students and faculty and communicates findings through all of the participants’ voices in an attempt to capture the rich discussions, ideas, and experiences of each faculty member. Therefore, specifically, this study employs critical qualitative methodology in its design.

Critical Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative methodology is the broad category that is used to describe this study’s design; however, this study applies a critical lens to the data. Therefore, the critical aspects of qualitative methodology were employed. Critical qualitative methodology (CQM) is defined as research that “uncovers, examines, and critiques the social, cultural, and psychological assumptions that structure and limit our ways of thinking and being in the world” (Merriam et al., 2002, p. 9). This methodology is aligned with the goal of this study in that this study seeks to examine the interaction between students and faculty from the perspective of the faculty but in a critical way. To examine something critically means to look beyond the surface and question the motivation and seek to understand the deeper meanings and messages communicated either explicitly or implicitly (Gee, 2007; McGregor, 2003; Rogers, 2002a, 2002b; Teo, 2000; van Dijk, 1993). However, to do so, a researcher must find a means to look
at and interact with the data in such a way that allows for the deeper meanings to surface. Furthermore, through an examination of literacy in the broad way it is defined in this study, at its core, this study seeks to examine the ways faculty perceive their students and how their perceptions may be influenced by the social and cultural assumptions that limit ways of thinking and being in the world (Merriam et al., 2002). This study employs critical qualitative methodology that borrows from critical discourse analysis to help the researcher to [1] interact with the data and [2] allow the deeper meanings to emerge.

**Critical Discourse Analysis**

A critical discourse analysis (CDA) “accounts for the relationships between discourse and social power” (van Dijk, 1996). Researchers who use CDA are interested in examining the structure or “properties of text and talk” that help reproduce power (Gee & Green, 1998; Rogers, 2002a, 2002b; van Dijk, 1993, 1996). This study used CDA in three ways: [1] to explore the ways knowledge is socially constructed and communicated in educational contexts (Gee & Green, 1998; Gee, 2007), [2] to investigate learning in social settings (Gee & Green, 1998), and [3] to uncover the deeper meanings communicated. Once all data were collected and themes emerged from the raw data, the researcher began the coding phase using the CDA method. CDA analyzes language-in-use, the patterns in talk, and provides researchers with the opportunity to analyze and explore discourse “as a meditational tactic to understanding and transforming these social relations” (Stevens, 2011, p. 188). Critical discourse analysis was selected as a means to code data because CDA considers the implications of social practices on status, power, and access to goods and services (Gee, 2007). Also, the CDA helps the researcher to tell “the story” that the data reveals, which is an extension from the basic
categories discovered during the open and cross-coding portions of the analysis (see Appendix C).

A CDA consists of transcriptions of speech and an analysis of its details (including but not limited to body language, intonation, and pauses) (Gee, 1999). The critical aspect of a discourse analysis allows the researcher to examine social practices in respect to its implications for “the distribution of social good, and power (e.g., how language in a job interview functions as a gate-keeping device, allowing some sorts of people access and denying it to others)” (Gee, 2004, p. 7). The way people write and speak is not arbitrary but purposeful (McGregor, 2003). CDA reveals that the way people speak, in this study, describe experiences, and respond to questions, is directly related to the way power is maintained and/or distributed and how people in a particular environment (higher education in this study) operate. To this end, Fairclough’s (2003) social activity approach to CDA is helpful in that it considers the purposeful use of language. CDA also allowed the researcher to question spoken text on a deeper level. Specifically, when conducting a CDA, the researcher questioned why the speaker used particular words and observed the speaker’s body language. For example, in Brian’s interview, his being from the same city where the study site is located and coming from a single-parent working class household influenced his choice to work at an MSI in the same city. He wanted to work with a specific population in a specific location that was similar to his personal experiences. Therefore, during the CDA, the researcher was able to unearth that his interactions with students are based on his own experiences and that the themes of race and background are deeper than the fact that the words “I am a black kid from ______” were used multiple times in his interview. Brian says, “That’s the way I was trained,” so his way of teaching is an extension of his training and “paying it forward” so to speak. The CDA allowed
the researcher to question why he kept using the words and how those words led to his use of other words that communicated the same sentiment (i.e. “The race moves forward…”). The researcher was able to identify a theme or pattern in the way that a participant responds to a question or scenario. In the instance of Brian, the theme/pattern of his responses focused on his feelings of responsibility to the race (African American), and because he feels that he has a responsibility to the race, he makes particular instructional choices that allow him to [1] model mainstream social literacy skills for his students and [2] fulfill his sense of personal responsibility to the race through his students’ success.

To conduct a study using a CDA as a method for analyzing data, the researcher must obtain a sample of text, which may be either oral or written in a natural setting. The text may either be obtained through observation of Discourse in use or a review of artifacts. The text is transcribed, coded, and analyzed. The CDA was used as a means to reduce the large amount of data into more manageable themes that communicate the deeper meaning. Open coding may be used to identify themes that emerge from the CDA (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

For this study, the text was obtained through structured interviews and open-ended responses to vignettes. Because the study context is higher education and environment impacts the way people speak and the words they decide to use (Delpit, 2002; Fairclough, 2003; Gee, 2001) the interviews took place at the study location, which has been identified as a four-year minority-serving institution, in order to get as accurate of a response as possible. Perhaps conducting the interviews at a local coffee shop may have set the stage for different responses. Conducting the interview in the very setting where the participants teach was a purposeful attempt to keep them in “character” so to speak. The interview questions and vignettes were designed by the researcher to model realistic examples of faculty-student interactions as they
occur at the study site. The verification process validated that the vignettes were realistic representations of actual interactions that faculty report having with their students at the site. Also, the verification process validated that the interview questions allow participants to reflect on their experiences at the study site. Because faculty from the study site who participated in the verification phase validated this alignment, the researcher expected to get responses that represent the type of Discourse that may be used at the study setting between faculty and students.

In addition to the CDA that was used to analyze the responses to the interviews and vignettes, this study also included a member check portion where the participant was asked to verify his or her responses. During the member check phase of the study, the researcher noted how the participant responded to seeing his or her own words, which is similar to the CDA reported in Purcell-Gates’s (1995) work. Furthermore, this study used a mixture of forced-choice and open-ended response vignettes as a second method of data collection. The CDA was used to analyze the responses to the open-ended vignettes. Although the responses to the forced-choice portion of the vignettes were tallied and reported in percentages, the researcher analyzed the response to see if the participants selected responses in the forced-choice section that are similar to their open-ended responses.

Because this study is a CQM that borrows from the CDA, it is necessary to resolve some of the tension that may have been created in the discussions of CQM and CDA. Specifically, the CDA is a sub-component of a CQM study. The reason this study is not a pure CDA is because this study is moving beyond “examining the structure or ‘properties of text and talk’ that help reproduce power” (Gee & Green, 1998; Rogers, 2002a, 2002b; van Dijk, 1993, 1996) and is more interested in “critiquing the social, cultural, and psychological assumptions
that structure and limit our ways of thinking and being in the world” (Merriam et al., 2002, p. 9). As used in this study, the CDA is simply a means for spending time with the data and making sense of such a robust amount of data.

Research Questions

To address the following research questions, this study employed critical qualitative methodology, which “critiques and challenges unequal distributions of power within social, economic, and political systems” (Sandlin, 2002, p. 371).

1. To what extent do college faculty members see literacy as a social practice?
2. What are college faculty members’ perceptions of the quality of their students’ social literacy skills?
3. In what ways do college faculty members respond to their students’ interpretation of social cues inside and outside of the classroom?
4. To what extent do college faculty members explicitly provide their students with opportunities to practice the social literacies necessary for success in college and beyond?
5. To what extent do college faculty members see their role as important in socializing their students to undergraduate culture?

Methodology

This section will examine the methodology as it relates to the procedures that were used in this study. Specifically, data collection and sampling will be described. During the data collection period, participants responded to twenty questions, including nine true or false
questions, and seven vignettes that addressed faculty perceptions of their students and their ideas about literacy and social capital in the following contexts: classroom, office, and instructional challenges. The interview included questions regarding teaching style and exposure to a variety of social situations. In the same session, after faculty members responded to the interview questions, they were asked to respond to the vignettes. The vignettes were useful for checking for consistency between the responses to the interview questions (e.g., Did the participants select responses to the vignettes that were similar to the way they described their interaction with students during the structured interview?).

Data Collection

Collection of data began during the fall 2013 semester immediately following approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) from the researcher’s institution. Participants also signed a consent form at the beginning of the interview session (see Appendix D). As previously stated, to ensure accuracy of findings, data collection was triangulated in the following ways: structured interview schedule, responses to true or false questions, and vignettes (Martella et al., 2013).

This study had four phases of data collection, which were initiated immediately after approval was received from the IRB at the study location. Phase I began with identifying the participants and concluded with a full transcription of all data. Data transcription and initial analysis occurred within one week of each session. Phase II was the member check phase of the study, which began after all data were transcribed. During phase I, the researcher scheduled the member check session with each participant. The member check phase of the study allowed the participant to review his/her responses with the researcher for validity (Creswell &
Miller, 2000; Hill, Knox, Thompson, Williams, Hess, & Ladany, 2005; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Rogers, 2002). Table 5 details the procedures for data collection in each phase of this study in the order that each step occurred within its respective phase. Each phase was completed before the next phase was started.

Table 5

Procedures for Data Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase I: Structured Interview Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Identify participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Schedule interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Conduct interviews [approximately 90 minutes in length].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Provide participant with consent form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Provide participant with a brief overview of the purpose of the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Schedule member check session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Provide participant with a copy of the structured interview schedule in case the participant would like to read the questions along with the researcher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Begin interview with basic information questions about the participant [Section I of questionnaire] [15-20 minutes].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Retrieve the interview questions at the conclusion of the interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. After the structured interview phase of the meeting is complete, begin vignette portion of the meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Provide participant with a copy of the vignette in case the participant would like to read along with the researcher [retrieve the vignette packet at the completion of the interview].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Thank participant for his/her time and participation, and remind the participant of the scheduled member check session.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The researcher began transcription and analysis within 48 hours of the session. The interviewer took 30 minutes immediately following the session to note any additional information about the session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase II: Member Check</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Provide participant with a summary of the responses to the questionnaire and vignettes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Ask participant to review and confirm the responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Invite participant to clarify the responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4: Ask participant if the response he/she provided during the initial meeting is still accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 5: Thank participant for his/her time and participation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Selection

Seven (7) tenured faculty members from the College of Arts and Sciences were interviewed, asked to respond to vignettes, and asked to validate their responses (member check). The sample selection was not limited by age, ethnicity, or gender, but purposeful sampling was employed. Purposeful sampling is defined as “selecting particular persons, events, or settings for the important information they provide” (Martella et al., 2013). The criteria for invitation to participate in this study were as follows: [1] faculty member must be tenured and [2] faculty member must teach or have taught, within the last academic year, a 1000-level general education course that served first-time, full-time freshmen.

Instrumentation

This study involved the use of three researcher-designed instruments, which are included in the appendices of this dissertation. This section examines the structured interview schedule, true or false questions, and vignette instruments that were used to collect data for this study. Sample question are provided. Each instrument is presented in the order that it was used in this study. For clarity, participants were asked the twenty interview questions first, and then asked to respond to the seven vignettes. This section also examines the trustworthiness, instrument verification procedure, and results. The instrument verification procedure took place before that actual study started. This allowed the researcher to adjust the instruments prior to the start of the study. The research questions (RQs) were aligned to each data point to
better illustrate how this study used the instruments to address each research question (see Table 6).

### Table 6

Research Question and Data Point Alignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQs</th>
<th>Data Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To what extent do college faculty members see literacy as a social practice?</td>
<td>Interview Questions 7-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What are college faculty members’ perceptions of the quality of their students’ social literacy skills?</td>
<td>Interview Question 1-6, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In what ways do college faculty members respond to their students’ interpretation of social cues inside and outside of the classroom?</td>
<td>Interview Question 11 Member Check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To what extent do college faculty members explicitly provide their students with opportunities to practice the social literacies necessary for success in college and beyond?</td>
<td>Vignettes 1-4 Member Check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To what extent do college faculty members see their role as important in socializing their students to undergraduate culture?</td>
<td>Interview Questions 12-20 Member Check</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Structured Interview Schedule

This study utilized a structured interview schedule during the first phase of data collection (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam et al., 2002; Molenaar, 1991; Seidman, 2005). The interview questions represent four of Patton’s (1990) six types of interview questions. These include experience/behavior questions, opinion/values...
questions, knowledge questions, and background/demographic questions. For example: How do you identify racially? and Discuss your undergraduate experiences in regard to your interaction with your instructors and peers are examples of questions from the research instrument that align to Patton’s background/demographic category. The structured interview schedule that was used in this study consisted of twenty questions. Nine of the twenty questions asked participants to respond with [1] true or false and [2] an explanation, which also served a means to triangulate the data. The nine true or false questions asked participants to reflect on their own behavior (i.e., When I call a colleague, I first ask if he or she is able to take my call before I begin talking. What makes you do this?). The follow-up questions built into those nine questions required the participant to reflect on his or her response. The researcher wanted to be sure to provide the participant with an opportunity to expand on a simple true- or-false response.

The standard interview schedule method of collecting data helped focus the researcher-participant interaction and make the most of each interview session. The structured interview schedule increased the productive nature of the interview but ensures the instrument is focused. The instrument was designed to gather data regarding faculty members’ perceptions and interactions with their students. The use of structured interviews in a qualitative study that sought to explore diverse and sensitive topics required the participant to respond to a series of questions that address the issue being explored without feeling personally indicted. In addition, the goal of this study was to explore and describe how faculty members perceive their interaction with their students in specific situations and not an opportunity to vent their frustrations. The practice of the interviewer asking the questions created a conversational situation that also worked to make the environment and participant more relaxed (Molenarr,
The researcher was able to ask the participant follow-up questions and for examples when necessary for clarity. The complete instrument is located in the Appendix A.

Responses to the structured interview schedule were analyzed using the CDA after all data had been open-coded individually and cross-coded all together to identify and collapse codes into codes that are more concise. The CDA was used to identify themes that emerged from the participants’ responses by analyzing the participant responses to each question. A complete description of analysis will be provided in the analysis section of this chapter.

**Vignette Response**

In addition to the structured interview schedule, this study used vignettes to collect data. Participants were asked to respond to seven vignettes that addressed faculty perceptions of their students and their ideas about literacy and social capital in the following contexts: classroom, office, and instructional challenges. Two of the seven vignettes were designed for the participant to provide an open-ended response. Five of the vignettes were forced-choice responses, but the researcher noted any additional commentary that participants provided.

The use of vignettes to elicit participant responses to social scenarios is a method that is commonly used in attitudinal research, behavioral science research, and healthcare research (Schoenberg & Ravdal, 1999). Vignettes have been used consistently in educational and behavioral science research to replicate realistic experiences in order to gauge beliefs and attitudes (Ganong & Coleman, 2006; Rainey & Moje, 2012; Rogers, 2002a; Schoenberg & Ravdal, 1999). Participants are given vignettes that are considered hypothetical scenarios and asked a series of semi-structured follow-up questions (Ganong & Coleman, 2006; Rainey &
Moje, 2012; Rogers, 2002a; Schoenberg & Ravdal, 1999). Table 7 is an example from this study (see Appendix B for the complete instrument).

Table 7
Sample Vignette

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette #1</th>
<th>How do you proceed?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Context- In the Classroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Jonathon, a student enrolled in your course,</td>
<td>A. You address his questions as quickly as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrives late to class after being absent.</td>
<td>to avoid further conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathon’s absences have exceeded the number</td>
<td>B. You tell Jonathon that you cannot address his question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allowed per the university attendance policy</td>
<td>now and that he is interrupting the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and his course work is suffering as a result of</td>
<td>C. You tell Jonathon that his lack of information is due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>his excessive and extended absences. As</td>
<td>to his absences and that he has to get the information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathon enters the classroom, in the middle of</td>
<td>from a classmate or wait until the class is over to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your lecture, he attempts to discuss his absences</td>
<td>ask questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and missing course work.</td>
<td>D. You tell Jonathon that he has missed too many classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and that he should withdraw from the course to save</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>his grade point average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. You refer Jonathon to the course syllabus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rogers (2002a) developed critical vignettes to help code the data collected from a qualitative study examining family literacy practices. Rainey and Moje (2012) used vignettes to replicate classroom experiences when describing ways teachers build insider knowledge through reading, writing, and thinking across disciplines. The distance that the hypothetical scenario creates may make the participant more relaxed. This approach provides a series of benefits that include [1] flexibility in the design of a research instrument, and [2] hypothetical situations that encourage the respondent to think beyond personal situations or experiences. Also, the vignette approach allows the researcher to recreate social situations that may be difficult to time and difficult to observe due to the consistent but sporadic occurrences. The
depersonalization creates a possible distance that may also help the respondent feel relaxed and be more forthcoming with information.

The vignettes used in this study were both forced-choice and open-ended response. The open-ended response section was analyzed using CDA. The forced-choice section was tallied and reported in percentages. The forced-choice responses range from representations of implicit, explicit, or passive responses to behavior. During the analysis of data, the researcher looked for a connection between the types of responses participants selected in the forced-choice section, where they may be able to disconnect more from the scenario, and the responses in the open-ended section and structured interview, where the participants may feel as if their response is more personal.

**Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is defined as validating the instrument to ensure that it is designed to collect data that addresses the research questions (Martell et al., 2013). In this study, a qualitative research design was employed to discover if faculty recognize, assess, and address the ways that students interpret social cues.

**Triangulation**

Triangulation of data collection was used to address issues of validity and to allow the researcher to “capture a more complete, holistic, and contextual portrayal of the unit [s] under study” (Jick, 1979, p. 603). This study gathered data through a structured interview schedule, which included both open-ended questions and true-false questions, and responses to vignettes.
The use of these three data points required participants to report their perceptions of their own and their students’ behaviors.

**Member Check**

Qualitative studies have been criticized for being subjective (see Armstrong, Davis, & Paulson, 2011; Creswell, 2009). The need to triangulate findings helps to ensure validity of data and explore possible differences in responses based on methodology (Duke & Mallette, 2011). As a standard practice in qualitative research, the participants are often included in the analysis portion of the data (i.e., Barbatis, 2010; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Rogers, 2002a). This study did not include the participants in the actual analysis of data. This study used the member check as a means of validation. Participants were provided a clean copy of the interview transcription, including vignette responses. The participants were asked to review and verify their responses. During the time that the participants were reviewing their responses, the researcher was silent but taking note of the participants’ responses to seeing his or her transcription. After participants completed the review and verified their responses, the researcher asked the participant if he or she had any additional information to provide based on his or her responses. At that time, participants were able to clarify or add to any response provided. Also, the participants were able to discuss their reaction to participating in this study.

Rogers (2002a) conducted a qualitative study that included member checking as a part of the procedures of her study. At each stage of analysis, Rogers (2002a) sought feedback from the participants to ensure that she was representing the participants’ words and experience accurately. Barbatis (2010) also conducted a study exploring the experience of students in a community college first year experience program. This study included a member check phase.
that occurred three weeks after each interview. The time line for the member check is important to [1] reduce the time lag between the interview and vignette response and the member check phase, and [2] explore possible themes that may emerge because of the member check and note the participants’ reaction to seeing their responses. Also, the participants may have had time to reflect on the questions and vignettes and notice changes to their responses to students.

**Instrument Verification**

To verify the strength of each instrument prior to use in the actual data collection phase, three faculty members, whose characteristics fit those of the faculty that participated in the actual study, employed at the study site tested each instrument. The purpose of the verification process was to identify the length of time that it might take to conduct the initial session, to test the usefulness of the interview questions, and to verify that the vignettes reflect realistic interactions between faculty and students at the study site (Henk, McKenna, & Conradi 2011). Of the three faculty members who participated in the verification process, one is tenure-track with five years of employment, and the other two have achieved tenure status with at least ten years of employment each. All three-faculty members hold the Ph.D., have conducted qualitative studies, have published in peer-reviewed journals, and have faculty rank in the College of Arts and Sciences.

As a result of the verification process, changes to the interview schedule were made. Specifically, the number of interview questions was reduced. Initially, participants were asked to provide a standard response of always, sometimes, or not at all. These response categories were problematic because [1] they did not always match the question and [2] participants were
most likely to respond ‘sometimes’ because it was easier to provide examples and sometimes
was a comfortable medium for the verification participants. To address this concern, the
interview questions were redesigned to ask participants a series of open-ended questions. They
were also asked questions about their own behavior. To those personal questions, participants
were prompted to answer true or false. The questions about their interaction with students
follow a more open-ended approach to allow for rich discussions. In addition, it was
determined that many of the questions were repetitive or rendered responses that were too
similar to determine any differences between questions. At one point, a verification participant
noticed the repetitive nature of the questions and voiced this revelation. To address this issue
in the instrument, similar questions were condensed. The verification process did not result in
changes to the vignettes. The verification process resulted in stronger instruments that provided
participants with opportunities to “tell their stories” in a structured format.

Analysis

Analysis of data took place at multiple points during the fall 2013 and spring 2014
semesters; this is reflected in the research design section of this chapter. To analyze the
participants’ responses, a critical discourse analysis was used. Critical discourse analysis
(CDA) has been a method for investigating “structural relationships of dominance,
discrimination, power and control when these are manifested in language” (Huckin, Andrus, &
Clary-Lemon, 2012, p. 107). Data were reviewed but not fully analyzed throughout the data
collection period of this study. Data for each participant were analyzed separately and then all
together. Open-coding of data from each participant was used first; then data from all
participants were cross-coded to collapse similar themes and name each code more consistently and accurately. This section will discuss analysis and coding for each data source.

As themes emerged, the responses were placed into categories according to commonalities. The following themes emerged: personal experiences/basic perceptions of self, basic perceptions of self as faculty, basic perceptions of faculty or peers, basic perceptions of students, basic perceptions about education or institution, and expectations of student abilities/skills/literacy. The goal of reporting data per participant is to ensure that false generalizations were not made and to report data as accurately as possible.

**Analysis of Interviews**

Participants responded to eleven open-ended questions. The structured interview questions were designed to elicit participants’ responses about their perceptions of students, perceptions of students’ literacy skills, and their perceived role in students’ social literacy skill development. The interview phase for this study began in November 2013, and concluded in December 2013. Each interview was audio recorded and lasted between an hour to an hour and a half depending on the participant. This means that the interviews were not stopped by the interviewer due to any time constraints. Each interview was fully transcribed within a week and open-coding began after each interview was transcribed.

In regard to the coding procedures, this study used open-coding during the first round of coding (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). According to Corbin and Strauss (1990), open coding is used to reduce data into distinct parts and ask questions about the ideas being studied through a compare and contrast of data. For this purpose, each interview was read once without coding. Then, the researcher read each interview while listening to the recording to make sure that the
transcription of data was accurate and any new ideas that emerged were noted. The goal of this was to become familiar with each interview and record any observations about the information. Then, each interview was read and statements or words that developed a pattern were highlighted. For example, in Brian’s interview, the following was found.

*Interview Question: Why did you seek employment at institution?*

1 Brian: Well uh, I’m from _______ so when a job opened up here in the city, I took advantage of an opportunity and applied um one of my big things is that I always wanted to teach at home. Teach people who had similar backgrounds than I had growing up and um this was really a prime spot for me to find myself.

*Additional Question for Clarity: When you say similar backgrounds, what do you mean?*

5 Brian: Well, you know working class kids from a single parent family on the south side of _________. black kid. And I went to high school in the area and I had friends in the area. So there is really a strong connection to be in an institution like this if not this place. When I was thinking about what I wanted to do with my life, I always wanted to come back to _________.

*Interview Question: Did you research the institution prior to accepting employment [location, student and faculty demographics]?*

1 Brian: Well a little. I scanned around when I was applying on the website. To see who taught where. I was familiar with student body already. But some of the faculty to see where they had got their degrees from, their racial makeup who taught what, who published what and where they had published.

(Transcript 11.26.13)

From Brian’s interview data, statements and words were highlighted, which appear in the above sample of his transcript, because they developed the pattern of background and race. Immediately after reading the interview without highlighting any content, each interview was read and listened to (audio) just to make sure that the transcription was accurate. Immediately after reading and listening to the audio, the interview was read and content was highlighted that appeared more than once. After the entire interview was read and words, phrases, and ideas
that appeared multiple times were highlighted, a day was taken away from the interview and the process was repeated with the other interviews. The day away from each interview was taken so that the interview could be reviewed again with fresh eyes. The goal of this was to see if anything had been missed during the first review of data and to try to limit inaccuracies due to fatigue or too much interaction with one piece of data. In addition, if different themes emerged from another data set, the other interviews could be reviewed to see if this theme was present but missed. After returning to the interview, the highlighted passages and words were read and similar words and passages were grouped. After this, the question was asked, “What is the overall message of this group of materials?” “What do they have in common?” The answers to these questions aided in the development of themes. To help facilitate and organize the open-coding procedure and themes, a chart was developed. Table 8 provides another example from Brian’s data.

Table 8
Example of Data Coding From Brian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Proactive Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m from _______ south side of _______.</td>
<td>strong connection</td>
<td>black kid</td>
<td>I was rather ill prepared to do that</td>
<td>I had an open relationship with a lot of my professors early on.</td>
<td>took advantage of an opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I always wanted to teach at home</td>
<td>When I was thinking about what I wanted to do with my life, I always wanted to come back to _______.</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>make up</td>
<td>I made it a point to go talk to my professors all the time and they seemed to be really open.</td>
<td>I would always make use of professor’s office hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I followed this procedure with the data generated from each interview. From the open-coding procedure, the following themes emerged. These data were further collapsed during the cross-coding phase.

- Race/Background
- Community
- Beliefs about students
- Behavior
- Preparation
- Sacrifice

Before the cross-coding phase of analysis, which consisted of looking at the themes that emerged from each participant’s data and identifying any consistency of themes across all participants’ data, the researcher listened to each interview again and read the transcripts while listening. This allowed the researcher to double check to see if anything emerged that might have been missed during the first round of coding. After all data were individually coded, the researcher started the cross-coding portion of the analysis.

After consistent themes were identified, the data were analyzed all together to begin identifying patterns across data sets and if any collapsing was needed. Considering Bogdan and Biklen’s (1998) descriptions of the types of codes that can emerge during the review of the data, it was determined that the types of codes that emerged were perspectives held by participants including their ways of thinking about people, situations, and contexts.

After the data were cross-coded and similar themes collapsed, the data were analyzed using a CDA. Gee’s (2011) building task questions helped guide the researcher’s thinking about the data (see Table 9). Gee (2011) introduces seven building tasks that can be used to
analyze language in a discourse analysis. The goal of the building tasks is to help researchers manage data and think deeply about the data. This study used these seven building tasks, while attaching a critical eye, to analyze and think about the language used by the participants and uncover how they use their language to build or maintain something in the environment. Gee (2011) provides (critical) discourse analysts with guiding questions to ask themselves during the analysis phase of a study using (critical) discourse analysis as a means of analyzing language. Table 9 provides, verbatim, each of the seven building tasks and the guiding questions that a researcher can use to guide the analysis (Gee, 2011).

Analysis of Vignettes

Responses to the nine true or false questions were tallied, and any additional comments were coded with the interview responses. The vignette responses were also tallied in the same way as the true or false questions, and the additional comments were also coded. These questions acted as a bit of a cross check of the open-end responses provided during the structured interview schedule. The questions are meant to replicate situations that may occur in a class setting and bring to life the interview questions. For example, vignette 1.A asked participants how they would respond to a student who interrupts instruction with a personal issue. The participants identified coming to class and arriving on time as an appropriate behavior. Vignette 1.A sought to almost test if their response to question 11. Simply put, because observing these social situations is difficult to impossible to time, the vignettes allowed participants to reflect on a situation, even if they say that they have not had the situation happen, and respond with a possible reaction. A participant who identified coming to class and arriving on time as an appropriate behavior or expectation and said that he or she would
### Table 9

**Gee’s Building Tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Task</th>
<th>Guiding Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Significance</td>
<td>“How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Practices (Activities)</td>
<td>“What practice (activity) or practices (activities) is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as going on)”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identities</td>
<td>“What identity or identities is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get other to recognize as operative)? What identity or identities is this piece of language attributing to others and how does this help the speaker or writer enact his or her own identity?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Relationships</td>
<td>“What sort of relationships or relationships is this piece of language seeking to enact with others (present or not)?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Politics (the distribution of social goods)</td>
<td>“What perspective on social goods is this piece of language communicating (i.e., what is being communicated as to what is taken to be “normal,” “right,” “good,” “correct,” “proper,” “appropriate,” “valuable,” “the ways things are,” “the way things ought to be,” “high status or low status,” “like me or not like me,” and so forth)?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Connections</td>
<td>“How does this piece of language connect or disconnect things; how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sign Systems and Knowledge</td>
<td>“How does this piece of language privilege or disprivilege specific sign systems (e.g., Spanish vs. English, technical language vs. everyday language, words vs. images, words vs. equations, etc.) or different ways of knowing and believing or claims to knowledge and belief (e.g., science vs. the Humanities, science vs. “common sense,” biology vs. “creation science”)?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

directly address a student who does not display this behavior but would not interrupt class time to do it, but then selected option A in the vignette section (which is A. You address his
questions as quickly as possible to avoid further conflict) might show an example of a misalignment between theory and practice. There is a gap between what they said they do and what they actually would do if faced with this issue.

Although each source was analyzed using the CDA, the vignettes responses were also tallied and reported in percentages. Because each vignette offered a different level of response (from implicit to explicit), each response was coded to uncover any emerging themes based on the percentages. The use of the CDA as a means for analyzing data collected for each instrument was an attempt to discover any inconsistencies in the responses. For example, when directly responding to an interview question, a participant may not have responded as candidly as he or she may respond to the hypothetical scenarios presented in the vignettes. For example, during the structured interview portion, when asked questions that related to addressing or managing student behavior, Thelma said that she uses body language and other more implicit ways to deal with students and their behavior. When responding to vignette 1.B, she selected a response that was more explicit. Specifically, she selected a response that is an example of an instructor verbally addressing a student’s behavior.

Overall, the methodology used in this study provided multiple ways for the researcher to interact with and think about the data. The use of the CDA as a means for analyzing the data allowed the underlying story to emerge. Just like instructors are encouraged to consider the whole student and the experiences that he or she brings to the classroom, this study allowed the whole instructor and the experiences that he or she brings to the classroom to emerge.
Analysis of True or False Questions

Similar to the vignettes, the true or false questions were tallied and reported in numbers. The goal of this set of questions, which were asked directly after the open-ended questions, was to [1] allow the participants to reflect on their own behavior when interacting with students, and [2] allow the researcher to identify any inconsistencies in the way the participants responded to the open-ended questions. Essentially, the purpose of this section of the structured interview was as a means of crosschecking the responses.

Chapter 3 Summary

Chapter 3 provided a description of the study context, research design, methodology, instrumentation, and means of data analysis that were used in this dissertation study. Also included in this chapter are samples of the actual instruments that were used to collect data. This study employed qualitative methodology in the form of a structured interview schedule, vignettes, and member check. Data for each instrument were analyzed using critical discourse analysis. The results and findings will be presented in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results that emerged from the data collection and analysis phases of this study as were detailed in Chapter 3. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that the data from this study were considered in multiple ways so as to drill down through a large amount of data to get at the deeper meanings and the multiple ways that the participants communicated their interactions with students. Figure 3 illustrates how data results will be presented.

Figure 3: Presentation of data results in Chapter 4.
Within the results section, the emerging themes are provided. The results of the eleven interview questions are provided one question at a time. Also, the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum that was introduced and described in Chapters 1 and 2 is applied in this chapter. The results from the nine true or false questions and the vignettes are tallied and presented. A summary of each participant’s responses is provided for each theme. Summaries of participant data are presented in alphabetical order by pseudonym to help ensure anonymity. In regard to data, this chapter is sequentially organized meaning that it describes the data as it emerged during the data collection phase and then later during the CDA phase.

As described in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, this study used qualitative methodology to examine [1] faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and [2] how faculty members teach students to interpret (read) social cues as they relate to higher education contexts. This study used critical qualitative methods and collected data at three points: interview, responses to vignettes, and true or false questions. Data were analyzed by borrowing from critical discourse analysis.

Procedure

Data from this study were analyzed borrowing from a CDA in multiple ways. Data from each point of collection (interviews, vignettes, and true or false questions) were analyzed separately and then analyzed across data points. First, individual participant data were analyzed to identify emerging themes. Then, all of the participants’ data were analyzed
to identify consistency of themes. At this point, similar themes were collapsed using more concise language.

Data Results from Interview Questions

When analyzing an oral text, Fairclough (2012) analyzes such text as a social activity and provides headings under which an analysis of text can be placed. Specifically, Fairclough (2012) provides genres, discourses, and style as ways people act, ways people represent, and ways of being in an environment respectively. When using critical discourse analysis as another way of thinking about the data in an attempt to unearth the deeper meaning revealed in the data, the researcher used Gee’s (2011) building tasks to think more about the data. As became evident, there are times when overlapping occurred and codes were collapsed.

Discourses or ways people represent is defined as “diverse representations of social life” (Fairclough, 2012). There may be a specific way that one is expected to represent as a student or faculty member at a Historically Black College/University and a different way that same student or faculty member is expected to represent at a Predominately White Institution (Fairclough, 2012). To represent accordingly, one has to use the appropriate language and interpret social cues. This was most evident in the basic perceptions of faculty or peers theme. Participants in this study used language similar to Gee’s (2011) description of “real Indians.” Gee (2011) provides a discussion of the language Native Americans used to be recognized by their kinsmen as being a “real Indian.” Particularly, the recognition work includes ways of “doing” and particular ways of acting. According to Gee (2011), “A ‘real Indian’ is not something one can simply be. Rather it is something that one becomes or
is in the doing (italics in the original) of it, that is, in the performance...If one does not continue to ‘practice’ being a ‘real Indian,’ one ceases to be one” (p. 24).

In the case of the participants of this study, they used language to be recognized, during the interview, as being qualified to provide information about students, (“What we do as teachers…” “I didn’t go to the top J school for nothing.” “Urban public university with all that implies.” “Obviously…”). By using Gee’s (2011) building tasks, the researcher was able to take a response and apply the building task questions in order to begin to uncover the deeper meaning being communicated. The building tasks and social activity analysis were more of a mental activity for the researcher. The following example will illustrate how the building tasks were used. This process was used to drive the researcher’s thinking about the data. Therefore, when reviewing the analysis per interview question and findings per research question, it will be clear how the analysis of the responses was shaped. To help illustrate, a piece of an interview from Brian will be shared and followed by a demonstration of how the building tasks were applied (see Table 10).

Participant: Brian

Interview Question 10: In what ways do you help students understand how their communication skills impact how they are perceived by others?

Response: I always talk about it. I mean that is how I was raised. I was trained that way. I train my students that same way. If they are successful in their academic careers and they are successful in their professional careers, the race moves forward. We keep the line moving. I talk about that all the time. We have to keep the line moving. I always tell them, I always mention in passing about books they should read. I tell them, well this is a book, write this down you need to read this book. The story that I use is when you are all CEOs, COOs, and CFOs of these large corporations and you are at a dinner party and you say I remember Richard Wright wrote the Native Son and you know and you start talking about these things you remember, Dr. ______ told me that all people in the know should read it. So keeps the line moving.
Table 10
Applying Gee’s Building Tasks to Brian’s Interview Response to Interview Question 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Task</th>
<th>Guiding Question</th>
<th>Researcher Response to Guiding Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Significance</td>
<td>“How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways?”</td>
<td>Brian is aligning professional and academic success to communication skills and specific cultural knowledge. He is also aligning cultural capital [books] to upward mobility. In his response, he is explicitly telling students that to know particular information (Richard Wright wrote <em>Native Son</em>) and being able to talk about it in social environments is significant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Practices (Activities)</td>
<td>“What practice (activity) or practices (activities) is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as going on)?”</td>
<td>Brian explicitly tells students to write things down and take note of specific information for later use. He is also using this in the classroom where he is being recognized as an authority or someone who has mastered Discourse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identities</td>
<td>“What identity or identities is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get other to recognize as operative)? What identity or identities is this piece of language attributing to others and how does this help the speaker or writer enact his or her own identity?”</td>
<td>Brian is enacting his identity as teacher/authority or giver of knowledge. He is also enacting his identity of elder as in passing down information for the progression of the race.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Relationships</td>
<td>“What sort of relationships or relationships is this piece of language seeking to enact with others (present or not)?”</td>
<td>Brian is enacting a relationship with other African American academics, not present, and a relationship with his African American students, present.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued on following page)
Table 10 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Task</th>
<th>Guiding Question</th>
<th>Researcher Response to Guiding Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Politics (the distribution of social goods)</td>
<td>“What perspective on social goods is this piece of language communicating (i.e., what is being communicated as to what is taken to be “normal,” “right,” “good,” “correct,” “proper,” “appropriate,” “valuable,” “the ways things are,” “the way things ought to be,” “high status or low status,” “like me or not like me,” and so forth)?”</td>
<td>Brian is communicating that in social-professional settings such as dinner parties, it is common for the conversation to range from personal to academic discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Connections</td>
<td>“How does this piece of language connect or disconnect things; how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another?”</td>
<td>This language connects Brian to his students and connects his students to the larger professional society. By explicitly telling them to write certain things down, that may have little to do with his discipline (Brian is a history professor and <em>Native Son</em> is a piece of literature that is most likely taught in English), Brian is encouraging students to connect the dots between what they are learning in college and their future professional lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sign Systems and Knowledge</td>
<td>“How does this piece of language privilege or disprivilege specific sign systems (e.g., Spanish vs. English, technical language vs. everyday language, words vs. images, words vs. equations, etc.) or different ways of knowing and believing or claims to knowledge and belief (e.g., science vs. the humanities, science vs. “common sense,” biology vs. “creation science”)?”</td>
<td>In his example, Brian privileges academic ways of talking (i.e., talking about literature over dinner; something that may be considered a middle-class activity or value). Brian also privileges African American literature. The tone of Brian’s entire interview has been about “moving the race forward” and “keeping the line moving” so his example is not off base from his overall tone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11 identifies the themes that emerged when analyzing the data during cross coding. These emerging themes have been aligned to Fairclough’s (2012) headings to help illustrate the type of data represented in each code.

Table 11
Alignment between Emerging Themes and Fairclough’s Social Activity Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emerging Themes</th>
<th>Fairclough Social Activity Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic perceptions of self as faculty</td>
<td>Discourse/ Ways People Represent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic perceptions of faculty or peers</td>
<td>Genres/Ways People Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic perceptions of students/ basic perceptions about education or institution</td>
<td>Genres/ Ways People Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations of student abilities/skills/literacy</td>
<td>Style/ Ways of Being in an environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 shows how the language that is used to represent a particular theme communicates something specific in a particular social activity. Genres or ways people act is defined as “diverse ways of (inter) acting in their specifically semiotic aspect” (Fairclough, 2012). An example that Fairclough (2012) provides is that people in a particular meeting, organizations, and in particular print outlets (news and books) use language in specific ways. This way of being was most aligned to the basic perceptions of faculty or peers theme. Participants thought about how they interacted with students, but
they also thought about how their faculty peers interact with students. For example, Brian says that some of his faculty peers take a patriarchal approach to teaching. More than a few participants made mention that the students at their institution have “issues” or are not like the students at the big universities. By saying that students are different in one setting and the difference is viewed as deficient, might the participants represent college expectations in a particular way based on this difference? In this instance, language is used in a specific way to describe how people act.

Data Results from True or False Interview Questions [Questions 12-20]

Table 12 provides a summary of responses from all participants for the nine true or false questions. The data is presented in both percentage and raw numbers. For question 17, one participant was not able to select either true or false, but insisted on sometimes and offered the following, “It’s neither. It’s less the place, so it would be true, but it would be more false. The relationship building outside of class is probably more important.” Questions 12-16 required the participants to reflect on their own behavior. All of the participants responded true to questions 13, 14, and 16. The only question that required personal reflection in which the participants responded false was question 15 where they were asked if they interrupt conversations. Questions 17-20 required the participants to reflect on their students’ behavior. For those questions, the responses were split between true, false for all questions except 17, and 19.
Data Results from the Vignettes

The vignettes represent social situations that might occur in the classroom and/or in an instructor’s office. Also represented in the vignettes is an instructional challenge where a

Table 12

Summary of Data Results from Questions 12-20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. When I call a colleague, I first ask if he or she is able to take my call before I begin talking.</td>
<td>n=5</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(71%)</td>
<td>(29%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. When I see a colleague in the hall, I say hello even if I may not have been introduced.</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(100%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. When I see students on campus outside of class, I speak to them.</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(100%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I do not interrupt conversations.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I see building relationships with my students as positive and necessary for my students’ success.</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(100%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The classroom is the space for students to build relationships.</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n=1 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(86%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Students do not understand the consequences of their behavior in class.</td>
<td>n=4</td>
<td>n=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(57%)</td>
<td>(43%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Those students who display “appropriate” behavior, position themselves to gain access to opportunities.</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(86%)</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I have a responsibility to help my students build relationships.</td>
<td>n=4</td>
<td>n=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(57%)</td>
<td>(43%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
student challenges an instructor’s professionalism and an instance where an instructor would model the type of social literacies that are expected in the college and professional environment. Table 13 provides a tally of the responses from the social vignette portion of the interview session and the analysis of the responses per question. The numbers in this section will demonstrate that for some questions, the participants insisted on selecting two options.

Table 12 and Table 13 provide the results from participants’ responses to questions 12-20 and the vignette portion of the study. Data is presented in both raw numbers and percentages in an attempt to report the data, numerically, in multiple ways.

Emerging Themes

Data for this study were analyzed in part by using elements of a critical discourse analysis. Gee and Green (1998) discuss how discourse analysis has been used to explore how knowledge is socially constructed and communicated in educational settings. According to Gee and Green (1998), “By studying discursive activity, researchers have provided new insights into the complex and dynamic relationships among discourse, social practices, and learning” (p. 119). This study used critical discourse analysis to unearth the story told by each faculty member, which demonstrates how they interact with students and why they select those ways to interact with students. By using CDA in this way, the study employs elements of a CDA, but is not an actual CDA. The analysis reveals that personal experiences and perceptions of participants play a large part in the student-teacher interaction. Data are presented first per interview question, then per participant, per theme,
and finally per theme across participants. The means of presenting the analysis of data is aligned with the way that data were coded. Data findings are presented, for each research question, in the next section of this chapter.

The following outlines the themes that emerged from coding the interview data.

After the data were analyzed and coded, the data were cross-coded to illuminate the

Table 13
Data Results from Vignettes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignettes</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.A. Jonathon, a student enrolled in your course, arrives late to class after being absent. Jonathon’s absences have exceeded the number allowed per the university attendance policy and his course work is suffering as a result of his excessive and extended absences. As Jonathon enters the classroom, in the middle of your lecture, he attempts to discuss his absences and missing course work.</td>
<td></td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.B. You are returning student essays to students in your class. Anita receives her graded essay and immediately begins to loudly voice her anger, with the assessment of her writing, using inappropriate language.</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td>n=3</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td>n=3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.A. A student who has an issue with attendance and punctuality arrives at your office during your scheduled office hours to discuss his or her grade. The student asks questions about the requirements of an assignment that you have already discussed during class, on multiple times, and that you have provided the class in writing.</td>
<td>n=3</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n=4</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued on following page)
Table 13 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignettes</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.B. You are in your office during office hours and a student arrives to talk with you. During the conversation, the student tells you that you are not teaching the class “right,” do not return phone calls or email in a timely manner, and that you are not in your office when he or she tries to talk with you. You remember that you have received phone calls from this student after business hours or on days when you are not scheduled to be in your office. You also remember that this student emails you on the weekend multiple times demanding an immediate response, and that you have responded to the student.</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.A You were assigned a class days before the beginning of the semester. The late teaching assignment gives you little time to prepare. On the first day, you meet the students and discuss your policies and give them an overview of the course. You tell them that you do not have the syllabus prepared, but will have the syllabus ready to give them during the next class meeting, which is in two days. After class, an older student approaches your desk and tells you that you should take personal responsibility and that it does not look good for someone of your ethnicity to make excuses.

Open-ended responses

(continued on following page)
Table 13 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignettes</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.B. After teaching class, a student approaches you with a note. You take the note and read it in your office. In the note, the student shares that during lectures, you often say umm and that makes you look like you do not know what you are talking about and that you often look unprepared. The student shares that he or she is only trying to help you out because the class thinks you do not know what you are talking about.</td>
<td>n=11</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. You walk past a colleague’s office door. The door is open and you have a quick question. You notice that there is a student sitting in the office.</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

overarching themes and how they reveal themselves across participants. Furthermore, a tally and summary of responses for the nine true or false questions is provided. After the interview data, a summary of responses or tally for the responses to vignettes are presented. A summary per participant, per theme will also be provided.

**Interview Questions [Questions 1-11]**

Within this section, summative data from interview questions 1-11 is provided. Interview questions 1-11 were open-ended. Each question is presented with [1] an analysis of the data that emerged and [2] examples from the participants’ responses to support the analysis. The Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum is also applied to the responses to these
questions and included in the analysis. The Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum represents the ways in which these scholars approach teaching social literacy skills.

*Interview question#1: Describe to me the extent to which your students are serious and take personal responsibility for their education.*

The goal of this question was to identify, early in the interview, how instructors perceive their students’ willingness to accept responsibility for their education, which is considered an indicator of how serious a student is about his or her learning. Motivation and self-efficacy tend to be issues that haunt undergraduate classrooms (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Quaye et al., 2009). This is also a place where an instructor’s perception of a student can influence how the instructor interacts with the student. The responses ranged from laughter to instructors giving specific details about the ways students either do or do not take personal responsibility. Responses to this question ranged from narrative to perceived numbers. For example, some participants felt that high school does a poor job of making students responsible for their education. Other participants considered this question quantitatively, although the numbers they provided did not have any scholarly support. The following provides examples of the range of responses.

Charlene:  
[Laugh]. How much time we got? I guess that is kind of a mixed bag cause in some classes you get some who are exceedingly responsible and some aren’t, but it seems that they are often not prepared to navigate an environment of this type. A big transition from high school to college. In high school if you just show up a little bit you can still get a C. I guess a lot of schools don’t really want to flunk students out because it affects the amount of state aid and the money that the get so instead of emptying their rosters of students who are not doing well they just kind of push them along. And so when they get to this environment they are expected to be more responsible and work independently to a large degree. You get that syllabus on the first day and the schedule and the onus is on you he student to make sure those assignments are in and of high quality. And I find that some students are not used to that kind of self-discipline and regimentation. And don’t seem to care much about the quality of their work.
Richard: Probably 10% are serious enough to take personal responsibility. The other 90% don’t know exactly why they are here or the purpose or function of the academy, and we have not connected the dots for them on why they need to be serious about this.

What is also evident in each type of response is the idea that education has failed the student at some point along the way. So the student is irresponsible or not serious enough because at some point the educational system has not done its job; however, the educational system, for Charlene, does not include higher education. For Richard, college faculty members are responsible for helping students through the process of understanding the expectations of college. Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) calls for more explicit instruction; whereas, Gee (1989a, 1989b, 1998, 1999) calls for apprenticeships or more implicit instruction that is more theoretical than pragmatic. If these two participants were placed on the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum, Charlene would be more on the Gee side because, based on her response, she expects students to apprentice based on her behavior. She provides a syllabus and the expectation is that students will view that syllabus as a model of the type of writing and thinking that she expects. Richard, on the other hand, sees it as the instructor’s job to “connect the dots.” Although one might argue that this leads to an apprenticeship between the instructor and student, it is an explicit way of dealing with mismatched skills; therefore, Richard may lean more toward the Delpit side of the continuum.

Interview question #2: How well prepared do your students come to class?

The goal of this question was for participants to reflect on how well their students arrive to class prepared. The responses to this question were consistent. Participants tend to feel that students do not come to class prepared to participate in discussions or class
activities. Participants do not think students understand that reading the material before class is necessary for success during class. An interesting point that is made is that the participants have ideas about why students do not read the text prior to coming to class. Purchasing or affording the book was consistently named as a reason that students do not read. Again, poor instruction prior to arriving to college is also identified as a factor in why students do not meet college expectations. The following are examples from the responses.

Brian: I think they can do a much better job at doing that. I think coming into a university they can be ill prepared. Especially in the discipline that I teach, history. I think a lot of that comes from bad instruction. A lot of folks have really bad history teachers in high school and have anxiety about history with it being a system of dates and the like. So I think they are ill prepared for that, and I think a lot of college students I have run across really are not reading so they are just not prepared to the larger group when you have these battery of people who are prepared to participate in class I think but overall they are not reading for a number of reasons. I think the biggest one for me is that they cannot afford the books. Cannot afford the books and one of the things I had to teach myself when I switched majors was the value of reading the book before you go to class, and I think a lot of students really don’t value that as a strategy. The book fills in a lot of holes. Professors generally do not lecture straight out of the book so you miss a lot of things.

William: That’s a problem. The education they had does not serve them well. At least three or four good students. Their writing was excellent. Most struggle with basics.

Revisiting the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum, both Brian and William do not think that students have been prepared for the implicit expectations of college (i.e., purchasing books on one’s own and reading the assigned material before coming to class). Instructors, whether they know it or not, act as models for the type of preparation that is expected for each class meeting. An instructor may prepare for a lecture by reading the material, sometimes again, preparing written lecture notes, or preparing a lecture presentation. Even when the instructor does not have physical lecture material, the way that the instructor leads
the discussion about course materials speaks to some knowledge about the material that developed before arriving in the classroom. Therefore, for this item, William and Brian would be on the Gee end of the continuum because by their coming to class prepared to engage students, who have read the material, in a class discussion, they are allowing an apprentice-like relationship to develop with their students. In a perfect world, students would see the way that an instructor comes to class with knowledge, meaning that the instructor does not necessarily read the book during class, and is prepared to discuss the material. Susan, on the other hand, would be more on the Delpit end of the continuum. She discusses that students’ preparation is dependent on her. The following is an example of Susan’s response:

Susan: It depends on what’s going on in class. If I say there is an assignment due or having a reading. They generally do. Most will have done or tried to do the reading. If I don’t say there is something due, they have not read. That is not untypical of undergraduates. I did the same thing. I didn’t have three jobs and a child though. Different set of experiences.

If she tells students that there will be a quiz, students tend to read the material before coming to class. In this instance, Susan may be providing an example of the more explicit instruction that Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002) explores because she has to tell students explicitly there will a quiz in order for them to read the material prior to a class session. A Gee way of teaching would have the instructor less explicit (or saying, “Read the material because we will have a quiz next class session) but more implicit (or not saying anything to the students about the quiz but rather, as a teacher, coming to class having read the material and prepared to address questions).

*Interview question #3: Can you describe how your students take correction or directive?*
For this question, participant responses were either students do not respond well to correction or directive or they are receptive. The measure that participants used to determine the way students respond to correction or directive tended to be extreme. They felt that not responding well meant that the student acted belligerent. Also, participants noted various reasons why students respond in a particular way. Receiving feedback on class assignments was identified as an activity that may trigger a student response to correction or directive, and students not thinking that it is the role of a faculty member to correct them were identified as possible reasons why students might resist corrective feedback. What was not mentioned was correction or directive to behavior or displays of social literacy skills. What might be revealed in these responses is that faculty members do not offer correction in those instances. So the next question would be, so what do they do? The following are examples from the responses:

Brian: Hum.[pause] I think in the 8 years that I have been at _________ I have only had two problem students as far as taking criticisms and taking correction on exams and or papers. I do not have a lot of belligerent students when I correct them openly in class. Um so again, I guess I have been rather lucky. There is also a way in which you can give criticism without criticizing. You know a lot of my background, a lot of my life has been with team sports and I very much take the personae of coach when I try to teach someone something. There is a way you can criticize without demeaning them. I think that is the approach I try to take. Um again, I don’t have a lot of negative examples of them coming back on me.

Additional Probing Question: So what types of things have you had to address? What types of ways have you provided correction or directive?

Brian (cont.): Outside of the response to papers, conferences. I prefer the face-to-face. If there are a lot of issues on the paper instead of sitting there and destroying the entire paper, I just write ‘see me’ on there. It is easier to talk to someone about a significant issue. It is disheartening to get a paper back and there are a lot of red marks on it. You know, I prefer
the face-to-face. That way we can you know. I don’t do a lot of emailing or texting because I don’t like to type and stuff. For me it’s about personal connection and looking in someone’s eyes when you are trying to correct, when I am trying to teach them something. I think that is important. So that’s how I go about doing that.

Charlene: Oh ok. That’s a mixed bag too. Some students have a very mature attitude. Some don’t really want to be corrected. When they get back the papers that have a lot of corrections on them I see them kind of do this. Sort of turn it over. They don’t really scrutinize it and say oh that’s a comma splice, I won’t do that again. No intellectual curiosity to really look at the corrections and say ok. To look at each one and try to. I say like Kathleen McWhorter says to keep an error log of their own errors ok and so they know the kinds of mistakes that they make. We seem to want to be college degreed but not college educated. We do not want the depth of knowledge. Some students seem very angry because they thought they could write but they can’t. I am not lowering the bar. You are going to have to jump up and meet it. Some are defensive. Their arms are crossed, they look angry. I am no nonsense. I am tough at the start of the semester. I come off a little sterner than I really am. They know I mean business. No excuses. I am strict about phones in the classroom. The policies are laid out. They sign a contract saying that they received and understand the class policies. Generally underprepared to do college level writing. I try to be encouraging. I encourage them to go to tutoring. I tell them that college is an environment where everyone is invested in your success. All you need is the humility. Students do not attend office hours. The ones who are already doing B and A work come to see me. They come at the end.

Richard: Some are pretty good. Some it’s like water off a duck’s back. They don’t get the need, the necessity for the correction. I think part of this may be generational. Part of it may be cultural in the modern academy. If you give me a second I’ll explain that. So we have people who come in as administrators who try to overlay a cooperate model in the academy and it happens at a number of institutions, not just this one. There are administrators who try to employ a corporate model. The customer is always right. The students are not customers. Unfortunately, one of the tenets of that model is that the customer is always right. The other tenet is our students are customers. In the academy, both of those suppositions are incorrect. One, our students are not our customers, and our job as faculty is to make them wrong. So they’re bumping up against this belief that they’re the customer and they’re always right and so us giving them correction often falls on deaf ears because they don’t believe that’s our role.
With this question, participants limited their responses to the ways that students respond to feedback on their class work. The reasons why students respond in ways identified as inappropriate is the result of a misperception about their [students’] abilities and an overarching misperception about the role of college. Again, participants do not mention how they respond to the student whose behavior may need correcting. This made the vignettes, where the participants were given social situations where student behavior need to a response, more revealing.

*Interview question #4: Describe how your students sacrifice personal time to be successful.*

This question revealed the younger versus older student theme that appears to be constant across participants and is included in the perceptions of students’ code. Overall, participants see older students as being the ones who sacrifice personal time to be successful in school. For example, participants say that older students are balancing outside responsibilities such as family and employment while attending college. Participants say that older students sacrifice time with their family in order to complete schoolwork. Younger students are viewed as immature and not willing to make those types of sacrifices or not required to make those types of sacrifices because they are not balancing the same outside responsibilities. The following are examples from participant responses that speak to this idea:

**Josephine:** They do not sacrifice personal time. They do not have their priorities straight.

**Thelma:** Some spend time away from children. Many are working parents and married. Some freshmen have children. The freshman block classes may not be traditional [18 year-old students]. Cut hours at work. The younger students may not sacrifice personal time to be successful. They are developing those skills. The younger students with kids are
more likely. They do not understand time management. It links to the personal responsibility piece. They do not understand that college work demands more time and work. They do not understand that it is different from high school. They do not understand that personal issues do not result in excuse. They do not always communicate beforehand.

Additional Probing Question: Does this school’s culture actually support these negative behaviors?

Thelma (cont.): These students have certain lifestyles that are different from students at __________ or ___. We serve a different population. I let people bring children if they can sit quietly. I would rather the student be in class. Students’ priorities do not always result in success. There are times when I have to explicitly talk with students about the implications of their behavior and how it may be viewed by others in other contexts [job].

William Not sure younger students do that. The returning students tend to make significant sacrifice. They work around school schedules; childcare is an issue, and financial burden. The younger students do not make too many sacrifices. They have their cell phones, wear expensive shoes and clothes.

The responses to this question provide more evidence of the participants’ deficit ways of thinking about their students. Also, the responses show that the participants might prefer the older or nontraditional student over the younger more traditional student because based on their responses regarding acceptable student behavior and their expectations of students, the older or nontraditional student fit those descriptions.

Interview question #5: Describe the expectations or standards that you have for your students. Have you ever had to adjust your standards? In what ways?

For this question, all participants said that they do not adjust their standards and that their standards are high for all students. There is a belief that adjusting standards does students a disservice because the “world” will not adjust its standards. There is also a belief
that students will rise to the occasion. What was revealed is that the participants might adjust how they require students to demonstrate meeting their standards. Furthermore, transformation of students’ abilities is important in regard to standards. The following is an example from Richard’s response:

Richard: On the first day, the biggest expectation that I have for them is that on the last day they have been transformed. Education should be a transformative experience. I don’t know what they’re transformed into; I don’t really care. That’s not for me to say. But they engage in a process that leads to them thinking about something differently. That’s the biggest expectation that I have for them.

Additional probing question: So have you ever had to adjust your standards?

Richard (cont.): Adjust the standards? I think early on in my teaching career and this is obviously years ago, expecting them to read more and I’ve had to adjust that so that they read less, and different things, and read differently. I have had to teach several of my students “how” to read especially academic literature because they are not able to discriminate between how I read a journal article and how I read a piece of fiction.

Additional Probing Question: And so even though that is not typical of a political science class, you saw that need. What made you actually see a need and do something even though it was technically outside of your discipline?

Richard (cont.): I think it’s just my own drive in not being complicate in the big lie. That I come and I am the font of all wisdom. I thought out some facts and you regurgitate them on a test and we lie to each other and call that learning. I am not going to be complacent in that lie and call that learning because it’s not and so I made the choice, when I can, meet the students where they’re at.

Susan: Master the content. You want them to be able to say that they did not know much when they started and now they know something. Begin to think historically. Learn to critique. They can identify thesis of argument. Metacognition is important. Want students to build. Have to adjust ways I achieve standards every single class. Not the
Josephine: At the beginning of the semester, I lay out clearly what the expectations are. Language course is unlike other courses. Language learning takes practice and exposure. That is the first thing I really mention. I expect them to be in class every time it meets. The second major expectation is in terms of their working habits, work ethic. You have to be committed to doing the work. They are expected to spend 2 or 3 hours minimum per class meeting to do well in the class. I expect them to assess themselves on a regular basis. I do not adjust the expectations.

Participants tended to be on the Gee end of the continuum in regard to their responses to this question. The idea that students are transformed leads to an apprenticeship, which is clearly a Gee-like approach to literacy. Furthermore, the idea that transformation takes place is not specifically tied to content. As Susan says, “You want them to be able to say that they did not know much when they started and now they know something.” That “something” that they know may be content or behavior.

Interview question #6: How do you view your students’ abilities to meet your standards in general and for literacy specifically?

For this question, participants applied their students’ abilities to meet standards in regard to communication, which led nicely into the next question. This question provides an example of the types of ways participants respond to questions. The responses range from narrative, quantitative, and personal in nature. Also, responses to this question reveal something about the way that some participants view the institution and the types of students who attend. For example, Charlene says that students are capable, but questions their motivation. She also says that the “strong students” typically start college somewhere else, and she goes on to name some of the more prestigious Historically Black Colleges and
Universities. Does this mean that students who begin college as the first-time, full-time freshmen who are the focus of this study are not typically strong? The additional follow-up question was asked to address this response. Charlene’s response concluded that her perception of first-time, full-time freshmen is influenced much by her perception of the local public school system which is poor. Examples of responses are provided:

Charlene: See I think they can get themselves up to speed but my question is do they want to? A lot of whining about how nobody else around campus expected them to do what I expect in that class. They have to do a lot of remediation. Most of them need a lot of remediation to write at college level. I have to send people to the writing center constantly and I am available to help them too during office hours. And our students, to be fair, have a wide range of abilities. Sometimes there are students in the class who went away to Howard or Hampton or Xavier in New Orleans but a parent got sick and for whatever reason they had to come back to _____. And they are very strong students but maybe the tuition is not affordable anymore. And so I find that there are some strong students that are able to meet the expectations.

Additional probing question: But what about those students who start here where this is their first college experience?

Charlene (cont.): Oh Lord have mercy. Yeah. Lot of them have been kind of pushed through ____. They need a lot of grooming or attention. I won’t say hand holding because I don’t like to say it that way, but they are kind of starting at a disadvantage. Many of them.

Richard: Pretty much a bell-shaped curve. There’s going to be 10% that might not succeed. And nobody wants to hear this, especially at a PBI, they might be the students who do not need to be in college. Not every student needs to be in college. And there’s about 10% that will succeed, in spite of their best efforts to screw things up. And 80% in the middle. Meets standards in terms of where they’re at. Some are talented, gifted, and lazy. Some are not as talented and work really hard. So they sort of fall out of that middle space. In terms of literacy, at this level it’s such a difficult challenge. Because if they haven’t developed the skills associated with literacy before they get here, teaching it at this level is really difficult. Because you’re trying to
introduce subject matter and a skill to be able to interpret the subject matter and trying to teach those things simultaneously is difficult.

William: They are capable. The question is will they make the effort? They do not want to do the work. Unfortunately, we do not teach writing. I try to work with them as much as I can but I do not have the time or resources. If I can understand it I am interested in their ideas. Do the best you can. Writing is a process of revision. Most do not care. Once in a while someone does. Those who want to revise are those who got A- and B+. The student has to sit and talk about the paper. I try to stress the importance of reading. Reading gives different modes of expression. It increases vocabulary. Increasing vocabulary is the most important thing you can do. A lot of students are bright but do not have the language.

Overall, participants see their students as capable, but not necessarily motivated. The use of literacy in the question was for the purpose of nudging the participants to think about their ideas and even maybe their definition of literacy.

Interview question #7: Explain the level of importance that you place on students’ ability to communicate effectively.

All participants said that they see effective communication as necessary for student success. Communication was also viewed as necessary for future success in the job market. Participants tend to link communication across contexts. Charlene explicitly tells students that their marketability in the employment arena is linked to their communication skills. She even uses classroom exercises to teach this point. Thelma’s response also exemplified how she provides explicit instruction.

Charlene: That’s critical. Um, there’s nothing you can do if you can’t communicate effectively. You can’t get a job, especially when I teach that business writing. There is always a student in there who works in human resources. That’s what they do in for their livelihood. They say they get about 600 applicants for a position. Their initial job is to get that down to a more manageable number. So the cover letter with the typos and the grammatical errors and the resumes with the visual glitches; those go directly in the round file. I try to explain that to students. You may have the most perfect
professional experience for the job that you are applying for, but if you can’t present yourself well on paper you just not going to get the position. There was one year I was asked to review some resumes. There were a bunch of us faculty members asked to sit in the Rotunda at lunch time and anyone who wanted to get their resume reviewed could bring their resumes for critique. And I looked at some of those resumes and thought that some of those students are sitting at home thinking, “Why ain’t somebody done called me by now?” But some of those resumes had good experience but their cover letters had errors.

Additional probing question: And your first-time full-time freshmen, what is the level of importance that you place on their ability to communicate effectively?

Charlene: They get the same lecture. I ask how many of you are going on to graduate school or doctoral level and many of them raise their hands. I say this is very important, and I stress in that Comp II and I class that we are really not doing much yet. These little 5 and 7-page papers. Get ready to do 25-page papers 35-page papers. A thesis that’s 60 to 80 pages. The doctoral thesis that is a book of your own original research 300 pages. So to kind of help them set their sights high and to put things in perspective. So what I say to them is the 5 stages of the writing process that you use for your research paper is the same process that you are going to use when you do your doctoral dissertation. You got to plan it. You got to have a thesis statement and table of contents, do research, draft, revise, and edit. You need to get this down at this stage as a freshman because as you go things get to be more demanding. So I try to stress that from the beginning.

Thelma: Great deal of importance. Oral/verbal communication is important. We talk in class about how things go hand in hand. Playfully correct during speaking events. The difference between ask and axe. Write both words on the board. Provide scenarios to help students understand language in use and how context matters. Most students are of color and some are ELLs. I tell all students that they are highly intelligent but that people may make assumptions about you. Sometimes students do not know or realize the language mistakes that they make. Correction is playful and kind. Writing and speaking are connected. Reading helps with oral communication. Appreciate personal voice. Emphasize that Standard English is a code. All students can learn the code. Code-switching and translating. Once you can do that, some things in life may come easier. Standard English is not “correct.” It is a code. The way a person speaks does not mean that they are not as smart. Not value judgment.
Participants also see communication as linked directly to their disciplines. They see their expectations about communication as having applicability to their students’ professional lives, but the way they approach teaching communication, for some, is directly related to the way they perceive communication to function within their discipline. Susan and Josephine provide two explicit examples of this idea in their responses:

Susan: High value. That is what teaching history is about essentially. Understanding the past and articulating ideas of others without judgment.

Josephine: It is a little different when teaching a foreign language. About 75-80% of the time communication is in the target language. We do communicate in English for cultural topics. Very important. Start with the target language even at a beginning level. We have to give them the tools to communicate effectively. There are different social contexts in which you use a different register of language. That is an introduction in understanding the purpose of communicating effectively. In general, when they come to the office it is important to communicate with your instructor in a language I can understand. Since we are in an academic language they have to use a certain discourse.

Overall, communication is seen as necessary for success. The way participants communicate this importance to their students’ ranges for the issue of lowered marketability in the job market, which would be more on the Delpit side of the continuum, but content specific approach would lean more on the Gee side of the continuum.

Interview question #8: Name three communicative skills that you see as necessary for success [for students].

Participants link this question to a specific context or environment. The responses to this question are aligned to the way literacy is defined in the study, as a transaction between a person and either verbal and/or written communication or a context. From Charlene’s response, communication is directly linked to capital building and awareness of protocol.
The implicit ways students communicate their belonging to the context is aligned with Gee’s work. Specifically, Gee’s ideas of Discourse are directly related to the way a certain context determines the way one is expected to communicate. For Charlene, not following established protocol is just as detrimental to using the inappropriate code, in writing and verbally. It is also identified as an important communicative skill.

Charlene: Writing clearly and effectively, speaking clearly and effectively, social capital and social skills. The ability to disagree without becoming disagreeable. There is usually a process in an organization. You know like our students if they get upset about something the temptation is to go straight to the university president. They don’t understand there is a chain of command. Those social skills need to navigate and environment like this are very important.

Richard and Brian’s responses also identify the verbal and nonverbal communication skills that are typically contextualized as important.

Richard: Need to able to write a report, communicate clearly in writing, interpersonal communication. So to be able to talk to a peer in a particular kind of way. You need to be able to talk to groups of various sizes. It can be a work team or it may be a whole division with 200 people sitting in the audience. You need to have some ability to communicate with them as well [peers, groups large and small].

Brian: Well it’s speech for one, that’s the most obvious one, writing had been a bit more de-emphasized with technology, but something as simple as eye contact and body language. It’s very important to look at someone in their eyes. May be a gender athlete thing that everything is about the game. If you can’t look someone in their eyes, they know that they have beat you already and give them a firm handshake you are thinking about this person’s self-confidence. You are transmitting something about yourself without even saying a word.

Overall, writing and speaking in a context-appropriate way is viewed, consistently, as the two most important communicative skills for success. Participants noted that students must be able to interpret the context in order to apply the most appropriate communicative
This way of viewing literacy skills is directly linked to the way this study defines literacy. Interestingly, literacy was not defined for the participants. The goal of this was to allow their own definitions of literacy to shine through in their responses. If a participant would have simply identified reading and writing as necessary literacy skills for success, it may have become apparent that the participant, in a basic way, defines that as literacy. However, instead, each participant added something about context and how context shapes the type of writing and speaking expected of students. These types of responses would place the participants, for this question, more in the middle of the Delpit-Gee Continuum because both Delpit and Gee see context as necessary for communication.

*Interview question #9: Describe your students’ ability to communicate in Standard English.*

This question gets at the heart of communicative expectations. The idea that Standard English has been identified as the acceptable way of communicating in most environments has been challenged by many educators, which have been explored in Chapter 2, and throughout this dissertation. However, through the challenges and the debates, Standard English prevails as a means for communicating in mainstream contexts such as higher education. The participants in their responses to other questions have described this idea. For example,

Josephine: In general, when they come to the office it is important to communicate with your instructor in a language I can understand. Since we are in an academic setting they have to use a certain discourse.

The overarching idea about Standard English is that in order to use it effectively and automatically, it has to be practiced. Thelma provides an example:

Thelma: They are challenged. Many do not have Standard English spoken at home. Makes it difficult for them to code-switch. As a kid I watched
my parents switch. Many students do not have access to that type of modeling. It is difficult for younger students to do it and understand that it is constant practice. They are not hearing when they leave the class.

Difference in home literacy values. Reading is emphasized.

Overall, the participants do not challenge the notion that Standard English is the language of the marketplace or mainstream contexts, and they are upfront about their concerns about their students’ abilities to use the language effectively. However, there is some reflection about the connection between language and culture and the practice that is needed to effectively switch between various languages. Participants tend to lean more toward the Gee side of the continuum with this question because they do voice some concern about addressing language in a way that is not oppressive and demeaning.

*Interview question #10: In what ways do you help students understand how their communication skills impact how they are perceived by others?*

The goal of this question was to gain an understanding of how the participants interact with their students in situations when students display social literacy skills that are not considered appropriate. Participant responses ranged from explicit to implicit, and within an instructional context. The following are examples of each respectively:

William (explicit): Obviously, in this context it’s important. It’s also important when you go outside. What I try to say is you think of this class as sort of a pain, but if you are applying for a job, you have to be able to read the job announcement and understand whether or not you have the qualifications. Then you have to submit something in writing that is going to show you in your best light; that is going to get you past the first cuts and get you an interview at which point you must orally be able to articulate what you are going to do for the company. So this is not just exercises we do because we are engaging in petty harassment. These actually have practical application. And sometimes I’ll say we do searches here and you put a job announcement out there and you say you want this; you get these people who are applying that do not have the minimum qualifications. Probably they’re just taking a flyer, but why are
they wasting their time? And maybe they don’t really get it. Maybe they don’t understand it, which is ridiculous, but you know, I said I can tell you from doing job searches if you get a poorly written letter, it goes right in the reject pile. It’s critical that you be able to express yourself.

Richard (implicit): I tend to be a little more provocative in class. I put things out that evoke a particular response and then sort of watch the argument and in the middle of the argument almost at the height of the crescendo just call a time out. And say so what’s happening? And say this is what I observed. It appears that neither of you are really hearing each other. And then talk about the communication experience that I noticed sort of interpersonally and get them to a place where they may not agree with it but to get them to see that there is another experience or another narrative about what just happened. I let them know that depending on the venue, they need to be mindful of how they are communicating and the receivers of the message. Because depending on the language that they use, they may give others permission to use that language that is unintended and so they need to be mindful about unintended consequences of their communication.

Charlene (Instructional): Oh man. How much time do we have on that? There is so much stuff I have to give you. There is this thing I have students read. I use it as an opportunity to discuss how this person would be perceived. Because the tone is very hostile and there are over 60 errors. I ask them what impression would this give. They are more critical than I am. I have a collection of things that other faculty have given me over the years as examples of what not to do. Use activities to help students conceptualize what communication means to perception. I am the toughest editor on campus. I didn’t come out of _____ for nothing. That is the top __ school in the country.

Another way participants approached to this question was with a discussion of the implications that one’s communication has on the [African American] race. Both Brian and Josephine provide examples in their responses:

Brian: I always talk about it. I mean that is how I was raised. I was trained that way. I train my students that same way. If they are successful in their academic careers and they are successful in their professional careers, the race moves forward. We keep the line moving. I talk
about that all the time. We have to keep the line moving. I always tell them; I always mention in passing about books they should read. I tell them, well this is a book, write this down, you need to read this book. The story that I use is when you are all CEOs, COOs, and CFOs of these large corporations and you are at a dinner party and you say I remember Richard Wright wrote the *Native Son* and you know and you start talking about these things you remember, Dr. _______ told me that all people in the know should read it. So keeps the line moving.

Josephine: Part of classes. Stress intercultural communication. When in a different culture, others may have a preset idea of who you are as an African American.

Participants approached this question in a variety of ways. Specifically, the responses ranged from implicit to explicit. In addition, participants approached this question from a cultural perspective. All approaches, in this study, for addressing student communication are similar to the way that Young (2004) addressed the African American male student in his class. Young (2004) wanted this student to understand that the way he represented himself socially, in writing, and verbally, had the potential to have implications for the [African American] race in general. Based on the participants’ responses, Young’s (2004) conversation with his student is also a conversation that the participants, in this study African American specifically, have with their students. African American participants in this study communicated a need to be honest with their students about the ways communication can work against them as they move in mainstream environments.

*Interview question #11: When students behave in a way that you find inappropriate, how do you go about dealing with those instances? What do you do if students challenge you? What do you do if students become confrontational?*

The goal of this question was to get some idea of how the participants address student behavior. This question was also represented in question three, which asked
participants to identify how students take correction or directive. Participants tended to
actually address this question when responding to other questions. For example, both Brian
and William said that they would embarrass students who challenge them in a confrontational
way. Also, of all of the interview questions, this question was most directly aligned to many
of the vignettes. The vignettes explicitly provided social situations that required the
participants to identify a response that was most aligned to the way they would respond if this
vignette were an actual situation. Participants simply replied that they do not get students
who are confrontational and identified a personal characteristic as a reason why students do
not become confrontational. Also, some participants defined confrontational in two ways:
behavioral and intellectual. The intellectual challenge was welcomed but still managed.

Brian: I think intellectually confrontational can be handled two different
ways. The first way is we can let it play out and see where their
thought processes are going. If it gets out of hand I always tell my
students that there are two Dr. _________. There is the very cool, laid
back Dr. _______ and there is asshole ______. Now if you get too
belligerent, too problematic asshole ______ is going to come out.
And asshole ______ thinks he is the smartest guy in the room, and he
is going to run you in circles until you shut up. It gets to the point
where questions are good but when you make a point and you have a
classroom with 20 something people and you have one that is being a
complete jerk and they are not trying to play the academic intellectual
game but they are just trying to be a trouble maker, that’s not fair to
everyone else in the class. You know, and part of the stuff that I tell
them in class that’s part of the social contract in the syllabus is don’t
waste my time and your classmate’s time. So if I get the sense that
the belligerence is coming out of nowhere and it’s counterproductive,
I shut it down. And if push comes to shove I just throw them out.
When I first got here I had reputation in the College of Arts and
Sciences for throwing folks out.

Richard: It is interesting I cannot think of an inappropriate way necessarily. If it
is something that I disagree with, I try to get them to walk me through
how they arrived at a conclusion or walk me through why they chose
that way of communicating. In terms of trying to provide some sort of
corrective action, I don’t do that.
Richard (cont.): I make them wrong. The challenges are so infrequent and yet that is really one of the things that I am wanting them to learn as a skill. To understand that there is a power differential but to challenge the authority in the power differential in an appropriate way. And yet it is and I may be mistaking the power differential and thinking that it’s actually more narrow than it actually is because they don’t tend to challenge me that way. And I don’t know if it’s a cultural piece where there’s a respect for the authority figure. If it’s the majority of first generation college students who oh no you don’t challenge a professor because they have heard about what college is about that’s different than second, third, fourth generation college students that do that. I welcome the challenge but if you are going to challenge me, you better be ready to back it up intellectually because I like that challenge and I’m going to meet you head on, and I usually win in that regard. Not necessarily because I’m right, but because I’m more prepared. And so the students don’t understand that they’ve got to come prepared for it. Because when hear the words well my opinion, I tell them, I don’t care about your opinion, what’s the data? And then they get sort of knocked off their step a little bit because their opinion has been invalidated and what do they fall back on?

Overall, the responses to this question tended to address the behavior in an instructional manner. If the confrontation is related to the content, participants reported using questioning to either stop the confrontation or help the student think more critically about his or her way of communication (Richard: “I make them wrong. The challenges are so infrequent and yet that is really one of the things that I am wanting them to learn as a skill. To understand that there is a power differential but to challenge the authority in the power differential in an appropriate way.”). Brian and Richard are examples of the ways the male participants address confrontation with confrontation. Brian said, “Now if you get too belligerent, too problematic then asshole ______ is going to come out. And asshole ______ thinks he is the smartest guy in the room, and he is going to run you in circles until you shut
up.” Richard said, “I welcome the challenge but if you are going to challenge me, you better be ready to back it up intellectually because I like that challenge and I’m going to meet you head on, and I usually win in that regard.” This tended to be the response of choice for the male participants in this study.

The female participants also use an instructional approach but in a less confrontational responsive way. For example, Thelma said that she uses body language, and Susan said that she typically deflects.

Thelma: It is, I’ve had it happen where students have screamed, tried to intimidate you. Um with the violence that has happened on college campuses, I am very cognizant of what is my role. When is it I can escalate this or I cannot. And so if I feel threatened or my students feel threatened. If I feel physically threatened I will leave. That is something that I have learned with time. When I was young I might have said you need to leave. That is still confrontational. You’re not going to do what I say then get out. When people are suffering from mental issues the reality it is not even about you. That’s one extreme. It has been a long time since I had a confrontational or challenging student. And I think because I don’t act as if I have all the answers.

Susan: I try to call them on it right away. It depends on what it is. The issue would be getting into an argument in class with another student. One student kept interrupting me in class and was very aggressive. My default would be to step back and use my verbal skills. I would deflect. Try to see humor in it. Use wit. Not react. First-time, full-time freshmen have more struggles with each other. Self-monitoring happens.

What becomes clear in the responses is that preparation is defined in two ways. Either students come to college prepared with the basic literacy skills or they do not come physically to class prepared to function in the actual class setting as expected by the teacher.

Either way, there is a deficit approach that the participants have when it comes to their perceptions of students. These questions could have been addressed in a positive manner.
Even if students do not come to class having read or with the book, a participant could have responded with what students do well. The participant (Josephine) who teaches a foreign language did lean toward a less deficit perception of her students. That could also be the result of her idea that students chose to study the language she teaches so they are overall more serious and willing to make personal adjustments to be successful. The following is an example from her responses:

Josephine: Mostly in the last 7 years, I noticed a drastic change in terms of maturity and preparation. I have students who are very well prepared for my classes. I think it has to do when they select French. It is not just an afterthought. Most students take Spanish.

Again, the eleven open-ended interview questions did not include qualifiers that would prompt the participants to provide either negative or positive responses. For example, question 4 asked participants to describe how students sacrifice personal time to be successful. The following is an example:

Brian: Well this is the student body here, folks are all about sacrifice. We have a lot of adults; we have a lot of single parents. So there are a number of people where there are a lot of things they could be doing but they can’t outside of the university. I have this one graduate student. She is a serious graduate student and um she is about 27 years old and she wants to be in a relationship. She is very religious. There are certain guys she won’t date. She was under a lot of pressure at home to get married; go out and find a relationship. And she tells me that, “Dr. _______ I can’t do these things I have to read all of your books.” She doesn’t complain about it. It’s a matter of fact. I think she is at the point where she wants to sacrifice her personal time now, for finishing this project I want her to do. Um, I’ve had a number of students like that; even at the undergraduate level they will do these things because they have these larger agendas. The more dedicated ones will sacrifice the party; they will sacrifice the easy money in order to advance in their education.

Additional Probing question: Interviewer question: So even those freshman students?
Yeah I think so. I remember a couple and there were times when they said they wanted to go out but they couldn’t because they had stuff for me to do. I see this woman. They have since broken up but I think she is ready to graduate now and she was talking about the things she couldn’t do.

Participants were able to approach this question by identifying all of the ways students sacrifice their personal time. This did happen with a few participants. Nevertheless, when the response included positive ways that students sacrifice, the participants typically described students who are not included in the study population [i.e., first-time, full-time freshmen]. For example, they talked about older students, nontraditional students, or graduate students.

Responses from True or False Questions [Questions 12-20]

Within this section, data from each participant will be analyzed for questions 12-20, which are the true or false questions at the end of the structured interview. These questions were designed to explore how faculty members use social literacy in higher education contexts with their students and their peers. The tally for questions 12-20 was presented in Table 11, which appeared earlier in this chapter in the results section.

Brian

For the nine true false questions, Brian offered comments to help support the true or false response. For example, when asked about calling a colleague and asking if he or she is busy before beginning the conversation [Q12], he responded true and attributed this behavior to professional experience; he said, “I don’t like when people call me and start talking;
people’s time is important.” Questions 13, 14, and 15 ask similar things such as speaking to colleagues [Q13] and students [Q14] on campus and not interrupting conversations [Q15]. To these questions, Brian responded true to Q13 and Q14 but responded false to Q15. He admitted to interrupting conversations all time by saying, “I always say I think very fast. Sometimes things come into my head and I have to say it which important. Sometimes I think I am the smartest guy in the room. Nothing else is important…It’s a bad habit of mine too. I try to apologize for doing that when I catch myself doing that.” For questions 12, 13, and 15 personal experiences in his undergraduate education and for questions 14, 16, and 17 building relationships and personal connections are used in the explanation. Question 18 asked about students understanding of the possible consequences for their behavior in class. Faculty members were not told if the behavior was positive or negative; however, Brian answered false indicating that [1] students understand consequences and [2] he explicitly tells them about possible consequences. Brian used an example of plagiarism. He also provided “failing, expulsion, and asshole [Brian] showing up” as possible consequences. Those students who display “appropriate” behavior situate themselves in a position to gain access to opportunities was considered a true statement, and appropriate behavior was defined as coming to class, doing the reading, and respecting other students [Q19]. One of the common threads that consistently ran through Brian’s interview was responsibility; however, when asked if he had a responsibility to help students build relationships, he responded false. He said that he can tell them about the importance of building relationships but it is their responsibility to actually follow through.
Charlene

For the nine true or false questions, Charlene offered comments to help support the true or false response. For example, when asked about calling a colleague and asking if he or she is busy before beginning the conversation [Q12], she responded true and attributed this behavior to professional experience and good manners. Questions 13, 14, and 15 asked similar things such as speaking to colleagues [Q13] and students [Q14] on campus and not interrupting conversations [Q15]. To these questions, Charlene responded true to indicate that she does speak to colleagues and students on campus and does not interrupt conversations. For questions 12, 13, and 15 the good manners and southern roots were used in explanations, and for question 14, building relationships was used in the explanation. For questions 16-20, Charlene responded true. Questions 16, 17, and 20 asked about the importance of relationship building. Questions 18-19 discussed behavior and consequences. Question 18 asked about students understanding of the possible consequences for their behavior in class. Faculty members were not told if the behavior was positive or negative. When asked to list possible consequences, Charlene identifies running out of [financial aid] money, poor performance on exams, and “instructor can make or break you.” Appropriate behavior [Q19] was defined as coming to class prepared, being attentive, and having good manners.

Josephine

For the nine true or false questions, Josephine did not offer many comments to help support the true or false response. For example, for questions 12 and 16, she simply
responded true and waited silently for the next question. Questions 13, 14, and 15 asked similar things such as speaking to colleagues [Q13] and students [Q14] on campus and not interrupting conversations [Q15]. To these questions, Josephine responded true to Q13 and Q14 but responded false to Q15, and added, “It’s a cultural practice. It is a style of communication that is very Francophone.” For questions 13 and 15 cultural practices was the response when pressed for additional details, and for question 14, building relationships with students and being interested in them was provided to support the response. No additional information beyond the true response was provided for question 16. For question 17, Josephine responded true and noted that language is used to communicate and that she fosters relationship building between her students through group work. Question 18 asked about students’ understanding of the possible consequences for their behavior in class. Faculty members were not told if the behavior was positive or negative; however, Josephine answered true. She provided “dropped from class and fail class” as possible consequences. Those students who display “appropriate” behavior situate themselves in a position to gain access to opportunities was considered a true statement, and appropriate behavior was defined as “willingness to participate in class, complete the work, work with peers” [Q19]. One of the common threads that consistently ran through Josephine’s interview was culture. She reported feeling that she does have responsibility for helping students build relationships [Q20] and she facilitates that through clubs and organizations.

Richard

For the nine true or false questions, Richard offered comments to help support the true or false response. Richard also insisted on ‘sometimes’ for one response and offered a
detailed explanation to support his response. Also, Richard used “typically” in his support when determining if a statement was more true than false or more false than true.

When asked about calling a colleague and asking if he or she is busy before beginning the conversation [Q12: When I call a colleague, I first ask if he or she is able to take my call before I begin talking.], he responded true and attributed this behavior to professional courtesy; he said, “It’s not about making assumptions about colleagues. In this profession, I know we are all busy with whatever we’re busy with, and so I am not going to assume that you have time to chat now.” Questions 13, 14, and 15 asked similar things such as speaking to colleagues [Q13] and students [Q14] on campus and not interrupting conversations [Q15]. To these questions, Richard responded true to Q13 and Q14 but responded false to Q15. He included, “Typically no but sometimes I do. I judge if what I need to interject is more important than what I’m judging the conversation. Typically I wait for conversations to have a lull in them where interjection is possible.” This suggests that he actually does not interrupt conversations if he “typically waits for a lull in them where interjection is possible.” For questions 13 and 15, community was theme of his comments, and for questions, 14 and 16 building relationships and personal connections are used in the explanation. Question 17 is where he insisted on sometimes as a response and added, “It’s neither. It’s less the place, so it would be true, but it would be more false. The relationship building outside of class is probably more important.” He also reflected on the academy from a historical perspective. Question 18 asked about students’ understanding of the possible consequences for their behavior in class, to which he responded false. Faculty members were not told if the behavior was positive or negative. “Fail the class, fail exam, and damage relationship with classmates” were identified as possible consequences. Those
students who display “appropriate” behavior situate themselves in a position to gain access to opportunities was considered a true statement, and appropriate behavior was defined as “timeliness, appropriate speech in terms of proper grammar, overall courtesy or good social graces, and understanding social cues” [Q19]. Two common threads that consistently ran through Richard’s interview were process and transformation; however, when asked if he had a responsibility to help students build relationships, he responded false. He says, “A responsibility, no, I don’t have a responsibility to make them do that, but I make them aware of the necessity of it. I am not responsible but I do it anyway.”

Susan

For the nine true or false questions, Susan offered comments to help support the true or false response. When asked about calling a colleague and asking if he or she is busy before beginning the conversation [Q12], she responded false. She said, “I am at work and you are at work you should be able to take my call. If they say they are busy, I don’t push the envelope. I do ask if my chair is busy. I ask permission to speak to first.” It was unclear what “I ask for permission first” meant because she said that she does not ask if the person is able to take her call. In another question, she mentioned that she would ask this question when calling the chairperson but not a peer. Questions 13, 14, and 15 asked similar things such as speaking to colleagues [Q13] and students [Q14] on campus and not interrupting conversations [Q15]. To these questions, Susan responded true to Q13 and Q14 but responded false to Q15. She included, that sometimes she might nod her head to acknowledge colleagues. For questions 13 and 15, nonverbal acknowledgment appeared to be a common theme, and for questions, 14 and 16 building relationships, “with majors,” was
used in the explanation. For question 17, she responded true and added that she uses group
work to help facilitate relationship building between students. “Some want to be the lone
wolf but I try to do group exercises. You do hope they bond together to study together.”
Question 18 asked about students understanding of the possible consequences for their
behavior in class, which she responded false. Susan reported feeling that students
understand the consequences of their actions. For question 19, where she is asked about
those students who display “appropriate” behavior situating them in a position to gain access
to opportunities she responded true. Faculty members were not told if the behavior was
positive or negative. Appropriate behavior was defined as “Acting like you care and instead
of complaining about questions on exam, engaged it” [Q19]. Common threads that
consistently ran through Susan’s interview were uncertainty and reflection. Susan responded
that she does not know how she would react if required, for example, to take a freshman
seminar class. She felt that her parents had done their jobs by exposing her to college and
culture. She did also acknowledge that her friends were required to take similar classes in
college and that some of the students she teaches have different experiences than her own.
When asked if she had a responsibility to help students build relationships, she responded
true. She said, “Within the classroom and community of scholars. Being aware of their
place in society as oppose to the lone wolf. I like when I put different skill sets together.
Highly trained students also need to know that there are different types of wisdom. Highly
trained means that student picks up on material quicker or comes to class already knowing.”
For the nine true or false questions, Thelma offered comments to help support the true or false response. For example, when asked about calling a colleague and asking if he or she is busy before beginning the conversation [Q12], she responded true and attributed this behavior to professional experience; she said, “I understand how busy people are. I am busy and I know they are busy too.” Questions 13, 14, and 15 asked similar things such as speaking to colleagues [Q13] and students [Q14] on campus and not interrupting conversations [Q15]. To these questions, Thelma responded true to Q13 and Q14 but responded false to Q15, and added, “Sometimes I do interrupt conversations. I can’t say that is true all the time….if it is urgent I will say excuse me. I do not engage in the whole conversation…I say sorry.” For questions 12, 13, and 15 personal experiences in her undergraduate education and for questions 14, 16, and 17 building relationships and personal connections are used in the explanation. Question 18 asked about students’ understanding of the possible consequences for their behavior in class. Faculty members were not told if the behavior was positive or negative. Thelma answered true. She provided “teacher not going to advocate for the student, academic consequences, and lack of critical development” as possible consequences. Those students who display “appropriate” behavior situate themselves in a position to gain access to opportunities was considered a true statement, and appropriate behavior was defined as “being prepared with materials, being alert, being engaged” [Q19]. A common thread that was weaved through Thelma’s interview was relationships. She reported that she builds relationships with her student through various venues [Q20-true].
For the nine true or false questions, William offered comments to help support the true or false response. Also, William used “obviously” to begin many of his responses in both the open-ended interview section and in response to the true or false questions. When asked about calling a colleague and asking if he or she is busy before beginning the conversation [Q12], he responded false. He said, “I don’t usually ask. I figure if they are answering, they can talk to me. If they don’t want to talk to me they can say that. I don’t have anybody ask me that.” He did add that if his call may be lengthy, he would ask if the person has time. Questions 13, 14, and 15 asked similar things such as speaking to colleagues [Q13] and students [Q14] on campus and not interrupting conversations [Q15]. To these questions, William responded true to Q13 and Q14 but responded false to Q15. He included, “I think people who walk by you without saying anything are assholes. I think they are stuck up assholes. Who do they think they are? They think they’re better than I am? It’s like you’re demeaning someone when you don’t say hello. I find it insulting.” For questions 13 and 15, respect appeared to be a common theme, and for questions, 14 and 16 building relationships, purely professional, was used in the explanation. For question 17, he responded true and added that the classroom being a space for students to build relationships is the way that he conceives of the classroom, but a place for them to build relationships with each other: “I want them to understand that there is a peer relationship that they should have.” Question 18 asked about students’ understanding of the possible consequences for their behavior in class, which he responded true. But for question 19, where he is asked about those students who display “appropriate” behavior situating themselves in a position to
gain access to opportunities he responded false. Faculty members were not told if the behavior was positive or negative. Appropriate behavior was defined as “to be able to challenge an idea that you disagree with in ways that aren’t personal, demonstrate that you understand concepts and ideas, showing enthusiasm for the subject matter. I would like to think that what I look at is how you perform academically” [Q19]. A common thread that consistently ran through William’s interview was respect. When asked if he had a responsibility to help students build relationships, he responded false. He said, “No. It’s not my responsibility. They are grownups.” It is important to note that William referred to his age in some of his responses [“I am old.” “I am too old for that.” “I am older than most faculty or a lot of faculty so the relationships that I have are purely professional, but I do think it is important to know them [students].” This age distinction was not used as a barrier with other participants.

The true or false questions were another means of collecting data regarding the participants’ perceptions. The true or false questions were asked directly after the open-ended questions, and provided a transition into the vignettes, which were forced choice.

Responses per Vignette Question

The purpose of this section is to provide a more in-depth look at the responses to the vignettes. Also, it will provide an opportunity to begin to analyze the responses to the vignettes against the responses to the structured interview questions. This may act as a cross-reference between the other two data points. Although the participants were asked to select the best response, doing so was often difficult, so for more multiple questions, more than one response was selected.
Vignette #1.A.: Context-In the classroom

Jonathon, a student enrolled in your course, arrives late to class after being absent. Jonathon’s absences have exceeded the number allowed per the university attendance policy and his course work is suffering as a result of his excessive and extended absences. As Jonathon enters the classroom, in the middle of your lecture, he attempts to discuss his absences and missing course work.

Response Choices:  
A. You address his questions as quickly as possible to avoid further conflict.
B. You tell Jonathon that you cannot address his question now and that he is interrupting the class.
C. You tell Jonathon that his lack of information is due to his absences and that he has to get the information from a classmate or wait until the class is over to ask questions.
D. You tell Jonathon that he has missed too many classes and that he should withdraw from the course to save his grade point average.
E. You refer Jonathon to the course syllabus.

For vignette 1.A, eighty-five percent of the participants selected choice B and twenty-nine percent selected choice C. This question is aligned to structured interview question 1 (Describe to me the extent to which your students are serious and take personal responsibility for their education), question 2 (How well prepared do your students come to class?), question 7 (Explain the level of importance that you place on students’ ability to communicate effectively), and question 11 (When students behave in a way that you find inappropriate, how do you go about dealing with those instances? What do you do if students challenge you? What do you do if students become confrontational?). The participants’ responses indicated that they are more likely to address the student as quickly as possible to avoid confrontation. What is interesting is that the responses to structured interview questions 1, 2, 7, and 11 would tell a different story. Those responses would paint a picture of no-nonsense faculty who do not waiver or interrupt class time in any way.
Vignette #1.B.: Context- In the classroom
You are returning student essays to students in your class. Anita receives her graded essay and immediately begins to loudly voice her anger with the assessment of her writing using inappropriate language.

Response Choices:  
A. You respond to the student’s concerns by suggesting that she reads the comments that you provided on the paper.
B. You ignore the student’s outburst and continue with what you were doing.
C. You tell the student that her response is absolutely inappropriate and that she should not speak to you in that way.
D. You ask the student to leave the class.
E. You invite the student to see you after class.
F. You indirectly respond to the student by addressing the class.

For vignette 1.B, the responses were a bit more diverse. Fourteen percent of the participants selected option A, forty-three percent selected option B, twenty-nine percent selected option C, fourteen percent selected options D and F, and forty-three percent selected option E. For this vignette, some participants selected more than one response. This question is aligned to structured interview question 1 (Describe to me the extent to which your students are serious and take personal responsibility for their education.), question 3 (Can you describe how your students take correction or directive?), question 5 (Describe the expectations or standards that you have for your students. Have you ever had to adjust your standards?), question 7 (Explain the level of importance that you place on students’ ability to communicate effectively.), question 10 (In what ways do you help students understand how their communication skills are perceived by others?), and question 11 (When students behave in a way that you find inappropriate, how do you go about dealing with those instances? What do you do if students challenge you? What do you do if students become confrontational?). The responses to this question represent more of the range of responses noted in the responses to the structured interview questions. For example, Susan said that
she would deflect in her responses to the structure interview question 11, but for this vignette, she actually selected two responses (B and F). Both responses represent a more implicit or passive way of handling an uncomfortable or confrontational interaction with a student.

**Vignette #2.A.: Context- The office visit**

A student who has an issue with attendance and punctuality arrives at your office during your scheduled office hours to discuss his or her grade. The student asks questions about the requirements of an assignment that you have already discussed during class, on multiple times, and that you have provided the class in writing.

**Response Choices:**

A. You tell the student that if he or she attended class regularly and arrived on time when he or she did attend, he or she might have a better understanding of the assignment and suggest that the student enroll in the class during a semester when he or she can dedicate more time to the course.

B. You address the student’s question without any mention of the issues with attendance and punctuality.

C. You tell the student that he or she should get the information from a classmate.

D. You address the student’s questions, but you also tell the student that his or her absences and lateness makes him or her look like a bad student and may have negative implications on how he or she is perceived by others.

E. You invite the student to discuss the issues that may be preventing him or her from attending class and/or arriving to class on time.

For vignette 2.A., forty-three percent of the participants selected option A, fourteen percent of the participants selected option B, none of the participants selected option C, fifty-seven of the participants selected D, and fourteen percent selected option E. This question is aligned to structured interview question 1 (Describe to me the extent to which your students are serious and take personal responsibility for their education), question four (Describe how your students sacrifice personal time to be successful), question five (Describe the expectations or standards that you have for your students. Have you ever had to adjust your
standards?), question seven (Explain the level of importance that you place on students’ ability to communicate effectively), and question 11 (When students behave in a way that you find inappropriate, how do you go about dealing with those instances? What do you do if students challenge you? What do you do if students become confrontational?). Option D represents an explicit response. This is somewhat aligned to the ways that the participants responded to the structured interview questions. For example, Brian selected option D and his responses to the structured interview questions reflect this same type of explicit nature.

Vignette #2.B.: Context- The office visit
You are in your office during office hours and a student arrives to talk with you. During the conversation, the student tells you that you are not teaching the class “right,” do not return phone calls or email in a timely manner, and that you are not in your office when he or she tries to talk with you. You remember that you have received phone calls from this student after business hours or on days when you are not scheduled to be in your office. You also remember that this student emails you on the weekend multiple times demanding an immediate response, and that you have responded to the student.

Response Choices:  
A. You keep the conversation related to the course material.  
B. You tell the student that you have scheduled hours and that you are available during those hours, and that you are not obligated to respond on weekends or after hours.  
C. You ask the student to give you instances of your lack of response. You also ask the student to explain what he or she means by “teaching the class right.”  
D. You tell the student that although you do your best to be available and respond to students in a timely fashion, you will continue to do better and you make a mental note of this student’s issues and begin to document your interaction with this student in case you have to defend yourself against these allegations.

For vignette 2.B., fourteen percent of the participants selected option A, twenty-nine percent of the participants selected option B, fourteen percent of the participants selected option C, and fourteen percent of the participants selected option D. This vignette is aligned to structured interview question 1 (Describe to me the extent to which
your students are serious and take personal responsibility for their education), question 3 (Can you describe how your students take correction or directive?), question 7 (Explain the level of importance that you place on students’ ability to communicate effectively), and question 11 (When students behave in a way that you find inappropriate, how do you go about dealing with those instances? What do you do if students challenge you? What do you do if students become confrontational?). Option B is not only an explicit response but also an instructional response. This response represented an interaction between a faculty and student where the faculty member is direct about responsibility. In response to standard interview question 3, Richard’s discussion about the misunderstanding of or the misuse of the term customer service helps to illuminate this interaction. Option B works to dismantle the prevailing customer service model that Richard says is reshaping higher education.

Vignette #3.A.: Context- The instructional challenge
You were assigned a class days before the beginning of the semester. The late teaching assignment gives you little time to prepare. On the first day, you meet the students and discuss your policies and give them an overview of the course. You tell them that you do not have the syllabus prepared, but will have the syllabus ready to give them during the next class meeting, which is in two days. After class, an older student approaches your desk and tells you that you should take personal responsibility and that it does not look good for someone of your ethnicity to make excuses.

Response Choices:    How do you proceed?

For vignette 3.A, participants were not given choices, but allowed to respond in the same way they did to the other structured interview questions. This vignette is aligned to structured interview question 11 (When students behave in a way that you find inappropriate, how do you go about dealing with those instances? What do you do if students challenge you? What do you do if students become confrontational?). Responses to this question ranged from participants directly addressing what they called the
inappropriate nature of the student’s comments to identifying with the student’s frustration.

The following is an example from the data.

Charlene: I would have to I would say something about their expectations being unrealistic. Reminding them that I was given the class at the last moment. Race has nothing to do with anything. Administrative decision. Not excuses.

What Charlene’s response provides is an instructional approach that explicitly tells the students about the inappropriate nature of the comment but also Charlene is taking the time to explain something about the political nature of the university. She is taking the time to inform the student that [1] faculty tend to be assigned courses on short notice and [2] students should not judge faculty in a way that they do not want to be judged by faculty. She also is communicating something about professionalism and hierarchy.

Some participants approached this question by identifying with the student’s frustration. Richard’s response, “I would tell them I hear you” is an example of this approach. Richard’s response not only identifies with the student’s frustration, but also does not engage the student in further discussion about the concerns.

Brian’s response is a combination of both Charlene and Richard as he identifies the nature of the university and administration as being responsible, and he identifies with the student’s frustration; however, he does also addresses the piece about ethnicity head on. William and Susan also address ethnicity in their responses. Susan, however, also says that she would deflect.

Brian: Truth is better than a lie or excuse. A syllabus is fluid. I would blame it on the administration and I am here to help you. I give them a choice to stay in the class or drop it. I would ask them to explain what they mean about ethnicity. Why would someone else get a pass and I do not? Use
this as a teaching moment to address some of the preconceived notions about race and ethnicity.

William: Ask for specifics regarding ethnicity. You will get the syllabus when you see it.

Susan: I would deflect- not take seriously. It says more about the student. I would say that I am not worried about how my actions reflect my ethnicity and/or gender. I would be more amused.

Overall, participants found a means, either explicitly or implicitly, to communicate something about the power differential that Richard talks about in his discussion of challenging students. The difference in this vignette and question 11 in the structured interview is that the participants saw the challenge as more of an intellectual challenge related to content. This vignette specifically asked them to address a challenge related to professionalism where the participant could not lean on an advanced knowledge of the content to more or less “shut the student down.” Thelma provided a more frank response in saying, “I would be shocked. I might have to be a little stern here. Honestly I might have to respond with ‘when you are teaching a university class I will take your advice into consideration.’ I would be angry. I would not want to engage this ‘type’ of person.” The use of the word “type” in her response communicates the idea that based on this single interaction; she has placed this student as a “type” and how she defines, “type” could have implications for the student. A student not understanding the fine lines between what might be considered “acceptable” to say to an instructor may have implications, positively or negatively, for the student.

Vignette #3.B.: Context- The instructional challenge
After teaching class, a student approaches you with a note. You take the note and read it in your office. In the note, the student shares that during lectures, you often say umm and that makes you look like you do not know what you are talking about and that you often look
unprepared. The student shares that he or she is only trying to help you out because the class thinks you do not know what you are talking about.

Response Choices: How do you proceed?

For vignette 3.B, participants were not given choices, but allowed to respond openly in the same way they did to the other structured interview questions. This vignette is aligned to structured interview question 11 (When students behave in a way that you find inappropriate, how do you go about dealing with those instances? What do you do if students challenge you? What do you do if students become confrontational?). Responses to this question ranged from not addressing the student’s comments to self-reflection about why the student might have arrived at the conclusions communicated in the letter to the faculty member. William and Susan provided examples of the reflective approach:

William: Write a more complete lecture instead of using notes or lecturing without notes. It’s a valid concern.

Susan: I would think about it. Try to be a little self-conscious. Take with a grain of salt. Reflective. Talk to chair and ask colleagues how they would handle it.

Vignette #4.A.: Context- The example
You walk past a colleague’s office door. The door is open and you have a quick question. You notice that there is a student sitting in the office.

Response Choices: A. You go ahead and ask the question because it is quick.
B. You ask your colleague to call you when he or she is finished with the student.
C. You decide to sit outside of the office and wait for the student to leave.

For vignette 4.A, fourteen percent of the participants selected choice A, one hundred percent selected option B, and no one selected option C. One of the participants selected two
options. This question is aligned to the true or false structured interview question 14 (When I see students on campus outside of class, I speak to them.) and question 15 (I do not interrupt conversations) because it is asking participants to reflect on their own behavior. Participants reported that they would interrupt the conversation between the faculty member and the student. By saying, “Call me when you finish” already breaks the possible dialogue between the student and faculty member and may actually result in the faculty member engaging the colleague who has the “quick question.” At some point of the structured interview, all participants mentioned something about themselves as models for students. If this is true, then interrupting conversations might appear to be the nature of the university; people interrupt others because their questions are more important. If students see their instructors doing this, then why would they not think it is acceptable to do it as well, especially if they do not realize something about the power differential that operates in the university? Also, some faculty members operate within and seek to maintain a power differential in their classrooms but are not honest about this with students or themselves. They say they see themselves as facilitators when they really operate as managers.

Emerging Themes Per Each Participant

Within this section, data from each participant will be analyzed for each theme that emerged during the coding phase of this study. As previously identified in this chapter, the following themes emerged from the coding: basic perceptions of self as faculty, basic perceptions of faculty or peers, basic perceptions of students/basic perceptions about education or institution, and expectations of student abilities/skills/literacy. The
participants’ perceptions of students will be presented as a list because the participants responded to questions regarding students with a list.

**Brian**

**Personal experiences/Basic perceptions of self.** Initially an engineering student, Brian shared that he felt a bit unprepared. He took advantage of his professors’ office hours and was mentored by both White and African American faculty members. He described himself, as an undergraduate student, as the kid who always sat in the first seat in the front row of the class. He prepared for class by doing the course reading and going to professors’ office hours to ask questions and get help with his class work. The open relationship that he developed with professors early on helped him. This relationship also helped him decide to change his major to History during his junior year. His professors were also open and welcoming. Through these relationships, he was able to discuss both academic and personal things with his professors. When asked how these relationships developed he acknowledged that the “people were nice,” but that he also initiated the discussions. He reported that he encourages his own students to take initiative and develop relationships with both their peers and their professors. He said that these relationships are important and can develop into networking opportunities in the future.

Brian also discussed his undergraduate experiences as an African American student in an environment that was predominately White. He described the idea that African American students “stuck” together in social situations and in academic situations by providing support to each other. The Black Student Union and Historically Black Greek Letter Organizations [BGLOs] were important spaces and “brought us all together.”
Basic perceptions of self as faculty. There is an idea that he has responsibility to his students and his race [African American]. For example, he stated, “I mean that is how I was raised. I was trained that way. I train my students that same way. If they are successful in their academic careers and they are successful in their professional careers, the race moves forward. We keep the line moving. I talk about that all the time. We have to keep the line moving.” The use of “we” aligns himself with his students. “We must keep the line moving” almost communicates that although he has achieved his degree, he is still very much responsible for moving the race forward, especially through his students. He also added, “So I challenge them because I am not going to have them going into the world and say, ‘Dr. _____ failed me’.” He used his preparation and experiences as a way to measure and teach his own students. He is aware of mainstream perceptions about his students based on race and class and tries to make sure his students are aware of these perceptions as well. The idea of race and having responsibility to his students as well as his community is recurring. Building relationships is important as he sees this as something that helped him succeed. He very much supports the idea of mentoring. Overall, he takes responsibility for his students and expects his students to take responsibility for themselves. There was mention of the Talented Tenth and double consciousness, both which speak to a W.E.B. DuBois approach to teaching.

Brian reports that he sets high expectations for his students and “forces them to be responsible for the work that they do.” He noted that he finds students to be ill prepared when they come to the university, but he also feels he was ill prepared. He felt ill prepared to major in Engineering when he arrived at college so this kind of connection to his students helps him to use his experiences to help his students. He sees his teaching as being a
replication of his time as a coach and athlete. As a faculty member, he is upfront with his students about how “the world” sees them and the types of misconceptions that society may have based on how they use language, look, race, and class. Brian states, “I think most parents, good parents, have the talk…with their kids early on about the standards that are expected for us and the standards that are for other people. So I think subconsciously they understand double consciousness. How we behave in public and how we behave in private. You know, but I continuously tell them this is important because “they” are looking at us in a particular way already so don’t give them any ammunition to hold you back.” Along the lines of responsibility comes community. Brian talked about sharing classroom space with his students and making sure that everyone is respecting the community space.

Perceptions of faculty. Brian stated, “I find that a lot of my colleagues take a very paternalistic attitude with some of our student body. I had this one in a different discipline and he always talks about racism and how oppressed these students are so he has to go easy on them. And that’s very counterproductive and for me that’s counterintuitive.” His overall perception of his colleagues is that they do not expect much from the students.

Perceptions of education/institution. In this category, his responses focused on the “type” of students who attend the institution, which ultimately, informs the “type” of institution where he works. This category has some overlap with other categories. For example, in his discussions about his students, he explained that students tend to have poor high school history teachers who reduce the discipline to a collection of dates, and this gives students anxiety about the subject.

Basic perceptions of students. Brian’s perceptions of students are somewhat balanced concerning positive and negative attributes. Although he identified concerns with
preparation and financial stability, his wording almost made someone else, not the study, responsible for the issues. For example, if a student is ill prepared when they enter college, it may be perceived as not only the student’s fault, but also the fault of the teacher who did not prepare the students.

Students were described as

- Responds well to high expectations and challenging material,
- Ill-prepared coming into the university,
- Has a difficult time affording course materials.

**Expectations of student abilities/skills/literacy.** Brian has an expectation that students arrive in his class prepared to engage fully with the material. He understands that there may be some skill building that needs to take place due to what he considers “poor high school teaching of history.” He has an expectation that students will receive the feedback that he provides and seek help if necessary; however, he does not expect to see the same errors from one written assignment to the next. To achieve this goal, overall, Brian expected his students to be aware of his expectations, but it is not evident that he explicitly tells them that he expects them not to make the same mistake twice so to speak. It is also not clear if he viewed writing as an activity that takes practice. From his responses, it appears that he sees students as having the agency to make changes, but students may not think they have the agency. This may be an example of mismatched literacy skills.

**Charlene**

**Personal experiences/Basic perceptions of self.** Charlene stated that she felt prepared for college because she attended an all-girls high school in an affluent part of the city where
she was raised. However, she did not feel that she was prepared for high school by her inner city public junior high school. For example, she mentioned that she received high grades in junior high for simply “paying attention in class and attempting to respond to the instructor’s request that was all they needed from me.” She was awarded a scholarship to attend a private all girls’ school. The principal at the junior high saw potential in her and suggested that she apply for the scholarship. She stated, “But when I moved to the private school, now the standards were obviously much higher. I was struggling, getting low grades. There was a group of us who worked with this one English teacher maybe two times a week after school. Because there were some White students who didn’t write well either.” As an undergraduate student, she studied journalism at a research university, worked multiple part-time jobs, and had a “good relationship” with instructors. Her ideas about her preparation to participate in mainstream society are attributed to her parents’ southern background teachings.

**Basic perceptions of self as faculty.** Charlene uses the words “real shock”, “blunt”, and “no nonsense” to describe herself as an instructor. She also used “tough at start”, “come off a little sterner that really am”, and “try to be encouraging” to describe her teaching style. She does not lower her standards, but described her teaching style as one that prepares students to meet her standards. She reported that she is strict about adhering to established social protocols like no cell phones in class and zero tolerance for rude behavior. She reported that she is proud of her keen editing skills.

**Perceptions of faculty/peers.** In her responses, she revealed that some faculty members tend to “spoon feed” students and she does not agree with that style of teaching.
Also, she reports feeling that some students are passed from one class to the next who are not ready to meet the requirements of the next class. She said that this hurts students.

**Basic perceptions of students.** It was in this category that Charlene provided the most information. Charlene consistently used “we” when responding to interview questions about students.

- More often not prepared
- Not used to self-discipline or regimentation
- Not caring much about the quality of work
- Used to being coddled
- Has poor social skills
- Having not figured out or been taught about the ways of the mainstream or professional environments
- Not understanding that they are supposed to study
- Has a difficult time learning basic grammar and writing because of age
- Has a mature attitude
- Some do not want to be corrected
- Wants a degree but not the education
- Not wanting the depth of knowledge
- Thinks they can write but can’t
- Some understanding personal sacrifice

**Perceptions of education/institution.** Charlene described public schools as not being as rigorous as private schools and that they tend to “push students along or social pass.”
College is described as an environment where “everyone is invested in student success” and a place that does not tolerate the irresponsible behavior that was accepted in high school. It is interesting to note that a majority of the students who enter the institution where this study took place come from inner city public schools.

**Expectations of student abilities/skills/literacy.** Charlene reports that she has high expectations of her students’ abilities. She also reports that she expects students to write clearly, speak clearly, conduct quality research, apply concepts, and have contextually appropriate social skills. She said, “I expect them to do college level work, and I am standing beside them willing to help them do college level work.” She reports that students do “have a wide range of abilities,” but, to her, those abilities are more evident in the transfer students who started their education at another university like “Howard, or Hampton, or Xavier in New Orleans.” “The ability to disagree without becoming disagreeable” was also used as a means to describe communicative skills that she sees as necessary for success. Social skills are a consistent issue throughout the interview and are described as understanding protocol and the chain of command.

Josephine

**Personal experiences/Basic perceptions of self.** As previously stated, Josephine added a different perspective to this study because she is the only foreign-born participant, and her foreign-born status is a thread that she weaves throughout her responses. Much of her personal experiences with education were shaped by her upbringing outside of the United States. She discussed how she carried the individualistic attitude about the academy and collaboration into her time as an undergraduate student in the United States. She also
discussed that although she is African American, there is still, at times, a gap in cultural practices between herself, her students, and her peers. For example, she said that she thinks in multiple languages and is not as fluent in English as people would think. She also mentioned that she tends to be very formal and perhaps, that is a function of the language that she teaches.

**Basic perceptions of self as faculty.** Josephine said that she begins every semester with the idea that all of her students can meet her expectations. She reported that her expectations of students are fair and realistic. To meet her students’ needs, she differentiates instruction. As an instructor, she reported giving her students the tools to communicate effectively. This perspective is also considered against the backdrop of her a languages instructor.

**Perceptions of faculty.** In this category, Josephine did not have any perceptions of her peers. Her responses were limited to herself and her students. Her perspective was shaped by her status as an African born African American French professor. In that regard, she is the only one who holds this status in her department.

**Perceptions of education/institution.** Josephine made many comparisons between her education outside of the United States [Europe and Senegal] and her education in the United States. Education, to her, is formal and a place for mentorship. Also, shaped by her status as a language instructor, college is a “different social context in which you use a different register or language.”

**Basic perceptions of students.** Similar to Brian’s responses in this area, Josephine described students in terms that are more general. She also provided a balance of positive and negative attributes. Students were described as
• About 50% do not take responsibility for their learning

• Not as mature but have academic ability

• Interested in the target language [Foreign]

Expectations of student abilities/skills/literacy. Josephine described her expectations of students as realistic. She said that about 75-80% of her interaction is in what she described as the target language. The target language is the foreign language that she is teaching. She reports that students are expected to understand that different social contexts require a different language or register and that language learning takes time and practice. Attending class, being committed, spending two to three hours a day outside of class preparing for class is also expected and communicated to students.

Richard

Personal experiences/Basic perceptions of self. Richard took a class at the university where he works about ten years before attending college. Many of Richard’s responses that described himself were limited to his experiences as an undergraduate.

Basic perceptions of self as faculty. As a professor, Richard said that he must first overcome the cynicism that students have about the discipline. He reports that he is not so concerned about where students do their work, meaning that he does not feel that students must go the library to complete assignments, as long as “engaged in the process of critical thinking and analytical reasoning.” He reports believing in meeting students where they are and differentiates his instruction but does not reduce his standards. He said that he likes to say provocative things in class to make students think deeply. He said, “I make them wrong and then welcome the challenge.” He said that he wants students to use reasoning and
support their claims and ideas with evidence. He also stated that he does not provide corrective action, but rather tries to reason with the students and encourage students to help him understand why they selected a particular communication style.

**Perceptions of faculty.** When responding to the interview questions, Richard used “we.” He used “we” to refer to faculty as a collective. For example, “we don’t connect the dots for them on why they need to be serious about this.” The job of faculty is described as making students wrong in order for them to question themselves and for intellectual growth.

**Perceptions of Education/Institution.** Richard noted that higher education in general is adopting the corporate model of the customer is always right more often. He disagreed with this model because he does not see the student as a customer. The goal of a college education is help students learn about context and transform students.

**Basic perceptions of students.** Overall, Richard described students in concrete terms. He was the only participant who primarily attempted to quantify students’ behaviors. Students were described as

- Ten percent are serious enough to take personal responsibility
- Ninety percent do not know exactly why they are here or the purpose of college
- Ten percent have impeccable grammar, ten percent will struggle in mainstream culture because they do not have good grammar, and eighty percent are in the middle
- Not prepared or interested in subject matter
- Some take directive well and some do not see faculties’ role as being one that should provide directive [customer is always right approach]
- Thinks school is a necessary activity in their minds but not the primary activity
Engaged in the process but do not challenge instructors enough because they do not feel they have the right to

**Expectations of student abilities/skills/literacy.** Communication is noted as one of the things that students should take away from an undergraduate education. Richard said that students need to be able to write a report, communicate, orally, to various types of groups, and have good interpersonal communication. He also said that students should be able to use the context to determine the type of skills that are required and are appropriate to communicate in the context.

Susan

**Personal experiences/Basic perceptions of self.** College was viewed as the ticket to the middle class by Susan’s parents. Her parents regularly took the family on educational vacations. Susan reported that as an undergraduate, she felt that although she thinks she was similar to the students where she works, she does recognize that many of her students are experiencing things differently due to their status as parents and their life experiences. Susan teaches the freshman seminar courses for three disciplines that are a part of her department. As an undergraduate, she felt that she would not have been happy if made to take a seminar class. Overall, she said that she is “still improving.”

**Basic perceptions of self as faculty.** Within this theme, Susan’s responses were not as robust as some of the other participants. She reported that she perceives faculty as a model for students, and she thinks that faculty actually do this.

**Perceptions of education/institution.** Like more than a few of the other participants, Susan uses “we” in her responses that describe something about education or the institution.
Susan’s use of “we” is when she talks about the nation. For example, she says, “Nationally, we are becoming more illiterate.”

Basic perceptions of students. Susan’s perceptions of her students are rather high in comparison to the other participants. She even said she is “surprised at how committed they seem to be.” Students were described as

- Takes responsibility
- Prepared depending on what is going on in class; “I have to say that something is due for them to read-typical undergraduates.”
- Most have done or tried to do the reading
- First-generation students don’t know the ins and outs of the university
- In a process
- Incredibly articulate
- Able to code-switch
- First-time, full-time freshmen have struggles with each other

Expectations of student abilities/skills/literacy. Susan reported that she expects students to master the content, transform, and begin to think historically. She also encourages them to learn how to analyze. Susan reports that she places a high value on argumentation and communication skills.

Thelma

Personal experiences/Basic perceptions of self. When describing her undergraduate experience, Thelma discussed being friendly with professors and that professors were respectful. Although her peers were friendly, most of her interaction with peers was within
her major. Thelma reports that the African American students on campus were close, and BGLOs supported each other. She did mention that she witnessed “explicit racial situations between students. Students used racial slurs and racially insensitive language. The university mascot was a caricature of Native Americans.” She stated that she is a fourth generation college graduate, and her parents modeled code switching in the home.

**Basic perceptions of self as faculty.** As she described her interactions with her students, she said that she wants to encourage students and tries not to humiliate them and uses body language to manage the class. In an upfront way, she reports telling students that they are highly intelligent but people may make assumptions about “you.” She said that she approaches each student as an individual and uses instinct to determine how to approach students. The individual conference is her preferred method for interacting with students or providing directive or correction. She reports that it is important to get to know students and build relationships. Her goal is reported as getting students at least two steps above where they started. She said that she does not adjust her standards, but she is willing differentiate or modify her teaching to help her meet students where they are academically. She noted that her expectations are high. There is a great deal of importance placed on oral communication in her class and she “playfully corrects during speaking events.” She also provided scenarios to help students understand language use and how context matters.

**Perceptions of faculty.** Throughout the interview, Thelma did not provide an explicit perception of her peers. She used the term “people” when discussing how she talked to her students about the world, but she did not discuss how she thinks her peers treat or teach students.
Perceptions of education/institution. Her perceptions of the institution are reported as it “serves a different population than ________ or _________. Student population has a certain lifestyle.”

Basic perceptions of students. Thelma’s responses were similar to Brian’s responses in that she [1] tried to balance the positive and negative traits of students, and [2] she reported personal attributes. For example, “some spend time away from children” can be considered a personal sacrifice, which is viewed as a positive trait. Her description goes beyond her perceptions of them intellectually. Students were described as

- Highly intelligent
- Not as prepared as she would like
- Not understanding that all material should be brought to class each meeting
- Responds positively to correction or directive
- Some spend time away from children
- Does not communicate before hand
- Does not realize or know the language mistakes they make
- Challenged by their ability to use Standard English
- Many do not speak Standard English at home and do not have models

In addition to the above list, Thelma consistently used her interactions with older students to describe the younger students. This “younger versus older student” theme is outlined as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Younger</th>
<th>Older</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do not take personal responsibility for their education</td>
<td>More Prepared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procrastinates</td>
<td>Proactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have more excuses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not prepared for unforeseen issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
May not sacrifice personal time to be successful
Still developing
Do not understand time management

**Expectations of student abilities/skills/literacy.** Students are allowed and encouraged to use personal narrative in Thelma’s class. She reported that she finds that students may need to translate their ideas from vernacular to Standard English, but she expects them to be able to complete this task and makes herself available to help them through this process. Her expectations vary in this category because she tries to individualize instruction as much as possible to address student needs. She said, “In terms of literacy, one student may be a reader and the other may not. One may have limited Standard English vocabulary.” This is to communicate that although her expectations are high, she identifies where students are so that she can meet them there.

**William**

**Personal experiences/Basic perceptions of self.** As previously stated about William, his undergraduate experience was that of a first-time, full-time, freshman and a returning student. He attended an urban public school. He had a career in law enforcement when he returned to complete his undergraduate education. He reported that, as a student, he did not like structured discussion.

**Basic perceptions of self as faculty.** As an instructor, William described himself as provocative. He said, “I hopefully make them uncomfortable to make them think. I say provocative things to get a rise out of them.” His teaching style is a mixture of lecture and
unstructured discussion, and he tries to link the past with the present. “I am also there to learn.”

**Perceptions of faculty.** William used the word “we” in his responses. The use of “we” is in reference to faculty as a whole and as a way to include students in the whole [e.g. “Unfortunately, we do not teach writing.” and “I think it is the most important thing we do.”]. But it was not clear if the “we” only referred to faculty in his department. He reports that he wants students to do college-level work and does not adjust his standards.

**Perceptions of education/institution.** When describing his students’ preparation, he stated, “The education they had does not serve them well.” His perceptions of the institution overlap with his perceptions of students. When he described students, he used “here,” which means the institution. Therefore, based on his responses, perhaps the institution is defined by the students. Specifically, William did not describe the institution in broad or general terms. Thelma, Charlene, and Brian, for example, describe the institution in relation to the students, but they also describe the institution in relation to the community.

**Basic perceptions of students.** William’s responses are a combination of his student population preference, students’ personality traits, and students’ intellectual potential. Students are described as

- Smart enough, capable, bright.
- About a quarter take responsibility for their education.
- Distracted and not good at prioritizing.
- Struggles with the basics concerning speaking and writing.
- Receptive to correction
- Younger students do not make too many sacrifices.
**Expectations of student abilities/skills/literacy.** As mentioned in the above summaries, William expects students to do college-level work. Communication is considered “the most important thing we do.” And words, vocabulary, language is important and critical to be able to express one’s self. Reading is an important part of being successful and gives different modes of expression.

**Data Across Participants for Each Theme**

Data for this study were analyzed in two phases. First, data were coded and analyzed individually. Second, data were cross-coded and analyzed all together. This allowed the researcher to [1] keep everyone’s individual ideas and voices organized and [2] allow everyone’s voices to contribute to “the story” that emerged from the data. The previous section provided data for each participant per theme. This section provides the results of analysis across participants.

**Personal Experiences/Basic Perceptions of Self**

Participants in this study tended to reflect on their personal experiences as undergraduates and other experiences when responding to questions about their students and their teachers. William said, “Teaching style is a mixture of lecture and discussion. I did not like structured discussion as a student.” Susan said that she would have been upset if she was required to take a freshman seminar course as an undergraduate. Charlene used her status as an inner-city youth with little preparation for mainstream culture to shape her teaching style. And these types of examples are consistently woven throughout each interview. How these faculty members approach their students, interact with their students,
and determine what their students need in order to participate in mainstream society is very much influenced by how they came to understand the “rules” and participate in mainstream society. What they do not do is ask their students about their own personal experiences. In that way, students seem to be generalized, and students are seen as having more “issues” than students at other universities, are unprepared or lazy, and are immature. Students are also placed into two categories: younger and older, with the older students being more desirable. The participants not only used their personal experiences to shape their interactions and expectations of students, but somewhat acknowledged how different their own experiences may be from those of the students they teach.

Basic Perceptions of Self as Faculty

Participants reflected on themselves as a teacher when thinking about their students. Responses in this code reveal that faculty see themselves as a shepherd. Susan and Josephine approach their relationships with students with the idea that they learn as much from their students as their students learn from them. Although that is somewhat evident in all of the participants, Charlene, Brian, Richard, and William shared the idea that the faculty-student relationship is one of shared responsibility and accountability. The relationship functions as a partnership that includes trust. Faculty members have the responsibility to provide students with the best education that will lead to success in the “real world.” Charlene, Brian, and Thelma also reported that they feel that they have an obligation to students who look like them (African American, working class, inner city). They have a responsibility to help these students get prepared for the realities and judgments of the “real world.” Brian is explicit in his belief that the only way the [African American] race moves
forward is through the hard work of what others who share the same racial identity. Specifically, Brian says, “Another story I tell them is they are not like their friends any more. By virtue of you making the decision to sit in this classroom at this particular time. By virtue of you sitting in this classroom, you are not like your friends anymore.” William, Susan, and Richard saw themselves as facilitators as all students transform. Richard said, “On the first day, the biggest expectation that I have for them is that on the last day they have been transformed.” Similarly, Susan offered, “You want them to be able to say that they did not know much when they started and now they know something.” Richard tended to be on the outside of the race theme that appeared to be held by the African American faculty members. He did not mention race in his responses. Charlene’s mention of race is almost as an indicator of confusion about higher education contexts and/or an unwillingness to conform to the expectations of higher education contexts. When Charlene uses “we,” she described the “we” as almost cunning (“….financial aid as a sophisticated form of welfare.”). She also used stereotypical nicknames (“Pookie and them”). Therefore, her mention of race was not in the same pride-like way Thelma and Brian did, but more as an indication of deficiency.

Perceptions of Education/Institution

All participants saw the academy as a place for transformation, growth, and development for students. As Richard provided, “the job of faculty is to make students wrong for intellectual growth.” Charlene said, “College is an environment where everyone is invested in student success.” Again, the responses that described the function or the role of education are also linked to the role of faculty members. Specifically, the faculty member
is responsible for carrying out the mission of the academy or remaking students into representations of what the academy stands for in abstract terms.

**Basic Perceptions of Students**

Participants tended to compare the younger, more traditional-aged students, with the older, more nontraditional-aged, students. In addition, participants also responded to these questions with percentages (“10% are serious.”). The use of percentages seemed to be arbitrary and not based on any data, which is another example of the ways faculty tended to generalize students. Even when reminded that the focus of this study was their interaction with the first-time full-time freshmen, they still offered a comparison in their responses. Faculty members tend to see students as unprepared to meet the challenges of higher education for a variety of reasons. They hold previous education, urban communities, outside obligations, maturity, and a host of other factors responsible for why students enter college unprepared. Susan noted that first-generation status makes it difficult for students to meet the challenges of college because they do not have their parents to ask questions. Charlene, Brian, William, and Thelma hold students’ lack of motivation responsible for their difficulties. Susan and Josephine discussed gaps in culture and language. Richard reported that he thinks it is lack of maturity that gets in students’ way, but he also said that this lack of maturity is to be expected and faculty members have not “connected the dots for them on why they need to be serious about this.”

Concerning taking directive, overall, faculty members thought that some students take direction well and some do not. They did not necessarily think that this could be attributed to anything in particular about the students. However, Richard added, “Some take
directive well, some don’t get the need for correction or directive and do not believe it is faculty’s role to correct them because of the idea that they are the customer and the customer is always right.”

Expectations of Student Abilities/Skills/Literacy

The ability to communicate in Standard English, in writing and while speaking, was identified as most important concerning students’ literacy. Josephine, Richard, Charlene, and Thelma discussed the ability to identify context and perform literacy as appropriate in that context. Josephine specifically discussed literacy and the influence of culture.

Validity of Responses

As previously discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, this study employed a member check phase to validate the responses. The use of member checking in this way is common in qualitative studies (Duke & Mallette, 2011). Each participant was asked to review a clean (without any coding marks) copy of the transcripts born of his or her interview. Participants were asked to validate their responses as they appeared in the transcripts and respond to seeing their responses to the interview questions and vignettes. Each member check session lasted about thirty minutes. The following discussion about the member check phase of this study is presented in a summative manner because there were no real differences in the way that each participant interacted with the data in this phase. To report the member check session of each participant would be repetitive and the summative approach tells the larger story.
The member check phase of this study revealed that the participants were very interested in how they “look.” As they read their responses, they laughed and shook their heads as they read silently. More than a few times, participants tried to edit the transcript. The participants had to be reminded that the interview was transcribed verbatim, so whatever “error” they found, was the “error” they made in speaking. During these discussions about editing, participants were asked if they wanted to add anything or clarify their responses; they all said no. The participants were not allowed to edit their response for grammar to ensure the integrity of the data. The way their speech looked on paper was a bit shocking to the participants as they said, “Did I say that?” The researcher offered to play the interview to confirm, but each participant declined. What was most interesting was no one was concerned with the way they answered the questions. No one reflected on comments like “sophisticated form of welfare” and what that statement communicates implicitly about students.

Overall, the participants in this study reported a variety of perceptions of themselves as individuals and as faculty. They approach teaching from their own personal experiences as undergraduates, which are often not aligned to the experiences of the students they teach. The participants have strong feelings of deficiency concerning their students’ academic skills and motivation. The deficient perspective also reaches into how students are described as people in the larger society (“They don’t care.” “They have their expensive clothes and cell phones.” “They spend their financial aid money on personal items.”).
Chapter 4 Summary

This chapter provided the results from the data collected for this study. Results were presented both numerically and in narrative form. In addition, the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum was included in the discussion of the participants’ responses to the interview questions. The findings and discussion will be presented in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study set out to explore [1] faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and [2] how faculty members teach students to interpret (read) social cues as they relate to higher education contexts. This dissertation contributed to the body of established literature in the field of literacy. Specifically, this study [1] offered a means for considering literacy in more broad terms and [2] discovered if faculty recognize, assess, and address the ways that students interpret social cues. Findings and recommendations for further research are also discussed in this chapter. Figure 4 will help illustrate how the findings will be presented.

Figure 4: Presentation of findings in Chapter 5.
This study is considered the first phase in a series of studies and, essentially, first examines what college faculty members say they do so that the next study may examine what college faculty members do in practice. This chapter examines how this study was approached and how that approach influenced the creation of this study.

Findings

The findings that resulted from this study are presented in this section. The findings are a result of employing elements of a CDA per participant and across participants. Findings are based on all data collected from this study. Within this section, findings are explored in four ways: [1] the key findings are presented and explored, [2] each research question is presented and answered based on the data, [3] using the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum, and [4] findings per participant characteristics.

Key Findings

The findings pay attention to “the story” that was unearthed during the critical discourse analysis. The findings get the reader to the bottom line and provide responses to the research questions that drove this study. The bottom line is what can potentially be learned based on the analysis. Figure 5 provides an alignment between the key findings and the research questions. Following Figure 5 is the discussion of each key finding. Key findings 1 and 3 can be aligned to two different research questions.
Key Findings

1. Participants lean toward a deficit approach when discussing their students’ abilities.

2. Participants compared the younger students’ literacy abilities to the older students with the older students being favorable.

3. Based on the information provided during the interviews and the responses to the vignettes, there appears to be a difference between what participants say they do and what they might actually do when faced with a scenario.

4. Participants arrived at teaching unintentionally or did not set out to be teacher when pursuing a degree.

**Research Question 1:** To what extent do college faculty members see literacy as a social practice?

**Research Question 2:** What are college faculty members' perceptions of the quality of their students' social literacy skills?

**Research Question 3:** In what ways do college faculty members respond to their students' interpretation of social cues inside and outside of the classroom?

**Research Question 4:** To what extent do college faculty members explicitly provide students with opportunities to practice social literacies necessary for success in college and beyond?

**Research Question 5:** To what extent do college faculty members see their role as important in socializing their students to undergraduate culture?

Figure 5: Alignment of key findings and research questions.

1. *Participants lean toward a deficit approach when discussing their students’ abilities.*

Young (2004), to name a few, regarding the ways mainstream contexts may view students of color as deficient. In regard to language, Smitherman, (1977, 1995, 2000, 2003) speaks to the idea that language that is considered outside of the mainstream is considered deficient. Moreover, a deficient label carries with it the idea that the person using the language is deficient and the culture of that language is deficient. Smitherman’s (1977, 1995, 2000, 2003) work is rooted in providing a counter narrative to that very idea. Smitherman (1977, 1995, 2000, 2003) is very much concerned with the perceptions and labels placed on students and how students internalize implicit messages and beliefs about themselves when someone says that their home language is deficient. Again, where is the middle ground in Smitherman’s argument? As Delpit (1995a, 1995b) suggests, society “tests” individuals based on language or how well one can demonstrate fluency in mainstream communication. Delpit (1995a, 1995b) also communicates the necessity of honest and explicit conversations with students about the ways society sees them based on their demonstration of a particular identity. Delpit (1995a, 1995b) would suggest a balance between honesty and encouragement. In this study, Thelma began the discussion with students by providing direction, but also encouragement. There has to be a balance in the direction that students are given, especially when the very thing that is being critiqued is tied to culture. But the critique cannot be sacrificed because the teacher is too afraid of offending the student if the goal of the teacher is truly to make the student ready for the mainstream world.

Participants’ responses to the interview questions were led by ideas of what students do not do or do not want to do. For example, Charlene began her responses to multiple interview questions with a laugh when asked about how well her students are prepared, sacrifice, or take responsibility. William also, on more than one occasion, responded with “they do not want
However, they never communicated that their students outright said that they have no desire to learn. This idea is based on a perception that the teacher arrived at as a result of some interaction. This is similar to Young (2004) and his reflection about his interaction with and in response to his student, Cam.

Charlene also communicated that she thinks that her students use financial aid as a sophisticated form of welfare. As discussed in Chapter 2, language carries with it power, the ability to oppress, and an identity (Alim Samy & Smitherman, 2012; Bourdieu, 1986; Delpit, 1995a, 1995b, 2002; Freire, 1970; Gee, 1989a, 1989b, 1998, 2001; Guiterrez et al., 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2002, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Lewis & Moje, 2003, Moje, 2007; Nasir & Hand, 2006; Purcell-Gates, 1995, 2002; Rogers, 2002a, 2002b; Smitherman, 1995, 2000, 2003; Stanovich, 2004; Young, 2004). An example of the description of a young African American female Dean’s list student’s language as “ghetto” was offered. Like ‘ghetto,’ the use of the term ‘welfare’ is racialized in and of itself (Kelley, 1997). The term ‘welfare’ is a word that can lead to a perception of social class, intelligence, and drive.

Moreover, this term can be used to describe someone who is “bucking the system” (Gilliam, 1999; Hancock, 2004; Zucchino, 1997). If students were viewed as “bucking the system” then would there be an opportunity for an apprenticeship (Gee, 1989a, 1989b, 1998, 2001, 2007, 2004, 2011) to emerge? Do teachers want to mentor students whom they feel are not making a sacrifice or are trying to “buck the system”? Charlene’s response provides an example; ‘Things like using your financial aid money for what it’s intended for. Some of our students are from low-income backgrounds and so there is a tendency to use the financial aid money as a sophisticated form of welfare. We get that refund check and we bailing out people and paying Pookie and them’s rent. We haven’t bought any books or what we are supposed to with
it.” It may be this perception about students that does not allow apprenticeships to form. It may also be this perception about students that does not encourage faculty to invest in their students’ success enough to take the risk and be explicit with their students.

2. **Participants compared the younger students’ literacy abilities to the older students with the older students being more favorable.**

This study set out to explore faculty beliefs about the social literacy skills of the first-time, full-time freshmen that they teach at an urban minority-serving institution. At the start of the interview, participants were explicitly asked to think about the first-time, full-time freshmen that they teach in their 1000-level general education classes, which are most likely to be filled with new students. However, when responding to questions, participants consistently compared the first-time, full-time freshmen students, who they also considered to be younger, with the older students. For example, interview question 4 asked participants to describe how students sacrifice personal time to be successful. Brian responded with,

> Well this is the student body here, folks are all about sacrifice. We have a lot of adults; we have a lot of single parents. So there are a number of people where there are a lot of things they could be doing but they can’t outside of the university. [Told story about a graduate student who sacrificed time]. I have this one graduate student. She is a serious graduate student and um she is about 27 years old and she wants to be in a relationship.

Thelma provided another example with her response to interview question 1 (Describe to me the extent to which your students are serious and take personal responsibility for their education.):

> Younger students tend to not take as much personal responsibility as the returning adults who tend to take more effort. They ask questions about their grades, extra credit. They attempt to understand the material the first-time. Younger students procrastinate more and are not as serious until finals. Younger students have more excuses. They are
not prepared for the unforeseen issues that can happen. When those issues happen, the younger students do not take responsibility for starting the paper late.

Again with her response to interview question 2, Thelma reiterates her stance on younger students (How well prepared do your students come to class?), “Not as prepared as I would like. Older students tend to be more prepared.” The interview questions often had to be restated to remind the participants that the focus was on the first-time, full-time freshmen, who, according to university data, are 78% of the student body and range in ages from 18-20. Even with the redirection, the participants had a hard time not making this comparison. Interestingly, the campus became residential in 1995, but it is still known for its large population of transfer and nontraditional students. Most of the participants in this study were employed at the university during the time when it was a commuter campus and served more nontraditional, older, returning students. Perhaps, this might be why their frame of reference is the “good old days” when the students were older. This finding is also aligned with much of the adult education literature in regard to the focus on the nontraditional student population (Baumgartner, 2001; Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey, 2008; Bonner, 1982; Brookfield, 1986; Finger, 1989; Gurin et al., 2003; Huerta-Macias, 2003; Hugo, 2002; Hurtado, 2005; Johnson-Bailey, 2002; Kilgore, 2004; Kuh & Ardaio, 1979; Merriam, 2001; Merriam et al., 2007; Price; 2001; Quaye et al., 2009; Saenz et al., 2007; Wenger, 2007).

If the participants in this study use the older students as the measuring stick for the younger students, then how much learning is missed because of the deficient beliefs about the younger students? According to Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), the first two years of college is the time when students learn the most. It is also during this time when the opportunities to socialize students are ripe. However, it is unfair to expect that younger students, who have
spent less time in the world, will arrive to college with same experiences, priorities, and skills as older students.

3. Based on the information provided during the interviews and the responses to the vignettes, there appears to be a difference between what participants say they do and what they might actually do when faced with a social scenario.

Vignettes were used in this study as a means to recreate situations where faculty and students interact (see Burden & Byrd, 2013; Maxwell et al., 2011). The contexts included the classroom, the office visit, and the instructional challenge. The vignettes were also used as a means to cross-reference the participants’ responses to the interview questions. If a participant responded to an interview question (which is more of a representation of a theoretical response) that he or she would explicitly address a student’s behavior but then selected a more implicit or passive response when responding to the respective vignette (which is more of a representation of a practical response, representing the same situation posed in the interview section), it would be fair to say that there may be inconsistency. It is difficult to time specific situations that call for students use social literacy skills and observe how faculty react to the situations, so the vignettes offered a means of recreating those situations.

The interview questions represented a broad, theoretical approach to addressing students’ social literacy skills. The vignettes required the participants to consider the actual application of the stance that they had taken in the interview portion of the study. What was found was that the participants tended to take a more implicit or passive approach in a practical situation. For example, William, on more than one occasion during the interview, stated that he would use public embarrassment to respond to a student’s behavior when it was outside of his expectations. However, in the vignette portion of the study, he leaned more toward responses
that were a bit passive. William selected option B, which states that the teacher tells the student to sit down and that his questions cannot be addressed now, but he added, “You praise publically and criticize privately.” Another example of inconsistency is with Charlene’s response to vignette 2.B. (You are returning student essays to students in your class. Anita receives her graded essay and immediately begins to loudly voice her anger, with the assessment of her writing, using inappropriate language.). In the interview questions, Charlene’s overall stance was explicit in regard to responding to students’ social literacy skills. However, her response to the vignette was option B (You ignore the student’s outburst and continue with what you were doing). Charlene then added that if ignoring the student did not work, she would invite the student to see her after class. In her interview questions, Thelma was a bit inconsistent in her stance. She moved between explicit and implicit, but her responses to the vignettes were more explicit. For example, in response to vignette 2.A, Thelma selected responses that addressed the student’s absences and how those absences have resulted in his being behind in the class. These examples demonstrate that there may be inconsistency between how the participants perceive their interaction with students and how they may actually respond to students.

4. Participants arrived at teaching unintentionally or did not set out to be teacher when pursuing a degree.

Only two participants noted that they [1] wanted to teach prior to entering the profession and [2] intentionally sought a teaching position at a minority-serving institution. The other participants communicated that they arrived at teaching unintentionally. Richard reported that he wanted to try out teaching. Susan reported that she needed a job. William also reported that he needed a job. Charlene stated that she was in between jobs when she applied
for her teaching position and knew little about the university. Brian stated that he wanted to teach and made an intentional effort to find employment at an institution that served minority students. Thelma was the only participant who spoke about her preparation to teach in graduate school as a teaching assistant, and she was one of the two participants who identified that she wanted to teach and teach people of color in a minority-serving setting. When thinking about instructors’ expectations and how those expectations may be linked to personal experiences and goals, could the new teacher know what to expect if the new teacher did not plan to become a teacher in the first place? Can the new teacher who relies on her own experiences, as a student, to inform her instruction of students, whose experiences are much different, know what to expect? To that end, teacher training and development can be a starting point to support teachers (Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Kugel, 1993).

Outside of teacher preparation programs, which prepare students for careers as primary through secondary teachers, those interested in teaching adults at the college level may not have received training in pedagogy during their degree programs. Brookfield (1986) states that teaching and learning is “a highly complex psychological drama in which the personalities of the individual involved, the contextual setting for the educational transaction, and the prevailing political climate crucially affect the nature and form of learning” (p. 41). It is through instructional delivery where the rubber meets the road in this “psychological drama” (Brookfield, 1986, p. 41). Furthermore, some faculty members might underestimate the amount of time and training needed for instructional planning and managing their interactions with students. So those faculty members who “needed a job,” might have thought that teaching would be no more than standing in front of a class talking and recreating their own college experiences. They may not take into account that the way they experienced college may be
drastically different from the way their students are experiencing college. This is like the
teacher who lectures in 2014 from a paper he or she delivered in 1976. When a teacher does
this, there is a belief that the teacher is out of touch with the discipline, but when a teacher has
expectations of students from his or her time as a student in 1976 in a middle-class
environment, nobody has that same conversation about being out of touch. The teacher is often
assigned lower-level classes where this disconnect is exacerbated by the younger students, and
the teacher is often offered no support and the student is blamed (i.e., The student does not
want to learn or they lack motivation).

Overall, the participants have perceptions of themselves, their students, and the
institution. They have determined that older students are better than the younger students are
and that the younger students do not have the desire to improve their skills. Those perceptions
drive the actual interaction. The perceptions of themselves are also different from the way they
responded to the vignettes where actual social situations inside and outside of the classroom
was replicated. The participants perceived themselves as taking a no-nonsense approach to
instruction. They saw themselves as towing the line on addressing incongruent social literacy
skills when demonstrated by their students. When faced with a hypothetical situation
(vignette), they often gravitated to more passive approaches to interacting with their students.
This could be the result of their perceptions of their students. Again, if the perception of the
student was that he or she does not want to do the work and improve, why would the teacher
invest the emotional and physical energy in what Brookfield (1986) calls the “psychological
drama” of teaching and learning? Therefore, the issue may be that the student’s lack of
motivation may be the result of the teacher’s perceptions (Delpit, 1995a; Ladson-Billings,
Findings per Research Question

Each data point was carefully aligned to the research questions that guided this study. This section demonstrates how findings address each research question. Also, the development of the two researcher-designed instruments was based on the research questions. Table 13 is the same as Table 6, which appears in Chapter 3.

Table 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Data Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To what extent do college faculty members see literacy as a social practice?</td>
<td>Interview Questions 7-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What are college faculty members’ perceptions of the quality of their students’ social literacy skills?</td>
<td>Interview Question 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In what ways do college faculty members respond to their students’ interpretation of social cues inside and outside of the classroom?</td>
<td>Interview Question 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To what extent do college faculty members explicitly provide their students with opportunities to practice the social literacies necessary for success in college and beyond?</td>
<td>Vignettes 1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To what extent do college faculty members see their role as important in socializing their students to undergraduate culture?</td>
<td>Interview Questions 12-20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question #1: To what extent do college faculty members see literacy as a social practice?

Participants did not explicitly link literacy to social practices. Social literacy is seen as a way to demonstrate literacy but it is not seen as literacy in and of itself. Literacy was used to describe students’ abilities to communicate verbally and in writing. This question is aligned to the interview questions 7-10. Participants reported that they tended to see literacy, at first glance, as a description of how well one communicates either orally or in writing. It was when participants were asked to describe particular features of their students (e.g., taking responsibility, sacrificing personal time, and coming to class prepared) that they started to broaden their ideas about what they wanted students to be able to do socially in their classrooms. To communicate such, participants described their expectations in regard to how students interact with their instructors and their peers during class discussion and group work.

Research Question #2: What are college faculty members’ perceptions of the quality of their students’ social literacy skills?

Participants saw their students’ social literacy skills as immature. Participants described their students’ social literacy skills when discussing how well their students take feedback and when and if students challenge them as teachers. Richard offered an interesting perspective that was a bit more critical than Brian, who provided a similar response. Richard said that students do not intellectually challenge him enough, and he welcomes the challenge. He saw the intellectual challenge as part of the process of intellectual growth, and he is not sure if culture plays a part in why students do not challenge him in this way. He added that he would welcome this opportunity to teach students how to challenge someone in a situation where there is a power differential. Brian offered a similar response but did not add the instructional or
cultural piece. Charlene, on the other hand, described her students’ challenges as “…being disagreeable.” She would like them to understand how to “disagree without becoming disagreeable,” but did offer much in how she helped them make this connection.

Overall, participants saw their students’ social literacy skills as being underdeveloped or not mature. The way they addressed this issue ranges from the explicit (“I shut it down”) to implicit (“I deflect”). Either way, the social literacy skills of students is something that the participants considered in some way in their classes.

Research Question #3: In what ways do college faculty members respond to their students’ interpretation of social cues inside and outside of the classroom?

The answer to this question became most apparent in the responses to the vignettes. The use of simulated classroom and office interactions with students required the participants to selected a response that is most aligned to the way they would address a particular experience with a student. Situations where students entered a classroom late but insisted on speaking with the instructor in front of the class or where a student challenged an instructor’s professionalism were represented in the vignettes and are examples of ways that social cues may be hidden in everyday interactions.

In the interview questions, participants took a tough stand on how they explicitly address their students; however, when faced with the vignette, the participants tended to try to find a more implicit way to respond. As revealed in the results section of this chapter, although participants say that they would not interrupt class to speak with a tardy student, when asked to respond to this situation in the vignettes, more than a few participants selected a response that more closely aligned to a response where they did ask the student to have seat, but they in some way address the student’s question.
Research Question #4: To what extent do college faculty members explicitly provide their students with opportunities to practice the social literacies necessary for success in college and beyond?

Richard said that instructors do not always do a good job of connecting the dots for students in regard to college expectations. It is through that connection of dots that students practice the social literacy skills that are expected in college and beyond. When asked if they feel that they have a responsibility to help students build relationships, three of the seven participants said no. They saw relationship building as important, but do not see it as their responsibility to facilitate.

Also, students may get practice using social literacy skills in situations represented in the vignette. An example of a social literacy skill may be the ability to communicate discontent in a contextually appropriate way. Vignette 1.B. provides a situation where a student is not happy with a grade and comments she received on a written assignment and begins to voice this dissatisfaction during class in an inappropriate way. William described one of the responses as a bit pretentious. He was not comfortable with the use of the “do not speak to you in that way” portion of that possible response. But why should teachers feel that they could not tell students how to speak to them without sounding pretentious? What would be the possible response from a supervisor whose employee speaks to him or her in an inappropriate way? The possibilities might range from unemployment for the employee to police action. So if this is representative of a real world response, and college replicates the real world, or at least serves as practice for dealing with real world experiences, then why would explicitly telling the student that her response is inappropriate be pretentious? As Richard provided, higher education is taking on a customer service model and with that transition, the student is the
customer, and the teacher is almost a direct report to the student. To address this type of customer-service related behavior would lead to elevated confrontation. To avoid that, participants try to find a way to avoid the situation altogether.

**Research Question #5: To what extent do college faculty members see their role as important in socializing their students to undergraduate culture?**

Based on the results of the data, it appears that the participants are not consistent in how they see their roles in regard to addressing their students’ social literacy skills. There is the overarching belief that students are adults and, as adults, it is the students’ responsibility to connect the dots. However, the participants also reveal that they think that their students are not mature and underprepared for college life, but again, they do not have the responsibility to work with students as they negotiate the social side of college life. Those participants who do see themselves as having a role in the socialization of their students tended to do so out of an allegiance to the race. They saw themselves as a model for their students.

Each research question was addressed in this study, and the data provided an opportunity for rich discussion and reflection. Ultimately, there appeared to be a difference between what the participants say they do and what they may actually do. The participants’ perceptions were not just of their students but also of themselves as a teacher. To that end, the data could be situated on the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum.

**Findings for the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum**

Table 15 provides the findings for the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum. The Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum situates the words of scholars Delpit (1995a) and Gee (1989a, 1989b), in regard to the enactment of literacy instruction, and creates a continuum that was used to [1]
analyze the data and determine what “type” of teacher the participants might be in the classroom. Based on the data, the participants for this study tended to have a mixture of the characteristics represented on the continuum; however, it would be important to begin to think about the value of each characteristic and its implications for teaching students. For example, an instructor who may or may not be explicit about his or her expectations in regard to social literacy skills may not place their students at a disadvantage. The implicit nature of the expectations may actually help build students' ability to interpret implicit text, but an instructor who teaches students who bring incongruent social literacy skills, as discussed in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, in a way that does not explicitly tell them how they may be perceived in mainstream contexts and also views college as too late to teach or help students build those skills may be placing their students at a disadvantage in the long run. This type of information might be helpful when potential faculty members are seeking employment at particular institutions or for search committees who are trying to find the best candidates for their institution. The continuum helps frame that discussion. It became obvious that like the scholars themselves, Delpit and Gee, the participants in this study embodied the perspectives of both concerning how they reported approaching instruction based on their perspectives. Based on their responses to the interview questions and the vignettes, six of the seven participants (86%) explicitly discussed with students the ways that society may view them based on communication skills and conflict resolution, which is directly aligned to Delpit Teacher Characteristic F. "[Teachers] can discuss openly the injustices of allowing certain people to succeed, based not upon merit but upon which family they were born into, upon which discourse they had as children.” Interview question number ten, which is provided as an example of a place in the interview where a participant directly addressed the Delpit-Gee
Table 15
Participants’ Placement on the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Delpit Teacher Characteristics (DTC)</th>
<th>Gee Teacher Characteristics(GTC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A  B  C  D  E  F</td>
<td>A  B  C  D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian</td>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlene</td>
<td>X  X</td>
<td>X  X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephine</td>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>X  X  X  X</td>
<td>X  X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X  X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thelma</td>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>X  X</td>
<td>A. “Discourses are not mastered by overt instruction.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B. “Discourses are taught by enculturation (apprenticeship) into social practices through scaffolded and supported interaction with people who have already mastered the Discourse.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. “..such “superficialities cannot be taught in a regular classroom in any case; they can’t be “picked up” later, outside the full context of an early apprenticeship (at home and at school) in “middle-class-like: school-based ways of doing and being.””</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D. “..true acquisition of many mainstream Discourses involves, at least while being in them, active complicity with values that conflict with one’s home-and community-based Discourses, especially for many women and minorities.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. “Teachers successfully teach "superficial features" of middle-class discourse-grammar, style, mechanics.”

B. "Teachers insist that students be able to speak and write eloquently, maintain neatness, think carefully, exude character, and conduct themselves with decorum.”

C. "[Teachers] are determined that, despite all odds, students can achieve.”

D. "Teachers put in overtime to ensure that the students are able to live up to their expectations.”

E. "[Teachers] set high standards and then carefully and explicitly instruct students in how to meet them.”

F. "[Teachers] can discuss openly the injustices of allowing certain people to succeed, based not upon merit but upon which family they were born into, upon which discourse they had as children.”
Practical Continuum, asked participants: In what ways do you help students understand how their communication skills affects how they are perceived by others? For example, Richard said, “I let them know that depending on the venue, they need to be mindful of how they are communicating and the receivers of the message. Because depending on the language that they use, they may give others permission to use that language that is unintended and so they need to be mindful about unintended consequences of their communication.” Richard’s response communicated the difference between the communicator’s intended message and the actual received message and how a misunderstanding on the part of either of the communicator or receiver can have a negative result.

One (Susan) of the seven participants is situated mostly on the Gee end of the continuum. Her responses, which have been integrated throughout Chapters 3 and 4, reflect a more implicit approach to teaching her students. She said that she would deflect when asked about responding to student behavior that she may consider undesirable. Josephine, on the other hand, is situated entirely on the Delpit side of the continuum. In her teaching of language, she explicitly reports telling her students about deliberate language choice and the importance of culture and context. Five of the seven participants (71%) are more situated on the Delpit end of the continuum, but they have at least one characteristic from the Gee side of the continuum. One of the seven participants viewed college as too late to teach students the expectations of the mainstream context, which is a Gee characteristic. This finding is interesting when considering that from their responses to the structured interview questions and the vignettes, six of the seven participants’ (86%) responses would communicate that they [1] explicitly discuss with students the way society may view them based on communication skills and conflict resolution and [2] explicitly address students’ behavior when it is incongruent with
mainstream “norms” and provides safe opportunities for self-correction. But if college is considered too late to teach students the skills to resolve incongruent literacy skills, one may question how participants are helping students build literacy skills that would help them be successful in mainstream contexts such as higher education and if participants’ views about college being too late to teach the literacy skills has implications for the way they teach these students (e.g., “I cannot be expected to undo twenty years of poor speaking, reading, and writing, or these students have had twenty years of poor literacy skills; we cannot expect them to make serious gains.”).

The Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum was developed during the preliminary review of literature for this study. The work of both scholars was used to explicitly map out the differences in their approaches to teaching students social literacy skills. The intent was to show the different approaches to addressing a mismatch (between context and skill) in literacy.

Researcher’s Perspective

The research focus of this study evolved out of multiple conversations and revisions of thought. I started this process wanting to know more about the ways that basic literacy, reading and writing, impacts success in college and beyond. Of course, that was a broad idea and needed refining. The narrowing process required me to think deeply and get to the root of what it was I really wanted to know and my ideas about it. After much thought, I realized that [1] the way that I saw literacy was much different from the way literacy is perceived (as the basic ability to read and write), [2] when I referred to ‘literacy,’ what I really was thinking about was social literacy (context matters), and [3] when I referred to ‘impact,’ I really was thinking about the consequences of not displaying literacy in a way deemed appropriate for the context.
As a postsecondary English teacher, I thought the starting place for such a study would be to research the ways that reading and writing are linked. At my institution, reading courses, including developmental, are housed in the College of Education. All writing courses are housed in the College of Arts and Sciences. When students have questions about their reading placement scores, they typically start by visiting the English department. Even advisers have called the English department with questions about reading placement scores. It appeared that the way reading was conceived, at the institutional level, was much different from the way it was conceived at a practical level. The perception was that reading and writing were viewed as activities that happen with a text. English is the place where students typically work with texts. By that idea, reading and writing should be a task for the English department. It was thought that students were taught to read and write at the same time. However, students were taught these two connected skills in a disconnected way.

Another issue I found was that to address the growing concern about the quality of student writing at my institution, disciplines simply increased the number of English classes for their majors. For example, students from other majors were required to take an editing course that really prepared one for a job as an editor. The belief was that by taking this course, students would become better proofreaders of their own work. This is not true because the editing course teaches technical editing skills such as editing marks and how to be a paid editor of others’ work, mainly artistic work, or information texts. Other English courses were required of non-English majors that seemed not to be aligned, at least not well, to the writing goals and expectations of particular disciplines. Writing instruction was seen as one size fits all, and students were left to transfer those skills appropriately to other contexts. Therefore, during the interview phase of this study when Richard said we (faculty members) have not
done a good job connecting the dots for students, I was reassured that this study was necessary and timely.

The conversation around student writing is typically filled with instructors saying that writing instruction is the responsibility of the English department or that they are not writing experts so in turn they do not feel comfortable addressing student writing. Furthermore, it was easier to blame the English department for “not doing their job.” Judging from Rose (1979), the concern regarding the quality of student writing is one that is not new or isolated to minority writers and discussions regarding who is responsible for addressing student writing are not new. Rose’s (1979) discussion of the Writing Research Project (WRP) at the University of California Los Angeles mirrors the discussions I was having at my institution more recently. In Rose’s (1979) work, the WRP started with similar questions (i.e., “Why isn’t the English department doing its job?” “Why doesn’t Psychology assign more papers?”) (p. 108). This deficit attitude is what led me to literacy in the first place, and was represented in the data from this dissertation’s study. An example of this type of deficit attitude can be found in William’s response to interview question 6 (How do you view your students’ abilities to meet your standards in general and for literacy specifically?). William responded with, “They are capable. The question is will they make the effort. They do not want to do the work. Unfortunately, we do not teach writing. I try to work with them as much as I can but I do not have the time or resources.” Writing is being viewed as a skill and the English department is solely responsible for not only teaching that skill, but also making sure that students retain that skill even years after students have completed the basic six hours of first-year composition. Charlene’s (a member of the English department) response to interview question 6 also spoke to not only a deficit attitude about students but also a belief that “good writing” is only required
of the English department: “See I think they can get themselves up to speed but my question is do they want to. A lot of whining about how nobody else around campus expected them to do what I expect in that class.” Students are not being taught disciplinary literacy (Moje, 2007), and they are not being held to same literacy standard across disciplines, and the concept is quickly swept off the table.

As I started to consider researching this reading and writing debate, I thought further about what it was that instructors were really saying they were concerned with regarding their students’ writing. Often, poor grammar was blamed for poor writing. The thought was that if students could learn grammar, their writing would improve. Delpit (1995a, 1995b, 2002), Gee (1998, 2001), Ladson-Billings (1994), and Lindquist and Seitz (2009) are a few of the literacy scholars that speak to this misconception. In the basic grammar courses, students were successful when grammar was taught outside of writing. Students were able to identify basic definitions of grammar concepts, but it was in their writing that they were unable to apply those ideas. So grammar might be a starting point. This kept leading to the idea of making connections and awareness.

As a person who often interacts with a wide range of students who have questions about their basic English requirements, I started to think about this idea of literacy. As stated in Chapter 1, literacy is often tacked onto a word to indicate awareness. So what can be seen is that although, traditionally, literacy has been used to describe one’s basic ability to read and write (Bigelow & Schwarz, 2010; Kruidenier et al., 2010; Reader, 2010), practically it is also used to describe one’s ability to understand and recognize and then use that awareness to make the most appropriate decision or take the most appropriate action for the context. The action or decision is not limited to reading and writing. Often, perceptions about one’s literacy are
conceived before any interaction with one’s reading or writing ability. And perceptions about literacy may lead to perceptions about intellectual ability and social class. These perceptions may influence opportunity and access to opportunity.

A review of the literature led me to begin to think about literacy more broadly and redefine literacy as a transaction between a reader and either the spoken word or a given context. With this broad definition in the backdrop, I continued to listen to the conversations, at the college level, about student skills, and those conversations became clearer through this study. The conversations continued to revolve around poor writing, but the older or returning student was given a pass in this regard. *That* student had been engaged in poor writing or speaking habits for years. It was viewed as a daunting task to expect *that* type of student to make changes to old ways. For *that* student, simply getting him or her through a high stakes writing assessment was the goal. The more traditional student who was typically younger, first-time in college, at the freshman level was more of an issue. The older student was viewed as sacrificing money and time with family to pursue a degree. The older student was viewed as mature and more serious about his or her education. The younger student lacked motivation, prerequisite skills, and clarity about college and its expectations. The younger student was immature. The younger student was not easily forgiven for his or her educational transgressions.

While continuing to consult the literature and listen to conversations in the field, what I realized is that the writing was the easiest place to point to as evidence of poor preparation for college, poor communication skills, inability to think critically or transfer knowledge, and it was a safe place because it provided evidence that supported perceptions about a particular group of students. It was safer to point to the writing than to point to the verbal interaction one
has with a student in class or during office hours where the student displays social literacy skills that are outside of the instructors’ expectation. To say that a student asked a question in class using African American Vernacular English might be uncomfortable because one may be perceived as judging the students’ culture as inadequate (Alim Samy & Smitherman, 2012; Delpit, 1995a, 1995b, 2002; Lindquist & Seitz, 2009; Smitherman, 1977). To say that the student entered an instructor’s office with his pants “sagging” may be judgmental based on the way young men with sagging pants are portrayed (Young, 2004). In both of these instances, the instructor arrived at a conclusion before the student either provided a piece of writing or opened his mouth. But when faculty members say that students do not write well, they are able to speak to instances where they experienced students’ literacy skills in a way that they considered to be outside of their expectations without running the risk of being culturally insensitive. Communicating well may not be limited to writing and the way one communicates may be linked to culture. What faculty members did not want to say was that African American urban students lack the necessary skills, both academic and social, to meet their expectations, and that they had arrived at that conclusion based on the ways these students, or other students who look like them, speak, dress, and act in college. They may also not want to say that African American urban students lack the necessary skills to meet their expectations because of the way they act at home and in their communities, but in essence, that is exactly what they said. Nevertheless, just because one does not say it, does not mean that one does not think it and act on it. From the data generated from interviews in this study, participants used language to communicate these very ideas. Saying that the university where they work serves a different population of students than those who may attend some of the other neighboring universities, saying that students use financial aid as a sophisticated form of welfare, or saying
that students are not interested in improving because they have their expensive clothes, cell phones, and shoes all lead to a preconceived notion, rooted in deficits, about students and their priorities. Often, nobody has the conversation with the students. Data from this study reflected that participants report either deflecting or embarrassing students. The pendulum swings either far in one direction or the other.

As a result, this study provided an entry point into a sensitive topic. Beginning with a collection of participants’ perceptions, it became apparent that participants did not always feel armed with strategies to address students concerning the realities of particular behavior. This feeling is similar to Delpit’s (1995a) discussion where she adds that teachers, who consider themselves progressive and informed, may feel that by pushing students who are considered to be from minority backgrounds to learn and use the dominant discourse, they are actually oppressing those students further. This idea was evident in Thelma’s responses. Thelma is an African American female professor from the English department. Although she reported that she pushes her students toward the mainstream discourse, she also is concerned with how they see themselves, and she pays special attention to encouraging their creativity and home language use. Another key finding of this study was teacher preparation. More than one participant reported that he or she had arrived at teaching or the location rather unintentionally and was “looking for a job.”

This study provided a starting place for helping faculty sift through the sometimes-murky waters of interacting with their students. The faculty-student interaction can be a “psychological drama,” as Brookfield (1986) puts it. When considering culture and the social implications for language, some faculty members may not be willing to take the risk when it comes to explicitly discussing the implications for behavior and language with students because
they [1] do not realize that their colleagues are walking the same tight rope and [2] do not feel armed with the tools to begin to approach such a sensitive topic with their students.

Conclusions

Although the participants say that building relationships with their students is important and their students building relationships with each other is equally important, the participants report little outside of assigning group work and class discussions as the ways that they facilitate that building. All of their interaction is content-instruction based. But the participants seldom address specific instances of social literacy mismatch with their students. The way they tend to address students is either through feedback on an assignment or in class as a whole.

The classroom space has the potential to act as a testing ground for students to practice the reading skills that Ruddell and Unrau (1994) discuss. The classroom space is likely to be a microcosm of the larger society. If education, specifically classrooms, functions as spaces where teachers socialize students, then one could expect students to enter with schemata that serve them well in this cultural model. However, what happens when socialization does not take place? What happens when teachers do not see this task as their responsibility? Students may in fact find that they constantly fail the tests that are administered by the classroom space itself and they may become withdrawn or frustrated.

Overall, this study revealed that the participants’ perceptions of students drive their interaction with students. Also, their perceptions of themselves drive how they approach teaching and how their teaching impacts students’ learning about social literacy. The participants said they lean toward an explicit approach to teaching, but when faced with specific questions about their approach to socializing their students or when faced with a
hypothetical scenario, they leaned more toward an implicit way of dealing with the social aspect of teaching students. Also, participants said that they see relationship building as an important part of college life, but they often situated themselves outside of the facilitation of building relationships with their students. For instance, Brian attributed his success in college to his opportunity to build relationships with faculty, but he then said that it is not his responsibility to help his students build relationships. So again, Alice Walker’s question remains, are teachers themselves the ones they have been waiting for to help students? And, is there a difference between what teachers say they do and what they really do? Based on the findings per the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum, the answer to the latter question is yes. This study allowed for the uncovering, on a small scale, of just that. There is a difference and for the implications of that difference to be fully realized, college instructors must be clear about their expectations, their students’ abilities (which is not always evident in what students produce), and the part that they play in connecting the dots between the two.

**Implications for the Postsecondary Teaching Profession**

The adult education literature begins to consider ways to better prepare teachers of adults to meet the needs of their adult students; however, much of this literature considers nontraditional education settings and nontraditional adult students as well as the development of philosophies (Baumgartner, 2001; Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey, 2008; Bonner, 1982; Brookfield, 1986; Finger, 1989; Gurin et al., 2003; Huerta-Macias, 2003; Hugo, 2002; Hurtado, 2005; Johnson-Bailey, 2002; Kilgore, 2004; Kuh & Ardaio, 1979; Merriam, 2001; Merriam et al., 2007; Price, 2001; Quaye et al., 2009; Saenz et al., 2007). Little in the adult and higher education literature explores teaching adults in higher education contexts, teaching
students who might be considered traditional, or helping students make sense of the social aspects of college life. The literature that does tangentially explore culture tends to focus on race as a point of negotiation between the teacher and student but not in the way that this dissertation approached cultural negotiations between the teacher and student (Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey, 2008; Gurin et al., 2003; Hurtado, 2005; Johnson-Bailey, 2002; Quaye et al., 2009; Saenz et al., 2007). A recommendation may be to consider the ways that culture negotiations play out during interactions inside and outside of the classroom. Teacher training in this area can begin with preparing to address differences in culture and social class and acknowledging the biases that come to college with both teacher and student. This will help establish strategies for checking those biases.

In regard to the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum (in a training or professional development situation) college faculty could be asked to situate themselves on the continuum through a questionnaire-style assessment. What this would do is allow them to be upfront with themselves about how they approach teaching students who arrive with social literacy skills that may need refining in order to match the social literacy skills expected within a particular context. Therefore, the continuum becomes a research instrument that can be used at various times during a teacher’s career. Also, the continuum can become a research instrument that can be modified for students that can begin to match them with teachers.

Another important consideration in regard to faculty development is for faculty to have opportunities to socialize with their students in education related contexts but outside of the physical classroom space. For example, Josephine stated that through her advisement of student clubs, she was able to interact with students in a less stressful environment. However, faculty would also be required to be open to these opportunities. It is common for faculty to be
transient when it comes to spending time on campus. They leave immediately after teaching classes and resist spending additional time on campus interacting with students beyond required office hours. Richard provides an example when he said, in regard to socializing with his students, that he is too old to socialize with his students. He may not see mentoring as a form of socializing.

The Development of College Faculty

Chickering & Gamson (1987) offer seven principles for quality undergraduate education. Included in those principles is the necessity for increased and quality faculty-student interaction. College professors, like the students they teach, tend to develop in stages as illustrated in Figure 6 (Kugel, 1993). Figure 6 is taken directly from Kugel (1993).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase I: Emphasis on Teaching</th>
<th>Phase II: Emphasis on Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1: Focus on Self</td>
<td>Stage 5: Student as Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2: Focus on Subject</td>
<td>Stage 4: Student as Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3: Focus on Student</td>
<td>Stage 3: Student as Receptive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: Stages of college faculty development.

Figure 6 demonstrates the stages of college faculty development (Kugel, 1993). Stage three in phase I transitions into stage three in phase II; therefore in phase I development is top down, but in phase II development is bottom up. The development of professors as teachers tends to move from an emphasis on themselves (teaching) to an emphasis on students (learning), but both emphasis happen in different phases of development (Kugel, 1993). It is
not until stage 3 of phase I that instructors begin to focus on students, and there is no timeline that governs how or when teachers enter or exit each stage. Instructors may be better able to serve their students if they find ways to focus on themselves as teachers while also considering the students they teach. Based on the data, it appears that these participants approached teaching as a self-centered and a subject-driven activity instead of a transaction between teacher and student. The participants use their experiences as undergraduate students to determine how they approach teaching, even when they acknowledge that their experiences may have been different from the students that they teach.

In general, instructors tend to move through stages of development as the need arises but in no particular order (Kugel, 1993). Thus, instructors’ development as teachers may not situate them in a professionally developed space to be clear about or be able to articulate what they expect from students. Instructors may have an even more difficult time articulating what they expect in regard to their students’ literacy abilities depending on what stage of professional development they are in themselves. It is important that students gain the literacy skills necessary to be successful in college and gain the social capital that they need to navigate successfully the college environments. If students typically get this information from their parents, the community, or their teachers, students who do not have access to teachers who are willing to share this information may enter and move through college at a disadvantage (Conley, 2005, 2007, 2012). Negotiating these ideas takes exposure to the codes that are used for navigating the environment. Instructors expect that students are able to identify, independently, the skills that they need for success during the entire college experience, but when and who provides students with this inside knowledge or instruction about what Delpit (1995a, 1995b) calls the culture of power remains in question. Furthermore, it may be expected
that college instructors, who are thought to have navigated the college terrain successfully, be willing to share this inside knowledge with their students. However, this consideration or expectation may depend on what stage of development the instructor is entering or exiting.

Addressing literacy differences that have cultural connections may become a difficult conversation to have with students. Instructors may feel uncomfortable addressing literacy faux pas due to cultural sensitivity or fear. In addition, literacy, language, and descriptions of language tend to be racialized (Kelley, 1997). The example that was used previously was a White male faculty member described an African American female Dean’s list student’s language as ‘ghetto.’ But this same belief about students’ communication skills was echoed in this study (e.g., Charlene). As stated, the term ‘ghetto’ has implications for race, class, and is typically considered negative (Delpit, 2002; Kelley, 1997; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). This is an example of the misunderstandings that take place when language that is tied to culture and identity is used but the language is outside of the mainstream. These misunderstandings may lead to faculty either deciding not to address mismatched literacy or students resisting the attempts to socialize them because the instruction is offensive and devaluing.

As revealed in the results for the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum, participants [1] deflect and shy away from addressing instances that may be sensitive or [2] do not put in the “overtime” that is needed to help students. Students then do not learn to negotiate social literacies and find opportunities to build relationships and accumulate social capital difficult.

Limitations

Chapter 3 stated that this study would allow for the possible development of a model of faculty characteristics for faculty who [1] understand the possible implications for interpreting
social cues, [2] understand the possible resulting social capital as critical to student success, and [3] provide students with instruction and opportunity to develop these skills. Because the sample size is rather small, the findings are not generalizable but rather are starting points for areas to consider or further research. The pool of possible criteria was also decreased because it appears that the same faculty members teach the same classes from one semester to the next. This made it difficult to diversify the pool of participants.

Recommendations for Further Research

This section will explicitly describe why further research is needed and the form the additional research should take. Specifically, additional research that examines students’ perceptions of their social literacy skills would further help bring to light the many [mis]perceptions held in academic settings. Furthermore, a more detailed look into the faculty characteristics or faculty types would add to the established literacy scholarship and influence teacher preparation and credentialing at all levels of education. To do so, perhaps a study that includes both qualitative and quantitative methodologies would be helpful in order to reach a larger participant pool and in order to contextualize the quantitative data. This study started by examining the perceptions of a small group of faculty. A next study may begin to be comparative in nature by comparing the perceptions that faculty have about their students with the perceptions that students have about themselves.

Recommendations for Sample Population and Instrumentation

Data from this study revealed that faculty members have perceptions about their students as deficient in some way. To get a better idea of how students perceive themselves as
college students and their experiences in college, previous studies have employed quantitative methodology (survey) to reach a large pool of students (Hurtado et al., 2012). What the survey does not capture is [1] the deeper conversation about college life and how it is experienced by students and [2] the language that students use to articulate their experiences and the way (Heath, 1989) they use language to fully articulate their experiences and the things that contribute to those experiences (Duke & Mallette, 2011). The one-size-fits all approach of a survey does not allow the bigger story to be revealed. For that reason, qualitative methodologies are a necessary component.

Although there may be existing instruments that could be used in studies, focusing on student perceptions, the researcher wanted to demonstrate how the instruments used in this study could be used. Table 16 provides an example of ways that the interview protocol from this study could be altered to fit the needs of a study that focuses on student beliefs and perceptions of their own experiences in higher education and their interaction with instructors.

The student perception piece would allow the researcher to get an idea if students actually recognize the different literacy skills that are in place and working in tandem in the college environment. Earlier in this dissertation, it was said that students might not be aware of the many expectations in play in college. They may be aware that there are expectations but what those expectations exactly are may be a mystery, especially if they are incongruent with the expectations from high school. Students may be somewhat aware that expectations are different but they may be waiting for more explicit conversations about what those expectations are when, in fact, their instructors are adopting a modeling approach. Often, students will say that they just want the teacher to tell them what he or she wants. Students might want explicit
Table 16

Sample Interview Questions for a Student Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample interview question</th>
<th>Altered Interview Question for Student Study</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Question from This Study</strong></td>
<td><strong>Altered Interview Question for Student Study</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Describe to me the extent to which your students are serious and take personal responsibility for their education.</td>
<td>1. Describe to me the extent to which you are serious and take personal responsibility for your education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How well prepared do your students come to class?</td>
<td>2. How well prepared do you come to class?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Sample vignette</th>
<th>Altered Interview Question for Student Study</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Question from This Study</strong></td>
<td><strong>Altered Interview Question for Student Study</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathon, a student enrolled in your course, arrives late to class after being absent. Jonathon’s absences have exceeded the number allowed per the university attendance policy and his course work is suffering as a result of his excessive and extended absences. As Jonathon enters the classroom, in the middle of your lecture, he attempts to discuss his absences and missing course work.</td>
<td>You arrive late to class after being absent. Your absences have exceeded the number allowed per the university attendance policy and your course work is suffering as a result of your excessive and extended absences. As you enter the classroom, in the middle of the lecture, ……</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How do you proceed?**

A. You address his questions as quickly as possible to avoid further conflict.  
B. You tell Jonathon that you cannot address his question now and that he is interrupting the class.  
C. You tell Jonathon that his lack of information is due to his absences and that he has to get the information from a classmate or wait until the class is over to ask questions.  
D. You tell Jonathon that he has missed too many classes and that he should withdraw from the course to save his grade point average.  
E. You refer Jonathon to the course syllabus.

A. You stop to ask your teacher questions before you take a seat.  
B. You take a seat without interrupting the class.  
C. You ask a classmate or wait until the class is over to ask questions.  
D. You realize that you have missed too many classes and decide to withdraw from the course to save your grade point average.  
E. You refer to the course syllabus.
instructions, and this is evidenced in review sessions when students expect the teacher to practically read the exam questions or tell them everything that will be on the test in detail. Students want to know details like how many questions will be on the test and will the test be multiple choice, essay, or short answer. Instructors may feel that it does not matter how many questions will be on the test and expect students to ask more content based questions. Again, this is a mismatch in literacy and expectations. But, again, the conversation around this mismatch is rarely taking place. Students and instructors just complain about how their needs are not being met. It is worth exploring if students understand what is expected and where they think they should get the information. Also, it would help students when articulating their expectations of college.

Summary and Final Thoughts

This study was designed to explore if faculty members at an urban minority-serving institution [1] understand the possible implications for interpreting social cues, [2] understand the possible resulting social capital as critical to student success, and [3] provide students with instruction and opportunity to develop these skills to be identified. To begin to organize this information, participants’ responses were coded, analyzed, and then placed on the Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum in an attempt to begin to uncover participant characteristics that may be more aligned with Delpit’s more explicit approach to teaching social literacies or if participant characteristics are more aligned with Gee’s apprentice approach to teaching social literacies. The Delpit-Gee Practical Continuum was introduced in Chapter 2 and discussed in Chapter 4 in relation to study findings. During the analysis of data for each participant, it was noted if the data revealed a more Delpit or Gee approach (see Table 15).
Summary

Based on data collected for this study, of the seven participants, six participants are more aligned with the Delpit side of the continuum, but of these six participants, all have at least one characteristic from the Gee side of the continuum. Overall, the participants reported their teaching as more explicit in regard to helping students negotiate, socially, the higher education context. Again, comparing the responses from the faculty participants with student participants would be a way to determine if this belief comes across in their teaching and if students feel that they receive explicit instruction about social literacy skills and expectations. Such research is therefore needed to extend the results of this study.

The data from this study suggest that the participants understand that the students that they teach face many challenges in regard to navigating the higher education context. They also understand that differences in social literacy skills may be at the root of those challenges. However, it became apparent that there may be a difference in what these participants think they do to address these differences in social literacy explicitly and what they may actually do when faced with a situation. The participants tended to judge their students without having explicit conversations with their students. For example, more than one participant stated that students are capable of learning and performing but they do not want to. What was missing was a description from a participant where he or she had a conversation with a student and the student said that he or she did not want to learn or made a choice not to learn. But if students understand that this is the expectation and perception about them, they not be motivated to do anything better. They might not understand that “better” is an option, and for them, being judged is a natural part of life.
Final Thoughts

This study was a starting point of a much-needed conversation about postsecondary literacy and how perceptions about literacy and about students’ literacy experiences held by faculty have implications for the way they interact with students. Lee et al. (2003) propose cultural socialization as a means for understanding how people “participate in routine practices across settings” (p. 6). By understanding how people are culturally socialized, faculty members who teach minorities or even, more broadly, new-to-academia populations of students may find ways to become better prepared to teach these students the social norms of college life.

The decision to teach or remain at an institution that said its mission is to provide opportunities and experiences for students who may have lived much of their lives in the margin means, at least implicitly, that one is willing to take responsibility for those students, which includes their successes and their failures. To remain and not take the responsibility, especially from a social justice perspective, is unjust and damaging to the lives of the students who attend. It is simply not enough to acknowledge that a gap in skills exists. It is not enough to say that the issue is one of poor home environments, K-12 schools, language, and limited exposure. It is necessary to take action. Teachers, by virtue of the profession, are in fact responsible for the growth and progression of the students they teach. This growth and progression is not always in the discipline.

It is a myth that in order to participate in an environment, one has to “buy into” the ideas and values of that environment. African American authors have written about double-consciousness and “the mask” that African Americans, for the purpose of survival, have learned to wear, but still maintain personal and cultural identity. Saying that in order for
African Americans to acquire mainstream Discourse (orally, written, or physically because Discourse is also a way of being in a context) they must devalue or shed, so to speak, their culture is to say that the accomplishments of successful African Americans who have mastered Discourse is not due to their connection with their culture, but, in part, due to acceptance of oppression. The ability to navigate multiple identities is not an option. It is a requirement for success and the resistance of oppressive forces. That is what we do as teachers. We encourage, we reflect, and we motivate change. Or else, we become the oppression that we teach our students to resist.
REFERENCES


Ladson-Billings, G. J. (2002). I ain’t writing nutt ing: Permissions to fail and demands to succeed in urban classrooms. In L. Delpit (Ed.), The skin that we speak: Thoughts on language and culture in the classroom (pp. 107-121). New York, NY: New York Press.


Purcell-Gates, V. (2002). “….As soon as she opened her mouth!”: Issues of language, literacy, and power. In L. Delpit (Ed.), *The skin that we speak: Thoughts on language and culture in the classroom* (pp. 121-144). New York, NY: New York Press.


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

STANDARD INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
### General Participant Background Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group:</th>
<th>20-30</th>
<th>31-40</th>
<th>41-50</th>
<th>51-60</th>
<th>61-70</th>
<th>71-80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do you identify racially?</td>
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<td>Gender Identification:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highest Degree Earned/Discipline:</td>
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<td>How long you have you been employed at this institution?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why did you seek employment at institution?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did you research the institution prior to accepting employment [location, student and faculty demographics]?</td>
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<td>Are you the first member of your nuclear family [of origin] to attend college?</td>
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<td>Discuss your undergraduate experience in regard to your interaction with your instructors and peers.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Overall Research Question:** This study explores faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and how faculty members teach students to interpret (read) social cues.

**Directions:** Thinking about students who typically enroll in the freshmen block courses that you teach, please respond the below questions.
### Basic Perceptions of Students

**Questions**

1. Describe to me the extent to which your students are serious and take personal responsibility for their education.

2. How well prepared do your students come to class?

3. Can you describe how your students take correction or directive?

4. Describe how your students sacrifice personal time to be successful.

5. Describe the expectations or standards that you have for your students. Have you ever had to adjust your standards? In what ways?

6. How do you view your students’ abilities to meet your standards in general and for literacy specifically?

### Faculty Perceptions of Student Literacy Skills [RQs #1 and 6]

**Questions**

7. Explain the level of importance that you place on students’ ability to communicate effectively.

8. Name three communicative skills that you see as necessary for success [for students].

9. Describe your students’ ability to communicate in Standard English.

10. In what ways do you help students understand how their communication skills impact how they are perceived by others?
### Faculty's Role in Students' Social Literacy Development [RQs #2 and 3]

**Questions**

11. When students behave in a way that you find inappropriate, how do you go about dealing with those instances? What do you do if students challenge you? What do you do if students become confrontational?

### Literacy as a Social Practice [RQ #5]

**Questions**

12. When I call a colleague, I first ask if he or she is able to take my call before I begin talking. **True or false**
   - What makes you do this?
   - If true, where did you learn to do this?

13. When I see a colleague in the hall, I say hello even if I may not have been introduced. **True or false**
   - What makes you do this?
   - If true, where did you learn to do this?

14. When I see students on campus outside of class, I speak to them. **True or false**
   - What is the value of responding in this way?

15. I do not interrupt conversations. **True or false**
   - Is there ever a time when you do or do not?

16. I see building relationships with my students as positive and necessary for my students’ success. **True or false**
   - Why or why not?

17. The classroom is the space for students to build relationships. **True or false**
   - If true, how do you facilitate this?
   - If false, why not? Where is the appropriate space for students to build relationships?

18. Students do not understand the consequences of their behavior in class. **True or false**
   - Name three possible consequences ___________ _______________ __________

19. Those students who display “appropriate” behavior, position themselves to gain access to opportunities. **True or false**
   - Name three characteristics of “appropriate” behavior ___________ _______________ __________

20. I have a responsibility to help my students build relationships. **True or false**
   - Describe and provide examples.
**Overall Research Question:** This study explores faculty-student interaction as a process of socialization for students and how faculty members teach students to interpret (read) social cues.

**Directions:** Thinking about students who typically enroll in the freshmen block courses that you teach, please respond to the following questions.

1. Describe to me the extent to which your students are serious and take personal responsibility for their education.

2. How well prepared do your students come to class?

3. Can you describe how your students take correction or directive?

4. Describe how your students sacrifice personal time to be successful.

5. Describe the expectations or standards that you have for your students. Have you ever had to adjust your standards?

6. How do you view your students’ abilities to meet your standards in general and specifically for literacy?

7. Explain the level of importance that you place on students’ ability to communicate effectively.

8. Name three communicative skills that you see as necessary for success [for students].

9. Describe your students’ ability to communicate in Standard English.

10. In what ways do you help students understand how their communication skills are perceived by others?

11. When students behave in a way that you find inappropriate, how do you go about dealing with those instances? What do you do if students challenge you? What do you do if students become confrontational?

12. When I call a colleague, I first ask if he or she is able to take my call before I begin talking.  
   **True or false**

13. When I see a colleague in the hall, I say hello even if I may not have been introduced.  
   **True or false**

14. When I see students on campus outside of class, I speak to them.  
   **True or false**

15. I do not interrupt conversations.  
   **True or false**
16. I see building relationships with my students as positive and necessary for my students’ success. **True or false**

17. The classroom is the space for students to build relationships. **True or false**

| 18. Students do not understand the consequences of their behavior in class. | True or false | Name three possible consequences. |
| 19. Those students who display “appropriate” behavior, position themselves to gain access to opportunities. | True or false | Name three characteristics of “appropriate” behavior. |
| 20. I have a responsibility to help my students build relationships. | True or false | Describe and provide examples |
APPENDIX B

VIGNETTES
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette #1</th>
<th>How do you proceed?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context- In the Classroom</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jonathon, a student enrolled in your course, arrives late to class after being absent. Jonathon’s absences have exceeded the number allowed per the university attendance policy and his course work is suffering as a result of his excessive and extended absences. As Jonathon enters the classroom, in the middle of your lecture, he attempts to discuss his absences and missing course work.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>B. You tell Jonathon that you cannot address his question now and that he is interrupting the class.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>C. You tell Jonathon that his lack of information is due to his absences and that he has to get the information from a classmate or wait until the class is over to ask questions.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>D. You tell Jonathon that he has missed too many classes and that he should withdraw from the course to save his grade point average.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>E. You refer Jonathon to the course syllabus.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. You are returning student essays to students in your class. Anita receives her graded essay and immediately begins to loudly voice her anger, with the assessment of her writing, using inappropriate language.</strong></td>
<td><strong>A. You respond to the student’s concerns by suggesting that she reads the comments that you provided on the paper.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>B. You ignore the student’s outburst and continue with what you were doing.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>C. You tell the student that her response is absolutely inappropriate and that she should not speak to you in that way.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>D. You ask the student to leave the class.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>E. You invite the student to see you after class.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>F. You indirectly respond to the student by addressing the class.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vignette #2</td>
<td><strong>Context- The Office Visit</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. A student who has an issue with attendance and punctuality arrives at your office during your scheduled office hours to discuss his or her grade. The student asks questions about the requirements of an assignment that you have</strong></td>
<td><strong>A. You tell the student that if he or she attended class regularly and arrived on time when he or she did attend, he or she might have a better understanding of the assignment and suggest that the student enroll in the class during a semester when he or she can dedicate more time to the course.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
already discussed during class, on multiple times, and that you have provided the class in writing.

B. You address the student’s question without any mention of the issues with attendance and punctuality.

C. You tell the student that he or she should get the information from a classmate.

D. You address the student’s questions, but you also tell the student that his or her absences and lateness makes him or her look like a bad student and may have negative implications on how he or she is perceived by others.

E. You invite the student to discuss the issues that may be preventing him or her from attending class and/or arriving to class on time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette #3</th>
<th>Open-ended response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context: The Instructional Challenge</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. You were assigned a class days before the beginning of the semester. The late teaching assignment gives you little time to prepare. On the first day, you meet the students and discuss your policies and give them an overview of the course. You tell</td>
<td>How do you proceed?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
them that you do not have the syllabus prepared, but will have the syllabus ready to give them during the next class meeting, which is in two days. After class, an older student approaches your desk and tells you that you should take personal responsibility and that it does not look good for someone of your ethnicity to make excuses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette #4</th>
<th>How do you proceed?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.</strong> You walk past a colleague’s office door. The door is open and you have a quick question. You notice that there is a student sitting in the office.</td>
<td>A. You go ahead and ask the question because it is quick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B.</strong> After teaching class, a student approaches you with a note. You take the note and read it in your office. In the note, the student shares that during lectures, you often say umm and that makes you look like you do not know what you are talking about and that you often look unprepared. The student shares that he or she is only trying to help you out because the class thinks you do not know what you are talking about.</td>
<td>B. You ask your colleague to call you when he or she is finished with the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C.</strong> How do you proceed?</td>
<td>C. You decide to sit outside of the office and wait for the student to leave.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

CROSS-CODING DATA TABLE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Experience/Basic Perceptions of Self [includes UG]</th>
<th>Perceptions of Self as Teacher</th>
<th>Perceptions of Faculty/Peers</th>
<th>Perceptions of Students</th>
<th>Perceptions of the Role of Education or Institution</th>
<th>Expectations of Student Abilities/ Skills/ Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty discussed how they arrived at the institution and why they accepted employment</td>
<td>Faculty tended to either see themselves as mentors or as “babysitters”</td>
<td>Faculty made mention of how they think their peers interact with students, perceive students’ abilities, and prepare students to meet the challenges of the world.</td>
<td>Faculty responses about their basic perceptions of students tended to either be from a deficit model or a non-deficit model. Some responses were almost as if the question was, “Do you think students are……?” instead of “Describe……”</td>
<td>Incorporates too much of corporate models – Student is customer-Customer is always right- Not true</td>
<td>All faculty members responded that they have very high expectations or standards. Communicating clearly, both orally and in writing, was consistently identified as a necessary skill for success and often used as variables to judge students by the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses ranged from describing their undergraduate experience to their preparation for college.</td>
<td>This category also includes mention of race.</td>
<td>Students are described as unprepared and at times unmotivated.</td>
<td>To help students learn about context</td>
<td>Included in this category was the ability to apply concepts and display contextually appropriate social skills as important.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some faculty reflected on their childhood and the importance family placed on a college education.

There is a consistent comparison of older returning students and younger first-time full-time freshmen. This was so consistent that I often had to remind the participant that he or she should be thinking about the first-time full-time freshman when responding to the questions. Even with that reminder, the participants continued to make the comparison. Older students are looked at more favorably than the more traditional first-time full-time freshman.

To transform students
The theme of race, either theirs or their students’, also surfaces in this category.

Within this category, faculty reflected on their own experiences.
APPENDIX D

CONSENT LETTER
PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT LETTER
Using Literacy to Explore Faculty Beliefs Regarding Teaching African American Freshmen to Interpret Social Cues

Dear Faculty:

My name is Concetta A. Williams, a doctoral candidate under the direction of Dr. Sonya L. Armstrong in the Department of Literacy Education at Northern Illinois University [NIU]. I am conducting a critical qualitative research study to discover if faculty recognize, assess, and address the ways that students interpret social cues.

This research project will be conducted during the fall 2013 semester. In my dissertation, I will provide an analysis of data collected in this study and will share the findings with my dissertation committee and you, the participant. I may also present the results in an academic venue. I am requesting your participation in this research. Your participation would include: one [1] tape recorded interview and response to vignettes in a single session that will approximately last forty minutes to an hour. In addition, you will be asked to verify your responses during a member check session that will be scheduled at the conclusion of the interview session. Specifically, I will ask you questions that relate to the following:

1. Basic perceptions of students.
2. Faculty perceptions of students’ literacy skills.
3. Faculty’s role in students’ social literacy development.
4. Faculty’s views regarding literacy as a social practice.

Tape recording is necessary so that I can construct a verbatim transcript to use in the analysis. All transcripts, notes, and information will be destroyed three [3] years after the conclusion of the dissertation process. All transcripts, notes, and information will be kept in a locked file.

I will keep whatever information you provide confidential. No one other than me will have access to the information, and the information you provide will not be identified by your name (I will use a pseudonym) in the dissertation I construct. Only I will have access to the transcripts and notes. In the dissertation I write, there may be some quotations from the interviews, but I will not use your real name and will endeavor to protect your identity so that you will experience no adverse effects for your honesty in the interviews and your willingness to participate.

Your participation is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for deciding not to participate. Also, you are free to withdraw from participation at any time, for any reason, with no penalties of any sort.

Please, sign below and return this form if you understand what I am asking of you and if you are willing to participate.

Thank you,
Concetta A. Williams
INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

1. I have read the description of the dissertation title, Using Literacy to Explore Faculty Beliefs Regarding Teaching African American Freshmen to Interpret Social Cues.

2. I understand that the primary purpose of this research is to explore and interpret the beliefs of faculty teaching at minority-serving institutions as they relate to African American, first time, full-time freshmen’s ability to interpret social cues.

3. I understand that I may ask the researcher, the dissertation chair, or the Northern Illinois University Research and Sponsored Programs Office questions about the dissertation or my participation at anytime using the contact information that follows.

   Concetta A. Williams  
   708.____._______  
   cw____@__________  

   Dr. Sonya L. Armstrong  
   815.753.8486  
   sarmstrong@niu.edu  

   Office of Research Compliance  
   815.753.8588  

4. I will keep whatever information you provide confidential.

5. Dr. Sonya L. Armstrong and Concetta A. Williams have my permission to use the information gathered from the taped interviews and notes with the understanding that they will not reveal my name or other identifying information in any publications or reports.

6. I volunteer to participate in this critical qualitative research and understand that the interview will be tape recorded to facilitate analysis of the data.

7. I will be interviewed by Concetta A. Williams using a structured interview schedule consisting one [1] interview that will include twenty [20] interview questions and seven [7] vignettes.

8. I will be asked to verify my responses after they are transcribed.

9. I understand that results from this interview will be included in Concetta A. Williams’s doctoral dissertation and may also be included in manuscripts submitted to professional journals for publication and conferences.

   I am willing to participate, and I am 18 years old or older by December 1, 2012. (For legal reasons, all participants must be 18 years old or older.)

   Print First Name  Print Last Name  Signature/Date

   I consent to having my interview and member check session audio taped. I understand that this audio tape and the information on the audio will not be shared.

   Print First Name  Print Last Name  Signature/Date

   Please provide the best email address to contact you.

   Please provide the best telephone number to contact you.