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Exploring Faculty Members' Multicultural Competence at a Faith-Based Institution

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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2014
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Abstract

This study explored challenges related to issues of diversity for faculty members teaching in nontraditional adult degree completion programs. The problem addressed was an increasing expectation that faculty members facilitate learning to help increase the cultural proficiency of their students without having prior training or needed experience. A critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) case study methodology with a transformative conceptual framework was used to explore the intersection of effective adult learning paradigms and multicultural competence. The primary research question addressed the cultural competence challenges that faculty members confront when teaching in the adult classroom. A purposeful sample of 188 faculty members was selected to take a self-reflective survey. Ten participants then self-selected to participate in follow-up focus groups and interviews. Qualitative data analysis was conducted through line-by-line analysis resulting in emergent themes, both in the self-reflective survey and in the focus groups and interviews, and then filtered through the change process phases of CAI. Findings revealed a need for further knowledge about diversity scholarship and identity formation, particularly related to sociocultural power differentials that may impact student learning engagement. The resulting project was a training module with opportunities for follow-up faculty learning communities to deepen learning about inclusive practice. Positive implications for social change included, but were not limited to, increased critical consciousness for faculty members and the successful use of CAI as a methodology for facilitating nondefensive dialogue in faith-based institutions of higher learning.

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Dedication

This research study is dedicated to Sarah, whose life and work have made mine possible. Her passionate commitment to social justice and inclusive excellence in all of her spheres of influence have left an indelible print on my heart and are the touchstone of this study. I am daily and forever grateful for her presence on the journey.

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I would like to thank my amazing husband, Larry; our two precious daughters, Katie and Cheri; and Dr. Kathryn H., my wonderful chair, mentor, and friend, for helping me complete something that daily threatened to undo me. None of this work would have been possible without Dr. Fred G., who opened my eyes to the wondrous world of adult education and patiently walked the degree completion journey with me every step of the way. Without their love and support, along with other cherished family, friends, and colleagues who came alongside me, I would have stepped away from a work that I hope and pray will be used to further human flourishing through the creative energy of God, who never stops loving us.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

Over the past few decades, returning adult students wishing to complete a bachelor's degree have become a familiar part of traditional university settings. Ross-Gordon (2011) noted that "National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) data indicate that 38 percent of the 2007 enrollment of more than eighteen million college students were 25 years of age or older" (para. 1). Adult learning-focused models of delivery, particularly high-intensity, accelerated formats, have become widely known for creatively integrating theoretical and applied learning, helping adults persist to their graduation and professional goals (Wlodkowski & Kasworm, 2003, p. 1). Many of these programs are housed in faith-based institutions (Gadd, 2012; Wlodkowski, 2003) in which the student population has become increasingly diverse and yet "the ethnic composition of the faculty is rarely keeping up with the diversity of the student population" (Taylor, Van Zandt, & Menjares, 2013, p. 110). While there is an increasing expectation that faculty members facilitate learning with their adult students to help increase cultural knowledge and competence, faculty members may not have had the professional training or experience necessary to make this learning occur.

This research was focused on the idea that an increasingly diverse student population in higher education creates an opportunity for faculty members and students alike to learn new ways to effectively and ethically navigate a widely diverse, rapidly changing academic arena. In particular, the research addressed the ways in which the creative use of experience as a rich source of learning in nontraditional adult degree-

completion programs can became a unique catalyst for helping to develop culturally

competent faculty who could, in turn, foster this awareness for their students. Through

the use of critical appreciative inquiry (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012) and a focused,

case study exploration (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011), elements of effective teaching

practice that engage a social justice perspective were examined. The setting for the study

was a medium-sized Christian liberal arts university in Southern California (referred to

with the pseudonym *Pax University*) in adult degree-completion (ADP; pseudonym)

programs serving a large number of adult students from diverse backgrounds. ADP

currently exists as an academic unit within the institution that has historically been a

forerunner in student-centered learning as a focus of best practice, embodying the adult

learning frameworks of Knowles (1984) and Kolb (1984) and inclusive of student

experience as an avenue for accelerated and applied learning.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine ways in which existing, positive

elements of adult teaching/learning practice in ADP programs could help faculty

members explore how cultural identity and critical consciousness impact student

engagement and motivation to learn. The study sought to make the connection between

increasing cultural competence as an integral and requisite part of effective adult learning

paradigms and confirmed the ways in which experiential and adult-focused learning

models create a natural context for dialogue, inclusion, and transformation through

critical reflection.

The study further searched for ways in which to help faculty members in an evangelical Christian higher education context explore the power elements related to teaching through a social justice perspective and to examine those elements through the positive change model of appreciative inquiry (AI). The research also sought to discern needed levels of support for faculty members as they work toward meeting institutional expectations of cultural competence and the Christian imperative for inclusive practice.

Definition of the Problem

Christian University Setting and Local Problem Prompting the Study

Pax University is a member of the international Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU), whose recent (2011) professional conference was devoted to the topic of cultural competency, diversity, and reconciliation tied to the Christian mandate for human flourishing (CCCU Conference Program Overview, para. 1). The university is representative of a number of evangelical, faith-based institutions whose teaching faculty and student body were once primarily homogenous and of majority status (White, male/female, Christian, straight, able-bodied) but have intentionally sought to become more diverse. While actively recruiting a diverse student body to meet their mission-focused goals, financial needs, and regional accrediting body requirements, CCCU institutions have often lagged behind in having the necessary institutional structures to support and sustain diverse demographics once students are enrolled and sitting in classrooms (Carr, 2011). One important frame in this structure is faculty awareness of and responsiveness to the diverse learners in their midst. Diversity initiatives focused on creating inclusive classrooms have been a growing mandate for

CCCU schools (CCCU Conference Proceedings, 2011). While not referencing Christian institutions in particular, Smith (2009) noted that academic change is often focused on faculty members and that "faculty development has been a central part of [successful] diversity work" (p. 58).

Though Pax University and ADP programs have made strides in the increase of numbers of diverse faculty members, Office of Institutional Research (OIR) data indicate that 76% fall into majority status category versus 24% of other faculty. Having too many homogenous faculty members is an issue because "teaching is most effective when … prior experience, community settings, cultural backgrounds, and ethnic identities of teachers and students are included [in pedagogical frameworks]" (Gay, 2010b, p. 22). Faculty members tend to teach through their own worldview and perceptions, and many are not aware of "conventional teaching practices [as reflecting] European American cultural values" (Gay, 2010b, p. 22).

Currently, there is no process in place that assesses existing levels of multicultural competence in the classroom or supports ADP faculty members in further developing their teaching practice to work effectively with diverse learners. The university has made diversity one of its missional cornerstones, and a recent Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation site visit resulted in recommendations to increase faculty opportunities for growth and development in the area of diversity. As the university has increased expectations for faculty members to grow in the area of inclusive teaching and learning, ADP should equip its faculty members to embrace diversity competence as a natural part of adult education practice. Research has shown that

intentional efforts to assist faculty members in developing an understanding of the effective components of inclusive practice increase student learning engagement and persistence to graduation (Danowitz & Tuitt, 2011; Pickens, Bachay, & Treadwell, 2009). This research study makes a contribution to existing bodies of knowledge by showing the unique potential that exists within adult learning paradigms for opening up hospitable and transformative dialogue about diversity awareness and inclusive teaching practice within a Christian higher education setting. It also extends current knowledge about the use of AI as an avenue for fostering nondefensive dialogue about diversity competence.

Nontraditional Adult Learners and Learning Environments

According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), adults who fall into a nontraditional category share the following: They have delayed college by at least 1 year, are employed full time, may be single parents, may have dependents, and may be attending school part time (Thomas & Hollenshead, 2012, para. 2). Choy (2002) noted that in the past, nontraditional students were considered any learners at the university not taking a traditional 4-year route to a bachelor's degree; however, when the AAC&U descriptors are applied, "a full 73% of [returning adult] students may be viewed as nontraditional" (as cited in Ross-Gordon, 2011, para. 1).

Pax University has been offering nontraditional adult degree-completion programs for over 20 years on its main campus, at seven regional centers, and more recently, in the online environment. Five programs exist (organizational leadership, liberal studies [K-12 teacher preparation], computer science, information security, and RN to BSN). Students are recruited from the business and professional environments of

the surrounding communities, and, since the emergence of online delivery, from national

and international settings as well. Overarching program objectives include preparing

leaders for both the profit and nonprofit organizational sectors with a special emphasis

placed on the development of excellent management skills, communication skills, and

personal integrity. Students ranging in age from 22 to 70 years have completed at least

60 units of previous college work upon enrollment and are working within the

professional setting related to their major field of study. Program design is cohort-based

and lockstep as part of an intentional support structure proven to be effective in

accelerated adult degree-completion programs (Swenson, 2003). Acceleration of course

content is framed through the experiential and student-centered adult learning paradigms

of Knowles (1984) and Kolb (1984). The interactive learning environment is shaped by

Thornburg's (2004) model (campfire, cave, watering hole, and field), and content is

prioritized through Scriven's (1991) five levels of merit. Faculty members are primarily

adjunct instructors who are subject matter experts and currently working in their

professions. Seven full time ADP faculty members carry dual responsibilities of teaching

and administrative support through curriculum design, prior learning assessment, faculty

development, and program direction. Adult students are further supported by the one-

stop-shop model housing all student services (admissions, registration, financial aid,

books, and materials distributions) in one location and within hours suited to working

adult professionals. Two faculty development inservice sessions are held in the fall and

spring of each academic year, which are exclusively devoted to adult learning topics

designed to help adjunct faculty better understand the nature of the adult student and

accelerated, experiential learning. To date, none of the sessions have focused specifically on facilitating learning for diverse populations, even though the demographics for ADP students are more diverse than those of the traditional Pax student population, and the faculty in ADP remains more homogenous than the faculty base of the larger university. While worldview and culture are addressed in one course in each of the five programs, no systematic attempt has been made to update the curriculum to infuse a social justice perspective throughout course content that works to bring about increased critical consciousness for students or works as an avenue for increased understanding and dialogue for faculty members. Given the experiential focus of nontraditional model embraced by ADP, faculty members should also be given explicit training about the ways in which "experience in a learning situation is mediated by culture [and that motivation to learn] is both culturally infused and embedded" (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009, p. 29). As part of ADP's mission is to predict excellence in nontraditional learning for adult students, ADP's teaching practices should be mirroring and exceeding the efforts of the larger institution to support faculty members related to classroom challenges inherent in serving a diverse student population.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Equipping faculty to meet diverse learners' needs has been an important part of strategic planning for Pax since a 2004 WASC visit, when diversity was noted as an area of concern (Site Report—WASC Visits Areas of Concern Document). Institutional climate, co-curricular programming, and support for diversity-related initiatives and

activities were highlighted as needing improvement. Pax responded by forming the Office of Diversity Planning & Assessment (ODPA) "to ensure that the onus of responsibility for diversity and intercultural competence training and awareness does not rest solely on the shoulders of staff and students, but clearly involves faculty members, [and administrative leadership of] the university" (Commission Response Letter Document). From that initial work, the diversity council was formed and meets regularly as part of faculty governance. The Faculty of Color Network was established in 2006 as a recruitment and retention initiative for diverse faculty members, along with a comprehensive enrollment plan to increase the number of students from diverse backgrounds.

Racially motivated incidents during the 2007-2008 academic year gave further impetus to the need to raise awareness about diversity dynamics on campus and to increase awareness and responsiveness of administrators, staff, and faculty to issues being raised (K. Denu, Vice Provost, personal communication, October 30, 2012). Responsive action occurred through staff/faculty trainings, the creation of a conference devoted to exploring faith-based cultures and diversity, and targeting research from Pax faculty members already speaking about diversity issues at national conferences. From 2009 to 2011, the office of the provost sponsored focused opportunities for faculty development to better equip faculty members to respond to diverse issues raised in the classroom. Efforts were made to tie workshop participation to the faculty evaluation process in order to increase attendance. Intentional work to raise awareness was not restricted to racial differences but was expanded to include awareness regarding other

marginalized populations on campus. More recently, the diversity council has been tasked with creating faculty self-assessments for multicultural competence, and the 2012 WASC visit gave specific recommendations that Pax more clearly connect faculty evaluation and student learning outcomes to diversity competence. While strides have been made in diversity-related faculty development for full time faculty members, those who teach in ADP are primarily adjunct faculty members with limited access to training opportunities available to full time faculty.

Evidence of an Existing Problem—Larger Setting

Developing intercultural knowledge and competence is one of the skills that the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) identified as an essential learning outcome for students as they "prepare for twenty-first century challenges" (Schneider, 2008, p. 4). While the AAC&U is not making a distinction between traditionally aged (18 to 22 year-old) college students and the returning adult student, the ability to effectively navigate across social and cultural difference remains a priority for both segments of learners. The definition of *intercultural knowledge and competence* is "a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interactions in a variety of cultural contexts" (Bennett, 2008). Data collected to explore how students and faculty experience the learning environment through the Student Satisfaction Instrument (SSI) and the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) survey instruments, for example, depict a wide range in the capacity to engage difference effectively (OIR, 2011). Research also indicates that institutions of higher learning that have remained primarily homogenous often have a difficult time

responding to increasingly diverse faculty and student populations (Banks, 2009).

Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2009) noted that many teaching faculty were socialized in

monocultural schools and communities and still hold an "unexamined set of traditions

and beliefs" about self and others (p. 6).

Teaching Through a Social Justice Perspective

Adams and Love (2005) observed that the ability to build inclusive classrooms

across social and cultural difference requires a social justice perspective based upon the

analysis of inequitable social structures "characterized by domination and subordination"

(p. 587). Administrators, faculty, mentors, coaches, and other leaders in the higher

education setting need to have an understanding of how educational institutions replicate

and reproduce societal inequities. Educators have an opportunity to disrupt and

transform unequal relationships by helping students become informed about social

inequality and modeling equitable relationships in the classroom (Adams & Love, 2005).

Using Marchesani and Adams's (1992) dynamics of multicultural teaching and learning

model, a social justice perspective is gained through the examination of four dimensions

of teaching and learning: what students bring to the classroom setting, what teachers

bring, the curriculum used, and the pedagogical strategies employed to move students

toward active learning or push them away from engagement (Adams & Love, 2005). A

social justice perspective is a way of viewing, with increased understanding, a complex

interplay of these four areas with elements that can be both interdisciplinary and

discipline-specific to effect inclusive learning environments. Growth and development

are fostered through personal analysis of social identity and prior socialization. Elements

of power and privilege related to the intersection of social identities are discussed and contextualized within academic disciplines. Curriculum and resources are reviewed to integrate a diverse set of perspectives. Pedagogy is shaped by interactive, experiential elements that both match and stretch diverse learning styles and cognitive development levels (Adams & Love, 2005). Large-scale, institutional change to promote an overarching social justice perspective involves leadership support of faculty members across disciplines through a developmental approach that incentivizes creating and sustaining inclusive learning environments. Such change also requires an authentic desire on the part of university faculty and administrators to truly value diversity as an invitational learning process toward a mutually shared future (Pickens, Bachay, & Treadwell, 2009).

Defining a Diverse Population

Until recently, diversity was seen simply in terms of differences related to race, class, and gender. With the growth of research and literature in the area of diversity in a variety of settings (business, social work, nursing, psychological counseling, higher education, etc.) the term *diversity* has broadened to include a wide range of difference. Diversity can refer to but is not limited by gender, sexuality, religion, race, ability (disabilities or physical disabilities), socioeconomic status, national origin, language, and age (Adams et al., 2013). For the purpose of this research, the broadest interpretation of diversity as difference was meant when using the term *cultural or multicultural competence* and addressing the engagement of adult students in the ADP program setting. Owen (2009) pointed out that diversity in higher education also includes "the differences

that differences make" or a "diversity for equity" perspective (p. 187). Both meanings will be referenced when using the term *diversity* in this research study.

Describing Resistance Elements

Resistance to diversity conversations and related work toward facilitating understanding and awareness about difference are well documented in the literature. For example, recently, in an edition of *Inside Higher Education*, Grasgreen (2013) indicated that "majority disaffection" was a factor in White, straight men feeling alienated in the higher education workplace (para. 1). Those individuals in leadership at Pax University have used the term *resistance* to describe a prevailing attitude among some faculty members, staff members, and students who are against diversity conversations and awareness-raising efforts. The resistance has been voiced in written feedback on faculty member surveys, faculty governance meeting minutes, and interviews with those in leadership who confirm that resistance to diversity awareness is a reality that needs to be addressed. Resistance has also been given voice by students in videotaped conversations about elements that lead to learning disengagement in Pax classrooms (Visser, 2011). For many, the topic is politically and emotionally charged and makes people both uncomfortable and fearful. In a Christian setting, resistance is further compounded by the idea that discussing difference is more divisive than unifying and that the imperative to love oneself and one's neighbor is sufficient. This attitude does not take into account systemic realities that continue to persist in higher education learning communities, which primarily impact the learning engagement of those in minority populations.

According to McIntosh (2009b), there are five phenomena that prevent those in the dominant majority from engaging in discourse about diversity:

A sense of entitlement coming from a privileged identity; the myth of manifest destiny which eases moral and ethical dilemmas about the historical taking of land and genocide of indigenous others; the myth of White *racelessness*, which fosters a belief that there is no cultural identity related to being White and that being White is what constitutes *normal*; the myth of monoculture which imposes a requirement on others to act like the dominant majority or be viewed as abnormal; and, finally the myth of White moral superiority or internalized supremacy—a more hidden element of early socialization that is difficult to recognize but which plays out in everyday encounters unless interrupted by intentional work to raise awareness and make a change. (p. 2)

To some persons, the United States is seen as *postracial*, or no longer impacted by racism, as there is a sitting Black president and the nation has come through the Civil Rights era with its related legislative acts of integration and affirmative action. Such thinking can result in a *color-blind* society that refuses to give recognition to systemic elements that continue to favor some at the expense of others (Adams et al., 2013; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009). Ironically, in Christian institutions of higher learning, the need for dialogue and change around diversity can sometimes be minimized or stifled by accusations of political correctness and a cry for unit—"Why can't we all just get along?" There is a space of disconnection between what Jesus modeled in his radically inclusive lifestyle and what plays out in the Christian academic setting. Other resistance

takes the shape of discouragement ("What I say won't make a difference, anyway …"), feelings of inadequacy (not having the right words to say, so saying nothing at all), and not wanting to be the sole spokesperson for a larger cultural group (Christians on Diversity in the Academy Conference proceedings, 2013). To summarize, at Pax University, resistance has been expressed in many of the ways described above and is evidenced by faculty governance meeting minutes, classroom conversations, board and administration-initiated task force focus groups on diversity, and surveys on student engagement. Efforts to minimize resistance continue to be the goal of administrative and faculty leaders as they seek to make diversity competence a cornerstone of teaching and learning excellence and one that is naturally linked to Christian theology and social justice.

Critical appreciative inquiry

Diversity initiatives to raise awareness about inclusive classroom practices can also be met with resistance when faculty members perceive that their abilities are being questioned from a deficit mindset. The purpose of this research was to explore and examine through a positive, asset model (appreciative inquiry) the intercultural competence strengths that currently exist among ADP faculty members by "defining, locating and promoting examples of good practice in supporting student learning" (Bellinger & Elliott, 2011, p. 708). This research purposed to contribute to an understanding of the local problem by using a change model that creates synergy through personal storytelling and a constructivist paradigm that can bring about a "preferred future in the best of what already is" (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012, p. 24). An added

piece was a *critical* approach that encouraged dialogue about positionality and power, elements that can influence inclusive classroom dynamics (Guy, 2009). Critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) still uses the 5-D AI model (definition, discovery, dream, design, & destiny/delivery) but is better suited for creating change "within highly complex issues in which it is very clear what the problem is but less clear what a future state might be" (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012, p. 52). Intercultural competence and understanding are decidedly complex issues, particularly within the framework of an evangelical Christian higher education setting. Distinctives of evangelical Christian thinking that can create barriers to diversity work in institutions of Christian higher education are discussed in the literature review.

Transformative Learning as a Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this research is constructivist and transformative as articulated by Mezirow and Associates (2000), in which "change is mediated through personal reflection and dialogue with others [and] the central role of experience [serves as a] point of connection" (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 292). Explorations into cultural competence are grounded in personal story and critical self-reflection and then reverberate through social context. Transformative learning involves change through meaning making and paradigm shifting. Exploring intercultural competence is often the navigation of new terrain involving risk taking and unexpected turns. Transformative learning was an appropriate framework for this research because one of Mezirow's premises is the *disorienting dilemma* as catalyst for change, which "causes us to examine our underlying assumptions and values" (Merriam, Caffarella, &

Baumgartner, 2007, p. 214). The theory also looks at the ways in which people make meaning from their experience from both an individualistic and sociocultural standpoint. Intercultural effectiveness requires knowledge and understanding in both arenas. Transformative learning theory is also grounded in narrative—a way of knowing that does not necessarily rely on scientific fact or concrete evidence as much as honoring less easily languaged intuitive and embodied experience (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 209). Understanding diverse learners and ways of knowing should be part of effective teaching practice. Finally, transformative learning was used to inform the research study through the AI methodology, which uses storied experience to bring about change.

Definitions

5D cycle: A variation of the 4-D appreciative inquiry process that includes a fifth dimension titled *definition* and an expanded idea of *destiny*, which includes *design* and *delivery* (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012).

Accelerated degree completion: Programs at the university level structured for students to take less time than conventional or traditional programs require to attain university credits, certificates, or degrees (Wlodkowski, 2003).

Accelerated prioritization of content: Use of Scriven's (1991) five levels of evaluation for prioritizing what is necessary to include in accelerated course design: stand-alone, critical, important, desirable, nonessential.

Campfire/cave/watering hole/field: Thornburg's (2004) metaphors for learning environments in adult accelerated course design.

Cohort/lock-step learning model: An accelerated program design model for adult students in which the same group of students proceeds through all program course work together and all classes are placed in a specific order, all classes contain foundational and recursive content, and each course is required for degree completion.

Critical perspective/stance/awareness: Examination and critique of existing economic and social structures and their resultant power dynamics (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007).

Constructivist: A stance that maintains that learning is a process of constructing meaning and making sense of experience dynamics (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007).

Critical appreciative inquiry: A blend of social constructionism, critical theory, and appreciative inquiry that focuses on the positive while holding space for acknowledging and naming structural inequities that impact organizational change (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012).

Critical awareness: Also termed *critical literacy*, refers to analytical habits of thinking, reading, writing, speaking, or discussing that go beneath surface impressions, dominant narratives, mere opinions, and routine clichés and that lead to understanding the social contexts and consequences of any subject matter; discovering the deep meaning of any event, text, technique, process, object, statement, image, or situation; and applying that meaning to one's own context (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009).

Cultural, intercultural, or multicultural competence: (a) Awareness and knowledge of how age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual

orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status are crucial dimensions to an informed professional understanding of human behavior and (b) skills necessary for working effectively and ethically with culturally diverse individuals, groups, and communities (McNeil & Pozzi, 2007).

Diversity and diverse populations: Differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practices, and other human characteristics (Castania, 2011).

Diversity and diversity for equity: In higher education, diversity for equity seeks to mitigate social structures that represent barriers for some and advantages for others (Owen, 2009).

Dominant majority: People in dominant groups (such as men, the able-bodied, Whites, native English speakers, adults, Christians, the wealthy) with assumed rules of superiority (Castania, 2011).

Domination/subordination: Social structures in which dominant identity groups wield power and unmerited advantage over subordinate identity groups (McIntosh, 2009a).

Equity: The creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to have equal access to and participate in educational programs that are capable of closing the achievement gaps in student success and degree completion (AAC&U, 2007).

Equity mindedness: A demonstrated awareness of and willingness to address equity issues among institutional leaders and staff (Center for Urban Education, University of Southern California, as cited in AAC&U, 2007).

Faculty learning community (FLC): A group of transdisciplinary faculty members, with a group size of 6-15, engaging in an active, collaborative, year-long program with a curriculum about enhancing teaching and learning and with frequent seminars and activities that provide learning and development in the scholarship of teaching and learning ("What Is," 2013).

Inclusion: Active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways in which individuals interact within systems and institutions (AAC&U, 2007).

Intersectionality: A feminist concept that seeks to describe one's identity as coming from more than one social identifier. Multiple identifiers interact simultaneously to create one's social reality (Hearn, 2012).

Monocultural identity development: Being socialized and living in the dominant culture as forming a singular cultural identity, often shaping attitudes and norms as universally valued and preferred (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009).

Motivation for adult learners: An understanding that adults learn best when their experiences are integral to the learning environment and that experience is both culturally fused and embedded (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009; Knowles, 1984).

Multicultural identity development: Broad models of identity development that provide a basis for explaining and understanding how those from a variety of cultures who are not part of the dominant culture make meaning from their experience (Torres, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2003).

Narrative learning and storied experience: A way to view adult development as a narrative framework that sees the life course as an unfolding story, one constructed and interpreted by the individual (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007).

Nontraditional adult learners: Adults who have delayed college by at least 1 year, are employed full time, may be single parents, may have dependents, and may be attending school part time (Thomas & Hollenshead, 2012).

Positionality: Also termed *social location*, refers to the place a person occupies within a set of social relationships (Hearn, 2012).

Power: The positional and social relations of persons as existing within hierarchical spheres in which some people wield more authority than others (Sheared, Johnson-Bailey, Colin, Peterson, & Brookfield, 2010).

Privilege: The unearned advantages that come from having White skin (McIntosh, 2009a).

Self-authoring: The development of an internal meaning system that facilitates critical thinking, mature decision making, appreciation of multiple perspectives and difference, and interdependent relationships with others (Baxter Magolda & King, 2004).

Social identity awareness: Analysis of one's multiple and interacting social identities (race, gender, sexuality, etc.), as well as one's identity statuses (dominant or

subordinate) and the impact of those identities and identity statuses on various

dimensions of classroom practice (Adams & Love, 2005).

Socialization awareness: Analysis of how people come to know themselves as

persons holding the particular identities that they wear, and the socialization impact of

institutional and cultural systems, structures, and practices (Adams & Love, 2005).

Social justice issue awareness: Analysis of the consequences of societal structures

of domination and subordination on the life chances and opportunities for people from

different identity groups (Adams & Love, 2005).

Social justice facilitation: Assessment of readiness (support, passion, awareness,

knowledge, skills), establishing effective learning environments, choosing appropriate

leadership roles, and attending to a variety of leadership tasks (Adams & Love, 2005).

Social justice perspective: Bringing to the learning environment an understanding

that overarching social structures are characterized by domination and subordination and

that social and cultural difference are used to justify inequities that are reproduced in

social institutions (Adams & Love, 2005).

Student engagement: A positive energy invested in one's own learning, evidenced

by meaningful processing, attention to what is happening in the moment, and

involvement in learning activities (Schreiner & Louis, 2006).

White: A descriptor that helps those of White European ancestry name their

cultural group as one among many groups rather than the *normal* cultural group

(Castania, 2003).

Significance

This research study used a reflective self-assessment tool as a starting point for inquiry into the cultural competence of ADP faculty members, who were then given the opportunity to name and affirm positive aspects of their teaching-learning practice through focus group dialogue and one-on-one interview discussion. The research and project study for ADP also became a model for the larger university to promote teaching effectiveness and multicultural awareness through a positive paradigm of appreciative inquiry and adult-centered teaching practice. If this research had not been conducted, faculty members would still be held accountable to standards of cultural competence for which they have had no training or opportunity about which to learn. They may not have had the chance to engage in formal dialogue with other colleagues designed to bring about greater multicultural awareness, and frustration may have been the end result. Classroom practice may have been negatively impacted, and student satisfaction could have decreased. The larger university might also have missed out on an energizing change process (appreciative inquiry) that might have reframed current perceptions about diversity work and inclusive classrooms. Externally, students who experienced faculty members in ADP programs who are not culturally competent may have left with a degree but not have the full skill set needed to be effective employees, employers, and citizens.

Guiding/Research Question

A problem in adult degree completion programs is a highly diverse student population being taught by a primarily homogenous faculty who currently do not receive specific training and support to navigate the culturally diverse classroom. The primary

question guiding this research—"What cultural competence challenges confront faculty members when teaching in the adult classroom?"—lent itself to an exploratory case study methodology within the "bounded integrated system" of ADP programs and a selected group of their faculty members as specified by Glesne (2011, p. 22). A related question—"What are the current strengths that faculty members believe they have when teaching in diverse adult classrooms?"—was given voice through the critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) process. Other questions included "In what ways does the Marchesani and Adams (1992) reflective assessment tool impact ADP faculty members and multicultural competence in the adult classroom?" and "How does dialogue and discussion through a CAI lens impact teaching and learning of ADP faculty members giving voice to their unique stories and perspectives?" An additional question was "How can the use of CAI create a nondefensive environment for discussion about diversity issues that have been historically difficult for Pax faculty members?" It was anticipated that because CAI is an inquiry process that envisions what could be and qualitative case study research produces emerging data, other questions would reveal themselves in the course of the data collection and analysis phase of the study (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Merriam, 2009). This conjecture proved to be true, and emergent questions are discussed in the data analysis section.

At least 20 years of research exist describing the need for culturally competent faculty members in higher education classrooms. However, little attention is given in the literature to the intersection of cultural competence and effective adult-centered learning environments as an ideal context for fostering cultural awareness and change. When

considering the further overlay of Christian higher education with its missional focus for inclusive learning excellence and the use of CAI as a tool for organizational change, the literature has even less to say. In evangelical Christian higher education, a good deal of intentional energy is spent helping faculty members become competent in the integration of faith in their classroom practice. Institutional leaders recognize that faculty members come to the university trained in their specific disciplines but not necessarily in how to approach their subject-matter expertise from a perspective that infuses faith integration into their scholarly practice. Therefore, many opportunities for growth and development are offered for faculty members, and faith integration competence is tied to evaluation for rank and promotion. At Pax University, diversity competence is coming to be seen as an area that needs the same kind of intentionality. This research study filled an important gap for the institution by offering new ways of approaching difficult diversity conversations through the lens of appreciative inquiry and adult-learning-focused paradigms. The marriage of these two modalities in a Christian higher education setting has the potential to shift and transform diversity efforts in ways not previously seen.

Review of the Literature

The literature review for this study encompassed bodies of thought from a number of areas to discuss the nature of cultural competence for faculty members in Christian higher education and adult learning adequately. The review included scholarship regarding adult and experiential learning, cultural competence, transformative learning, evangelical Christian higher education, and appreciative inquiry (AI). Strategies used to search the literature included the following: reviews of primary text sources from experts

in the field, current peer-reviewed journal articles, and reviews of dissertations found in the ProQuest database. I surveyed references listings and bibliographies of other published works found in university libraries (Walden University, Azusa Pacific University, and Claremont Colleges). Key search terms included *accelerated adult learning, adult learning, appreciative inquiry, constructivist learning, cultural capital, cultural competence, Christian higher education, cultural intelligence, culturally responsive pedagogy, diversity, emotional intelligence, evangelical Christian higher education, experiential learning, faculty learning communities, identity development, intercultural competence, integrative higher education, intersectionality, meaning-making, meta-cognition, multicultural competence, motivation, narrative learning, nontraditional adult learners, positionality, power, privilege, self-authorship, social justice perspective, student engagement,* and *transformative learning.*

Adult and Experiential Learning

      Introduction. Effective adult-focused learning models center on student experience as a rich source of learning (Knowles, 1984; Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Such models provide a natural context for expanding awareness and understanding about diverse others (Flowers, 2010; Greenberg & Perry, 2005; Merriam, Baumgartner, & Caffarella, 2007); however, critical consciousness of the instructor also plays a key role (Guy, 2009; Lund, 2010). This first portion of the literature review serves to provide a clear context for the compelling nature of adult learning-focused paradigms and the connections between effective use of experience and shifts in cultural thinking. Experience as an essential element of adult learning models, creating inclusive

classrooms through dialogue and critical reflection, as well as the necessary emancipatory outlook of the instructor will be discussed.

Background.

Effective adult learning models. Many adult learners are pleasantly surprised upon their return to higher education in programs designed with the adult learner in mind (Kenner & Weinerman, 2011; Ross-Gordon, 2011). Much of that delight is found in the shift from being a passive learner in a teacher-centered pedagogical structure to a model that embraces andragogical principles in which the adult student's life roles and experience become central to new learning. When Malcolm Knowles began to popularize the idea of andragogy in the 1970s and 1980s, he relied on the previous work of Eduard Lindeman and Carl Rogers to frame his understanding about the ways that adults learn best (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). Lindeman, also known as the father of adult education, gave eloquent prose to the nature of experience and learning and the importance of considering experience as a vital component of adult education programs in his classic work, *The Meaning of Adult Education* (Lindeman, 1926). Rogers and his *whole-person learning* (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994) had a strong influence on Knowles's work and continue to be an underlying force in the current movement for integrative higher education (Bassett, 2011; Lipson-Lawrence, 2012; Palmer & Zajonc, 2010). Integrative education is an important idea in this discussion, because in light of the experience of the adult student and the idea of bringing all of one's self to the learning endeavor, if a person's cultural experience and identity are minimized or dismissed, then student engagement falters and effective teaching comes to a halt. Truly acknowledging

whole student experience in the classroom as an undergirding paradigm in successful

adult learning environments is a critical link to culturally responsive teaching (Gay,

2010b; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009; Schreiner, 2013).

  Experiential learning. Summarizing his own seminal work on experiential

learning (Kolb, 1984), David Kolb, along with his research partner and spouse, Alice,

described the following main tenets of experiential learning theory (ELT): Experiential

learning is (a) best described as a process, (b) considers all learning to be re-learning, (c)

requires the resolution of conflict of opposing modes of adapting to the world, (d) is a

holistic process of adaptation to the world, (e) results from synergetic transactions

between the person and the environment, and (f) is the process of creating knowledge

through a constructivist paradigm in which social knowledge is created and re-created in

the personal knowledge of the learner (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, p. 194). Experiential learning

is not a set of strategies to provide learners with experiences from which they can learn,

nor is it a simple recording of one's experiences as an avenue for learning (Kolb & Kolb,

2005). Instead, ELT encompasses knowledge creation and the transforming of

experience (Kolb, 1984). While some have criticized Kolb as not truly taking the

learner's context into consideration in terms of power issues, integrative and

transformative learning is the goal of his experiential learning process (Merriam,

Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). (Transformative learning as a context for better

understanding power elements of adult learner experience will be discussed further on in

this literature review as part of the conceptual framework for the research that was

conducted.)

In a comprehensive monograph for ERIC on experiential learning, Fenwick (2003) further expanded on the nature of experience and learning in adult, career, and vocational education. She foregrounded the idea that experiential learning as a movement in adult education has helped learners view their informal, experiential learning to be as important as learning gained in formal, academic settings. This assertion, in turn, has been a source of empowerment for adults who have used this new-found confirmation of their experiential knowledge to bring about emancipatory change. In relationship to culturally responsive teaching in higher education classrooms, the idea of empowering students through truly acknowledging the significant learning events from their life experience is a cornerstone of effective facilitation of adult learning.

Current issues.

The adult classroom as a place of dialogue, inclusion, and transformation. A hallmark of effective adult learning environments is a shift of power for the instructor from all-knowing teacher to a facilitator who is learning alongside students (Brookfield, 2006; Knowles, 1980). This changed stance does not negate the subject-matter expertise of the instructor, but instead acknowledges that adult students possess an experiential knowledge base that is vital to the learning process (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Sharing power in the classroom is sometimes difficult for faculty members who have come from a traditional model of teaching and learning. Yet the ability to do so creates a space for humility and authenticity in the learning environment—two characteristics that have been shown to help people progress in cultural competence work (Johnson-Bailey & Alfred, 2008; Lindsey, Martinez, & Lindsey, 2007; Paxton, 2010).

One of the best descriptors of the adult classroom as one in which adult experience and knowledge are respected was put forth by Vella (2002) in defining dialogue as the foundational *word between us* in adult learning paradigms. While not mentioning experiential learning theory directly, Vella's work in the field of adult education over the past 30 years has elicited some of the most powerful and poignant illustrations of esteeming the unique culture and experience of adult learners (Vella, 2008). Examples contained in her writings are those from both the national and international setting and give clear voice to the use of dialogue education as emancipatory practice.

Another prominent thinker in the field of adult education who holds dialogue and discussion as central to inclusive adult learning practice is Stephen Brookfield. Not only does Brookfield's (1991) earlier work on developing critical thinkers set the stage for facilitators of adult learning to help students grapple with the complexity of difference, his continued legacy of writings on discussion as a way of teaching (Brookfield & Preskill, 1999, 2005) brings practical tools to the process. Other related works highlighting the importance of experiential dialogue focus on understanding and facilitating adult learning (Brookfield, 1986), the power of critical theory (Brookfield, 2005), skillful teaching (Brookfield, 2006), social justice issues in learning and leadership (Brookfield, 2008), and a recent update on powerful techniques for teaching adults (Brookfield, 2013).

Sharing power in the adult classroom through a facilitative teaching style has been primarily the domain of nontraditional adult learning paradigms. Recently, however, the AAC&U articulated a set of essential learning outcomes for traditional undergraduate

students of institutions participating in the organization's Liberal Education and

America's Promise (LEAP) project. One of the learning goals is fostering intercultural

knowledge and competence. Traditional, undergraduate instructors could benefit from

the student-centered, experiential approach used by facilitators of adult learning.

Professors across disciplines and student demographics at Pax University will be

expected to facilitate culturally competent learning in the classroom; therefore,

embracing adult-learning models that bring experience to learning could be one of the

benefits of the study.

The link between emancipatory practice and experiential learning. Critical

consciousness, an awareness of the power differentials that are extant in social structures,

is an important characteristic of culturally competent faculty members (Gay, 2010a;

Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Questions

for those who facilitate the intentional use of experience as a pathway to learning in the

adult classroom could be "Whose voice is missing?" or "Whose voice is dismissed?"

The raising of critical consciousness, both for faculty members and students, is based on

the idea of conscientization first put forth by Paulo Freire (2000) in his groundbreaking

work on emancipatory learning, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire considered the

learner's experience to be central to the learning endeavor and saw the facilitator as

colearner.

Pettit (2010) pointed out that adult learning practitioners can use direct experience

and personal interests of students as a starting place to unmask power and social

inequities in the classroom. In order to do so, faculty members need to have an

understanding of their own positionality and be critically reflective about what they value in the learning process. For example, a rational, linear thought process is only one way of viewing the world. In culturally diverse classrooms, instructors need to grow their own repertoire of pedagogical strategies to embrace different kinds of knowing so that learners from multiple life stances feel heard. A summary of models that have been shown to help support faculty members' work with diverse learners is discussed further in the cultural competence portion of the literature review.

Conclusion. The adult learning literature has been addressing experience as an avenue to learning for the last 30 years. Additionally, acknowledging non-Western ways of knowledge was given an entire chapter in Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner's (2007) most recent edition of *Learning in Adulthood* and is the subject of many journal articles (Fraser & Hyland-Russell, 2011; Freiler, 2008; Nieves, 2012), so the idea of considering differences in the knowledge and experiences of diverse learners and in diverse ways is not new. Where the literature related to this study is nearly nonexistent is in the innovative use of adult learning models and the connection to truly embracing diverse student experience, particularly in institutions of Christian higher education in which the majority of faculty members and students come from the dominant culture. The research conducted has powerful potential to make a difference in this regard.

Cultural Competence

Introduction. The literature on diversity and cultural competence in higher education, while originally focused on opening doors to bringing diverse students into institutions, now concerns itself more with how to best to serve and support student needs

(Gutierrez, 2011; Smith, 2009). Changes in U.S. student demographics and a call for increased institutional accountability around diversity efforts are driving this support movement. Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) inclusion initiatives and accrediting body mandates have opened up a much-needed space in university life for intentional yet challenging dialogue (Banks, 2009; Danowitz & Tuitt, 2011; Pope, Mueller & Reynolds, 2009). The Make Excellence Inclusive project has a specific goal of developing *equity-minded practitioners* who are willing to take active part in difficult conversations and decision making to influence transformative change for student learning and engagement (AAC&U, 2007). Supporting faculty members in work with diverse students was the primary focus of this research study. This section of the literature review will include a brief background of the historical issues, a discussion on the varying elements of culturally competent practice, and a summary of support models and strategies for faculty members.

Background.

Historical overview—A brief snapshot. According to Pope, Mueller, and Reynolds (2009), shifting educational terrain occurring around issues of diversity has been a part of institutional agendas in U.S. higher education for almost 50 years. Educational trends have mirrored social and political issues and events in the larger culture. Efforts in the 1960s and 1970s had to do largely with desegregation and access for women and people of color. The 1980s and 1990s saw increased demographic shifts bringing the language of multiculturalism and diversity into American higher education (Gutierrez, 2011). The 2000s have brought a steady push of diverse demographic

realities to such a great extent that universities can no longer afford to ignore what a diverse presence means to institutional life (Schneider, 2011).

Gutierrez (2011) credited Daryl Smith's (1995) landmark work on diversity in higher education as moving the diversity conversation from numeric representation to institutional transformation. Smith (2009), a scholar from the Claremont Colleges, noted that curriculum, climate, and institutional-level change should flow from each university's unique educational mission. Discussion also included working through structural issues of power, privilege, and the assumption of neutral knowledge that compose the mindset of most universities that embrace a Eurocentric paradigm as the center-piece of teaching and learning. Addressing a Eurocentric paradigm as a factor in effective teaching by faculty members was an important part of this research study.

Swartz (2009) considered dominant discourse in higher education as a barrier to system-wide change and as one that considers *difference as deficit*. She summarized multicultural education efforts by Gay (1981), Ladson-Billings (2004), Sleeter (2001), Tatum (1999), and others as working to raise awareness about the need for emancipatory practice. Again, reflecting societal trends, much pushback has been given in the last few years to acknowledging power and privilege that White dominant members still hold in higher education spaces. Examples include the overturning of affirmative action for admissions decisions (Sanders, 2012; Simmons, 2013); Whites complaining of reverse discrimination and feeling minimized on higher education campuses (Endres & Gould, 2009; Grasgreen, 2013; Rodriguez, 2009), and color-blind, postracial ideologies (McIntosh, 2009b; Paredes-Collins, 2013).

Nonetheless, a steady chorus of voices in the literature indicates a desire to create a new narrative and meaningful vision for diversity in higher education, one in which all stakeholders work together collaboratively to bridge differences (Alfred, 2009; Banks, 2009; Sleeter, 2010; Taylor, 2013). Respecting sociological and psychological factors in effectively dealing with opposition (McNeil and Pozzi, 2007) and an expanded conceptualization of what diversity means (Pope, Mueller, and Reynolds, 2009) are part of that new vision. Smith (2009) considered that higher education finds itself at a transformative point much like the one brought on by technology where early and clumsier attempts at integration paved the way for current ingenuity and seamless use. Related to this research study, culturally competent faculty members play a key role in elevating diversity work to a natural part of the teaching learning enterprise.

Current issues.

Culturally competent practice.

Defining—Difficulties of defining. A wide spectrum of difference exists regarding faculty member awareness and skills related to cultural competence. Every person has had different experiences shaping the adult trajectory of growth and development in dealing with difference. One of the significant challenges of working with diversity in university settings is defining and assessing levels of culturally competent scholarly practice for faculty members across disciplines (Deardorff, 2011; Dervin, 2010). Kumagai and Lypson (2009) contended that using an educational outcomes approach as a way to define culturally competent practice is limited in nature. Simply categorizing knowledge, skills, and attitudes as a way to measure cultural competence assigns a static

nature to the process that does not match the reality and complexity of the experience. Critical shifts in consciousness and continuous refinement of one's thinking are a necessary part of a culturally competent educator's scholarly practice.

In a definition which includes criticality, McNeil and Pozzi (2007) suggested that becoming more culturally competent has the following four dimensions: (a) the ability to describe and analyze one's ethnic identity, (b) a developing awareness of how culture influences the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of self and others, (c) understanding how differences help or hinder social interactions and social relations, and (d) skills and metaskills necessary to resolve conflicts, make decisions, and function in novel cultural and interpersonal situations (p. 90).

However, even a consensus in definition would not help ease another tension in diversity conversations related to academic disciplines — the idea that some faculty members have of diversity as a discipline-specific issue that does not cross over into their area of expertise (Marbley, Bonner, Burley, & Ross, 2010; Smith, 2009). Instead of viewing diversity as intersecting in myriad ways with all forms of knowledge, scholarly discussions of difference are seen as relegated to the social sciences and schools of education. The idea of diversity work as everyone's responsibility is a consistent theme in the diversity literature (Gay, 2010a; Sturm, Eatman, Saltmarsh, & Bush, 2011; Taylor, 2010; Tharp, 2012) and one in which appreciative inquiry as an exploratory method served as a hopeful paradigm with which to make room for positive change.

Teaching through a social justice perspective—Elements in the literature. A promising avenue for integrated culturally competent practice as described earlier in

Section 1 is learning to teach through a social justice perspective. Adams and Love (2005) encouraged developing a social justice perspective that examines four areas: what the teacher brings to the learning setting, what the student brings, what pedagogical practices are employed, and what curriculum is used. Based on Marchesani and Adams (1992) framework, the four areas become a lens through which to assess and critically reflect upon equitable teaching and learning. The lynchpin of social justice practice is recognizing dominant and subordinate elements embedded in higher education structures and addressing them in each of the four areas as part of effective practice. Inherent strands of thought in the higher education literature include power and privilege, identity development, intersectionality, cultural capital, and creating an inclusive learning environment.

Power and privilege elements. In an expressive summary of the impact power and privilege have on learning environments, Lund (2010) described her own journey as a White, female adult educator. Using McIntosh's seminal (1989) work as a model, the benefits enjoyed by White educators and learners were laid out. Some of the privileges included setting the standard for educational expectations with the concomitant assessment of failure for those who do not meet those expectations. Further benefits named were the ability to view racism as a thing of the past, familiarity with Western theoretical foundations of learning, and mentors through the educational system. Guy (2009) specifically noted the challenge of power and privilege in classroom dynamics and recurring patterns he became aware of while facilitating the learning of adult students. Examples included things such as Whites speaking authoritatively to and for other

groups, White women setting the tone for classroom discussion, Black students' caution in presenting their views, the reluctance of international students of Asian descent to speak openly, and the propensity of men (White and Black) to dominate conversations, often drowning out other voices.

Manglitz and Cervero (2010) examined the intersection of privilege and power from individual as well as societal standpoints and named the ways Whiteness impacts their adult education practices. Authenticity and accountability through relationships were seen as integral to facilitating emancipatory learning environments. Brookfield (2010) languaged power and privilege as elements that need to be interrupted in practice through the addressing of racial microaggressions, challenging White epistemology, and refocusing on the richness of diverse scholarship.

Understanding identity, intersectionality, and positionality. In a comprehensive and much needed work that focuses on cultural competence in higher education and its relationship to understanding identity development, Torres, Howard-Hamilton, and Cooper (2003) highlighted a number of models. Compelling arguments were made for the need to understand how cultural identities are formed and what that means in the teaching-learning enterprise. For example, White faculty members who have never considered their own cultural development and instead may view themselves as *just White* or *just American* may have difficulty recognizing the significance of culture in learning. Conversely, not recognizing the development of marginalized groups and the different stressors related to developing as part of a subordinate culture can also negatively impact learning engagement. Key White identity models discussed were those

of Helms (1992) and Hardiman (2001) while primary models for multigroup ethnic and racial identity development came from Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1989), Sue and Sue (1990), Phinney (1992), and Myers, Speight, Highlen, Cox, Reynolds, Adams, and Hanley (1991). A familiarity and understanding across models was encouraged as part of effective teaching practice.

In a related discussion on intersectionality and positionality, Hearn (2013) described the benefits for those who teach in higher education of understanding their own social locations so as to engage better with students. Biases and opinions carried into the classroom related to social identifiers were noted as shaping the way professors and students take part in the learning endeavor. Kirk and Okazawa-Rey (2010) further illumined the concept of intersectionality and the need to examine the way that personal identity issues link to micro, meso, and macro levels of understanding. Adult educators have a unique opportunity to utilize experiential models of learning to help students deal with complex emotional, social, and political issues. Dill (2010) considered that intersectionality is the *intellectual core* of diversity work and U.S. cultural literacy.

Cultural capital and student learning engagement. Students who come from higher SES backgrounds or who have had the opportunities to be exposed to knowledge and dispositions needed to succeed in higher education are said to have the cultural capital with which to persist towards and achieve degree completion (Heinz-Housel, 2012; Kanno & Varghese, 2010). Cultural capital is a concept first named by Bourdieu (1977) with which culturally competent educators are familiar and use to help widen participation in the adult classroom. Strategies that acknowledge differences in levels of

cultural capital might include pulling curriculum from diverse knowledge bases, using a variety of interactive teaching styles, or contextualizing content through peer collaboration and mini lectures. Understanding cultural capital is briefly included in this section of the literature review as an idea that is connected to the larger practice of teaching through a social justice perspective (Gay, 2010b; Lindsey, Martinez, & Lindsey, 2007).

  Inclusive learning environments. Inclusive learning environments are those in which culturally relevant and responsive pedagogies have become a thoughtful part of program planning and institutional life (Alfred, 2009; Banks, 2009; Danowitz & Tuitt, 2011). Effective facilitation of learning in the classroom can only occur when cultural backgrounds are considered in a nonjudgmental and welcoming way (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2012). In an early and groundbreaking work, Ladson-Billings (1995) defined culturally responsive pedagogy as resting on three criteria: (a) Students must experience academic success, (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence, and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the current status quo of the social order (p. 475). For teachers, Sue, Lin, Torino, Capodilupo, and Rivera (2009) suggested principles for guiding the education and training of teachers and their capacity to facilitate wisely difficult conversations related to race, class, gender, and other differences in the classroom. Being culturally responsive encompasses the ability to know the causes of difficult conversations (triggers) and ways to engage in rather than avoid discussion.

Faculty development models. A variety of models that attempt to assess cultural

competence are depicted in the diversity literature. The following is not an attempt to

describe all of them, but to make mention of those that continually surfaced in the

literature. Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (1993,

2004) depicts a range of developing cultural competence from ethnocentric to

ethnorelative and is used in business and educational settings to facilitate cultural

awareness understanding. Similar models include the intercultural maturity model of

King and Baxter Magolda (2005), and Deardorff's intercultural competence model (2006,

2009) as described by Deardorff (2011). All three models share interactive and

overlapping elements of growth into cultural competence. Specific models of assessing

faculty member cultural competence are described by Sleeter (2009) with ranges from

novice, developing, and accomplished and by Spanierman et al., (2010) whose

multicultural teaching competency scale (MTCS) contains questions related to skills,

knowledge, and values.

Supportive strategies. Strategies of support for faculty members and institutions

of higher learning are described by a number of diversity researchers. Banks (2009)

suggested that creating a common language for diversity would help those in academia to

stop wasting time arguing over fine points about which there may already be agreement.

In a related recommendation, Castania (2011) indicated that making efforts to understand

the evolving nature of diversity language would prevent the misuse of terms that might

unintentionally offend others. Workshops devoted to exploring mutual understanding of

diversity vocabulary and information about current terminology would be an effective

avenue for this kind of faculty development. Sciame-Giesecke, Roden, and Parkison

(2009) recommended that institutions make an effort to prioritize the study of diversity

scholarship and to financially support the efforts of those who are working towards more

equitable practice. Many faculty members in the academy are not aware of the rich body

of work in diversity scholarship that has developed over the last 25 to30 years, and that

lack of awareness is detrimental to teaching and learning effectiveness. Programs that

develop culturally competent teachers are outlined in a table by Taylor (2010) with the

following five categories of important aspects for producing culturally responsive

teachers: (a) Develop a culturally diverse knowledge base, (b) design culturally relevant

curricula, (c) demonstrate cultural caring and build a learning community, (d) build

effective cross-cultural communications, and (e) deliver culturally responsive instruction

(p. 27). Finally, several scholars encouraged dialogue as the key to inclusive teaching

practice and as a way to create spaces of transformation in the learning environment

(Gonzalez & Baran, 2005; Rodriguez, 2009; Sleeter, 2010; Wilson, 2005). The use of

dialogue and narrative experience through critical appreciative inquiry to better support

faculty members with diverse learners were foundational elements of this research study.

Conclusion. Recognizing the shifting elements of the higher education landscape

and the need for culturally competent professionals is an important part of the diversity

literature. Understanding what constitutes teaching and learning through a social justice

perspective can be challenging and divisive, but remains a moral imperative —

particularly for those in evangelical institutions of higher learning whose mission is

founded on inclusion and equity. Providing new spaces for learning and sharing through

the unique intersection of adult learning and appreciative inquiry will hopefully extend the literature on cultural competence through the research undertaken.

Conceptual Framework—Transformative Learning

  Introduction. It is difficult to refute the power of transformative learning (TL) both as a theoretical construct and as an elegant portrayal of what many adults experience when they return to school (Kasworm & Bowles, 2012; Stevens-Long, Schapiro, & McClintock, 2012). My journey as an adult student from undergraduate, to masters, and now doctoral level graduate work is a testimony to the richness of the TL framework as an accurate depiction of the potential for growth and change. Research on TL has spanned over three decades since Jack Mezirow's original conception of the theory in 1978, which was inspired by his wife's return to college as an adult (Mezirow, 1991; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Significant research across multiple academic disciplines and professional settings described the perspective transformation of adult learners through the TL construct (Kasworm & Bowles, 2012; Mezirow & Taylor, 2009; Watkins, Marsick, & Faller, 2012). Change was shown as occurring in individuals and organizations, as well as in social and global arenas (Cranton & Taylor, 2012; Johnson-Bailey, 2006; Lipson-Lawrence, 2012).

  However, the scope of this portion of the literature review will be focused on the ways in which transformative learning serves as a natural undergirding framework for the exploration of multicultural competence for faculty members in adult degree-completion programs. The review will describe how constructivist and experiential elements of TL served to create space for changes in meaning-making and paradigm shifting that is part

of growing into cultural competence (Kumagai & Lipson, 2009; Mezirow, 2012; Tisdell & Tolliver, 2009). The review will further highlight elements of the theory that connect TL and cultural competence used to justify this research as a worthwhile, scholarly endeavor. This section will include historical background, four overlapping TL perspectives (cognitive-rational, depth psychology, structural development, and social emancipatory), and TL as an avenue for purposefully transforming cultural awareness and worldviews with examples from current research.

Background. Transformative learning is defined as a process by which previously uncritically assimilated assumptions, beliefs, values, and perspectives are questioned and thereby become more open, permeable and better justified (Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow, 2000). The goal of transformation is to generate beliefs and opinions from a revision of previous experience that will prove more true or justified, in order to guide action (Cranton, 2006). Key ideas related to Mezirow's original conception of the theory include shifting frames of reference, critical reflection on experience, changing habits of mind, the *disorienting dilemma* as a catalyst for change, and discourse as central to the process of transformation. The underlying philosophical assumptions of transformative learning theory are constructivism, humanism, and critical social theory (Cranton & Taylor, 2012).

According to Stevens-Long, Schapiro, & McClintock (2012), there is sometimes confusion about the terms used to describe transformative learning which can include *transformation* (deep and lasting change)*, transformative education* (a planned, educational experience designed to bring about change)*, and transformative learning* (a

specific reference to Mezirow's conception of learner process and change) (p. 184). Merriam, Baumgartner, and Caffarella (2007) indicated that in the literature, the terms *transformative* or *transformational* are used interchangeably to describe the TL process in adult learning.

Changes over the last three decades. Baumgartner (2012) affirmed that scholars typically speak about a theory from the most current vantage point, however, that there is merit in understanding the progression of an idea across time. She described each decade of literature about TL from the 1970s through the 2000s, including critiques by various scholars as the theory morphed and in relationship to historical trends in adult education. The theory moved from a singular rational process grounded in social psychology and critical pedagogy to a more a holistic way of looking at the way adults make changes in meaning-making and world view. Transformative learning grew to encompass the intuitive and the emotional as significant aspects of the learning process (Baumgartner, 2012; Dirkx, 2001), as well as spirituality (Tisdell, 2003; Tisdell & Tolliver, 2009).

In another way of viewing the changes that have taken place in the life of TL theory, Gunnlaugson (2008) described a *first and second wave* of TL theory development. The first wave gave way to the second when the influence of critical, feminist, and postmodern theory began to be part of the adult education discourse. Second wave TL was described as the more holistic and integrative phase within which the field is currently working (Cranton & Taylor, 2012).

Early critiques of TL theory related to social change elements as missing, along with unacknowledged learner context as important to understanding how adults make

changes in meaning (Baumgartner, 2012; Merriam, Baumgartner, & Caffarella, 2007). Later critiques reflected post-modern discourse with accusations of white, Western values as elevating self-direction and human agency without consideration of social power structures at play. Mezirow refuted his critics by claiming that he had taken cultural context into consideration and that transformation through rational discourse as an idea is embedded in culture (Baumgartner, 2012; Mezirow, 2000). In a larger discussion that critiqued the body of research done on TL, it was suggested that scholars may have relied too heavily on simply *reviews* of TL, rather than becoming familiar with Mezirow's original and expanding ideas, leading to some confusion and stagnation in the field of TL research (Cranton & Taylor, 2012). Related to ongoing interest in TL, the research literature continues to grow in conjunction with an annual conference on transformational learning. Taylor (2008) lauded the impact that TL has had on the field of adult education theory and practice by calling it the *new andragogy*. Cranton and Taylor (2012) asserted that TL has both overshadowed andragogy in the adult learning literature and become central to the field.

Current issues.

TL as streaming through four overlapping lenses. Mezirow's ground-breaking work in transformative learning has gained prominence not only from the ideas resident within the theory itself, but to a great extent from those scholars who were captivated by TL and have elucidated understanding through accessible writing and research in ways that Mezirow's more complex style did not. Patricia Cranton and Edward Taylor are two of those scholars. A third is Steven A. Schapiro, a professor at Fielding Graduate

Institute in Human and Organizational Development, whose scholarship focuses on

effective adult learning paradigms and transformation, particularly related to social

justice issues (Schapiro, 2008; Schapiro, 2009; Stevens-Long, Schapiro, & McClintock,

2012; Wasserman, & Gallegos, 2012).

In a recent qualitative research collaboration on TL and doctoral student learning

processes, Schapiro and his colleagues gave an articulate summary of the four strands of

thought that encompass TL thinking (Stevens-Long, Schapiro, & McClintock, 2012).

They are included in order to make clear connections between the constructivist and

experiential nature of TL theory and the creation of space needed for learning about

cultural competence. After briefly naming and describing the four areas and associated

researchers, specific links will be made to the elements that relate to growth in cultural

awareness and understanding:

- Cognitive rational approach (Cranton, 2006; Mezirow, 1991) transformation as a

  change in meaning perspective through the process of a disorienting dilemma,

  critical reflection, dialogue, and action.

- Depth psychology approach (Boyd, 1991; Boyd & Myers, 1988, Dirkx, 2000)—

  transformation as a fundamental change in one's personality involving both the

  resolution of personal dilemmas and the expansion of consciousness, resulting in

  greater integration.

- Structural development approach—transformation as a shift to a different stage of

  development or higher order of consciousness and greater complexity in ways of

knowing (Belenky et al., 1986; Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2000; Kitchener & King, 1994; Perry, 1970).

- Social emancipatory approach—transformation as the development of critical consciousness (Brookfield, 1995; Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994; Morrow & Torres, 2002).

All four strands are considered to have similarities and differences, as well as having overlapping processes (Stevens-Long, Schapiro, & McClintock, 2012, p. 184).

Of the four approaches, the social emancipatory perspective is the element that is most missing in evangelical Christian higher education adult education practice (Paredes-Collins; Taylor, 2013). Social emancipatory TL is also the approach that most directly addresses the issues of dominant and subordinate power dynamics in the adult education classroom. Literature that supports transformational education through the raising of critical consciousness is typically story-based and dialogic in nature (Adams & Collins, 2012; Adams et al., 2013). Hearing personal experience from those in different and marginalized cultures helps expose those from monocultural backgrounds to new ways of thinking and being as a powerful catalyst for change.

In the structural-developmental approach, much literature has been devoted to the ways in which a transformation of consciousness connects to narrative learning and the concept of self-authorship (Baxter-Magolda, 2012; Kegan, 1994, 2000; King, 2009). Increasingly complex ways of thinking from a critically reflective stance foster the ability to examine and expand limited paradigms regarding different others (Brookfield, 2010; Schapiro, 2007). Other literature correlated both cultural intelligence (CQ) and

emotional intelligence (EQ) with higher orders of thinking (Chrobot-Mason & Leslie, 2012; Crowne, 2008; Moon, 2010; Van Dyne, Ang, & Livermore, 2010). A review of this literature would suggest that faculty members in ADP programs at Pax could possess EQ in many areas, but may be missing CQ due to a lack of exposure to other cultures or the evangelical hurdles described in the next section.

The cognitive-rational approach to TL involving Mezirow's original conception of the theory has direct ties to cultural competence through its languaging of changing habits of mind and the disorienting dilemma that often precedes a change in one's thinking. And, finally, the depth-psychology approach brings intuition, imagination, and affect into the learning process, all characteristics that play into the storied nature of understanding difference through integrated learning.

TL as purposefully transforming cultural awareness. The literature is replete with current research that demonstrates the variety of settings, issues, and persons who are using TL to help transform understanding of cultural difference (Bridwell, 2012; Johnson-Bailey, 2012; Kokkos, 2012; Ntseane, 2012; Schapiro, Wasserman, & Gallegos, 2012; Taylor & Snyder, 2012; Wasserman & Gallegos, 2007). Higher education research included intentional interventions that foster TL through experiential and active learning which consist of three domains, one of which demonstrated strategies for critical reflection (Kasworm & Bowles, 2012). The creation of learning environments that use experience and active learning to bring about change is a central idea in effective adult learning paradigms. The authors also described innovative professional development programs for faculty members and administrators that use TL as a framework to help

initiate change for creating a supportive institutional climate for diversity (Kasworm & Bowles, 2012). Other literature reflected on the ethical nature of the adult educator as a change agent (Ettling, 2012; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Discussions on TL and adult education through the years have continued to raise the importance of demonstrating a responsible, caring ethic by those who facilitate adult learning with the intent to transform. Change through the learning process can be emotionally charged and challenging to deal with in the adult classroom. Understanding and learning to manage emotional triggers is a key aspect of transformation for both faculty members and students in relation to cultural competence work (Visser, 2011).

Conclusion. Transformative learning has become an integral part of adult learning theory and practice. The narrative, constructivist nature of transformative learning theory provided an ideal framework for the research that was conducted. Faculty members had an opportunity to bring their rich, experiential narratives to the research through appreciative inquiry—a methodology that resonates closely with the tenets of transformative learning. Additionally, they were able to take that experience back into their own classrooms to help facilitate cultural awareness for their students.

Evangelical Christian Education

Introduction. Christian institutions of higher education, because of their faith-based mission and need to produce globally competent graduates, should be leaders in diversity and inclusion efforts (Abadeer, 2009; Jun & Luna De La Rosa, 2013). Yet, evangelical institutions, in particular, struggle to keep pace with societal changes (Fubara, Gardner, & Wolff, 2011). Faculty member and student populations in evangelical

colleges and universities remain primarily homogenous (Paredes-Collins, 2013; Taylor, 2013). Administrative leadership, staff, faculty members, and students may come from monocultural backgrounds. Increasingly diverse student populations (Jackson Glimps and Ford, 2010; Lowenstein, 2009) make it necessary for evangelical institutions of higher learning to support the cultural competence needs of faculty members as they strive to facilitate learning and student engagement in the classroom (Danowitz & Tuitt, 2011; Sleeter, 2012).

Background: Historical overview—Evangelical Christian higher education. There are 4,000 degree-granting universities in the United States, 1600 that are private and nonprofit campuses, and 900 of which identify themselves as having a religious affiliation (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Within those 900 institutions, there are 115 that are self-described as evangelical and whose educational mission is intentionally Christ-centered with the goal of relating scholarship to biblical truth (CCCU, 2013). Pax University belongs to the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU), an organization with specific membership requirements and descriptors for its constituents. Some of these characteristics include being regionally accredited, having sound finances, and using broad curricula rooted in the arts and sciences as part of a comprehensive, 4-year educational experience (CCCU, 2013).

One problem in defining Christian higher education (CHE) is determining the extent to which religious affiliation truly influences the practices of an institution. In an interesting study conducted by Glanzer, Carpenter, and Lantinga (2011) researchers used four categories developed by Robert Benne (2001) to depict a range of CHE practice

from orthodox to secular. Those CHE institutions that fell on the orthodox side of things

used their distinct Christian identity as an important organizing paradigm and affirmed

that the Christian account provides the overarching meaning and value through which

knowledge is viewed. Evangelical institutions of higher education fit this description for

identity and meaning making, and yet there appears to be a disconnect between the

radically inclusive life of Christ as depicted in scriptures, and the ways in which diversity

is embraced as a welcome part of institutional life. Interestingly, Wilkens and Thorsen

(2010) noted that social justice and activism was a primary focus of evangelicalism until

just after the turn of the 20th century, when energies were turned towards more individual

and less social concerns. More recent literature indicated that diversity efforts in

evangelical Christian colleges are something relatively new and that many do not make

diversity an institutional priority (Paredes-Collins, 2009; Taylor, 2013).

 Current issues.

 Diversity challenges. There is a growing mandate within CCCU schools for

demonstrated commitment towards diversity. Unique challenges for evangelical

institutions in the examination of faith and diversity have been given voice in the most

recent edition of *Christian Higher Education*, an issue that was devoted to exploring gaps

in the literature and raising questions for administrators, faculty, and students to consider.

Taylor (2013) noted that evangelical theology stresses individualism over social

structures and that evangelicals tend not to examine things through a racial or cultural

lens. This idea was given further credence by Paredes-Collins (2013) who explored racist

events at evangelical institutions and found that majority thinking was color-blind and

dismissive ("This isn't really happening"), therefore, making it easy to relegate diversity to tangential status. Some evangelicals believe that overt expressions of commitment to diversity will cause them to become secularized, when being counter to cultural norms is a strong faith value (Abadeer, 2009; CCCU, 2012). Fubara, Gardner, and Wolff (2011) applied diversity management principles to CHE and diversity efforts explaining that for some, diversity work feels like preferential treatment which goes against a merit based philosophy of individual work and rewards. They further noted that evangelicals have a much easier time with international diversity versus domestic diversity, which helps them maintain a *segregated pluralism*. Also described in their research is the idea that evangelical Christians feel a *push-pull* dialectic that on the one hand pushes them away from fully embracing diversity efforts, while at the same time is pulling them towards the need to address diversity concerns. Examples of push would be the external culture urging pluralism and multiculturalism, as well as internal forces within the institution, including scriptural teaching on inclusion. On the other hand, evangelical institutions are pulled towards homogeneity, as many inhabit a second cultural identity that upholds a conservative, White, middle-class, Republican ethic as the value norm for Christians. This underlying identity pulls them towards sameness and away from feeling disposed to welcoming different others (Fubara, Gardner, & Wolff, 2011).

Linking theology and mission to diversity efforts. A small but growing body of literature is seeking to link successful diversity efforts in CHE to institutional mission and theology as an avenue for change (Nussbaum & Chang, 2013; Perez, 2013). In her landmark research on diversity and higher education, Smith (2009) provided a four-part

framework for diversity work and institutional change in which mission is the centerpiece. For those in evangelical CHE, the ability to make the connection purposefully between faith and inclusive practice holds the potential for powerful change (Jun & Luna De La Rosa, 2013). According to McNeil and Pozzi (2007), Christians are more motivated to pursue cultural competency if the need for knowledge and skills is embedded in a theological context.

   Institutional support for a focus on faculty member competence as integral to success*.* Successful models for developing culturally competent faculty members in CHE institutions are difficult to find, but are a necessary part of the diversity imperative for institutional change. Taylor, Van Zandt, and Menjares (2013) concluded that individual institutions have the responsibility to provide support for their faculty members who are working towards cultural competence. The researchers employed a year-long model with a small number of faculty members with the goal of going deeply with some in order to have them become significant role models and help with the equipping of others. In another study on culturally responsive pedagogy, Taylor (2013) suggested that effective institutional change occurs best by starting with faculty members who are already open to diversity conversations and moving out from there, rather than forcing those who are resistant. In terms of successful strategies, some faculty members benefit from one-day workshop experiences on diversity competence, yet isolated sessions apart from institutional structures that support ongoing development are sometimes perceived as more discouraging than helpful.

Conclusion. Increasingly diverse student populations in evangelical Christian higher education are creating a need for faculty members to possess the skills, attitudes, and behaviors that help them support student learning and engagement. Christian universities that hold an evangelical faith stream have distinctive challenges related to diversity efforts. The research that was conducted sought to fill a unique gap in the Christian higher education literature through the exploration of critical appreciative inquiry and diversity competence in an evangelical setting.

Appreciative inquiry

Introduction. Diversity work in higher education is an area that often deals with entrenched ways of thinking and being that require intentional engagement in order to bring about effective change (Bowman, 2010; McHatton, Keller, Shircliffe, & Zalaquett, 2009). Additionally, the need for change is many times spoken about with negative language and deficit thinking that does more to shut down diversity discourse than to promote collaborative action. Research shows that when people truly embrace change it is not because they have been *shamed* into acting differently, but, instead, change occurs through connection and support with others (Brown, 2007, 2012; Kasl, 1992).

Appreciative inquiry (AI) is an organizational change model that focuses on the strengths and successes in a context or setting and uses narrative experience to help bring about positive change (Cooperrider &Whitney, 2005; Hammond, 1998). The generative nature of the model also gives rise to thinking in new ways about structural realities that lead to transformational and lasting change (Bushe, 2007). Diversity work necessarily involves a shift in structural realities. While limited research has been done in higher

education about using AI to foster transformation in diversity work (Alston-Mills, 2011),

AI has been used as both a methodology and theoretical research perspective in

educational settings for over a decade (Calabrese et al., 2007; Carr-Stewart & Walker,

2003; Elleven, 2007; San Martin & Calabrese, 2011; Starr-Glass, 2012). AI has also

been used through the critical lens that is an integral part of the proposed research, even

though lack of criticality has been a specific critique leveled against AI as a change

method (Bellinger & Elliott, 2011; Dematteo & Reeves, 2011; van der Haar & Hosking,

2004). The focus of this final portion of the literature review serves to describe the broad

nature of AI as a transformative change tool, give critiques from the literature of AI as a

research method, and elaborate on the use of critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) as a

promising avenue for diversity change in Christian higher education.

Appreciative inquiry in practice: As a transformative tool broad in scope and

nature. The experiential foundation of effective adult classroom practice and the co-

construction of experience as that which potentially makes learning transformational

were key elements of this research. Appreciative inquiry (AI) deftly weaves through both

paradigms by using participant experience as an avenue for synergistic dialogue and

positive change. Originally put forth as an alternative to action research (Cooperrider &

Srivastva, 1987), AI has evolved to become much more encompassing in the last two

decades through the expanded work of Cooperrider and others (Cooperrider & Whitney,

2005; Hammond, 1998; Stavros & Torres, 2005; Watkins & Mohr, 2001; Watkins, Mohr,

& Kelly, 2011; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). Essentially, AI is described in the

literature as an organizational change model that reframes organizational issues from

problem-focused to seeking the best in that which is already working. Organizations, like

people, are not problems to be solved, but mysteries to be embraced (Cooperrider &

Srivastva, 1987).

There are distinct phases to the AI process and underlying principles that guide

practitioners through facilitation of an appreciative inquiry. The 4-D AI cycle (discovery,

dream, design, and destiny) was originally conceived by Cooperrider and Srivastva

(1987) and is the AI cycle most often referenced in the literature. However, Watkins and

Mohr (2001) added a fifth dimension, definition, and made each phase overlapping,

calling it the 5-D model. The 5-D model was the methodology choice for the research

conducted, as the overlapping and integrative elements fit well with cultural competence

as complex and emerging.

Initial guiding principles for AI included constructionist, simultaneity, poetic,

anticipatory, and positive. More recently, awareness, wholeness, enactment, and free

choice were added with the idea that all of the principles are interrelated and work

together as a whole (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012). The principles essentially

provide a mechanism for collaborative inquiry that is empowering and serve as a

metanarrative for engaging in the process. Similar to group norms, participants can be

brought back to established ways of considering issues and ideas through the AI lens. AI

is referred to as *lifecentric* or as an approach that is constantly asking, "What is

lifegiving?" about who we are and what we do (Watkins & Mohr, 2001). Engaging in AI

can take place across a short session or several days and data collection can consist of

interviews and focus groups, as well as using a team who is trained in AI to facilitate data collection and analysis (Cockell &McArthur-Blair, 2012).

Elleven (2007), referencing Hammond (1998), described eight underlying assumptions of AI:

(a) In every society, organization or group something works, (b) what we focus on becomes our reality, (c) reality is created in the moment, and there are multiple realities, (d) the act of asking questions of an organization or group influences the group in some way, (e) people have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future or the unknown when they carry forward parts of the past, (f) if we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what are best about the past, (g) it is important to value differences, and (h) the language we use creates our reality.

(p. 453)

Some of these assumptions can be directly tied to the challenges of diversity work in CHE. For example, understanding multiple realities and recognizing the power of language are two important aspects of growing in cultural competence (Adams et al., 2013; Castania, 2003). Also, carrying history forward would hold particular significance for evangelical Christian faculty members and institutions due to the spiritual weight that tradition carries in faith life.

Critiques of the model. Like much of qualitative research methodology as it first gained credible ground, AI has its share of critics. Bellinger and Elliott (2011) used AI as an avenue for promoting good practice in social work and were met with resistance from some colleagues who considered AI to be lacking in rigor. More intensive *gatekeeping*

through the internal review process was also experienced, as AI was not considered to be an established research method. Another critique of AI revealed in the literature had to do with conducting larger inquiries and the ability to have consistency and continuity across a changing participant base (Reed et al., 2002). More than one researcher cautioned that using AI without critical self-reflection and an understanding of systemic power within organizations limits the nature of AI effectiveness (Dematteo & Reeves, 2011; Grant, 2008; Grant & Humphries, 2006).

Critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) as a promising avenue for diversity change in Christian higher education. The title *critical appreciative inquiry (CAI)* was not formally used in the literature until the important recent work of Cockell and McArthur-Blair (2012). In their timely and comprehensive text, *Appreciative Inquiry in Higher Education*, the authors describe over 20 years of research and practice using AI in a multiplicity of educational settings. Critical appreciative inquiry emerged from Cockell's doctoral research in which she explored the impact of difference, power, and diversity. CAI is described as a blending of two traditions that meet together to hold space for both the positive (what is working) and an acknowledgement of the important emancipatory work done in the previous three decades through civil rights and feminist movements. CAI also honors the sociocultural construction of experience, recognizing dominant and subordinate elements of personal, institutional, and community life. Introducing this kind of holding space or *productive tension* (Grant & Humphries, 2006) is a vital component of reaching through barriers inherent in evangelical institutional life and in the PAX University research setting. In a graphical representation, Cockell and

McArthur-Blair (2012) depicted CAI as consisting of a core that includes three elements: social constructionism, appreciative inquiry, and critical theory. All three elements are necessary in order to avoid bypassing the challenging discussions of privilege and power in classroom practice.

Using a CAI framework through which to achieve a deeper understanding of what faculty members face as they navigate difference in the classroom seemed a profitable pathway for possible growth and change. Because a metanarrative (discussion of AI principles) is already built into the process, easing into challenging dialogue was accomplished more readily. CAI also holds a support mechanism in its use of collaborative dialogue that could potentially serve to grow a *learning culture* around diversity and classroom practice (Shreeve, 2008). Working towards becoming an inclusive practitioner and moving from an issue focus to an inquiry focus are two important goals of CAI facilitation, making CAI a promising avenue for diversity competence exploration in CHE.

Conclusion. Appreciative inquiry as a positive change model holds key elements for facilitating difficult dialogues that are part of dealing with difference in the higher education classroom. As a research methodology with constructivist underpinnings, AI fits well with the experientially based adult classroom model and transformative learning conceptual framework of this research. Additionally, introducing the critical lens of CAI could serve to fill a gap in the literature, particularly in the area of Christian evangelical higher education that is currently not being met. When instructors have an opportunity to share their passion about effective teaching-learning practices already being used in ADP

classrooms, CAI can serve as a portal to more difficult conversations and increased learning engagement for everyone.

Implications

The research findings and outcomes from this study shed light on the need for faculty support in becoming more critically aware and gaining a deepened understanding of teaching through a social justice framework. Hopeful dialogue through the appreciative inquiry process during the focus group sessions reveal a true desire for further learning. The three phases of the data collection process proved to be powerfully effective in raising questions about diversity and student learning engagement. The spaces created for potential shifts through reflection and dialogue about experience underscore the significance of the transformative and constructivist nature of critical appreciative inquiry. Faculty members were explicit about the need for further institutional support that could facilitate their growth into cultural competence.

Implications for the proposed project direction are exciting to consider. Creating a diversity module that utilizes critical appreciative inquiry as a starting place for challenging conversations can be used by the Office of Diversity. The Office of Diversity is currently housed in the Center for Teaching , Learning, and Assessment (CTLA) responsible for faculty development opportunities. CAI might become a strategic lynchpin that helps provide positive exploration of current levels of proficiency, as well as give strategic tools to empower faculty members in their classroom practice. The Office of Diversity can then leverage CAI as a strategy to deploy training within schools and departments university-wide. Because appreciative inquiry focuses on the

positive core of what is already working and Pax University is a strengths-based institution, philosophical parallels will already be in place to help project implementation be more seamless and well received.

Increased numbers of faculty members participating in CAI discussions can also lead to larger faculty development workshop sessions containing experiential components that include critical reflection, dialogue, and active experimentation flowing from the original self-assessment. On an institutional level, the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CTLA) can use the CAI model to help form faculty learning communities (FLCs) that are focused on cultural competence using adult and experiential learning theory as a foundation. It is also not inconceivable that the Board of Trustees for Pax University might participate in a diversity CAI focus group, which would elevate the understanding and awareness of diversity imperatives in ways not currently happening. Because Pax University is part of the CCCU consortium, CAI can become more widely recognized as a positive change model for evangelical institutions struggling to help faculty members effectively engage difference in the classroom. If even one-third of the 115 CCCU institutions were to engage in a positive, structured process to promote diversity competence, inclusive practice could widen its spheres exponentially when considering both the faculty member and student populations involved.

Summary

A problem exists in highly diverse evangelical Christian higher education classrooms, which use an adult learning paradigm embracing experience, yet still have primarily monocultural faculty who may not have the tools to support the culturally

situated experience of a diverse student population. Key issues addressed in Section 1 of

the research study included changing demographics and a cultural competence mandate

for faculty members; the nature of evangelical institutional culture and related challenges

for diversity efforts; transformative learning as an appropriate theoretical construct for

experiential and narrative change; and critical appreciative inquiry as a timely and

appropriate model to explore faculty member needs.

The remaining sections of the doctoral study will describe the qualitative

methodology used to explore classroom practices used by ADP faculty members and how

the three phases of data collection resulted in findings that shaped the proposed project.

A depiction of the project itself and then reflections about my own process as a scholar-

practitioner immersed in the research process will follow. Concluding thoughts will be

presented, along with documents in the appendices that amplify the research process

undertaken.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

How Research Derives Logically From the Guiding Question

My research study involved the exploration of faculty member experience as an avenue for understanding both the strengths and challenges of facilitating learning in highly diverse adult degree completion classrooms. A qualitative case study methodology was used as one that is well suited to the exploration of a complex and socially constructed process (teaching-learning) with individuals whose "experiences are assumed to be varied and multiple" (Glesne, 2011, p. 39). The case focus of my research study was ADP faculty members and the diverse classrooms within which they teach.

Investigating the cultural competence of faculty members has sometimes been approached from a deficit mindset with the idea of creating training and development to close gaps in practice. Instead, the study was framed through a qualitative case study methodology using a positive change process, critical appreciative inquiry (CAI). The CAI framework proved to be uniquely suited to providing a meaningful backdrop for the research subject (cultural competence), the research setting (an experience-focused adult degree completion program), and the research context (timely, institutional fit). The research design was also confirmed as one that appropriately explored the question "What challenges do ADP faculty members face as they teach in highly diverse, adult degree-completion classrooms?"

Description of the Qualitative Tradition or Research Design

Merriam (2009) pointed out that qualitative case study knowledge resonates with and is rooted in contextual experience. Qualitative case study methodology "is valued for its ability to capture complex action, perception, and interpretation" (p. 44). The problem being explored in this research study focused on a wide spectrum of attitudes, skills, and knowledge that faculty members had constructed about their experiences related to cultural competence and classroom practice. Nuanced understanding of how classroom dynamics play out across difference and the faculty member's perceptions of self and others were best examined through a qualitative approach. According to Hancock and Algozzine (2011), a case study design is also appropriate for inquiring about activities taking place within certain settings. Exploring the challenges faculty members face when teaching in highly diverse adult classrooms within specific ADP programs created the case focus for the research conducted.

An important component of the research design was grounding the study with the use of appreciative inquiry (AI) as a constructivist and potentially transformative avenue for change around the challenges of managing highly diverse classrooms. Appreciative inquiry (AI) was first suggested by Cooperrider (1986) as a change management tool focusing on the "untapped and rich accounts of the positive" as a way to facilitate organizational change (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Instead of viewing problems in an organizational setting as things to be taken apart and fixed, AI seeks to look at them through an *appreciative eye* with the assumption that many things are already working (Hammond, 1998). A more recent stream of AI thought, critical appreciative inquiry

(CAI), has been languaged as a way to "foster stronger, more inclusive inquiries [which] recognize that social structural differences affect people's ability to participate and be included" (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012, p. 51). For both types of inquiry (AI and CAI), narrative storytelling becomes the focus of a generative process that honors experience as the ground for strategic organizational change. The 5-D AI model adapted by Mohr and Watkins (2002) uses definition, discovery, dream, design, and destiny/delivery and became the framework for focus group discussion, as detailed under data collection further on in this section.

Justification of the Choice of Research Design

Design Suited to the Research Problem—Exploring Cultural Competence

Conversations about diversity and cultural competence in higher education are often met with resistance and can be emotionally and politically charged (Hearn, 2012; Taylor, 2013). Critical appreciative inquiry offered a framework that diffused negative attitudes by shifting the conversation from the start into a positive imaging process. One specific challenge that faculty members may face when working through issues of cultural competence is an awareness of and understanding about ways in which power dynamics can impact student learning and motivation (Guy, 2009; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2009). Critical appreciative inquiry proved to be a tool that helped facilitate dialogue that did not gloss over issues that are sometimes difficult for majority faculty to recognize or perhaps even language. For example, one participant shared that taking part in the three phases of data collection gave her "a different level of awareness" and broadened her understanding of inclusive facilitation in the adult classroom. Conversely,

for those who had been historically discriminated against in the academy, CAI served to create an inclusive space of engagement in ways that did not dismiss their experiences (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012). When teaching through a social justice perspective was opened up as part of focus group dialogue, Participant 3 was able to share that she has to "prove her credentials to students" in ways that she has noticed White faculty members do not. Without the specific metanarrative that the CAI framework provided, she might not have felt empowered to bring out such a transparent observation among majority faculty members.

Beyond classroom dynamics, the use of CAI also brought about fruitful discussion of current best practice in the areas of pedagogy, curriculum development, and the differences students bring intro the classroom. By having overtly languaged the idea of the *critical* elements needed in each area, but still focusing on what is currently working, CAI created an avenue for synergistic and collaborative dialogue. The CAI structure helped faculty members explore their scholar-practice through stories of what was working, while navigating difficult elements of the diversity conversation from an energizing stance. For example, in closing comments from Focus Group Session 2, a member indicated feeling challenged "in a really good way to grow and to stretch and to learn" while affirming the use of dialogue and narrative experience as an avenue for learning—much the same way that experience is used in their adult classrooms to foster learning moments.

Design Suited to the Research Setting—An Experientially Focused Adult Learning Paradigm

A qualitative case study design using CAI proved to be well suited to the setting of the inquiry—an adult learning-focused program in which curriculum and course design are specifically shaped to use learner experience "as a rich source of learning" (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011, p. 39). Because faculty members themselves are adult learners, it made sense to use a research method designed to elicit their experience about positive strategies already being employed to navigate cultural differences in the adult classroom. In a sense, the chosen research design sought to mirror for faculty members the powerful ways in which skillful integration of experience into the learning setting can bring about rich engagement with content, but specifically about the engagement of diverse student learning. More than one focus group member commented on how the dialogue exchange about teaching practice was helping them rethink an inclusive learning environment. At the same time, the research findings showed a number of disconnections between experience and learning related specifically to cultural competence and student learning engagement. These disconnections will be part of analysis discussion and given further treatment in the Section 3 project literature review. Overall, findings supported the use of CAI as a narrative process that, when well facilitated, creates an opportunity for dialogue about *common themes and future images* while still recognizing the social inequities that are an important part of culturally competent practice (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012). The particular research design had also been selected to promote opportunities for creating potentially transformative

learning moments for which adult learner-centered models have become known (Stevens-Long, Schapiro, & McClintock, 2012). Specific examples of such moments will be discussed in the data analysis portion of this section.

Design Suited to the Research Context—A Christian Liberal Arts University Situated in Historical Readiness

Pax University was in a particular state of readiness for conversations of cultural competence among faculty members. As described in the local rationale for the problem, a confluence of external and internal bodies and issues created a particularly poignant moment of need for furthering understanding about diversity in Christian evangelical institutions. This research study was designed to open a portal to dialogue around a topic that has often been construed as negative and divisive from a Christian perspective, using a framework that assumes best intent. There is a growing body of research in a variety of fields such as nursing (Moody, Horton-Deutsch, & Pesut, 2007); social work (Bellinger & Elliot, 2011); environmental community organizations (Paulin & Dhakal, 2011); and healthcare (Dematteo & Reeves, 2011) in which appreciative inquiry is being used as a model to initiate institutional change. However, there is no research about using AI in Christian higher education related to cultural competence and its connection to best practices in adult learning-focused programs. A qualitative, case-study approach framed through a critical appreciative lens proved to be a powerful vehicle for giving clear language to the current experience of faculty members as they strive to teach through a social justice perspective and facilitate inclusion in the classroom.

Design Overview and Participant Sample

The setting for this research study was a medium-sized Christian liberal arts university in Southern California called Pax University (fictional name) offering nontraditional adult degree-completion programs (ADP; fictional acronym). A three-phase, qualitative case study design was used to collect data from multiple sources. Phase I involved use of a reflective, self-assessment instrument developed by Visser (2012) and used with permission, of which I then created an electronic version using Zoomerang survey software (see Appendix B). The reflective survey instrument was based upon Marchesani and Adams's (1992) multicultural teaching model. Marchesani and Adams (1992) examined the teaching-learning process for the purpose of teaching through a social justice perspective in the following four areas: what faculty members bring to the learning setting, what students bring to the learning setting, pedagogical strategies, and course content. Phase II involved focus groups using critical appreciative inquiry as a conceptual framework to help bring voice to teaching through a social justice perspective. Phase III entailed conducting one-on-one interviews that further amplified experiences that faculty members had in participating in the survey and focus group process.

A purposeful convenience sampling method was used for the initial data collection with self-assessment reflection documents. Creswell (2012) described *purposeful sampling* as that which qualitative researchers use in order to "intentionally select individuals and sites" to further understanding about a particular phenomenon (p. 206). The sample was purposeful because faculty members were deliberately selected

based upon their teaching experience with adult students in ADP programs. Convenience samples come from a participant base that is "available and willing to be studied" (Creswell, 2012, p. 145). The sample used was considered convenience, as the adjunct faculty members who were involved were existing faculty who were active in ADP programs within the Pax University setting. This sample consisted of 188 adjunct faculty members who currently taught in undergraduate and graduate ADP programs across the following four disciplines: business (organizational leadership), computer science, nursing, and liberal studies. The faculty members who teach in ADP programs are primarily adjunct faculty members who are professionals in the field. Some ADP adjunct faculty members are also full time instructors at Pax University in discipline-specific schools across campus. All 188 participants were asked to voluntarily take the written self-assessment, which was anonymous but contained a short set of demographic questions that provided information helpful to the study (e.g., professional discipline, gender, length of time teaching, ADP courses taught, faith tradition, etc.). Demographic data were disaggregated, coded, and tied to emergent themes, which are described in the below data analysis section. Participants were invited into this initial phase of data collection through an e-mail that was sent to all active ADP faculty members with the intent of allowing as many of them as possible to have an opportunity to reflect on four areas of their practice related to diverse students in the adult classroom.

Once survey data were collected, a smaller random sampling of faculty members self-selected to participate in focus groups by indicating their interest through a response e-mail when sent the link to take the survey. These participants were contacted via e-

mail to determine a willingness and commitment to take part in a 2-hour focus group with

four to five other members and were given suggested dates and times. Restricting each

focus group session to four to six members was an intentional choice so that adequate

time could be given to develop dialogue about all four areas from the previously

completed reflective assessment. Final selection of group members for scheduled

sessions was based upon availability. A total of 10 Phase I participants volunteered to be

in focus groups, with five per group confirmed for each session. On the days on which

the sessions were held, one participant per session dropped out—one related to illness

and the other to an urgent professional commitment. Once focus groups were conducted,

all eight participants were sent a follow-up e-mail or phone call the next day thanking

them for their focus group participation and asking if they had an interest in taking part in

a one-on-one interview that would give them a chance to further illumine challenges and

successes involved in teaching in diverse ADP classrooms. All eight focus group

participants agreed to be interviewed, along with a ninth participant, who was unavailable

for the focus group but had taken the reflective self-assessment and wished to take part in

the interview process. Case study research intentionally works to bring depth to the

research process, sometimes through only a few cases (Merriam, 2009). Going more

deeply through interviews of the nine participants who volunteered helped shed further

light on the unique aspects of teaching adult students using experiential foundations and

the challenges of fully engaging diverse student experience.

     Access to participants was granted by the dean and director of faculty for ADP.

Contact information for use in distributing the reflective assessment instrument was

provided by the director of faculty. Methods that were used for establishing a researcher-participant working relationship are described as part of the discussion below.

Protection of Research Participants

The IRBs for both Pax University and Walden University (the sponsoring doctoral student research institution) reviewed the proposed study and granted approval before any data collection began. The Walden University IRB approval number assigned to this research study was 01-03-14-0244182. The Office of Institutional Research (OIRA) at my institution also approved the scheduling and deployment of the Phase I self-reflective survey instrument. Further measures for ethical protection included consent authorization forms for those participating in the written self-reflective assessment, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews. Care was taken to ensure anonymity in Phase I collection and confidentiality in Phases II and III data collection, along with clear explanations of the research process and the data collection measures that were being undertaken. Participants were given the option to opt out at any time during the research process, and data collected from assessments, transcribed focus groups, and interviews were kept in either my password-protected laptop and/or a four-drawer metal filing cabinet to which only I had a key. No harm to participants was anticipated. However, the underlying philosophy that shaped my research inquiry was cognizance that cultural competence is a complex issue requiring an ethic that is "rooted in human relations, care, and socio-historical context" (Glesne, 2011, p. 182). Consequently, care was taken at each phase of the research process to be sensitive to

participant needs and to attend to any affective or verbal displays that might have needed to be addressed immediately or with follow-up communication.

Access to Participants and Role of Researcher

Access to participants was granted by the dean of ADP programs at Pax University, in conjunction with support and approval by the ADP director of faculty. Both administrative leaders are committed to helping ADP faculty members have the best possible preparation for teaching in adult classrooms with their increasingly diverse student profile. Establishing a researcher-participant relationship, particularly for the focus group participants, was eased by over 12 years of rapport between the ADP faculty members and me. The seven full time ADP faculty members who work in various administrative and teaching roles in adult programs provide inservice training and support for adjunct faculty members and are personally involved in ongoing, relational support. The ADP model of caring for adjunct faculty members as critical players in student learning is becoming known throughout the university as one to be imitated in other disciplinary areas. The researcher-participant relationships already had a sound basis due to the historically positive rapport with ADP faculty and staff, and the intention was for those relationships to deepen and grow as a result of the synergistic CAI process—which proved to be the case. Evidence for this came from anecdotal narrative following Phases II and III of the research, in which some participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to take part in the study expressed interest in knowing the results of the research at a later date. Bias that this rapport may have created is accounted for in the description of limitations of the study. I was not in the position of

supervising any of the adjunct faculty members who were asked to participate in the study.

Data Production and Design Rationale

Overview

Because qualitative researchers are actively engaged in the data collection process and there is a co-constructed element at play, the term data production was used (instead of data collection) throughout in this section as one that better represented my intent (Glesne, 2011). The data produced in this research inquiry were gleaned from reflective survey documents, focus group interviews, and one-on-one interviews. Qualitative and case study methodology relies upon multiple sources of data and data gathering techniques to elicit rich data and complex findings (Glesne, 2011).

Justification for Choices About Which Data to Collect

Having three phases of data collection was an intentional part of research design to allow participants the opportunity to first do individual reflection, and then have opportunities for group dialogue through CAI, and then go more deeply into one-on-one conversation with me through a semistructured interview. Intuition that these three combined elements could result in powerful transformation for some faculty members proved to be true.

Use of the reflective self-assessment exercise tool (Visser, 2012) in Phase I data production gave faculty members specific evaluative questions through which to view four areas of their teaching practice (see Appendix B). Adams and Love (2005) stated that "teaching and learning are fluid, interactive processes that can be characterized in

many different ways" (p. 588). For the purposes of facilitating a social justice

perspective in the classroom, and based upon Marchesani and Adams (1992) earlier

model, the following four areas become part of evaluating one's practice: what students

bring to the classroom setting, what teachers bring to the classroom setting, instructional

strategies, and curriculum resources (Adams & Love, 2005). These four areas became the

focus of critical appreciative inquiry in Phase II focus group sessions and more in-depth

discussion as part of Phase III interviews.

Phase I Data Production: Tracking, Analysis, and Validation

Surveys were sent out in the approved time frame of my institution and remained

open for a 2-week period. Anonymity was preserved through the use of a separate e-mail

containing the link to the survey that was sent to participants once the signed consent

form was returned. One reminder was sent at the beginning of the second week that

improved survey return count. Of the 188 reflective surveys sent out, 50 were returned of

which two were incomplete and 48 completed. The two incomplete surveys were

removed from final analysis. Once the survey was closed, data were pulled from the

survey site including all raw responses, all individual responses, and an all-data summary

of responses provided through the Zoomerang Survey website. No names or identifying

features were attached to survey results. These documents, along with individual survey

responses and signed consent waivers, were printed out and stored in a locked, four-

drawer cabinet in my office. An organizing system was created at this time in which hard

copies of documents were placed in labeled file folders, and a three-ring binder was used

to start compiling notes, memos, and other paper documents used for preliminary

analysis. Electronic versions of these documents remained on my password-protected laptop. Electronic files continued to be organized in files using labeling aligned with component parts of the doctoral project assessment rubric for ease of access.

Initial analysis of reflective survey data documents occurred within days of survey closing in order to create a simultaneous process of collection and analysis considered as a distinctive of sound qualitative research (Merriam, 2009). Emerging inquiry produced by survey analysis informed preparation for upcoming focus group sessions. Initial analysis also served to contextualize my facilitation of both focus groups and follow-up interviews. Phase I analysis was captured through memos to myself and open coding (Merriam, 2009) that later served as a more in-depth coding schema.

The production and analysis of these data painted a broad brushstroke about where faculty members found themselves in different parts of the teaching-learning process related to facilitating learning for diverse students in the adult classroom. While self-assessments have sometimes been critiqued as not having accuracy about what is truly occurring in the learning environment (L. Schreiner, personal communication, February 13, 2013), this research study sought to honor faculty member perceptions about their own experience as scholar-practitioners. The critical nature of experience to learning and potential transformative learning was a key theoretical construct for this research inquiry. Phase I data also provided a demographic snapshot of faculty member participants that later enhanced the qualitative analysis of emergent themes and findings.

Phase II Data Production: Tracking, Analysis, and Validation

Phase II data production occurred through the facilitation of focus groups using critical appreciative inquiry as a way to elicit narratives of current best practice related to teaching through a social justice perspective. The four areas of practice were used to shape the content of the focus group questions with a modified overlay of the 5-D appreciative inquiry cycle as a framework for moving through each session. Scripting in an overt definition of teaching through a social justice perspective became the *critical* lens through which the AI became a CAI. This scripted definition was given mid-way through the 2-hour session (see Appendix D). Stating the definition allowed me, as the facilitator, to frame a metanarrative about what constitutes critical consciousness in the teaching-learning setting. The definition also served to explain how CAI is a process that makes room for holding productive tension between positive practice and power dynamics that can contribute to inequitable learning environments (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012).

Focus groups were conducted in a small conference room on the Pax University campus that provided a convenient location for participants and a setting conducive to safe and hospitable dialogue. Consent forms were distributed, signed, and collected prior to the start of each session. I facilitated both focus group sessions, and I am a White female with over 15 years of experience with group dynamics and facilitation work, in addition to serving as a diversity trainer. Sessions were audio-recorded and an observer was present to take notes regarding interaction and group dynamics that could further enhance data analysis and understanding of the research study topic. The observer was a

White, female full time faculty member from the department of leadership and organizational psychology who is trained in counseling and has 10 years of experience facilitating diversity work in a number of academic and professional settings. Presession meetings between me and the faculty observer were conducted to review the CAI process. Expression of the schema through which observations would stream was confirmed as cultural proficiency, adult and experiential learning, and evangelical orientation with respect to inclusion. Meetings were also held immediately after each session to debrief notes and process. The observer assigned code numbers to participants being observed so that no names were present in her notes. These postsession communications served to provide further clarity and depth to the focus group session data production and preliminary analysis. The use of an observer was also one strategy used to provide internal validity to data production processes and to help "capture what is really there" (Merriam, 2009, p. 213).

Focus group audio recording files were sent for transcription and returned within the week. Transcription was done by a paid transcriptionist referred by the Office of Institutional Research at Pax University. The transcriptionist signed a confidentiality agreement, which was included in IRB documents as part of the approval process. To further preserve confidentiality, participants were assigned number codes, and any reference to specific persons was removed. Beginning and overlapping analysis from each session took place through culling of my notes, as well as the observer's notes. I also reviewed audio recordings while waiting for transcripts to be returned. Preliminary thoughts were placed into memo form and then cross-referenced with Phase I survey

data. Coding in the key guide was amplified as new ideas and patterns were noted. Once

transcripts were received, each transcript was reviewed in a number of ways. The first

review was done through a same word/phrase analysis in which repeating words and

ideas were highlighted and then summarized on large easel sheets and posted around the

room in my private home office that was kept locked when not in use. Preliminary

coding became an approach for constructing categories. The second review took

emerging categories and themes from easel sheets and tracked them through a topic grid

suggested by Creswell (2012) which included major, unique, and leftover topics. During

this time, further review of the literature was conducted to ground the naming of

categories. Named categories also derived from my observations about the data, as well

as participants' expression of unique ideas that tied to research questions. These naming

strategies were described by Merriam (2009) as those that support congruence in

qualitative research studies. Reflective journaling and Word document outlines were also

kept as part of the tracking process. All hard copy documents, including consent waivers,

transcripts, notes, journal reflections, etc., were kept in a locked, four-drawer file cabinet.

Electronic documents were kept on my password-protected laptop.

Phase III Data Production: Tracking, Analysis, and Validation

Data from one-on-one interviews are considered a strategic element of inquiry for

an "information rich" case study (Glesne, 2011). Interviewees self-selected from those

who participated in the focus group activity, and, therefore, brought further depth of

experience and information to the topic under study. Participants were contacted

immediately following each focus group session and then scheduled within that week for

better recall of the focus group conversation. Interviews were conducted by the primary

researcher and were up to 1-hour in length. Interviews were held either in the office of

the participant or my office for ease and privacy. Interview questions were designed to

bring further depth to the focus group dialogue experience (see Appendix E). The

interviews were audio recorded with preconsent obtained from each participant and then

transcribed for review and analysis. Interview audio files were sent immediately

following each interview to a paid transcriptionist referred by the Office of Institutional

Research at Pax University, and transcripts were returned to me within 1-2 weeks. The

transcriptionist signed a confidentiality agreement that was included in IRB documents as

part of the approval process.

Participant names were again replaced with number coding. Analysis of

interview transcription documents followed a similar process to that of the focus groups.

Analysis was conducted in an overlapping strategy that combined review of incoming

transcripts with cross-referencing to emerging themes from focus group analysis. The

same-word/same phrase process was used to sift through each of the nine interview

transcripts. Findings were integrated into the topical grid but were also individually

reviewed and insights placed into existing reflective journal documents. Interview

transcript findings were also brought back to easel pad summaries, and key clarifying

points were added to pertinent areas.

A manual, color-coding with symbols strategy was developed and utilized as

analysis progressed and resulted in a coding key guide. Line-by-line coding provided for

immersion analysis that helped prevent predetermined theories from being attached to the

data (Glesne, 2011). Themes, patterns, and frameworks of relational categories were pulled out for comparison and analysis and then tracked within the above described documents. Analysis was then conducted by taking all five research questions and connecting findings to each one through the five elements of the 5-D AI cycle. Final analysis was done by straining those elements back through the four areas of teaching through a social justice framework (content, strategies, faculty, and students) and pulling out appreciative and critical findings. All of this work formed a foundation for the proposed project, a training module that can be adapted for varied institutional settings, but designed to empower ADP faculty members to effectively engage diverse student learning in their classrooms through the use of critical appreciative inquiry (CAI).

Credibility of findings was established through two avenues of triangulation—the use of multiple sources and multiple investigators. Multiple sources of data included the survey documents, along with transcripts from focus groups and interviews. Multiple investigators included the researcher, observer, and an external auditor. The faculty member who served as a focus group observer was provided copies of transcripts for both focus groups and all interviews and gave analytical feedback in a face-to-face meeting with me. The external auditor, a higher education consultant with Ph.D. from Claremont Graduate University, was given a draft version of the research analysis and findings, and provided feedback in a written document. Triangulation in qualitative research serves as an avenue for accuracy and credibility (Creswell, 2012).

Results of Research—Finding the Story

Overview

Glesne (2011) referred to the data analysis process for qualitative research as "finding your story" (p. 184). The idea of eliciting rich and descriptive data from narrative construction of experience resonated deeply with the design methodology of this research study. Cockell and McArthur-Blair (2012) suggested that representing data analysis from critical appreciative inquiry is a process of quilting stories together from emerging and relevant themes, notions, and threads that tie back to the literature. By extending the quilting metaphor, the purpose of the research and the primary research question became the bottom frame upon which all storied pieces were laid out with a tapestry slowly taking shape as each story was told. The purpose of this research study was to examine the ways in which adult and experiential learning paradigms could serve as a unique portal to increased critical awareness and cultural competence in the classroom. The primary question asked what challenges ADP faculty members face when teaching a highly diverse student population. The five stories that emerged are represented in the following findings and were illumined through two overlapping approaches that gave structure to the tapestry under construction from the data produced. The first overlay is the modified version of the 5D (Watkins & Mohr) AI model upon which focus group and interview questions were based (see Figure 1). The model became the conceptual framework that served to promote inquiry through a critically appreciative lens (see Figure 2). The second overlay was the four-quadrant social justice-

framework teaching model described in the design overview. Findings were outlined

through both structural overlays.
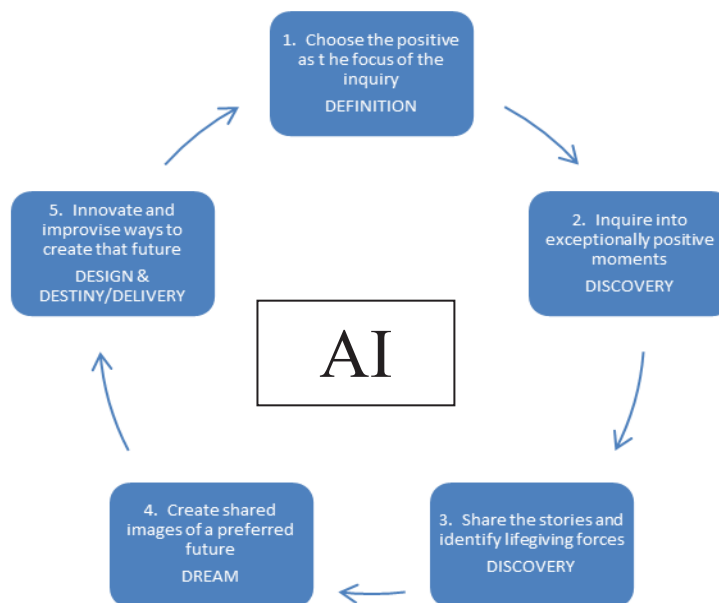
Figure 1. 5-D AI model. The 5-D model incorporates the 4-Ds and adds a fifth component, *Definition,* which "emphasizes the importance of taking the time needed to develop the topic that will fit the purpose of the inquiry and engage everyone involved" (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012). Model from *The Essentials of Appreciative Inquiry: A Roadmap for Creating Positive Futures* (p. 5), by B. J. Mohr and J. M. Watkins, 2002, Westford, MA: Pegasus Communications.
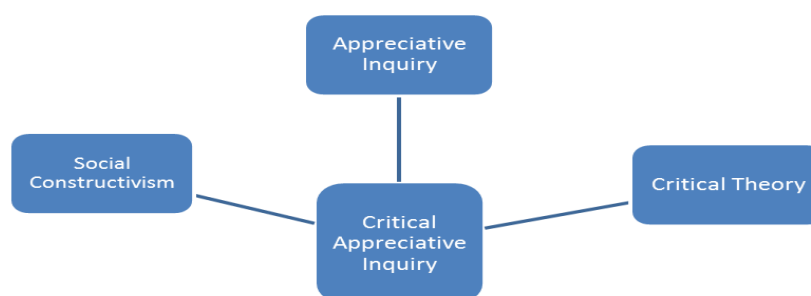
Figure 2. Critical appreciative inquiry model. Critical appreciative inquiry serves as a paradigm within the appreciative inquiry framework in which socially constructed inequities can be addressed. From *Appreciative inquiry in Higher Education: A Transformative Force*, by J. Cockell and J. McArthur-Blair, 2012, San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Definition

There were no specific findings related to the *Definition* phase of the CAI in this research study. However, a rationale for including this phase as an important frame for the research conducted could be helpful. For the purposes of this research, a modified 5-D AI model was used in which *Definition* served as the first element of the cyclical process "emphasizing the importance of taking the time needed to develop the topic that will fit the purpose of the inquiry and engage everyone involved" (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012, p. 24). Because cultural competence is a complex subject involving structural inequities sometimes experienced by stakeholders, taking time to specifically name the topic being explored through a *Definition* phase was a purposeful choice in research design. Instead of starting right off with the *Discover* phase (the beginning point in a basic 4-D Appreciative inquiry), the 5-D model created an intentional space for naming important elements of the study. Watkins, Mohr, and Kelly (2011) likened this phase to the contracting stage of consulting in which the "inquiry goals, including the framing of the question and the inquiry protocol, the participation strategy, and the project management structure are developed" (p. 36). I made an intuitive choice about which AI model would best serve the nature of the inquiry which proved to strengthen the findings and related analysis. The voices selected to define and speak into the topic drove the critical aspect of the inquiry—a crucial element related to challenges faculty members may face when teaching in diverse classrooms. Instead of using stakeholder voices from the institutional sample, the *Definition* phase was modified to use voices that shaped the research design itself.

Definition in the 5-D model begins with choosing the positive as the focus of the inquiry and allowing stakeholder voices to speak into the topic of the inquiry. However for this exploration, the *voices*, so to speak, which flowed into defining the inquiry came from those inclusive practitioners including Maurianne Adams, Barbara Love, and L.S. Marchesani, whose work with the four-quadrant model has been shaping what it means to engage in critically reflective practice for the last twenty years (Adams & Love, 2005; Marchesani & Adams, 1992). From her more recent diversity scholarly practice, Visser (2012) further added *Definition* to the research topic by creating the reflective questions used in the survey itself. Her questions allowed ADP faculty members who participated in Phase I of the study to investigate their own teaching-learning practice through a self-assessment designed to evoke critical reflection. I also spoke into the *Definition* of the topic by appropriating critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) as the overlay for looking at teaching-learning effectiveness from an inclusive stance. In a sense, Cockell and McArthur-Blair's (2012) conception of CAI (the only one of its kind in the literature) also became a defining voice in the *Definition* phase. Defining elements of this inquiry were the positive and powerful adult learning paradigm through which ADP faculty members facilitated learning. The critical focus of the inquiry became the metanarrative about what constitutes a social justice framework in teaching and learning. The CAI structure served as a bridge to hold productive tension between the two defining pieces (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012).

Five Stories

Five stories emerged from the research study that reflected an intersection of findings across adult learning paradigms, cultural competence, and faith-based inclusive practice. The storied themes were transformative learning environments; transformative facilitation; personal and institutional capacity; impediments to honest dialogue; and, finally, exploring student narratives. The findings in each story were discussed through the discover and dream phases of appreciative inquiry and one or more specific areas of practice from the four-quadrant social justice framework (content, learning strategies, faculty, and students). Connections were made to research purpose and questions. Additionally, evidence of challenges was discussed to give support for proposed project direction.

Story 1—Transformative Learning Environments

Course content.

Discover. The *Discover* phase of a CAI involves inquiring into exceptionally positive moments and sharing stories that identify lifegiving forces (Watkins, Mohr, & Kelly, 2011). The first story that emerged through the research was themed as transformative learning environments. Adult learning paradigms are typically known for creating learning environments that elicit experience and use content and learning strategies that are student-centered and problem-based. Schapiro (2007) noted that adult programs often create a catalyst for transformation by creating learning environments that both support and challenge existing values and belief systems. Focus group participants easily shared about some of the ways in which they use course content to intentionally

incorporate topics that touch on issues of diversity in the classroom. A warm-up question asking participants what they think of when they consider the word *diversity* and ADP students established that participants' understanding aligned with the research study definition – diversity as encompassing the broadest spectrum of difference.

Creative use of case studies and film were mentioned by Participant 4 as a "rich medium for cultural awareness and racial and ethnic identity [that] bring about dynamic discussion opportunities around this convoluted term called culture." Positive stories were told about course content designed to bring out an understanding of difference through readings and current events. The use of biblical scripture to "intentionally challenge genderism and racism" was mentioned by Participant 2 as a way to make assignments "revolve around current and social justice issues."

***Dream*.** Creating shared images of a preferred future involves imagining exceptional moments as the norm in a group or institution rather than the exception (Watkins, Mohr, & Kelly, 2011). Regarding the impact of course content and diversity, ADP faculty members who took part in the focus group shared a desire for more collaboration among colleagues teaching same course sections and a need for ADP course curriculum specialists to offer a cadre of options that could bring about deeper engagement with diversity topics. They referenced the energy in the focus group session while engaging in dialogue about diversity and imaged what that might look like as a vehicle for enhancing ADP course content and curriculum. Their dream tied directly to part of the vision in the proposed project in which co-constructed collaboration among peers becomes an integral part of growth into cultural competence.

Evidence of critical awareness. Of the eight faculty members who took part in focus group sessions, three displayed a solid understanding of critical awareness related to course content and diversity issues. According to Castaneda (2004), content that gives evidence of critical awareness goes beyond confirming "traditional, mainstream experiences and perspectives" (p. 148). Three faculty members made statements lending support to the idea of their growing critical awareness regarding content. For example, Participant 5 indicated that her expertise (gender studies) informs her curriculum, but "I would have to say I probably have more heightened awareness around issues of gender than I do about race and other types of diversity issues." Finally, two faculty members were unable to put into language what content would look like through a critical lens. When asked if there are things she does differently with content when she considers her diverse online student audience, Participant 1 said, "No. I don't think so. No, I wouldn't be prepared to do it [the content] differently."

Challenges. Findings that evidenced challenges for faculty members related to content seemed to be focused on a desire for being exposed to diversity literature and media sources that could enhance classroom practice. Taylor (2013) expressed that providing a variety of scholarly readings on diversity for faculty members can work towards building a missing common intellectual core regarding diversity scholarship. This core knowledge can then be used to re-design courses to make them more inclusive for a diverse student population. ADP faculty members do not currently receive explicit help in this regard. An important connection to the absence of a common understanding from the diversity literature would be the ability to address Eurocentric narratives that run

through typical liberal studies offerings. Increased understanding about normative assumptions is part of culturally responsive pedagogies and enhanced motivation for student learning (Gay, 2010; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009).

Learning strategies.

Discover. A transformative learning environment for adult students was also evidenced in the myriad, rich strategies employed by ADP faculty members to engage student learning. These strategies included minimal lecture, demonstrations, the flipped classroom, small and large group discussion, jigsaws, real-life examples, presentations, activities used to engage readings, stand-where-you-stand, resourcing, and chalk-talks. Lang (2009) spoke to the potential for transformative and deep learning through relational activities in the adult classroom. ADP faculty members consistently gave voice to the strategic ways in which they designed classroom activities to bring out adult experience and to create opportunity for interaction with colleagues and classmates. For example, Participant 2 said, "I make use of jigsaw and other [interactive] teaching techniques that help them be responsible for understanding the material, sharing it with one another, and then having a discussion after they've shared within their groups." Phase I survey data also underscored that ADP faculty members across programs and regardless of length of service self-report as *always* employing strategies that are varied and hit multiple learning styles of their students.

Dream. When discussing interactive learning strategies, faculty members expressed that a favorite element of teaching ADP students was the structure of the adult classroom in terms of active engagement. ADP faculty members who taught in both

traditional undergraduate classrooms and for ADP further expressed that a dream of

theirs would be more of the same kind of interactivity for their traditional students. Other

comments referenced ADP inservice training sessions and that a favorite aspect of those

sessions was the modeling of interactive classroom strategies as a method for presenting

the training topics at hand. A related dream was that ADP offer more than just twice-

yearly opportunities for exchanging learning activity strategies, again relating the

energizing and collegial focus group dialogue as whetting the appetite for further similar

offerings.

   Evidence of critical awareness. Brookfield (2013) suggested that classroom

techniques that display critical awareness take into account power dynamics in the

classroom. Understanding power dynamics specifically related to using certain activities

to further cultural competence was not openly verbalized by focus group participants.

Not being explicit about power elements related to cultural competence had primarily to

do with the way the question was posed by me when I asked, "In what ways do your

teaching strategies go beyond traditional lecture and assigned readings?" Effective adult

learning activities are necessarily overlapping with facilitation strategies employed by

ADP faculty members, and the power elements related to both were discussed through

the findings in the next story, transformative facilitation.

   Connecting threads. Story 1, transformative learning environments, began to

capture the colorful ways in which adult learning focused environments through their

student-centered approaches create significant space for new learning. The strategic use

of experience to increase learning through content, along with creative activities that

make use of peer knowledge, wove a design of best practices that was clearly evidenced by ADP faculty members. A missing element for some was the bridging of content and activities to cultural competence, which related to both the purpose of this research and the primary question about the challenges ADP faculty members face. A question that emerged from this themed story was, "If adult learning paradigms are truly focused on student learning experience, whose experience might be missing in the content and through the learning activities?" The proposed project included intentional design pieces that facilitate critical understanding in this regard.

Story 2—Transformative Facilitation: What Faculty Bring

   Discover. Inquiring into exceptionally positive moments about who ADP faculty members are as facilitators of adult learning was one of the highlights of the data production process. Story 2, transformative facilitation, in many ways became the heart of the study's findings, because faculty members' experiences were the core of this research. Focus group and interview sessions revealed several strands of integrative practice that the literature supports as providing deep learning "that reaches into and beyond the individual participants" (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010, p. 12). Faculty members' ability to create learning spaces with the potential to transform was evidenced from a swell of appreciative voices surging through focus group and interview sessions. The following categories emerged under the overarching theme of transformative facilitation.

   Inhabiting authenticity and humility. ADP faculty members verbalized, in a variety of ways, a persona that they bring to the classroom that is shaped by authenticity and humility. The adult learning literature is replete with discussion about the power of

such a stance as a motivator for student learning engagement (Brookfield, 2006; Palmer, 2007; Vella, 2008). For example, Participant 8 talks with students about her own return to school as an adult saying, "I sat right there in your seat … I felt what you're feeling … you can do it [complete your degree], and I'm going to help you!" Another expression of authenticity came from Participant 5 who said, "To have some level of vulnerability I think is really important. I try to be vulnerable myself with my stories and invite that for my students." This same participant demonstrated humility in her practice when saying, "I think it's important for a professor to say, 'Listen, I don't know.'" She then shared about having students bring their experience to the topic, which modeled a willingness to learn from others and illustrated a humble stance.

Honoring of experience. Experience to learning as an integral part of adult education practice was a foundational part of this study. ADP faculty members evidenced an ethos of honoring adult experience as a natural part of their role as facilitators. Participant 3 talked about bringing student narratives in through discussion. Participant 9 echoed that reading student autobiographies (an assignment given to students in every ADP program) gave her "an understanding of student experience" and a sense of who is in the room. To better understand her students' experiences Participant 1 makes a "grid of people's backgrounds … to sort of gauge where they are coming from." Participant 8 spoke about one of the "joys of working with adult learners [is using] the great levels of expertise in the room" and then facilitating content through those experiences. A related statement came from Participant 5 who "… invites the expertise

of those in the classroom, because I think there's so much to be learned from people's experiences."

Understanding self as colearner. Related to the philosophical underpinnings of honoring adult experience in the classroom is the idea of facilitator as a participant learner. Several ADP faculty members expressed that they learn just as much from students as the students are learning from them. Facilitator as colearner is another attribute of sound practice that is commonly found in the adult learning literature (Brookfield & Preskill, 2005; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011). Related to the purpose of the study, being a colearner is an attitude displayed by ADP faculty members through these findings that could represent a greater openness to new ideas about cultural identity and proficiency. The proposed project study capitalized on this mind-set as part of cultural proficiency training design.

Using discussion and dialogue. Another way ADP faculty members made specific mention of honoring adult experience was through the use of discussion and dialogue as an avenue for rich learning. In the same word/same phrase analysis of transcripts, the terms discussion and dialogue came up repeatedly across both focus group sessions. Participant 5 talked about facilitating a safe environment "where we can have small group discussion, large group discussion, and kind of weave that throughout." Participant 2 agreed with this comment and added that he uses activities that allow for grasping of material and then "sharing it with one another, and then having discussion after they've shared within their groups."

The design of this research was intentionally centered around dialogue and discussion in an attempt to mirror what ADP faculty members are already doing in the classroom to facilitate new learning. The use of critical appreciative inquiry as a framework highlighted faculty member experience through collegial dialogue. This conversation, which focused on the positive, in turn, opened up opportunities for new learning about power elements in the classroom. In her interview following the focus group session, Participant 9 referenced the way she moved from the Phase I survey experience into new learning through the dialogue in the focus group session. "I thought I knew what it [content knowledge of focus group] would be … but as we talked and people were sharing their own experiences, again, I was learning all kinds of new things and seeing different angles and aspects than I had seen previously." Her comments highlight the co-constructed and potentially transformative nature of narrative expression that appreciative inquiry encourages through dialogue within storied experience.

Creating hospitable learning space. The student-centered approach in Knowles's andragogy was heavily influenced by the work of Carl Rogers (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Rogers believed that significant learning takes place in an environment "in which threat to the self of the learner is reduced to a minimum" (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011). The findings evidenced that creating safe and hospitable spaces for learning is a priority for ADP faculty members. "I like to talk about confidentiality in the classroom and have that be a safe space for people to be able to share their stories and their experiences" was the statement Participant 5 made when asked about her teaching practice. Participant 2 spoke to the early establishment of

ground rules to emphasize that everyone's perspective is valuable and that disagreement can be done in an agreeable manner. From those same comments he said, "I hope to create that safe space where they feel like they can speak up." Particularly in relationship to difficult conversations about diversity, Participant 4 provides a metacommunication for his students in which he tells them, "We will be discussing real world issues and challenges … and we [will do that] in a safe, uplifting environment." Participant 3 uses her own cultural background to help open up communication about everyone's diverse perspectives and tells her students, "This is a safe place and I'm exploring…I want to give you permission to explore where your opinions, beliefs, and attitudes might be coming from." Intentionally creating safe spaces for learning was mentioned as a lifegiving factor by a number of the participants in the study.

Modeling critical thinking. Posing questions and nurturing spaces to hold productive tension were two elements that ADP faculty members gave voice to under the story of transformative facilitation. Participant 3 shared that the colleague she team teaches with models how to engage students in critical thinking by studying their autobiographies and then being "an active question-bringer (for lack of a better term)." Participant 5 indicated that she uses a *case in point* strategy that serves to create disequilibrium for her learners by attending to conflict or tension in the room and using that to facilitate critical thinking about a topic. Others agreed that the use of questions and returning the topic at hand back to the students for collective discussion was an important part of encouraging critical thinking. These facilitation strategies fit with Brookfield's (2006) conception of fostering a student's ability to "critique prevailing

assumptions" (p. 241). Promoting critical thinking also creates momentum for the kinds of transformative learning shifts that are the focus of this research study – moving into cultural competence. The proposed project used CAI as a query process about faculty members' self-narrative including the identity formation of both self and others. Facilitating critical thinking as a pedagogical tool then, once again, became a mirror for faculty members in their own development through strategic design of project training content. A familiar practice from their own classrooms became part of a powerful self-exploration into understanding the impact that cultural differences make on student learning engagement and motivation.

   Understanding the power of cohort-based learning. The cohort model is sometimes contested as an effective learning model (Beachboard, Beachboard, & Adkison, 2011), but ADP faculty members consistently made mention of the cohort structure as enhancing learning through relationship. Being part of developing student relationships and the bonds forged over 15 to 24-month programs of study were described as a lifegiving factor for many ADP faculty members. Participant 5 expressed, "I think what's lifegiving is the cohort model and family atmosphere in the classroom … that's something I have really been impacted by." She then went on to say, "I think it's just incredibly lifegiving as students get to know one another and value one another. Gosh. There's magic that happens in the classroom as a result … it's nothing I did, it just happens there in the cohort." Demonstrating his ability to effectively leverage the cohort model through personalizing his own story with students, Participant 2 said, "What's lifegiving is establishing meaningful relationships … one of the ways that do that is I

share a PowerPoint with pictures of family , and share stories … they [students] wanted

to have that connection [with me]." Participant 3 said, "I think the relationships they've

already formed by the time they've gotten to [the class I teach] and the supportive way

about the cohort is cool." Participant 9 shared her enthusiasm for the cohort model as an

avenue for students to help one another take responsibility for doing the work that needs

to be done in order to complete their degrees. "[When they are] problem-solving with

each other and connecting with each other during the week, that is just so joyful to me."

Dream. Shared images of a preferred future related to transformative facilitation

were limited to expressing a desire for more kinds of dialogue opportunities beyond the

twice-yearly inservice sessions. Faculty members expressed how impactful it was for

them to learn from other colleagues about different ways of facilitating adult learning.

The proposed project responded to this desire through varied pathways and modalities for

increased interaction with colleagues about diversity awareness as part of training design.

Evidence of critical awareness. The crux of this study rested on an assumption

supported in the literature and from my experience that monocultural faculty members,

particularly in evangelical Christian higher education (ECHE) settings, often struggle

with the kind of critical awareness that diverse students need in order to effectively

engage in the learning process. One of the broadest definitions of critical awareness and

culturally responsive practice was given by Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2009) and was

used as foundational context for the remaining analysis in this section:

> *Critical awareness:* Also termed *critical literacy*, refers to analytical habits of
>
> thinking, reading, writing, speaking, or discussing that go beneath surface

impressions, dominant narratives, mere opinions, and routine clichés,

understanding the social contexts and consequences of any subject matter;

discovering the deep meaning of any event, text, technique, process, object,

statement, image, or situation; applying that meaning to one's own context.

(p. 190)

Critical awareness related to what faculty members themselves brought to their

teaching-learning practice was evidenced in the findings by some participants in both

focus group and interview sessions. The two participants who were faculty of color gave

the most eloquent expression to what difference can mean in higher education

classrooms. Their ability to give eloquent expression supported an underlying narrative

in this study regarding identity formation of diverse populations and how bumping up

against the dominant majority has required them to be critically aware in ways that their

White colleagues may not necessarily be. When considering what faculty members bring

to the teaching-learning setting through a social justice framework, a key component is

critical self-awareness about the impact of intersectional identities on student learning

engagement (Adams & Love, 2005; Marchesani & Adams, 1992).

When interviewed, Participant 7 indicated she feels a need to overcompensate

with students to gain acceptance and have credibility. "I think, basically, being a

minority, an African-American woman, over 50 … I'm a good role model [but] I'm not

the majority of what they see … So I'm sensitive to it and I know they kind of sit back

and wait for me to kind of prove that I have the knowledge, that I'm capable." Critical

awareness of her social positioning in a society where she experiences inequitable

treatment causes her to move into her classroom practice differently than her White colleagues. Participant 3 said that she uses her cultural identity to bring difficult discussion about difference out in the open on the first session of any course she teaches in a way that disarms and allows others to do the same. "I am very comfortable putting out there my own experiences, my own cultural background in hopes that it gives others permission to own their difference." Both participants used their cultural understanding of self to promote an inclusive learning environment to effectively engage a diverse array of students. Both participants also expressed having a comfort level *with not letting Whites opt out*, an emergent sub-theme expressed by other participants in the study, and not just the faculty members of color. Participant 7 said, "I'm very comfortable talking about that [power and privilege issues] because I feel I have nothing to lose by exposing that to students. It's something that needs to be talked about. We need to know that just because you are White and male in a suit and tie does not mean that you don't need to be questioned." On a related note, Participant 4, a White male faculty member, indicated that he felt the tension in his cohort when a White male student initially refused to take part in a worldview assignment designed to describe specific cultural background of students. In another version of *not letting Whites opt out*, he let the student know that the expectation would still be that the student brings meaningful dialogue from his unique perspective about his own experience of culture.

Critical awareness by faculty members in ADP classrooms was also evidenced in other areas beyond race, including skillful facilitation of issues having to do with gender, LGBT, faith differences, age, and ability. For example, Participant 2 shared an example

from his classroom where a student came out to his classmates for the first time while giving a presentation on what biblical scripture says about homosexuality. (LGBT students at ECHE institutions are many times ignored or marginalized as *different* and *sinful*.) The fact that the faculty member created a safe enough environment for the student to self-reveal and also did not censor the topic or the student, displayed both critical awareness and compassion. "I don't want to take any credit for it, but I felt that the very thing I'd hoped for—not just knowledge, but wisdom; not just tolerance, but compassion and hospitality … at that moment, the classroom was transformed." These particular examples pulled from findings represented critical awareness on the part of faculty members related to pushing up against the dominant culture, as well as creating inclusive spaces for marginalized groups.

An important finding related to critical awareness was the way in which the research design moving from self-reflection to dialogue shifted some participants' awareness of critical issues in the classroom. Six out of eight focus group participants gave evidence of shifts in thinking related to race, class, gender, and other areas of diversity in their classroom practice from taking part in this research process. Participant 5 said, "I think the questions that you asked were good questions in as much that it got me thinking about areas of diversity that I maybe hadn't consciously thought about before." She went on to say that the process caused her to reflect on and really evaluate how she looks at diversity in the classroom. Participant 7 gave slightly less indication of shifting in saying, "Yes, it [the survey and focus group process] made me think about it a little bit differently." Participant 1 indicated that being part of the research process

helped her recognize that she does not focus on or address elements of diversity in the classroom, signaling the beginnings of shifting awareness.

In starker contrast, Participant 9 talked about being impacted by each part of the research process (survey, focus group, and interview) with growing realizations as she completed each phase. Upon completion of the survey, she e-mailed me requesting a copy of the instrument so that she could think through some of the questions it raised for her about her practice and integrating diversity elements. During the focus group session she indicated that the survey "was intriguing … and brought a different level of awareness and asking myself, "Do I do this? How do I do this?" During her interview, she added that before she had gone through the research process, she would have said that she was comfortable with a variety of people. "I would now add that I'm also open to the fact that I don't know everything, and that I want to more intentionally solicit people's input and ideas that I might not have asked for previously." This assertion tied directly to the purpose of the research in that a critical appreciative inquiry process allowed her to explore power elements of classroom practice that had not previously been considered. Transformative shifts in thinking will now be integrated into her future teaching-learning efforts.

A final example of changed perspective through taking part in the research process came from Participant 2 who said, "I liked the comprehensiveness of it and it caused me to stop and think … Am I bringing issues of racial reconciliation and awareness? Is that sufficiently structured into the curriculum?" He went on to ask, "Is

there really a safe space [in my classroom] where [students] can feel comfortable being able to share and be open about their own personal background?"

Challenges. Challenges for faculty members in terms of how they facilitate learning for diverse students were revealed through what was overtly languaged, what was languaged in particular ways, and what was not at all languaged, but was still telling.

Experiential learning to diversity competence disconnect. The use of experience as a way to deeply engage the adult learner was demonstrated in many of the above illustrations depicting skillful facilitation. However, in some instances, faculty members made comments that could be interpreted as shifting responsibility about their own discomfort with a topic back to students to handle for them. For example, when asked, "What strategies do you use when you don't feel equipped to address diverse perspectives on an issue or topic?" Participant 4 said, "Bounce it to the class." Participant 5 asks her students, "Who would like to speak to this?" and Participant 6 said that she puts "the student in touch with someone who could better address their needs than I can." One of the elements raised by both the observer and external auditor was that while these types of responses can at first be construed as skillful use of experience and support for the student, they can also be indications of faculty members not owning their own need to increase cultural competence skills. According to Lund (2010), majority faculty members have had the luxury of not needing to learn about engaging with difference, as their privilege shelters them from this expectation. Having the discernment to tell when using experience in an adult classroom is part of an empowering

shared dialogue versus deferring responsibility for becoming culturally proficient was an important issue raised by this study.

A related challenge is the burden placed upon students from marginalized populations by instructors who have not yet investigated their own social identity or that of their students. An example of inappropriate use of student experience is when a faculty member turns to a person of color and asks them to *speak for their group* when an issue of race comes up in the classroom. In so doing, that faculty member has abdicated teacher responsibility and placed the student in an untenable and often painful position (Sue, 2010). While none of the participants specifically mentioned doing this, making use of student experience in this way could easily occur if the faculty member was not comfortable facilitating diverse topics or situations that arise in the classroom.

***Confusion about what* critical *means**. In some instances, it became clear that the term *critical* was not understood by ADP faculty members as having to do with power elements in the classroom. Instead, the word was used interchangeably with critical thinking. When talking about the idea of a critical appreciative inquiry during her interview, Participant 9 expressed that she recognized "it's not critical like negative—it's critical like using one's intellectual capacity or critical thinking, being able to be thoughtful and having a process and incorporate all these different components." So while she was thoughtfully languaging her growing understanding of what being appreciative of different perspectives might now mean having gone through the research study process, she was still unable to connect the idea of being critical with power differentials in the classroom. When comparing her understanding to Ginsberg and

Wlodkowski's (2009) definition of critical awareness, two missing components were those related to dominant narratives and social context. Lacking understanding about the concept of criticality and its relationship to teaching through a social justice framework was one of the primary challenges confirmed through this research study. The proposed project was designed to more fully unpack the idea of critical teaching practice with specific activities.

Connecting threads. Story 2, transformative facilitation, continued to fill in a picture of artistry between skills and personal traits that highlight the unique orientation of the adult classroom. Interestingly, many of the attributes described as those that make facilitators of adult learning so effective are the very same attributes noted in the literature as those that can elicit a move into cultural competence (Brookfield, 2013; Gay, 2010; Lindsey, Martinez, & Lindsey, 2007). An emerging question then became, "What disconnections might be taking place for ADP faculty members that inhibit a move into cultural proficiency given the powerful narrative and transformative climate they give evidence of creating for their students?"

Story 3—"I'm Comfortable, but…"—Personal and Institutional Capacity: What Faculty Bring

Discover. Story 3 had to do with knowing oneself as a faculty member in terms of comfort levels with diversity issues and examination of attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions. Several distinctions were made by participants between personal comfort levels in navigating diverse classrooms and perceived institutional messages that caused some dissonance for them. Therefore, the overarching theme that emerged was titled

personal versus institutional capacity as a descriptor capturing Smith's (2009) idea of "engaging all faculty and building the capacity of all faculty to address the pedagogical, curricular, and scholarly work of diversity" (p. 74). Enacting inclusive learning environments requires a cohesive effort by individual faculty members and the institution itself.

Comfort levels. When asked to describe how comfortable they are in the presence of diverse student populations, focus group participants shared a variety of discoveries that displayed an honest appraisal of their practice. Participant 9 indicated she was comfortable "because I don't know anything different! To me, that is normal." She went on to say that when she finds herself in settings where all the people are similar, that is strange to her. Two participants expressed that diversity is not something to which they give consideration. For example, Participant 5 said, "I would say that it's not something I even think about." And promptly after that, Participant 6 said, "I don't think about it either." A related statement came from Participant 8 who said, "I think we are all trying to be very responsive to our students, but I don't really think of it as diversity," and then went on to say "I'm uncomfortable, but am becoming more comfortable…it's a growth process for me." Participant 2 described the importance of paying attention to diversity in his classroom, that he celebrates the different cultures, and looks forward to being in a diverse environment.

Participant 3 said that her response changed recently from "comfortable with all diversity" to "comfortable with cultural diversity [and] very comfortable with religious diversity," but found herself uncomfortable when she experienced having two practicing

lesbian women in her classroom. She then described a reflective process she went through because she has gay friends, yet in the classroom setting, she had "an initial hurdle [to get through] and I really had to sit down with myself after the first class and say, 'Okay, now, how are you going to approach this?'"

A similar response was given by Participant 4 who stated, "I've always been comfortable with racial and ethnic diversity," but then went on to say that although he and his wife have gay friends and they are very comfortable with that, "I've come into potential conflict … here at the university." Other participants expressed similar dissonance when it appeared that religious differences might make it difficult to express a Christian worldview and still foster inclusion for some students. A recent incident at Pax University in which a theology faculty member came out as transgendered and was let go from the university was brought up by more than one participant as a cause for discomfort. Again, there was dissonance between what faculty members felt personally about the situation with their colleague and the university's lack of communication about institutional expectations of what could be discussed openly with students in the classroom.

Examining attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions. When asked, "In what ways do you examine your own attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions about what it means to work in diverse environments and with diverse individuals?" participants shared similar responses indicating mindfulness and a willingness to seek out answers: "I don't assume." "I stay mindful of things that trigger me." "I maintain an awareness of those in the classroom." "I learn a lot from my students." "I do reading and research." Participant 4 was the only

faculty member who openly stated that he no longer examines his "beliefs with regard to diversity in any other capacity than gay rights" which he specified only had to do with the university's positional statements and not his own comfort level. This statement was such a unique assertion from the research findings that it is further explored under negative case analysis near the end of Section 2.

Dream. In creating shared images of a preferred future, faculty members were quite open about languaging a desire for further opportunities structured in the same way as the research inquiry to help them explore and then discuss teaching through a social justice perspective. The focus group experience, in particular, was voiced as "reinforcement that other people are concerned about issues of justice and aware of gender and power differentials" and as a hopeful avenue for future conversation. Others mentioned a need for actual physical space on the Pax University campus where faculty members could more easily gather on a regular basis for "informal dialogue, networking, and getting to know each other in a different way." Participant 3 said, "I would love to see more diversity on the teaching staff [and] in leadership so that I can feel that those perspectives are being represented." Participant 2 suggested that diversity be "integrated in our teaching, in our classrooms, in our curriculum [and as a] university norm" much in the same way as faith integration is currently. Participant 6 envisioned a *Learning Commons* that she said could be used in a multidisciplinary manner to increase knowledge in a strategic way about diversity and teaching through social justice framework.

Listening to these ideas from research participants gave impetus to the proposed project and the use of CAI as an exploratory and empowering avenue for learning to teach through a social justice framework. From a researcher-observer perspective, hearing the ideas expressed about a preferred future from the energized stance created by the CAI structure was gratifying to experience. There was absolutely no negativity in the conversation, even when subjects typically construed as negative surfaced in the focus group and interview settings. This focus on the positive, an inherent part of the underlying philosophical assumptions of AI, gave testimony to the power CAI has as a potential change process for diversity competence and ADP faculty members.

Evidence of critical awareness. In talking about levels of comfort with diverse students in their classroom, about fifty percent of focus group participants displayed some evidence of *color-blindness* in their approach. As described earlier in Section 1, lack of acknowledgement about seeing difference in others is considered part of an overall denial that inequitable structures exist which work to benefit some at the expense of others. From the quotations above, three participants made overt statements that support colorblind ideology (I don't see differences/I don't think of it as diversity). A fourth participant, who appeared to be reflecting while responding, said, "… so I think that kind of blind approach that maybe I've had is inappropriate." Her statement indicated a beginning acknowledgement that not seeing difference might not be the best avenue for engaging diverse students.

There was no explicit use of the term color-blind by me or the participants during the focus group sessions, but the attitudes expressed suggested this phenomenon. Such

an approach would be considered lack of critical awareness (Sue, 2010; Taylor, 2013). Color-blindness emerged as a subtheme related to personal capacity and the ability to teach through a social justice perspective. It is also likely that color-blindness exists in some administrators and board members who carry leadership responsibilities at Pax University. Therefore, institutional capacity for promotion of inclusive learning environments is also negatively impacted.

A second subtheme that actually wove throughout many parts of the focus group and interview conversations was given the name *moves to the external* as a way to describe a seeming inability to engage with one or more diversity topics. These movements away from a conversation or person when diverse issues arise are directly tied to personal comfort level and could reflect a parallel at the institutional level as well. *Moves to the external* quickly became a coded category in early analysis and continued throughout analysis completion. According to Watt (2007), when dialogue about diversity becomes difficult, particularly for majority persons with privileged identities, defense mechanisms come into play including *moving to the external* as a way to deflect discomfort. Further discussion about privileged identity exploration takes place in Section 3 as part of the literature review for the proposed project.

Evidence from findings about *moving to the external* was noted by the observer and me in focus group sessions through some of the following comments. For example, when asked, "In what ways does your understanding of your social identity and that of your students influence your teaching practice?" Participant 8 talked about digital technology. Talking about students and their computer background, while possibly

simply referencing generational differences, could also have been construed as an inability to focus on intersecting identity elements that may be impacting her teaching-learning practice. When asked about her comfort level with diverse students, participant 1 said, "I am cheering for the quiet student," which had more to do with temperament than race, class, gender or other kinds of diversity being discussed in the session. Regarding emotional *triggers* and issues of race, class, gender or other isms coming up in the classroom, some participants deflected by talking about "narcissistic attitudes" or students who "take the class away from the learning agenda," not really focusing on diverse elements related to power differentials.

Challenges. Challenges related to personal capacity for ADP faculty members had to do with comfort levels about varying kinds of diversity, as well as a perceived lack of clarity from the institution as to what is acceptable in the classroom regarding some diverse issues. While demographic data from the Phase I reflective survey instrument showed a high percentage of faculty members (about 95%) who considered themselves comfortable with a diverse array of students, actual discussion in face-to-face settings made it appear to be much less the case. This difference could have had to do with actually being in discussion with others and unpacking comfort levels about a variety of diverse student situations, as opposed to responding to a linear question on a survey. Emerging subthemes of color-blind ideology and movement to the external were noted as challenges that also fall under a larger category discussed in the next thematic thread— impediments to honest dialogue. Institutional capacity to engage diverse issues and

persons could be perceived as mirroring personal comfort levels, thereby highlighting a systemic component of diversity struggle for Pax University.

Connecting threads. Story 3, personal and institutional capacity began to provide some contrast for the positive paradigm that is part of well-designed and facilitated adult learning environments. Pulling these threads through so that they were visible on the tapestry was one way to achieve the necessary visual to begin to address effective means for growth into cultural competence for ADP faculty members. The proposed project used the vehicle of critical appreciative inquiry to help make such change possible.

Story 4—Impediments to Honest Dialogue: What Faculty Bring

Story 4, impediments to honest dialogue, is a phrase borrowed from Derald Wing Sue's (2010) *Microaggressions in Every Day Life*. As data analysis unfolded, findings evidenced attributes connected to privileged identities of ADP faculty members that, when unexamined, can serve as barriers to student learning engagement. Sue's (2010) description seemed to best capture an emerging theme that included missing language for social identity of self and others (related to power and privilege) and a prevailing fear of inadequacy to address diversity issues in the classroom. These elements were compounded by having a Christian faith tradition that clearly calls persons to be inclusive and loving to all students, yet not having the practical skills to fully enact such values across difference. These skills include an understanding and awareness of power and privilege issues related to diverse student populations.

Discover.

Missing language for social identities. ADP faculty members who participated in Phases II and III of the research study demonstrated a strong ethos of caring about their adult students, as well as their own teaching-learning practice. Much evidence was presented to support this idea in the analysis described in earlier themes. However, when asked, "In what ways does your understanding of your own social identity and that of your students influence your teaching practice?" a variety of respondents displayed some inability to express an understanding of social and positional identity of self and students. The clearest display of social identity understanding came from the two participants who were female faculty of color. As indicated in earlier analysis, this ability is not unusual due to a life-long need to navigate subordinate societal structures. Participant 3 simply stated, "I am very comfortable putting out there my own experiences [and] cultural background." Participant 7 had a similar response and said, "I'm very comfortable talking about that [because] we need to have this conversation." Neither participant was at a loss for words about their cultural identities throughout the focus group session or during their individual interviews.

One of the White male participants also gave some indication of being able to put into language aspects of his identity related to power and privilege structures. For example, Participant 2 said, "… it was only gradually that I began to become aware of my assumptions as a White male … it's just been a life learning process." But then in later comments, he displayed both discomfort and a lack of wording to describe some events occurring in his classroom around race, class, and gender. Participant 5, a White female, described the importance of being self-aware and said, "I'm aware that I'm a

first-generation college student, privileged, and not all of my students come up that same link," but self-admittedly is uncomfortable talking about diverse issues, except for gender. These last two examples show that even when faculty members have done some intentional work to process and understand their identity in the culture, they may not have the language to facilitate and fully engage student learning related to dominant and subordinate status.

Displaying the defense mechanism described earlier as *moving to the external*, three of the participants engaged entirely different topics when asked the question about social identity and two participants had no response to give. These findings support the idea that resonates through the literature that faculty members who are White and with monocultural backgrounds are often unable to articulate a social identity because of privileged elements that work to keep crucial elements of dominant identities hidden (Adams & Love, 2005; Lund, 2005; Sue, 2010; Torres, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2003). Color-blind ideologies, referenced in earlier examples, also further prevent ADP faculty members from having a felt need to learn language that could help them better facilitate difficult diversity dialogue. Not having the language to talk about issues of diversity, particularly in evangelical Christian higher education (ECHE) settings, is an impediment to student learning engagement and one of the significant findings of this study. Strategies to address this need are part of the proposed project.

Prevailing fear of inadequacy. In the game of poker, a *tell* is a physical or nonphysical behavior that can signal to other players what is hidden in the player's hand of cards. As analysis continued in Phases II and III of the research study, this idea helped

capture an impression on my part about a prevailing sense of fear that seemed to be

emerging from the findings. While not always openly revealed, there was an underlying

sense that faculty members were afraid of being viewed as incompetent or lacking skills

when it came to issues of diversity. For example, more than one participant continued to

shift racial and ethnic descriptors as they moved through the focus group session

discussion. Both the observer and I felt this could be due to discomfort from not

knowing what would be acceptable to say among their peers and then shifting as they

heard others speak. Another *tell* related to expertise appeared to be revealed through

participants who made both claims of *not seeing diversity* in their students accompanied

by assertions of *celebrating diversity* of all their students. While believing their

statements to be genuine, the juxtaposition of the two ideas, which contradict one

another, could be construed as fearing engagement with the topic of diversity in the

teaching-learning environment.

Faculty members also evidenced fear about what the institution might *do to them*

if they did not handle diverse issues correctly and according to stated missional values,

particularly around LGBT concerns. Participant 5, for example, asked if the institution

was unable to model a transparent conversation about transgendered identity (after a

colleague was asked to leave the university for coming out as transgender), then how

could she feel safe enough to do that in her own classroom? Participant 9 indicated that

she experienced an internal tug during a classroom discussion between students with

different religious backgrounds in which she had to ask herself, "… so, what is my role in

this when something would directly conflict with institutional goals?"

Faith-based, inclusive practice. A final impediment to honest dialogue that prevents movement for faculty members into cultural proficiency was evidenced through some of the findings related to faith and practice. Faculty members are fully aware of the university's *God-first* moniker and a lengthy positional statement on *God-honoring diversity*. They expressed gratitude to be part of an institution where they can freely express their religious views and are encouraged to integrate faith with their field of discipline as part of facilitating learning through a Christian worldview. However, when asked the question, "Why do you think that conversations about cultural competence and diversity can sometimes be difficult in faith-based institutions of higher learning?" it was clear that participants felt challenged both personally and institutionally.

Participant 5 wondered if "… faith-based institutions unashamedly are uncomfortable with the topic … we know that we're supposed to openly value diversity. But, perhaps, we don't in some ways and maybe we're ashamed or uncomfortable even discussing the issue. I don't know that we have enough conversation about it." This idea was reinforced by Participant 8 who simply said, "People are uncomfortable. They don't want to be politically incorrect [or] hurt anybody's feelings." She went on to say that, "… in a faith-based organization, you've got the extra worry about so many branches of evangelical Christianity that you not only have to worry about ethnic and all these other things, but now you have to add faith to that."

In response to the same question and a reference to literature that gives evidence for evangelical institutions as having more difficulty than their secular counterparts regarding diversity competence, two participants immediately expressed sadness.

Participant 9 said, "I would add that learning that makes me sad. I feel sad about that because I didn't realize that, I didn't know that. From my experience in an evangelical Christian upbringing, we, of all people, should be more open. That we're really less open is disturbing." Participant 2 asserted that conservative elements of Christian liberal arts institutions often prevent openness and acceptance. "So, sadly, rather than being what defines us and as what should make us distinctive, this practice of justice and mercy … there's a disconnect."

An excellent summary was given by Participant 3, a female faculty member of color, who said, "[a] We try to get rid of the difference and love out of sameness. That doesn't feel good for anybody … [b] I also think it's very hard for us in Christian higher education to recognize the privilege of dominance. Undoubtedly, if you're part of the dominant culture, you have to be incredibly self-aware to get to that. [c] If you're part of the dominant culture, you have to make intentional decisions to value difference [and] [d] We need to move away from the color blind trend in culture and honor culture and differences … I think there's a tension going on within Christian perspectives about all of that." Finally, Participant 4 mentioned the ways in which Christians sometimes use scripture texts to reinforce stereotypes and racist attitudes which effectively shuts down any open dialogue about difference.

Dream. The critical appreciative inquiry process proved to be unique in providing capacity to give expression to elements that need changing related to inequitable power structures and practices, but through a positive lens. Faculty members were eloquent about what kinds of opportunities would help them teach more effectively through a

social justice framework. Participant 7, a female faculty member of color, indicated that

she would like to see not just increased representational diversity, but "I really want to

see diversity of thought." She then went on to say that revising the curriculum to

exemplify diverse scholarship would be one avenue for making that happen. Two

participants indicated that eliminating barriers to diversity competence would have to be

more fully embraced by higher levels of leadership before true change could occur.

Specific mention was made of the compositional make-up of the board of trustees and the

academic cabinet as a starting place. As expressed in earlier Dream findings, more than

one faculty member said that inservice sessions focused exclusively on diversity using

the model they had just experienced in the research study would help increase skills and

comfort levels.

Connecting threads. Story 4, impediments to honest dialogue, provided more

contrasting threads to an emerging picture of effective adult learning paradigms and their

relationship to culturally proficient practice. In bringing to light specific ideas from the

findings and the literature that serve as barriers to having honest dialogue about diversity,

a shared vision about a preferred future began to appear. That vision encompassed a

critically reflective stance that creates an inclusive learning environment for both faculty

members and students. The proposed project was designed with activities that can help

faculty members move through impediments discussed in this story line.

Story 5—"What About My Students?"—Exploring Student Narratives: What Faculty Bring

In discussing the four-quadrant model that depicts teaching through a social justice framework, Adams and Love (2005) underscored the importance of *knowing one's students*. While student participants were not solicited for this research study, findings regarding faculty perceptions of students in ADP classrooms became an emergent theme and Story 5, "What about my students?—Exploring Student Narratives." Participants spoke to the relationships they have with students and the feedback they receive from students about perceptions of inclusivity.

Discover.

*Relationships with students***.** There was a wide spectrum of difference in regard to the kinds of relationships established with ADP students as part of faculty member teaching-learning practice. Because knowledge of different others is best discovered in the context of relationship (Jindra, 2007; Paredes-Collins), one of the focus group questions asked, "What is your experience having a personal connection with a diverse array of students?" and, "Can you give an example of when and how this occurs for you?" While all of the participants talked about caring for students and their learning in the classroom, only 2-3 faculty members shared evidence that they intentionally seek to be in relationship with their students beyond that setting. This was interesting in light of disaggregated demographic data of reflective survey participants, which indicated a much higher percentage of respondents that described themselves as having personal

connections with diverse students. "*Always*" and "*sometimes*" responses referring to seeking connection with a diverse array of students came in at 80% combined.

Of the eight focus group members, two faculty members made specific references to the relationships as being with diverse others. For example, Participant 3 said, "Personally, every sort of formal mentoring experience has been with someone from a diverse background. So my heart-to-heart women, the women that seek me out outside of the classroom, they have been in general diverse, African-American and Latinos, mostly." Participant 4 said that he has regular open office hours on Wednesday afternoons, and a number of students drop by during that time for conversation. He also referenced as part of those comments the mentoring of diverse students.

One participant made mention of how she helped a military student outside of class with a job referral, and another participant said she was not sure if race was a factor in whether or not students were drawn to her (a White faculty member). The other four participants did not respond to this question. While not conclusive, findings from exploring this question and the relative lack of response from most participants could indicate that ADP faculty members may not seek connection with diverse students beyond the classroom because it is uncomfortable to do so. By not fostering those connections, they have less opportunity to gain deeper understanding about the experiences of their diverse students, which could increase student learning engagement.

Feedback received from students. Some interesting responses were evoked when participants were asked, "What feedback do you receive from students that help you know whether they perceive the learning environment in your classroom as one that

fosters inclusivity, respect of differences, awareness of diversity, and a deepened understanding of the experience of others?" Participant 9 indicated that participating in the research was an *eye opener*, as she had always focused more on helping her students see similarities in their experiences rather than differences. In teaching the first session of an 18-month program, she shared that underscoring similarities was a strategy she used to help cohort members feel supported by one another. As she was talking in the focus group, she said that she could now see the benefit of underscoring similar goals her students may have for degree completion but not blurring the distinct differences between persons. This assertion spoke directly to a shift in critical awareness, a primary purpose of this research study.

Participant 3 expressed that it was difficult to get honest feedback about White student perceptions until the end of course evaluations were completed. Sometimes this feedback helped her see a need to communicate more clearly around some issues of cultural competence in the diversity management course she teachers. Participant 5 does a mid-course evaluation, but did not speak to specific questions or responses she uses to determine feedback regarding diversity elements in the classroom. She also mentioned e-mails and after-class communications, which brought nods of agreement from other participants. Making specific references to mini-assessments and paying close attention to narrative comments on course evaluation forms, Participant 2 indicated that garnering feedback about learning environment and concepts learned was of value to him. In what could be interpreted as *moving to the external*, more participants than not simply focused

on responding to the general idea of getting feedback, rather than specific feedback about how they foster an inclusive learning environment.

Lifegiving moments. Lifegiving moments regarding student narratives included "hearing their backgrounds and successes; rich conversation around theories and concepts … [and] bringing their whole person to the table, including cultural background, all of the pieces of diversity." More than one participant also acknowledged feeling gratified when the "unique barriers and obstacles that adult learners have" come down and they are successful in achieving an important goal of degree completion. This was particularly true for one faculty member who was a first generation college student and referenced "the magic that occurs" when she sees her own adult students who are first generation succeed. Another lifegiving aspect of student narrative was seeing the impact current and former students were making in their spheres of influence directly related to courses faculty members were teaching.

Dream. An opportunity related to exploring student narratives was shared by Participant 9 when she said , "I guess that's [understanding students differently] just something after today's discussion that I'm going to be interested in exploring with other instructors … are there things that I could be doing differently that will help students?" Being in conversation with colleagues about creatively acknowledging difference is something she was visioning as part of a preferred style of practice. Her question and reflection is an example of the kind of co-constructed and transformative dialogue that critical appreciative inquiry brought about in the data production process.

Evidence of critical awareness. None of the participants spoke about the importance of understanding student narratives from a perspective of identity formation of dominant and subordinate groups, including faculty members of color. This is not surprising in the sense that most of the literature on identity formation comes from counseling or student counseling fields of study, and none of the faculty members participating in the focus groups and interviews held that background. In other words, understanding identity formation would not be part of their typical discipline's training. However, a broader perspective for those who teach in higher education might be that all educators, particularly those from the dominant majority, learn about monocultural and multicultural narrative identity as a matter of course for most effectively engaging as many students in the learning process as possible (Torres, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2003).

Challenges. One challenge that related to student narrative and perception of inclusion in the classroom had to do with ADP faculty members and their capacity to acknowledge difference and to have the tools for giving a metacommunication about difference with their students. Another could be the mistaking of helping students (here's what I did for them) with a more mutually reciprocal connection from which both faculty member and student could potentially benefit.

Connecting threads. Story 5 brought out ADP faculty perceptions of student narratives through relationships and connections, as well as varying forms of feedback from student to faculty member that could help form an understanding of diverse perspectives. Elements from this theme brought both light and dark to the existing

tapestry. Faculty members shared the joys of student learning, but also noted were possible missed opportunities in the teaching-learning endeavor that might serve to increase cultural competence. The proposed project sought to fill in needed understanding about student narratives and their relationship to structural realities that may impact student learning engagement.

Design and Destiny/Delivery

In the fifth part of the CAI cycle, the discoveries and dreams of participants came to fruition in a final design and implementation process (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012). For the purposes of this research study, the design and delivery phase is what constituted the final project addressing the findings, and was created by me instead of participant stakeholders. The proposed project is described in Section 3.

Negative Case Analysis

One discrepant case came to light through the research findings. Negative case analysis serves to bring discussion to findings in qualitative research that does not fit with other emerging data (Creswell, 2012). It can also help mitigate researcher bias by bringing out differing perspectives (Glesne, 2011). During focus group discussion and in his subsequent interview, Participant 4, a White male, indicated that he *no longer examines* his values, beliefs, or attitudes related to diversity. The one exception for him was regarding LGBT issues, and only in relationship to his personal comfort levels versus stated university policy. What made this a negative case was the contrast of his many years of experience as a skilled facilitator of adult learning, including a PhD in higher education and adult learning, coupled with an expressed attitude of no longer needing to

learn about diverse people or issues. No other participants, including Phase I survey respondents, overtly stated this point of view.

The primary research question assumed that ADP faculty members experienced challenges in their facilitation of learning with diverse learners, which was confirmed through the findings. The purpose of the research had to do with effective adult learning paradigms as a natural avenue for increased critical awareness. I expected to find a range of participants from those highly effective in teaching through a social justice perspective to those who had little or no awareness about how to do so. But there was no expectation that a faculty member would hold themselves completely culturally proficient with no need for further learning about self or others. Such an attitude flies in the face of all that ADP programs promote about life-long and continuous learning for their students and their faculty members.

When first reviewing focus group transcripts, this different attitude was noted and placed on easel sheets under personal capacity. Once the interview transcript came in, more than one analysis was done to illuminate this case. One element that came up was the Hispanic background that the participant carries which gives him an *invisible* cultural identity, because he appears to be White. When asked how he languages being part of the dominant majority with his students, he said, "I don't think I'm seen as the dominant majority." He also talked about the way he shares his military background with students, as well as his lower socio-economic status growing up "on the south side of the tracks." It is almost as if he appropriates many of his identities in order to relate to his students

and truly considers himself a person that embodies so much cultural variety that there is no more room for growth.

Doing the negative case analysis regarding this participant was a reminder that everything is not always as it seems when facilitating learning about diversity. Just because others see themselves as on a life-long trajectory of needing to grow into being more critically aware, does not mean that this participant's experience is not valid. While first believing that a privileged attitude was cloaking this participant's perspectives, at the end of the process, the nature of his reflections about self and others made it impossible to be certain. Keeping an open mind about the possibility of not ever being able to understand or label someone else's experience became an important insight. The idea of involving this participant in some future research that could bring more clarity also holds potential for expanding the knowledge base on diversity and facilitation of learning.

Closing Analysis

A Flaw in the Tapestry: The Critical Gap Between Faith and Inclusivity

According to Rohr (2008), there is a Navajo tradition in which a flawed thread running through a tapestry is where the Spirit is working to bring about good. Even though there is clearly something not right in the picture, that thread is viewed as a restorative pathway. A call to shalom (whole and harmonious relationships with self, God, and others) and a scriptural mandate for justice and reconciliation is the very fabric of what Christians profess to believe. In an evangelical Christian university, one could say that a lack of critical awareness and the impact it has on all members of the learning community is the flaw in an otherwise rich, student-centered educational experience.

Critical gaps between faith values and truly inclusive behavior need to be closed. The

research conducted and the subsequent project designed to support Pax University faculty

members towards growth into cultural competence hopes to serve as one generative

source of change.

Conclusion

The research process undertaken through the use of Critical appreciative inquiry

(CAI) in a qualitative, case study exploration resulted in the following outcomes:

- The three-phase research design, which started with self-reflection and

  then moved into dialogue and discussion, proved to help facilitate critical

  awareness of ADP faculty members. This finding directly related to the

  purpose of the study, which proposed a positive change process with

  critical overlay (CAI) as a potential model for transformative change.

- CAI proved to be an effective metanarrative for facilitating discussion

  about teaching through a social justice framework and critically competent

  facilitation of learning. Additionally, the four-quadrant model conceived

  by Marchesani and Adams (1992) and used by Visser (2012) to create

  reflective questions was confirmed as an impetus for bringing about

  change.

- It was confirmed that adult and experiential learning paradigms are natural

  vehicles for facilitating the same kinds of transformative learning

  experiences for faculty members that they do for adult students. Evidence

  was given to support specific shifts in thinking related to cultural

competence for faculty members through some of the same strategies they employ with their own students to encourage critical thinking and new learning.

- More than one challenge surfaced which spoke to the primary research question, "What cultural competence challenges exist for faculty members when teaching in the adult classroom?" Challenges included missing core knowledge about diversity scholarship that should be impacting content choices; missing language about self and others specifically related to identity formation and personal narratives; lack of awareness about power differentials and positional identity pieces, including a lack of ability to name dominant and subordinate structures that may impact classroom practice; lack of intentionality around increasing skill set in working with diverse learners; and lack of opportunity to engage in training sessions that use dialogue and discussion to further diversity competence.

- Evidence was provided that faculty members are eager to be supported both personally and institutionally as they seek to enact inclusive learning environments. It was also confirmed that some dissonance exists between faculty members and the institution regarding how to handle situations that involve diverse student populations.

Evidence from findings supported the creation of a diversity topical training using critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) as a metanarrative process for facilitating growth and change in cultural competence for faculty members in ADP programs. The initial

training session is titled, Increasing Cultural Competence through the Use of Critical

Appreciative Inquiry: Effectively Engaging Diverse Learners in Adult Classrooms. The

training process will start at an ADP faculty inservice as the focus of the session,

extended from the existing 4-hour format to a one-time, 8-hour format. The process for

some interested faculty members will then continue through becoming part of a faculty

learning communities (FLC) designed to increase core knowledge of diversity

scholarship through assigned readings and review activities.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The research undertaken through the use of critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) and a qualitative case study methodology demonstrated both a desire and a need for ADP faculty members to receive support as they seek to effectively engage student learning in diverse adult classrooms. The project was based upon findings gleaned from the Discovery and Dream AI phases and used to structure an inservice training session to meet support needs. The session was designed to mirror, with modifications, the critical appreciative process used in the study and relied on adult learning strategies to actively engage faculty members in diversity content. The framework of the session employed a dialogue education model (Vella, 2002, 2008) as one that best resonates with the spirit of appreciative inquiry (AI) and that allowed for sound planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Project Description and Goals

The purpose of this project was to take existing positive and effective adult learning principles and use critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) as a transformative mechanism for growth into critical awareness and cultural proficiency. The project was conceived as a way to raise comfort levels and to equip faculty members for examining the teaching-learning environment through a critical lens. It was designed with the idea of coming alongside faculty members in ways that would help alleviate fears about lack of correct language or expertise regarding diversity issues and student learning engagement. The findings from Section 2 analysis gave evidence for a need to address

such concerns. The underlying motivation was empowerment versus mere training with the hope of sparking desire that would impel faculty members to better align their practice with teaching through a social justice framework (Adams & Love, 2005). The project idea itself came directly from ADP faculty members as they gave voice to the kinds of support they wanted to have from ADP and the larger institution with respect to increasing their understanding and skills regarding diversity competence.

In response to Dream findings, an extended inservice training focused solely on diversity as a topic was designed and served as the foundational starting place for learning. The goal of this session, patterned after the research data production process, was to provide opportunities for investigation of personal, institutional, and cultural narratives. Exploring critically reflective practice and engaging the teaching-learning endeavor through a *justice in shalom* perspective were also part of session design. These terms will be further explained through the below project literature review. To provide opportunities for ongoing dialogue and deepened learning, a secondary component was designed with faculty learning communities (FLCs) using diversity scholarship for readings and related activities. The goal of this portion of the project was to engage those faculty members who have a willingness and desire to experience deeper learning, potentially creating a grassroots movement across the institution with respect to diversity competence as a natural element of teaching-learning excellence.

Rationale

The genre of this project is training and development. It was selected because findings showed that an effective way to support faculty members with increased cultural

competence is through an intentional reflective and dialogic process. The project design closely aligns with data findings and analysis from Section 2 by creating a similar opportunity as that of the research process for discussion with colleagues about teaching through a social justice framework—something a number of the participants specifically requested. Additionally, strategic activities have been included to increase critical awareness and understanding about working with diverse student populations, something for which the findings evidenced a need. The training module will let all ADP faculty members who attend receive foundational information and practical tools that could immediately impact their teaching. The session will also use Adobe Connect to allow participation by those faculty members who are unable to attend the on-site training. Because Pax University serves students in a number of regional centers and in online environments, some faculty members may wish to use this option. Evidence was also given through findings to support the idea of the co-constructed and transformative nature of dialogue and a hunger expressed by some faculty members to know more. Thus, the FLC component could prove to be incredibly lifegiving and empowering. Kukulska-Hulme (2012) considered faculty learning communities as an avenue for taking learning to the next level. If the focus group and interview participation and feedback are any indication, there will be a number of faculty members who wish to go more deeply into the learning process through an FLC experience.

ADP faculty members deserve to be empowered and equipped in the same ways as the adult students they serve. ADP faculty members clearly honor and incorporate their students' experiences as part of student-centered learning. This research was

premised on the idea that valuing faculty members' perceptions about their own teaching-learning practice would be the most promising avenue to bring about shifts in perspective about diversity competence. Appreciative inquirys' eight underlying principles embody a strong narrative that honors the positive experience of stakeholders as an integral part of effective organizational change (Watkins, Mohr, & Kelly, 2011). Dialogue education uses *the word between us* as a powerful space where learning can occur in a safe yet challenging environment (Vella, 2002). Findings from Section 2 analysis supported the idea that faculty members enjoy learning from one another through dialogue and that new learning occurs in that setting. By structuring the session with the use of CAI and dialogue education, the project continues to capture the spirit of innovative practices for increasing culturally proficient teaching through focusing on personal narrative (Castaneda, 2004; Gay, 2010; Lindsey, Martinez, & Lindsey, 2007).

The problem described in Section 1 of this study emphasized an increasing expectation that faculty members facilitate learning with their adult students to help increase cultural knowledge and competence, without necessarily having had the professional training or experience to effectively meet this goal. The problem was compounded by the nature of an evangelical Christian context, which sometimes creates resistance to promoting diversity competence, as well as the primarily monocultural composition of faculty members in ADP programs. The project was designed to provide training that facilitates a better understanding of how faculty members situate themselves in terms of narrative and intersectional identity with related dominant and subordinate power elements (Dill, 2010; Torres, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2003). It also sought

to increase awareness of sociocultural elements related to critically reflective practice that can impact effective student learning engagement and motivation of diverse students (Brookfield, 2013; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009). Finally, the project addressed the problem described from the findings as a critical gap between faith values and inclusive practice by reframing current evangelical narratives about diversity with a counternarrative that embraces "a biblical theology of [just] … relations" (McNeil & Pozzi, 2007, p. 88).

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this literature review was to lend support to the proposed project genre based upon findings from the data production and analysis. The review begins with a rationale for training development as an appropriate project response to enhancing cultural proficiency. It goes on to examine critically reflective praxis and narrative identity as crucial elements for movement into cultural proficiency and as necessary parts of training in the proposed project. Also included is a discussion of dialogue education as an empowering faculty development method, especially when combined with critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) and with its strong social justice underpinnings.

Strategies used by me to search the literature included the following: reviews of primary text sources from experts in the field, current peer-reviewed journal articles, and reviews of dissertations found in the ProQuest database. I also surveyed reference listings and bibliographies of other published works found in university libraries (Walden University, Azusa Pacific University, and Claremont Colleges). Key search terms included *counternarratives, counter-storytelling, critical consciousness, critical*

awareness, critical literacy, critical reflection, cultural narratives, dialogue education, faculty development, faculty learning engagement, grand narratives, identity formation, justice, justice in shalom, metanarratives, multicultural identity formation, narrative identity, privileged identity exploration, reconciliation, self-narratives, self-reflection, shalom, story-telling, transformative reflection, and *White identity formation.*

Faculty Development Training as an Effective Way to Address Cultural Proficiency

A faculty development training module with follow-up faculty learning communities (FLCs) was the genre of project chosen to address the findings from this research study. According to Lee, Poch, Shaw, and Williams (2012), intercultural competence skills for faculty members do not develop naturally but need to be structured opportunities to increase "awareness, skills, or knowledge to effectively support students' capacity to engage diversity" (p. 14). Using skillfully designed training sessions to enhance growth into cultural competence is an avenue supported by a number of diversity scholars (Adams & Love, 2005; Smith, 2009; Taylor, 2013; Torres, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper). ADP faculty members who took part in focus groups and interviews during the research process indicated a desire to experience more learning about diversity through inservice training sessions. Even when faculty members have an invested interest, training sessions should provide resources and structured avenues for dialogue with peers (Castaneda, 2004). Both phases of project design included resourcing and collaborative discussion with colleagues around diversity scholarship and student learning engagement.

Taylor, Van Zandt, and Menjares (2013) noted that faculty development training for diversity competence at faith-based institutions should be designed to take into

account "the context of [unique] theology, faculty, culture, climate, and population" (p. 110). The proposed ADP training and subsequent FLC were developed with a specific emphasis on adult learning principles and through a critically appreciative lens that was successful in the research process. The training was also designed to take into account faith distinctions that might create resistance to diversity conversation. Instead, inclusive practice was reframed as one that is a natural part of educating for shalom, an idea discussed further in this literature review as supporting the choice of project genre.

Critically Reflective Practice

Introduction. Critically reflective practice is an idea in which the adult learning literature is steeped. Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2011) specifically cite the work of Mezirow (1991) and Brookfield (1986) in defining critical reflection as part of helping "adult learners transform their very way of thinking about themselves and their world …" (p. 105). While critical reflection covers a broad spectrum of shifting view points, for the purposes of this literature review the term is being used through an emancipatory lens. Transforming perspectives regarding culturally competent higher education learning environments was a primary goal of this research study and one that was integrated into the project addressing this need. This portion of the literature review gives a brief background of the origins of critically reflective practice. The review goes on to examine personal and institutional gaps of a critical nature tied to research findings for which the proposed project training genre serves as an appropriate avenue for remediation.

Background. Paulo Freire (1970, 1993, 2000) in his seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, was the first to give voice to the idea of *praxis*—a combination of

reflection and action towards emancipatory ends. Critically reflective praxis, by its very nature, necessarily includes an understanding of the power elements that benefit some at the expense of others and rob them of their voice. In an educational setting, teachers collude in oppressive systems when they use a *banking model* of teaching which suppresses learner voice and assumes what kinds of knowledge are important to the learner (Freire, 2002). Emancipatory orientations to adult learning "begin with the sociopolitical context of people's lives [and a] call for adults to reflect critically on power and oppression" (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 435). It is not enough to simply acknowledge power elements; instead praxis implies that critical reflection will lead to *conscientization* (raised awareness) resulting in some kind of empowering action.

Relationship to proposed project.

Personal capacity—Three critical gaps. While the languaging of this study's focus had to do with how ADP faculty members effectively engage a highly diverse student population, the learning engagement of all students is impacted when critical awareness is lacking. Three specific areas came through as part of Section 2 findings and analysis that the diversity literature also addresses as needed elements of culturally proficient practice: (a) missing understanding about what the term *critical* means in relationship to power dynamics and student learning engagement; (b) missing experience about the nature of privilege and the defense mechanisms employed to avoid dealing with privileged identities; and (c), missing language to describe diversity elements that name self and other's experiences.

Critical Gap 1—Missing understanding. It does not do any good to throw the term critical around if nobody knows what is being talking about. This insight was gleaned from my personal experience and findings from the current study under discussion. For those persons who come from a monocultural background or who may have not had exposure to critical theory scholarship, the word critical simply means giving negative or possibly reflective feedback. In relationship to teaching through a social justice framework, the term critical involves an ongoing "analysis of the process of schooling that includes an understanding that the overarching social structures are characterized by domination and subordination, and that social and cultural differences are used to justify that inequality" (Adams & Love, 2005, p. 587.) Gay (2010) further suggested that increased critical understanding involves the deconstruction of conventional assumptions and paradigms that are present in liberal arts curriculum typically streamed through a Eurocentric perspective. In a discussion about culturally relevant pedagogy and behaviors, Taylor (2013) noted that "true cultural competency also requires that faculty be willing to acknowledge structural inequalities ingrained within their academic institutions" (p. 54). There is no growth into cultural competence without first understanding the connections between critical awareness and power issues.

Research findings indicated that ADP faculty members would benefit from further information about the concept of criticality and the implications for teaching from a critically reflective stance. The focus group script used in the study included a definition of the critical elements involved in teaching through a social justice framework, which was read aloud to participants when moving into the critical appreciative segment of the

session (See Appendix D). During the interview process, participants were then specifically asked what they thought about critical appreciative inquiry as a method for facilitating conversations about diversity and learning (See Appendix E). One reason for employing this strategy in the research design was to intentionally explore participant understanding of the term critical. The project training curriculum included an interactive learning activity called, 'What makes it critical?' as a way to facilitate understanding about this idea.

Critical Gap 2—Missing experience. The diversity literature is full of evidence that majority persons (White, middle-class, male/female, heterosexual, Christian, able-bodied) are often missing experience that helps them understand their privileged identities and the impact that lack of awareness has on their interaction with others (Anderson & Collins, 2012; Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, 2010; McIntosh, 2009b; Sleeter, 2012; Sue, 2010). Findings from the research also supported this idea. For example, evidence was given about the color-blind approaches exhibited by some participants or movement to the external, which could have meant discomfort or lack of understanding about diverse issues or persons. While the term privilege was defined and supported in Section 1 of the project study document, the purpose of further discussion here has to do with specific aspects of the proposed project that are designed to help mitigate this problem.

Defense mechanisms that White faculty members sometimes displayed in the study and that are written about in the literature are oftentimes hidden due to the invisible nature of privilege. One of the greatest challenges in helping others become more

culturally proficient has to do with unearthing these behaviors and facilitating learning

about inequitable systems that disclose privilege and power elements (Coston & Kimmel,

2012; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009; Johnson, 2005). From the student affairs

literature, Watt (2007) explained the Privileged Identity Exploration (PIE) model that

"identifies eight (8) modes associated with behaviors individuals display when engaged

in difficult dialogues about social justice issues" (p. 114). They include denial,

deflection, rationalization, intellectualization, principium, false envy, benevolence, and

minimization (Watt, 2007). The eight responses fall on a spectrum from awareness to

action and provide a model that can be used to help anticipate potential responses from

faculty members or students during diversity discussions.

The article from which this information came is one of the sources that has been

integrated into a jigsaw activity that sets context in the opening part of the project

training session. Jigsaw activities are particularly powerful in helping explicate a topic,

as the information is first taken from an outside expert and then discussed with a small

group of colleagues. Coming to consensus about important points is part of a process that

culminates in further sharing with a different set of colleagues who have other pieces of

the information. Large group debriefing provides an additional opportunity for engaging

the topic. This activity is an example of providing an experience for faculty members

through co-constructed dialogue with several strategic sources on diversity that can be

transformative in shifting critical consciousness.

Critical Gap 3—Missing language. Another important finding that was confirmed

from this study was the idea that majority faculty members sometimes appear to be

missing language needed to effectively navigate diverse topics and relational dynamics

when issues of race, class, gender or other isms come up in the classroom. This is an

issue related in part to the continuous and evolving nature of diversity language

(Castania, 2003) coupled with majority persons perhaps having less opportunity to

engage in effective cultural communications. Sue (2013) described the apprehension that

can sometimes accompany efforts to speak about racial topics as *rhetorical incoherence*,

a phrase originated by Bonilla-Silva (2006). Aspects of rhetorical incoherence include

communication that is "tentative, obtuse, abstract, and filled with nonsensical utterances

(Bolgatz, 2005)" (Sue, 2013, p. 664). This idea connects to some of the seeming

disconnections voiced during the focus group and interview sessions by some research

participants. Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2009) acknowledged that silence or

unresponsiveness around diversity issues or dynamics can be connected to fears of being

misunderstood or memories about speaking out that went badly. Faculty members may

also feel afraid to lose control in the classroom related to their "own personal and

fragmentary understanding of such matters" (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009, p. 67).

The design of the proposed project took into consideration that faculty members

may feel embarrassed or lacking expertise when missing language to communicate about

diverse issues in the classroom. A discussion activity created to open up this topic was

included in project design. If missing language elements are filled in, it may be possible

for White faculty members to start authentically sharing their cultural identity with

students, with its related power and privilege challenges, as a matter of course. This

strategy was described during the focus group sessions by one of the study participants, a

faculty member of color, as a strong point of connection with her students. Her comments inspired the discussion activity designed to help facilitate change for ADP faculty members who may struggle with languaging cultural identity.

Institutional capacity—A summary perspective. When considering critical reflection and institutional capacity, broader brushstrokes from the literature seemed pertinent to the proposed project. Facilitating learning for a group of faculty members about diversity competence is much less effective if efforts are not paralleled with critically reflective shifts from administrative and academic leadership constituents (Perez, 2013; Smith, 2009). A rationale for the existing problem laid out in Section 1 of the study included source support indicating that both the AAC&U and CCCU organizations, in which Pax University has professional membership, have stated imperatives for creating and sustaining inclusive learning environments. Lee, Poch, Shaw, and Williams (2012) asked what can be done to make diversity competence central to institutional mission and purpose instead of simply creating "islands of innovation" (p. 11). The proposed research project has the potential for facilitating shifts, even at the institutional level, if key stakeholders in administrative and academic leadership positions are given the opportunity to explore critical habits of mind using a CAI approach.

Narrative Identity

Introduction. According to research, an effective approach to shifting cultural understanding can occur through considering how personal identity is situated within larger societal structures and related inequitable systems (Hearn, 2012; Kaur, 2012; Sue, 2013). Training design of the proposed project contained an explicit focus on narrative

identity as a necessary part of understanding sociocultural context and related power and privilege elements. Identity formation of self and others in connection with personal and cultural narratives will be discussed in this part of the literature review as key elements supporting project design. A counternarrative to help shift and support faith-based imperatives for inclusive learning environments will also be discussed.

Narrative as central to learning. One of the premises of this research study was the use of adult learning paradigms, which highlight experience to learning, as a potentially rich avenue for also making needed shifts in cultural awareness and understanding. Clark and Rossiter (2008) observed that "the process of narrating is how learners give meaning to experience" (p. 64). This idea was supported by Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2007) who suggested that narrative learning not only makes connections with ideas, but also with other learners. Learning through self and other's narrative experiences was evidenced during focus group and interview discussions in which participants made statements about the new ideas they were gleaning through dialogue. CAI involves sharing lifegiving stories. These stories then become foundational for creating positive change. Learning through narrative can occur through hearing of stories, telling of stories, and recognizing stories (Clark & Rossiter, 2008). All three of these elements came into play as participants took part in focus group and interview sessions.

Narrative as central to understanding identity. A seminal researcher in the field of identity studies, Dan McAdams (1993, 2001, 2004), proposed a *life story model* in which "people reconstruct their past and anticipate their future in terms of internalized

and evolving life stories" (McAdams, 1987, p. 15). Higher education course work in understanding diversity and culture often relies on student narratives about their own culture to help bring about shifts in understanding. This was true for me in my master's level studies at National-Louis University and doctoral level studies at Fielding Graduate Institute, as well as more recently in the HEAL program through Walden University. The power of narrative in understanding identity becomes a starting point for dialogue and transformative learning about self and others (Mezirow, 1991; Taylor & Cranton, 2012). Hearing other people's stories about how they experience social realities also seems to create compelling space for majority persons to start making shifts in understanding their own privileged identities. The proposed project used CAI as a vehicle for self-reflection and shared stories as an avenue for faculty members to explore cultural identity.

Exploring personal identity of self and others. There is a variety of literature across disciplinary areas that support the use of identity development as a means for increased cultural competency. For example, from the student affairs literature, identity development has been in discussion since the mid-twentieth century, primarily emanating from and rooted in the psychology counseling and vocational fields (Torres, Jones, & Renn, 2009). More recently, the human resource literature is using identity as a focus of discussions for training employees about social justice inequities (Collins, 2013; Mizzi & Rocco, 2013). Other fields that facilitate learning about culture through an identity development lens are social work (Kohler-Reissman, 2013), business management (Dutton, Roberts, & Bednar, 2010), and nursing (Ke, Chavez, Causarano, & Causarano, 2011).

In higher education, a critical source referenced earlier in the Section 1 document is that of *Identity Development of Diverse Populations*, an ASHE-ERIC report developed by Torres, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper (2003). It has been over a decade since the publication of this succinct rationale for higher education practitioners to understand both White and multi-ethnic identity development to more effectively engage student learning. And, yet, there remains limited understanding by faculty members about the importance of recognizing how social identity impacts student experience in the classroom, and as part of a necessary knowledge base for movement into cultural competence (Taylor, Van Zandt, & Menjares, 2013). The proposed research project integrated an identity exploration activity developed by Visser (2012) called *Identity Petals* (See Appendix A). Further readings and activities related to understanding identity formation to facilitate student learning engagement were also included in the FLC scholarship sources.

Exploring meta- and counternarratives. As part of the research inquiry participants were asked, "What do you think is the best avenue for facilitating discussions about diversity competence with faculty members?" Two responses, one from a participant and the other by the observer, caused me to investigate the idea of meta and counternarratives as a potential avenue for supporting faculty members with cultural competence needs. Meta or grand narratives have been described as historical and themed stories that represent larger, universal truths (Giroux, Lankshear, McLaren, & Peters, 2013). Grand narratives have been critiqued in post-modern and feminist literature as not being representative of smaller, more localized experiences that take into account social context and positionality (Bhambra, 2011; Dey & Steyaert (2010). In

evangelical Christian higher education (ECHE) settings, for example, a metanarrative regarding diversity could be the idea that *diversity conversation is more divisive than unifying*, and, therefore, should not be discussed. Another example of an ECHE metanarrative could be the color-blind ideology referenced throughout in this study as *not seeing difference*, which was evidenced both in the literature and with some of the research participants. If metanarratives could be unearthed through storied activities that display alternative realities for people from differing background and perspectives, cultural shifts could be made.

Counternarrative is an idea that stemmed from critical race theory (CRT) as "a method of telling a story that aims to cast doubt on the validity of accepted premises or myths, especially ones held by the majority … and is a means of exposing and critiquing normalized dialogues that perpetuate racial stereotypes" (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004, p. 27). Two of the larger anthologies often used in diversity competence work are *Race, Class, & Gender* (Anderson & Collins, 2012) *and Readings for Diversity and Social Justice* (Adams, 2013) are filled with counternarratives that tell short, yet powerful stories of those who experience marginalization in U.S. society. Understanding counternarratives as a source of learning about others represents an important pathway for faculty members as they teach through a social justice framework. Counternarratives are particularly useful for *interrupting* privileged discourse (Kaur, 2012). For the purposes of the proposed project, providing exploratory activities into both personal and institutional counternarratives in ECHE settings became an important part of project design.

A new narrative—Justice in shalom. Goble, Sand, and Cook (2011) suggested that meaningful engagement of inclusive practice at ECHE institutions usually involves the need for a striking revisioning of purpose and priorities related to mission and vision. Because of existing narratives that position diversity as additive or tangential in nature, intentional steps must be taken to value cultural difference and tie it to a missional framework (Perez, 2013). At Pax University, placing God first and creating learning excellence through Christ-centered teaching is foundational to missional stance. The needed connection is also making explicit the idea that such an ethos inherently contains the practice of *justice in shalom*.

Wolterstorff (1983, 2002, 2004) is a Christian theologian and philosopher from Yale University whose many works contain the idea of teaching for *justice in shalom*. This idea embodies a relational peace that is not merely absence of hostility, but one that actively seeks to bring about good for self and others through just action. Harris (2013), in a comprehensive study of Wolterstorff's writings, amplified the notion of justice for shalom as part of *educating for shalom*. In this larger description, "the motto educating for shalom needs to permeate the whole enterprise of Christian higher education, not just one areas, such as curriculum or scholarship" (Harris, 2013, p. 180). In a recent diversity workshop at Pax University, attendees expressed a preference for the words justice and shalom as a term to facilitate inclusive practice, as it held less political baggage than the phrase *diversity work*. Educating for shalom will be a part of new languaging for ADP faculty members through the CAI diversity training session, which can help make explicit ties to the call for justice related to biblical mandates to love God, self, and others.

McNeil and Pozzi (2007) gave further credence to this idea from the clinical psychology literature on multicultural competency when talking about the need for a "functional narrative that can help us recontextualize and reconstitute the old tensions and offer new relational alternatives" (p. 88). Their discussion included new learning from the field of neuroscience, which helps explain how meaning systems imprint on the brain, which requires training that, goes beyond mere giving of information (McNeil & Pozzi, 2007). This was a valuable insight for the development of a project seeking to engage faculty members in new understanding about cultural constructs. They also advocated for a "theology of identification, one that allows individual to see the interconnectedness of their identity, clan, and nation with the identity, clan, and tribe of the other" (McNeil & Pozzi, 2007, p. 88). Again, this work reinforced the need for efforts that shifts both personal and institutional narrative identity pieces that inform a just ethic of relations based on biblical principles.

In a compelling work forged from his experiences with genocide and ethnic cleansing during Balkan warfare in the 1990s, Volf (1996) depicted a theology of identity, otherness, and reconciliation. He described a shifting of identity that must occur in order for one to *embrace* versus *exclude* the different other. His ideas are particularly meaningful for ECHE institutions, as he uses the idea of the *de-centered self* in which Christ becomes central and enacts the ability to forge peace instead of violence in relationship with others. Changing the narrative to embody an infused and reconciling ethos related to diversity initiatives on ECHE campuses was a hopeful by-product of the project study training designed for ADP faculty members.

Dialogue Education

Introduction. Selecting Vella's (1995, 2002, 2008) dialogue education as a powerful training methodology to structure the proposed diversity training project reflected an honoring of adult experience and a unique fit with critical appreciative inquiry (CAI). Having experienced the thorough and interactive nature of the dialogue model with previous training and workshop sessions, I saw a promising foundation for moving diversity competence forward. Dialogue education as an overlay for the CAI process had the needed assessment pieces that illumine participant learning. The model was also a fit for the proposed project with its strong adult learning and social justice foundations. Adult and experiential learning was a primary component of the study as a potentially rich avenue for increased cultural competence. This last section of the literature review will provide a rationale for the structural and philosophical elements of a dialogue education framework as a choice for the proposed project. Complementary elements between dialogue education and critical appreciative inquiry will also be discussed.

Structural elements. Vella's seven-step model provides structure for an interactive and dialogic process when designing trainings for adults. The seven steps (who, why, when, where, what, what for, and how) contain all of the elements required for needs assessment, formative and summative assessment, and achievement based outcomes. The steps are organic and nonlinear in that they do not necessarily need to be taken in order, as long as all are covered at some point in the process. While affirming that the dialogue education process is one that encourages "listening, respecting,

doubting, reflecting, designing, affirming, considering options, and celebrating opposites" disciplined structure is the backbone that makes creative learning possible (Vella, 2008, p. 11). Haase (2014) considered this open yet structured system as one of the brilliant aspects of Vella's dialogue model for effective teaching and learning.

One of the most impactful elements of training through dialogue is the depth of communication taking place throughout the process, particularly before and after the training session. Participants begin dialogue about the upcoming session, essentially helping shape what will occur through presession phone calls, e-mails, and surveys. Vella (2008) considers this presession work as part of a learning needs assessment that will then inform all aspects of the training being designed. The seven steps are referred to as a design rather than planning because design implies

> preparing a flexible structure for inviting and enhancing learning by explicitly naming who is present, what the situation is that calls for this learning, the time frame and the site for the event, the comprehensive content and learning objectives (achievement based objectives-ABOs), and finally the learning tasks and necessary materials. This structure [also] contains the evaluation indicators…
> (p. 31)

The word *planning* is a more static term and implies that something is being done for someone rather than a work in creation with participants themselves. Because each step in the process honors participant experience and provides a structured learning format, dialogue education holds the potential for much transformative learning.

Philosophical elements. The underlying philosophy of dialogue education is that adults possess the life experience necessary to engage in discussion with any teacher about any topic and that new learning occurs best when connections are made to that experience (Vella, 2002). The process of dialogue is one in which the facilitator of learning is a colearner who creates a safe and hospitable environment through sound relationships. All learning activities must serve the learner. Respect for learners as decision-makers and a holistic (mind, body, emotions) approach is also part of sound dialogue education practice. According to Vella (1995), all of these elements flow from an emancipatory framework put forth by Freire (20002) and embracing adult learning principles set out in Knowles' (1984) andragogy.

An overarching assumption of dialogue education is that "Learning is for transformation toward peace" (Vella, 2008, p. xxii). This idea fits closely with the faith-based imperative for inclusive learning environments in ADP classrooms and at ECHE institutions. In an e-mail correspondence with Jane Vella in July, 2012, I received an article describing dialogue education as *a spirited epistemology*, one in which "the spiritual dimensions of adult education are the human dimensions, and attention to these makes for excellent, effective adult learning" (Vella, 2000, p. 7). Dialogue education was also described as being *reverent*, a concept that is closely associated with persons as unique creations imaged by God and whose lives are sacred. The act of honoring learner experience and taking seriously the words that they speak with one another in the learning process is almost a micro peace making endeavor that spills over into larger spheres of influence. Such a framework seemed perfectly suited to facilitate diversity

competence work for ADP faculty members whose teaching and learning practice is part of a larger faith-based community.

Connections to critical appreciative inquiry. In the Section 1 rationale for this research study, a point was made that there is no existing literature about the use of critical appreciative inquiry to facilitate learning about diversity in higher education practice. In a similar vein, I could find no literature that expressed the strong connections that can be made between dialogue education and critical appreciative inquiry as holding similar experiential and narrative elements that work for positive transformation. Critical appreciative inquiry relies on storied experience of lifegiving moments from stakeholders as a foundation transformational change in organizations or groups (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Hammond, 1998). Dialogue education is based on learner experience and honors that as the source for transformative learning (Vella, 1995, 2002). Both models employ philosophies that assume that participants hold knowledge and wisdom from experience that can be trusted when trying to solve problems or increase effectiveness in a setting or system (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012; Watkins & Mohr, 2001). Both frameworks have a permeable structure (one as cycle, one as steps) for moving into and through a change process. When working through the project design, it became clear that the dialogue education steps fit wonderfully into the CAI cycle elements. By combining and modifying the two models, the proposed project training could be even more compelling in terms of the transformative learning work involved in diversity awareness and growth into cultural competence.

Conclusion

The above literature review supported the proposed project genre by illuminating elements of training as an appropriate venue for increasing cultural competence, critically reflective practice, narrative identity, and an inclusive learning community that embodies justice in shalom. The review also provided a structural rationale for the use of dialogue education as well-suited to connect critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) and facilitation of growth into cultural competence for ADP faculty members in the proposed project.

Implementation

The proposed project has two phases: (a) An initial training session that will be conducted as part of the regular ADP faculty inservice session taking place in October, 2014, and then, (b) An opportunity to take part in follow-up faculty learning communities (FLCs) in a semester long, intensive type experience, starting January, 2015. Both project phases are designed to fit into existing structural elements at Pax University for more practical inclusion. For example, ADP faculty members already take part in a twice yearly training session that is incentivized with a stipend and required one time per year as part of their teaching contract. While FLCs have not been offered to ADP faculty members, who are primarily adjunct, the concept has been employed for the last three years for full time faculty members and sponsored by the Center for Teaching and Learning Assessment (CTLA) around varying topics. Using existing structures can serve to expedite project implementation and reinforce the importance of diversity competence training.

Phase I: Initial Training Session

The name of the faculty inservice training session is Increasing Cultural Competence through the Use of Critical Appreciative Inquiry: Effectively Engaging Diverse Learners in Adult Classrooms. The session will be eight hours in length, which is an extension of the typical 4-hour time frame. In discussion with the dean, as well as the director of faculty, it was determined that an extended session would deepen the learning experience. The session will run from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm and use CAI and dialogue education principles to frame learning engagement. (See Appendix A for session schedule, learning activities, and assessment plans.) An option to participate in the session through the use of Adobe Connect will also be made available to ADP faculty members who are off-site.

Phase II: Faculty Learning Communities

Follow-up faculty learning communities (FLCs) will be offered as a way to expand support for ADP faculty members in learning about student learning engagement and cultural proficiency. The goal of faculty learning communities will be to continue in dialogue with colleagues through the reading of diversity scholarship and interactive engagement activities designed to further increase understanding (See Appendix A). Interested faculty members will be given an opportunity to sign up with colleagues of their choice at the inservice training session in October. Small groups will be formed consisting of 5-7 participants per group, meeting 2-times per month for a 2-hour time period. Time slots will be devised to accommodate the needs of adjunct faculty members who are primarily working professionals in their field of study. An end of semester day

and a half retreat will be the culminating activity to support reflective assessment and to vision possible next steps. Face-to-face sessions will be the only modality offered for this first semester of diversity FLC offerings, as part of a trial to assess effectiveness of the strategy.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports—Phase I: Initial Training Session

Resources needed for the inservice session using will include the planning time of ADP staff and administrative faculty members who already help coordinate this event as part of their regular work schedules. Additional planning time will be needed for the director of faculty and me, who will also be bringing in the colleague who served as the observer for the research study focus group sessions, as a co-facilitator of the event. A stipend of $500 will be given to co-facilitator, and the regular $75 stipend for ADP faculty members who participate will be doubled to $150 for the eight-hour training session. In addition to providing breakfast and a morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack will also be served, at a cost of $18 per person, instead of the typical $11 per person currently being charged. Materials (session handout packet, themed give-away item, post-it paper, pens, etc.) are part of the current event budget and are not anticipated to run over the current allotted amount. The dean of ADP has already approved all additional expenditures for the October event.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports—Phase II: FLCs

Resources for Phase II faculty learning communities (FLCs) will have primarily to do with text materials highlighting diversity scholarship and then the semester-end retreat, which in which two to three local venues are currently under consideration. *Race,*

Class, and Gender – an Anthology; *Identity Development of Diverse Populations*; and *This Side of Heaven: Race, Ethnicity and Christian Faith* are the three sources being discussed as the primary texts for FLC participants. While a new part of ADP offerings, FLC text materials have been approved under a miscellaneous category by the director of faculty and the dean of ADP. Other resource materials will include TED talks, linked articles from the APU library featuring Wolterstorff's justice and shalom work, and video film clips, which would incur no additional cost. Guest speakers may be considered for the end of semester retreat, but would probably consist of invited faculty colleagues from the faculty of color network who may be interested in speaking into the topic for fellow faculty members.

A requisition for classroom or other meeting room venues will take place after the fall inservice is completed and a potential number of interested participants are determined. ADP administrative faculty members will be facilitators of FLCs and will be compensated with one unit of overload. End of semester retreat expenses are being budgeted under the same miscellaneous category from which the materials are being provided. Planning and execution of the event will be done by ADP administrative faculty and staff members. Student workers, already in place and supporting the director of faculty, will lend additional support to the event. An estimate of anticipated response for this first round of FLC small groups is a minimum of eight and a maximum of 30 interested faculty members, for a total estimate of two to five groups.

Potential Barriers

Barriers that may hinder implementation of the Phase I inservice training could include the topic itself, which for some may have negative connotations; the extended time-frame, which may feel cumbersome to those who are used to the one-half day approach; and additional planning time for facilitators who currently have very impacted schedules. Barriers for Phase II FLCs could be the pricing and availability of selected texts; finding available times that work for a variety of interested faculty members; and having enough physical plant space not already being used in which to accommodate the small group meetings. Potential barriers for the end of semester retreat could be finding an appropriate space within budget and then coordinating schedules of participants to ensure full attendance. The planning and execution of the retreat would also incur additional ADP staff and administrative faculty time and creative energies. Another barrier to FLC participation could be lack of monetary compensation, such as a unit overload pay, which is currently being offered for graduate level faith integration class participation, but as of yet is not budgeted for diversity offerings.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

As indicated in the above description, the Phase I initial training session would take place at the next ADP faculty inservice as an extended session in mid-October, 2014. Planning for the event would begin in early August. Save the date and follow-up invitations and reminder announcements would occur once every three weeks, starting mid-August. Weekly planning meetings will be scheduled with ADP staff and faculty members. Preassessment phone calls and correspondence indicating the extended length

of the session and to elicit participant input would take place in early September and would then be used to shape specific planning efforts, based upon participant feedback. Prereading and the self-reflective survey will be sent out the last week in September for completion prior to the actual session. ADP faculty members are used to having presession assignments as part of learning engagement. A precession run through with all administrative faculty members, the co-facilitators, and any staff members helping the day of the event will take place a week before the scheduled inservice date. Once the session is over, a follow-up assessment survey will be sent with two days seeking feedback and giving another invitation for FLC participation (See Appendix A).

Phase II FLC preplanning will be overlapping with some of the Phase I planning to help market the opportunity and strategize to pull in as many interested participants as possible. A flyer handout invite will be part of Phase I training session packets and a plug will be given during the session, with sign-up sheets available throughout the day. As stated, another invitation will be given in the feedback survey for the training session and then ADP faculty members will also make phone calls or initiate e-mail contact with some faculty members who gave indication of interest at the training session. Once an estimated number for participation is confirmed, meeting spaces and scheduling will occur starting early November and with final plans in place by mid-December before the university closes for the Christmas holiday. Faculty learning communities will be scheduled to start in the second week of January, 2015, and run through the end of May. The retreat will be scheduled for mid-May and final survey feedback solicited with a few days of the retreat's end.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

In dialogue education, the role of the learner and responsibilities of others involved is structured through the seven design steps (Vella, 1995; 2008):

1. Who: Participants will be those ADP faculty members who choose to take part in the fall inservice session. Typically about 60-75 people attend inservice events. Seven administrative faculty members, including the Dean of ADP and the Director of Faculty will give varying levels of leadership to the day. The researcher facilitator and her co-facilitator will be part of that leadership team. For the FLCs, the seven administrative faculty members will be facilitating the small group sessions of about 5-7 participants a piece. The total number of participants will be determined after the inservice session.

    Prior to the Phase I training session, the leadership team will be responsible for taking part in planning and communication with participants. Explaining the extended format and doing an informal needs assessment from a short set of questions is the purpose of the presession communication. During the session, administrative faculty members will be helping facilitate in varying activities throughout the day. After the session, they will be helping coordinate FLCs, doing some follow-up communication and preparing to give leadership to an FLC group.

    Participants of the training session will be responsible for prereading preparation and completion of self-reflective exercise and then engaging with colleagues throughout the day at the training itself. They will also be involved

in some one-on-one presession communication via phone or e-mail as part of the needs assessment process. Participants will further be asked to bring a syllabus from one of the courses they teach to use in an activity with the four-quadrant social justice framework from the self-reflective exercise completed prior to attendance. Phase II FLC participants will be asked to actively engage in the dialogue and readings of each scheduled session, as well as taking part in the retreat event. At the retreat itself, assessment of FLC effectiveness will take place through pair-share activities, short written reflections, and a group teaching activity designed to explicate learning from the semester meetings. Both the leadership team and the participants will engage in a visioning activity for next steps in continuing to build and integrate diversity competence in ADP programs.

2. Why: The situation calling for the learning event has been an expressed desire on the part of ADP faculty members to be better equipped to deal with diversity issues in the classroom. These expressions go beyond the research study feedback and include inquiries from faculty members in previous inservice sessions about the need to focus on diversity as a training topic.

3. When: Phase I inservice session – October, 2015 from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm (plus presession preparation and post-session survey follow-up); Phase II FLCs – January through mid-May, 2015, twice monthly for two hours a piece, with a day and a half retreat in the middle of May as a culminating event.

4. Where: For Phase I, the site will be Pax University in a large classroom space designed for seminar type events (or the Adobe Connect distance option for those faculty members from regional centers or online venues). For Phase II, classrooms and/or conference rooms will be used on site at Pax University.

5. What: Content (knowledge, skills, or attitudes (SKAs) will be facilitated through six interactive learning tasks including: (a) Self-assessment Reflective Exercise, (b) ECHE Narratives Jigsaw, (c) 'What makes it critical?', (d) Identity Petals, (e) Triggering Events, and (f) Educating for Shalom – all of which are described in Appendix A.

6. What for: Achievement based outcomes (ABOs) (the desired end specifically connected to each part of content) is described in Appendix A.

7. How: Learning tasks and materials (How the ABOs will be accomplished by the learners) are described in Appendix A.

Project Evaluation

In dialogue education learning outcomes are part of the *What for?* design step that reveal indicators of learning in both formative and summative ways (Vella, 2008). The learning task itself contains inductive work that connects the topic to learner experience, adds content, and then has an implementation strategy either in the training itself or as part of transfer and applied learning that is part of a later integration process (Vella, 2008). Formative and summative assessment will be part of both the Phase I and Phase II learning experiences, as described above and further explained in Appendix A.

However, once Phases I and II of the project are complete, the director of faculty will lead the ADP Administrative faculty team in an over-arching assessment process using dialogue and discussion as an avenue to sift through feedback surveys and experiences from both events. A product from this process will be a summary document with suggestions for integrative and evaluative next steps in continuing to build momentum and proficiency for ADP faculty members with diversity and student learning engagement in ADP classrooms. The summary could include such ideas as opportunities for team teaching, peer evaluation, and continued use of FLCs to promote a diversity scholarship knowledge base. Incentives could be proposed for those faculty members who are strategically using the learning gleaned from the project events to more effectively engage their adult students. A student feedback process could be developed so that faculty members are more immediately connected with student perceptions about what is occurring in the classroom. This document will go to the dean of ADP and could be shared with academic cabinet members at the university as a model for creative strategies to increase cultural proficiency of other constituents.

The overall evaluation goal for the proposed project is the increasing critical awareness and proficiency of ADP faculty members around issues and dynamics of diversity. This kind of learning transfer is what Vella (2008) refers to as longitudinal in that learning occurs both in the moment and over time. Therefore, some indicators of learning are evident immediately within the training events themselves, and others are behavioral and become evident across time. Key stakeholders who are impacted by the

evaluation plan include ADP faculty members, ADP administrative and staff members, and the dean of ADP.

Implications Including Social Change

Local Community

The local community stands to benefit much from this project because Pax University is situated in a highly diverse city and many community members take adult degree completion course work from ADP faculty members. Faculty members with increased critical awareness will have the capacity to more effectively engage diverse learners and will be able to better communicate about systems that work to advantage some and oppress others. This kind of open understanding and dialogue could go a long way in building good will across a variety of local constituents, including retail shop owners and local governance bodies. Students themselves will benefit by increased understanding of their own positional identities and related systems that will cause them to be more effective in their professional and personal settings. University board and administrative leadership could become aware of increased diversity effectiveness and begin to use it as a model for their own examination and growth.

Far-Reaching

I see this research study as having potentially far-reaching implications. For example, as mentioned in Section 1 of the study document, CCCU institutions lag behind their secular counterparts in equipping faculty members and students to be culturally competent. The nondefensive nature of CAI employed in the facilitation of such learning could be adopted in the CCCU as an effective training modality for increased institutional

capacity for inclusive learning environments. The social justice and reconciliation components of the study alone could help bring about a major reframing of how ECHE institutions view themselves in relationship to diverse others.

Elements of this study have already been presented at the national level at an AAC&U conference earlier this year that was focused on diversity and privilege cognizance related to effective student learning engagement. The information was well received and requests were made for partnering with a state and local college in the Southern California area to help bring these ideas forward. The findings from this study also have the impact for international reach, as AI Practitioner and related conferences are located in Canada with international constituents. Because there are so many global systems of oppression, CAI, which is relatively unheard of in the literature, could be used as a meta-framework to bring about positive change.

Conclusion

Section 3 provided a description and scholarly rationale for the proposed project as one that effectively addresses challenges faced by ADP faculty members as they seek to work with a highly diverse student population. A review of the literature was given to support how the project genre, training and development, served as an appropriate avenue to address both research problem and findings. A discussion of the project itself described needed resources and existing support systems that will make implementation possible. Potential barriers to implementation, as well as an evaluation plan, were also described. Section 3 concluded by making connections between the project and social change that could be expected for stakeholders in the local community and within a

larger, global context. In Section 4, final reflections about the project, as well as the

scholar practice of the researcher will be discussed.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

In this final chapter, project strengths and limitations are addressed, as well as discussion and analysis of my own growth and process regarding scholarship, project development and evaluation, and leadership and change. In a self-reflective analysis, I further examine my own growth as a scholar, as a practitioner, and as a project developer. Going through the HEAL program and doctoral study process was a powerful experience, and the importance of that work and what I learned are also included in this section. Concluding comments address project implications, specific applications, and directions for future research.

Project Strengths

The proposed project evidences a clear fit for the findings from the research undertaken on a number of levels. A primary strength is the desire expressed by ADP faculty members themselves for an experience like the one they had during data production as an avenue to help them increase cultural proficiency. Taylor (2013) indicated that diversity competence work in higher education settings can gain more momentum by focusing on interested individuals. Another strength is the way that project design uses experiential and adult learning as a natural platform for new learning relying on ADP faculty members' own experiential knowledge base about adult learners. The project also honors faculty members' experience about moving into cultural proficiency through the use of dialogue and strategic activities based upon adult learning principles, a strength evidenced from their own practice with students. In addition,

cultural competence work aligns in a compelling way with transformative learning theory, critical appreciative inquiry, and dialogue education as change processes. All three elements hold an emancipatory lens through which to view experience and learning and serve as a natural undergirding philosophy for project design. Because the project mirrors the research data production process, there is evidence to support the expectation that increased critical consciousness and more effective student learning engagement will be an outcome of the training session and faculty learning communities. Finally, the project has been created to fit into existing structural elements at Pax University, making implementation and further momentum for strategic institutional growth around diversity a much stronger possibility.

Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations

Three primary limitations revealed themselves as the research study progressed. The first was a lack of ADP adult students' input about their own experiences in the classroom regarding issues of race, class, gender, and other diversity topics and dynamics. While it was an intentional choice on my part to limit the scope of the study by starting with faculty perceptions, student input would have given a fuller picture of current realities in ADP classrooms. Such input could have confirmed and, perhaps, extended the study's findings. The second limitation was felt to be the proscriptive nature of Internal Review Board (IRB) examination at both institutions in terms of an unwillingness to let focus group and interview questions emerge from the Phase I survey, which would have truly reflected the qualitative and transformative, constructivist framework for the research. Instead, questions had to be structured in advance, and I felt

limited capacity to move outside the range of questions preapproved through the IRB

process. Some of the literature indicated that the use of an appreciative inquiry

methodology can sometimes elicit higher gatekeeping from institutional review boards

(Bellinger & Elliott, 2011). Diversity as a topic has also been shown to be subject to

increased IRB scrutiny (Tufford, Newman, Brennan, Craig, & Woodford, 2012). In

ECHE institutions, such an attitude has served to discourage some students and faculty

members from moving forward with diversity scholarship and research (S. Warren,

personal communication, May 22, 2014). This is a systemic issue that needs to be

addressed and that, ironically, mirrors the power and privilege elements discussed in this

study. The research conducted could possibly help mitigate overzealous scrutiny by IRB

bodies in CCCU settings as the CAI process becomes more far reaching and well known.

A final limitation was referenced in the Section 2 methodology in my discussion of the

12-year rapport I held with ADP faculty members through contact at inservices and

through my administrative role with prior learning assessment. While the research data

production process appeared to confirm the depth and ease with which faculty members

engaged in all three phases of the study, it could be that some were reluctant to openly

identify themselves in discussing diversity issues and so did not participate.

Recommendations regarding the above limitations include conducting a similar

research process with ADP students and involving faculty members who have gone

through the October inservice session as a way to gather data while creating continued

learning opportunities around diversity competence. Regarding IRB restrictions, winds

appear to be shifting as the national voices (AAC&U, WASC, CCCU, etc.) continue to

get louder about the need for inclusive learning environments. Ultimately, this will result in pressure to ease resistance in the research process around innovative and qualitative research methodology while still holding researchers to protective standards. Finally, my rapport with ADP faculty members, while very workable for the scope of this study, does not mean that another research project with sister schools with which I have no connections could not be meaningful. In fact, looking at findings from both populations could make a powerful case for CAI as facilitative process.

Scholarship

The doctoral journey as a whole has served to show me the importance of scholarship and how it can be used in the service of human flourishing. Because scholarship is based on human experience and infinite ways of knowing, nothing can ever be fully known. Sound scholarship should inspire a spirit of continuous learning and connect persons to one another in ways that promote thriving systems and an informed global citizenry. Scholarship, if done through an attitude of mindful inquiry (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998), connects the ethos of the researcher with the problem at hand and then with the process for investigation. Mindful inquiry ultimately leads the investigator into ways in which to meaningfully respond. On a more pragmatic level, I learned about the importance of accurately acknowledging the work of others and using source support in transparent ways. I recognized that if my work were being cited, I would want the person using it to do their very best to correctly express my stated intent. This realization slowly started making me diligent about doing this with others' work. I am grateful for feedback from my HEAL professors to help me have more clarity about the purpose of good

scholarship and how my own scholarly practice could make a difference in this regard. A final recognition is that the process of doing scholarship (and reading the scholarship of others) allows me to find out what is really occurring in a setting or event instead of making uninformed assumptions and taking action that may be missing the mark. I am also much savvier when it comes to the consumption of scholarship produced by others.

Project Development and Evaluation

While I was no stranger to project development, both the HEAL course work and project study considerably deepened my learning and understanding about this process. The need for cohesion in layers of conception, theoretical foundations, planning and practice, and integrative evaluation all become much clearer for me. While I had my own favorite project development systems in place, I learned a great deal about varying perspectives and different avenues for completing similar goals. That exploration confirmed that I value project design and development in which integrative, whole-person learning is foundational. It also confirmed that if the projects I design are not in some way connected with helping others deploy their own gifts more effectively for a larger purpose, then those efforts do not align with who I am as a scholar-practitioner.

Leadership and Change

As I believe often happens when adults return to school to further their education, opportunities opened up for me to grow in my own leadership capacity at my academic institution as I progressed into the final stages of my doctoral study. Quinn (2012) imaged the idea of *deep change* and personal leadership development as that which involves a willingness to be in a place of uncertainty and learning in order to be excellent.

He went on to say that "when we are committed to a higher purpose, we move forward through the fear of conflict, and as we do, we learn and we see in new ways" (Quinn, 2012, p. 1). There was probably not a single week in the HEAL program that I was not afraid of some aspect of the work and more afraid of my inability to keep moving through it. And yet I knew that if I trusted the process and visioned the capacity to better help students with my degree, I could carry on.

As my roles are shifting into greater leadership and visibility, I find myself leaning into the examples from professors in my courses and from the literature and learning tasks we experienced as HEAL students. I sometimes have to remind myself to "act as if" and then proceed by trusting my intuition and using the skills I have learned to create a program or talk with board members about an important issue. I have also learned to invite others to walk alongside me and be part of the work that I used to undertake solely on my own, and I have been enriched by the collaborative efforts and willingness to use other's strengths on behalf of a needed initiative. I am also more open to change and recognize that if I stay present and in the moment with others, changes are about current experience with real people and needs. I can use the past to inform future leadership decisions, but the present is all I have with which to facilitate excellence in higher education.

Analysis of Self as Scholar

Like someone looking at a blurry photograph that slowly comes into focus, I recognized a few months ago while writing up the data analysis portion of the project study that I had found my *voice*. It was a specific moment in the hallway of my study in

which I realized that I was writing with clarity from the original source of my being, an almost strange recognition of myself. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1997) described the development of self, voice, and mind in ways that I believe resonate with my view of myself as an emerging scholar. Their classic work, *Women's Ways of Knowing*, describes the long journey that must be made by women in order "to put the knower back into the known and claim the power of their own minds and voices" (p. 19).

As an emerging scholar, I have come into a place where I can hold my own with peers and am able to acknowledge the recognition by peers of my developing expertise in adult learning and in educating for shalom. I believe that my scholar practice has always flowed from my unique gifts and calling into the field of adult education, but I never imagined that going through the doctoral journey would so profoundly alter my sense of self and place in the world. It was confirmed to me in a parallel journey of spiritual formation and growth over the last 3 ½ years that my own belovedness as a person made in God's image and doing a work that flows from a central space of Love is spoken through my scholar practice. It will never be perfect, and that is perfectly fine.

More practically, I have learned as a scholar more precise ways of speaking and that I do not need to prevaricate or exaggerate to get a point across. It is enough to speak directly and simply in both written and verbal communication. My doctoral chair, Dr. Kathryn H., was most helpful in this regard. I can think in deep ways and yet make my communication accessible to all kinds of people. Otherwise, how is my expression of ideas to be useful in helping others to find their own way in higher education? I have come to believe that being a scholar has as much to do with who one is as what one

knows and that ethics and integrity need to be the ground from which all else springs.

Another insight and area of growth was in the ability to *hear* critical feedback. I

recognized that critique from trusted individuals has the ability to make me a better

person and my work more excellent. Critical feedback is not the crux of who I am. I

have learned to take negative comments less personally. I also learned that detractors

make diminishing comments for a variety of reasons. People do not have to like me or

my work in order for me to make a difference in a positive and thoughtful way.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

As a practitioner, my self-confidence grew. Even when people said, "You are

already doing this work" (with adult students and in diversity training), I knew that going

through the HEAL course of study was making me think about it differently and do it

differently as well. Often, I have had intuitive strategies in place that create hospitable

learning environments, but I now understand at a much deeper level the undergirding

theories related to what I am doing in the classroom and across the university. I highly

value having had the specific experiences of taking those intuitions through a structured

process in the HEAL course work and project study to further grow my practice. I can

now use that understanding in the service of student learning engagement and enriched

learning environments.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

Much of my learning as a project developer was similar to what was described

above in relation to learning about project development and evaluation. However, I

believe the hardest part for me was the fear of creating a process (the research design and

subsequent data collection) based upon my own intuition and learning and then having it actually work. The experience confirmed for me, again, the importance of taking the time to make sure all elements are planned and that timing, people, resources, assessment, and so forth are all carefully thought through. Backing into the timeline for Phase I survey deployment and closure; scheduling subsequent focus groups and interviews; and having audio tapes always in the process of transcription—all of this meant detailed planning and execution.

I think I also learned that in unfamiliar venues like a project study process, I can do what I know to do and seek input from others for support as needed. I used to believe that if I asked others for help, I would be seen as somehow *less than*. However, the doctoral work made me have to rely on others in ways that I had never experienced. This was valuable learning for me and has served to enrich my relationships with colleagues and other stakeholders. Relying on others in appropriate ways has also helped me have less distortion about the need to be perfect or always in control. I want to model that attitude for my adult students, who also seem to struggle with this issue. A final thought is that as a project developer, I will always need to keep open space for new learning about what can be done differently or how to achieve learner goals more effectively.

The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change

A colleague and friend told me at the start of my doctoral journey that all of the work I do for course assignments, if at all possible, should focus on the subject or issues I thought my dissertation would end up working to change. I knew from the start of the HEAL program that my work was focused on my own need to grow in the area of

cultural competence and my desire was an equipping for other people (colleagues,

students, friends, and family) that would somehow not be as shocking and painful as my

own experience had been. Would it be possible for others to have difficult dialogue

about diversity and come into a more critically aware stance without unnecessary

suffering in the process? Diversity competence, by its very nature, is an issue that works

to bring about social change.

I believe the project study undertaken has the potential to impact social change in

three powerful ways:

- On a micro level, the project study allowed faculty members to begin an

  individual change process for which the proposed project works to bring

  about increased capacity for diversity competence. It is difficult to

  measure the long-term impact of such individual transformation when

  considering the students under their care, as well as the personal and

  professional lives they inhabit.

- On a meso level, much stands to be gained not only at Pax University, but

  in the 115 CCCU institutions that also hold an evangelical calling to

  inclusion and the challenges related to diversity languaged through this

  research study. Critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) as an avenue for

  change could conceivably impact thousands of lives.

- On a macro level, Wink (1998), a well-known theologian and biblical

  scholar, would describe *the powers that be* as those domination systems

  that need to be openly identified and then transformed in order to end

injustice and violence in the world. This project study described

counternarratives to current systems of oppression that need enacting in

order to help dismantle systems of inequity. For that reason, and because

higher education plays an important role in how people see and understand

their world, this project study could create ripples of positive impact in

many domains.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

I think the importance of this works rests in its overt expression of the need to

address identity formation and privilege elements that are currently working against

effectively engaging student learning for all students and faculty members. I think the

research speaks to the urgency of creating inclusive learning environments, not just in

faith-based institutions of learning, but as a matter of justice for all persons. Using CAI

as a metanarrative to facilitate an understanding of teaching through a social justice

framework is also an important feature of the research. Should this work move forward

and gain momentum, it could be that the field of higher education will more easily

embrace the challenge of diversity issues and dynamics with clarity and purpose.

As indicated earlier, some of the work related to this research has already been

shared on the national level and further application of the project design could extend in

to many areas of the university, not just ADP faculty members and their students. CCCU

schools and their secular counter-parts could use this project study model to increase

diversity competence for all institutional stakeholders. I have already been approached

by a church congregation about facilitating the CAI process in their transition of pastoral

staff and new visioning of purpose and mission. So, beyond higher education, other entities such as business and healthcare, for example, can benefit from the work done through this research.

Directions for future research include creation of a CAI assessment model that moves participants through a discovery process around the idea of what it means to be culturally competent. Because AI always starts with the positive, lifegiving elements of a person's experience, transformation is grounded in personal narrative, much like the research process. Another research avenue is the development of a specific model describing narratives and counternarratives to help unearth entrenched ways of thinking and being. These parallel ideas have specific activities that tie to exploration and honoring of experience. Finally, the idea of understanding one's intersectionality, which Dill (2010) considered the *core of diversity work*, is an avenue that needs more intentional exploration and work, particularly for those of the dominant majority. This will take a willingness on the part of individuals and institutions to grapple with privileged identity elements that may feel threatening. In a recent edition of *Inside Higher Education* Crole (2014) indicated that "We need to do a better job as scholars to make it clear that it's [privilege] structural and not individual" (as cited by Weinberg, 2014, para. 14). Helping to normalize the idea that all persons come into the classroom with intersecting identities goes a long way to helping difficult dialogues on diversity take place with more ease and frequency.

Conclusion

Section 4 provided a reflection on project study strengths. It also addressed

limitations of the study with alternative recommendations grounded in the literature. A

self-reflective analysis included discussion about the idea of scholarship and the essence

of being a scholar. In examining project development and evaluation, additional insights

were shared about growth I experienced as a project developer. I described an

evolutionary view of myself as a leader and reflected on my capacity to effectively deal

with change. While discussing the importance of this study, powerful moments of

learning I experienced in the doctoral journey surfaced for observation and reflection.

Finally, implications of the study were shared and underscored by applications already

made and potentially forthcoming. Suggestions were also made regarding future

directions for research that could further impact the field of higher education and adult

learning.

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Appendix A: Proposed Project

Part A - Training Session Module: Increasing Cultural Competence through the Use of
Critical appreciative inquiry: Effectively Engaging Diverse Learners in Adult
Classrooms

October 2014 Inservice Session Schedule

+ (Including the related learning tasks from the *What?* of Vella's design steps:

1.   Inductive work to anchor the new content

2.   Input: add new content

3.   Implementation: Learners apply new ideas or skills

4.   Integration: Learners take it away

Evaluation indicators: learning, transfer, impact)

Breakfast: 7:30 to 8am

8 to 8:15am - Welcome, Opening, and Ice-breaker Activity

- o Use self-reflective exercise that they completed to do a Think-Pair-Share

  + Learning Task = inductive work to anchor new content by seeking experience with reflective questions

  - o What thoughts about your own practice or questions did you have as you completed the reflective exercise?

  - o Turn to a neighbor and share

  - o Large group debrief

8:15 to 8:20am

- o Setting Ground Rules

  - o Respect, honesty, risk-taking, awareness of difference, speaks from your own experience, patience with self and others, generosity with self and others, any others??

8:20 to 10:50 am (Break at 9:20 for 10 minutes) Use self-reflective exercise that they completed to serve as ground work for CAI

- Learning Task = inductive work to anchor new content through focus group dialogue; input by defining "Teaching through a Social Justice Framework" mid-way through activity

  o Critical appreciative inquiry using focus group questions from study

      o Small groups of 4-5 participants

      o Facilitation by some who already went through focus group process

- Implementation through co-construction of learning about diverse elements of classroom practice through large-group discussion

      o Around-the-room Large Group Debrief

- Integration through eliciting applied learning from large group discussion

10:45 to 11:45am

- ECHE One-page lit review Readings Activity

      o Read through the one-page review

- Learning task = adding new content from literature review articles on evangelical Christian higher education and diversity

      o What strikes you as you are reading?

      o Mark up page or make any brief notes (we are providing highlighters for easy marking!)

      o We'll call time when it's time to move on

  o Paired Sentence completion

- o Exercise logistics

- o Activity designed to allow for "deep listening"

- o Complete the following sentence as many times as you can in a 1-minute period

- o "Something that stood out to me was…"

- Learning task = inductive and new input through co-constructed conversation with peer; applying new ideas through co-constructed dialogue

"What makes it Critical?"

- o Explanation of Critical Theory

- o Contextual Information Regarding Emancipatory Adult Education

- o Systems of Domination and Subordination and Replication in the Classroom

- Learning task = add new content about critical theory, emancipatory adult education, and systems of domination replicating in the classroom

- o Write down one example from your own practice that displays critical examination of content or teaching strategies

- Learning task = implementation of new ideas about critical theory by applying to practice

11:45 to 12:15 Lunch

12:15 to 1pm

- Identity Petals (Intersectional Identity Exploration)

- o Introduction

- o   Activity Instructions

- o   Pair Debrief

- o   Large Group Debrief

- Learning task = inductive work by naming own intersecting identity pieces, adding new content, application of ideas, and integration through large group discussion.

1pm to 1:10pm – Processing and Parking Lot

- Seeking formative and evaluative input re impact and learning

- Intentional space for questions, concerns, thoughts, future needs

- Learning task = integration – taking away new learning about session thus far, including intersectional identity, ECHE institutions, and Critical appreciative inquiry related to teaching/learning practice

1:10 to 2:30pm

- Jigsaw Activity

- o   Articles for jigsaw: PIE model (Watt); Teaching about Race (Brookfield); Just Democracy: Ethical Considerations in Teaching (Guy); Nature of White Privilege and Teaching and Training of Adults (Lund).

- o   Instructions and Assignment of Home and Expert Groups

- o   Reading, Expert Idea Consensus, Sharing with Home Group

- o   Large Group Debrief

🞤 Learning tasks = New input from articles regarding resistance, privileged identity, and power dynamics in the classroom; inductive work with peers tying information to personal experience; integration from large group debrief

2:30 to 3:30pm

- Triggering Events/Diversity Language

  o Mini-Lecture on Triggering Events Theory
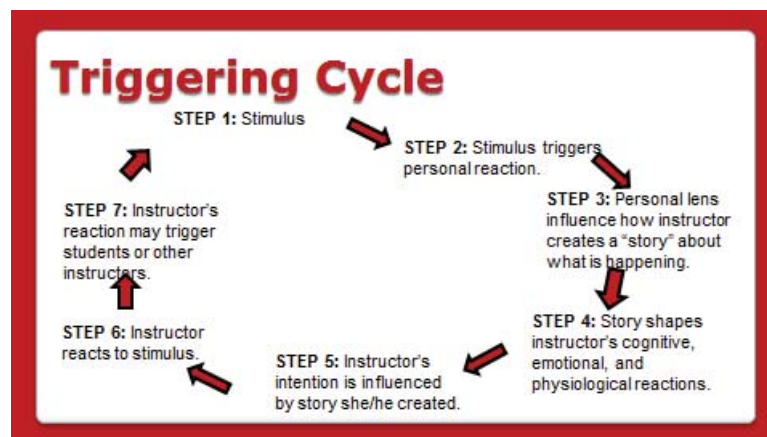
🞤 Learning task = add new content with triggering events theory

  o Triggering Events Questionnaire

🞤 Learning task = inductive work identifying triggers from personal experience

  o Large Group Debrief and Spill into Diversity Language Discussion

    ▪ Castania – Evolving Language of Diversity

    ▪ Open Q & A

🞤 Learning task = add new content from Castania's work; implementation and integration through large group discussion

3:30 to 4:00pm

- Justice in Shalom/Educating for Shalom: Mini-Lecture

- o Nicholas Wolterstorff (1983), *Until Justice and Peace Embrace*

- o **"**Shalom is intertwined with justice**"** (p. 69).

- o Shalom: the human being dwelling at peace in all his or her relationships: with God, with self, with fellows, with nature.

- o Not merely the absence of hostility, not merely being in right relationship. "Shalom at its highest is *enjoyment* of one's relationships" (p. 69).

- o **"**Shalom is an ethical community that is wounded when justice is absent**"** (p. 71).

- "Shalom is both God's cause in the

  world and our human calling."

  - o Shalom is first articulated in Old Testament, but first comes to expression in the New Testament

  - o Shalom goes beyond justice

  - o Incorporates right, harmonious relationship to *God* and delight in His service

  - o Incorporates right, harmonious relationships to other *human beings* and delight in human community ("…there can be delight in community only when justice reigns, only when human beings no longer oppress one another" p. 70)

  - o Incorporates right, harmonious relationship to *nature* and delight in our physical surroundings. "Shalom comes when we, bodily creatures and not

disembodied souls, shape the world with our labor and find fulfillment in

so doing and delight in its results"
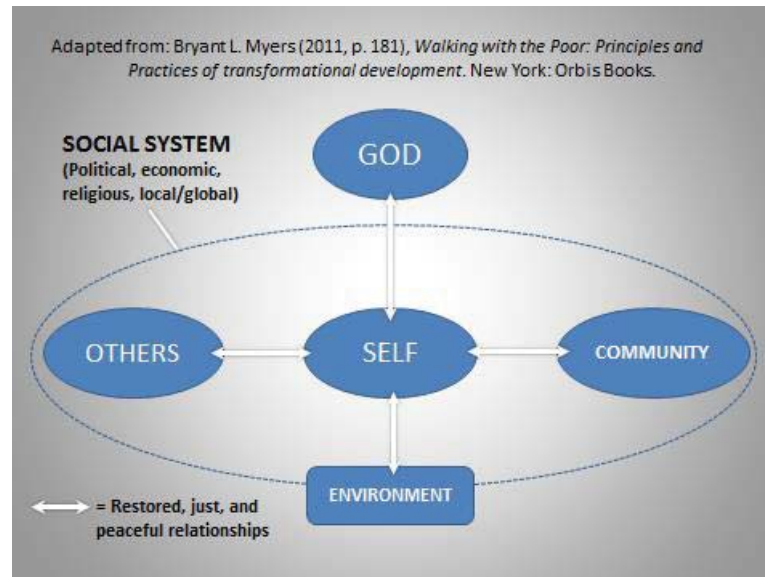
- How might this framework intersect with what we do at Pax?

- What are the ways that a lack of shalom manifests in higher education? (if we

  were honest, what would we say this looks like at Pax?)

- Learning task = add new content with educating for shalom framework; applying

  new ideas to Pax University setting; integration through naming specific features

  of ways in which Pax University displays inclusive learning community

  environment

4:00 to 4:20pm - Processing and Parking Lot

- Seeking formative and evaluative input re impact and learning

- Intentional space for questions, concerns, thoughts, future needs

- Learning task = integration – taking away new learning from completed session

  including intersectional identity; ECHE institutions; Critical appreciative inquiry

related to teaching/learning practice; resistance and privilege features; educating

for shalom

4:20 to 4:30pm

- Closing and Faculty Learning Communities Explanation and Sign-ups

Inservice Session Learning Tasks and Achievement-Based Outcomes (ABOs)

<u>What</u>: Content (knowledge, skills, or attitudes (SKAs) will be facilitated through six interactive learning tasks including:

Learning Task 1: Self-assessment Reflective Exercise and CAI Focus Groups

Learning Task 2: ECHE Narratives Jigsaw

Learning Task 3: "What makes it critical?"

Learning Task 4: Identity Petals

Learning Task 5: Triggering Events/Diversity Language

Learning Task 6: Educating for Shalom

<u>What for</u>: Achievement based outcomes (ABOs) (the desired end specifically connected to each part of content)

By the end of the eight-hour session, all will have:

- Examined teaching-learning practice through Critical appreciative inquiry
- Identified the nature of some ECHE resistance to diversity conversation
- Examined critical theory and connected idea to practice
- Explored intersectional identity and named social positionality
- Identified emotional triggers regarding race, class, gender, and other isms in the classroom
- Explored diversity literature and named elements of resistance, new language for diversity conversation, and increased privilege awareness through reading and dialogue
- Explored evolving nature of diversity language
- Considered educating for shalom and explored in the context of Pax University

<u>How</u>: Described in the inservice session schedule outline

Identity Petals Instructions and Activity

Philosophy of the Exercise:
- We are all comprised of multiple, overlapping, and intersecting identities; this activity (which is particularly good for visual learners) allows participants to name these identities and view them holistically. It forces everyone to think about all of their identities rather than focusing on those they are the most comfortable with.
- This activity shows that identities are not random and interchangeable traits, but that they affect, in very real and sometimes hurtful ways, how we interact with one another and how we live our daily lives.

Exercise Instructions:
1) Distribute "Identity Petals" handout.
2) Instruct participants on how to complete the handout initially:
    - Write your name in the center circle.
    - Use the outer segments to write down how you view your race/ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, gender, ability/disability, religion, and nationality. In addition, there is one blank area where you can write any other salient aspect of your identity. Please feel free to create additional petals where you can write other identities that are important to you.
3) Allow students five-ten minutes to fill out the blanks, answering questions as they come up (they probably will).
4) When everyone has finished, ask participants to do the following:
    - Draw a square next to the aspects of your identity that you think about on a daily basis.
    - Draw a circle next to the aspects of your identity that you believe affects how other people view or treat you.
    - Draw a triangle next to aspects of your identity that you believe affects how you view or treat others.
5) Allow people to share their responses with others in pairs or small groups. Allow plenty of time for this!
6) Debrief as a large group.

Additional Discussion Prompts:
- Introduce the concepts of "one-ups" and "one-downs" into the discussion. Delve more deeply into the idea that our privileges have a direct relationship with other's oppressions, and vice versa.
- What patterns do you notice when looking at where your shapes are placed?
- How does it feel to have a list of all your one-ups and one-downs in front of you?

Identity Petals Blank Handout
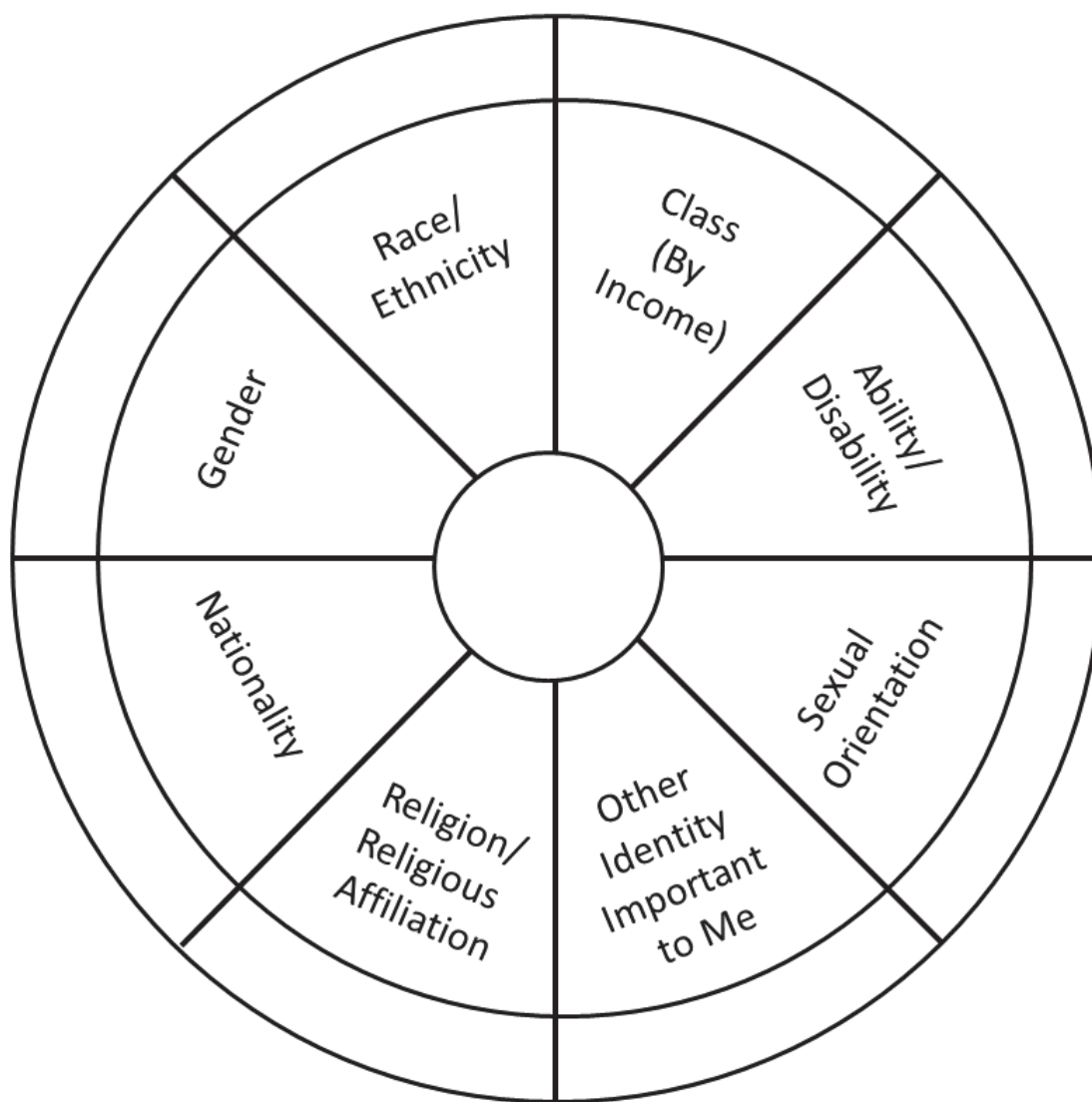
Triggering Events Activity Instructions and Questionnaire

Directions: Use a 0-5 scale to rate how much of a "trigger" each of the following is for you in the classroom:

> 0 = no emotional reaction
> 1 = very mild level of emotional reaction
> 2 = low degree of emotional reaction
> 3 = moderate degree of emotional reaction
> 4 = medium-high degree of emotional reaction
> 5 = high level of emotional reaction

When a student or instructor:

_____ 1. makes an offensive comment.

_____ 2. demonstrates racist, sexist, or classist attitudes and behaviors.

_____ 3. belittles my point or that of a participant.

_____ 4. challenges the validity of the information or statistics being presented.

_____ 5. criticizes my style, design or approach.

_____ 6. dominates the conversation and "airtime."

_____ 7. interrupts me or other participants.

_____ 8. demonstrates domineering, threatening or controlling behavior.

_____ 9. refuses to participate in the discussion or activity.

_____ 10. Tries to "bully" me or another participant.

_____ 11. is arrogant and self-righteous.

_____ 12. dismisses the conversation as "political correctness."

_____ 13. is "set in their ways" and unwilling to shift his or her perspective.

_____ 14. "coaches" members of other groups on how to act, think, and feel.

_____ 15. portrays themselves as the "victim" of "reverse discrimination."

_____ 16. proclaims that they are a "good one" and doesn't own their own group identity.

_____ 17. demonstrates disruptive behavior including joking, side conversations and snide or sarcastic comments.

_____ 18. questions my competency.

_____ 19. challenges one of my comments or behaviors and labels it oppressive.

_____ 20. is colluding with their own oppression.

_____ 21. "rescues" members of the privileged group.

_____ 22. is experiencing and expressing deep emotions of pain, grief, or anger.

_____ 23. makes oppressive comments about members of their own race, gender, nationality, religion, etc.

_____ 24. only engages in the conversation out of their "oppressed identity."

_____ 25. refuses to "own their privilege" as a member of a privileged group.

_____ 26. shifts the conversation away from their privileged group and back to their oppressed group.

_____ 27. "does not get it" as a member of the oppressed group and cannot "make the connection" and use their membership in the group to understand this form of oppression.

_____ 28. tries to derail the planned format and agenda.

_____ 29. refuses to engage in any further dialogue.

_____ 30. tries to work out their personal issues on me or the group.

_____ 31. projects their assumptions and feelings onto me or the group.

_____ 32. ?? (other triggers you might name from your experience)

Developed by S. Visser and used with permission. ████████

Inservice Session Follow-Up Survey*

1.   Providing your name is optional. Name:_____

2.   Which ADP program do you teach in?

3.   Overall, this inservice training was:

        Not useful
        Somewhat useful
        Useful
        More than average useful
        Extremely useful
        Other comments

4.   Did you like having an extended inservice session that included lunch and ended
        at 4:30?
        Yes
        No
        Other comments

5.   The first part of the morning used Critical appreciative inquiry focus groups to
        explore teaching through a social justice framework grounded in your current
        classroom practice. How useful was the morning session?

        Not useful
        Somewhat useful
        Useful
        More than average useful
        Extremely useful
        Other comments

6.   After the focus groups, a readings activity called Evangelical Christian Higher
        Education (ECHE) lit review was facilitated. It included a paired sentence
        completion activity and a short lecture on "What makes it critical?" What was
        your perception of this information and related activities?

        Not useful
        Somewhat useful
        Useful
        More than average useful
        Extremely useful

Other comments

7. Moving more into personal exploration about diversity issues, the first part of the afternoon consisted of an activity called Identity Petals, which was followed by another called Triggering Events. How did you find these self-examination activities?

    Not useful
    Somewhat useful
    Useful
    More than average useful
    Extremely useful
    Other comments

8. The afternoon jigsaw activity offered an opportunity to learn more about privilege and power elements in the classroom. What was your response to this activity?

    Not useful
    Somewhat useful
    Useful
    More than average useful
    Extremely useful
    Other comments

9. The last part of the afternoon had to do with teaching through a justice in shalom framework and exploring the relationship of diversity and Pax University. What did you think about his part of the session?

    Not useful
    Somewhat useful
    Useful
    More than average useful
    Extremely useful
    Other comments

10. Please give us feedback on the two Parking Lot discussions that were designed to elicit your feedback about how the session as impacting you.

11. Briefly describe what really worked for you.

12. What did not work?
13. Did you have adequate information to prepare for the inservice training?

Yes

No

Comment

14.   What specific topic(s) or activities would you like to see in future inservice trainings devoted to diversity?

15.   How would you describe your personal learning from this inservice session?

16.   Are you planning to take part in a Faculty Learning Community (FLC) to further explore diversity scholarship and classroom practice?

Yes

No

Comment

Thank you for taking time to give us feedback!

*This survey was created in a Zoomerang (Monkey Survey) format, but was not readable when transferred into the doctoral study document, so was re-typed in current format for better viewing.

Part B: Faculty Learning Communities

Who: Participants and Facilitators (Number to be determined)

Why: To deepen learning from inservice session and gain foundational

knowledge of diversity scholarship; continue dialogue with peers for co-

constructed change in scholar-practice for enacting inclusive learning

environments for ADP students

When: January to April, 2015

Where: Pax University Classrooms/Conference Rooms

What: *Race, Class, & Gender*; *Identity Development for Diverse Populations*;

This Side of Heaven; TED Talks; Wolterstorff research articles

What For: Learners will have reviewed and discussed three foundational works in

counternarrative, identity development, and Christian reconciliation.

How: Dialogue and Discussion

Part B: End of Semester Retreat

Who: Participants and Facilitators from all FLCs; Guest Speakers from Pax

University Faculty of Color Network (Number to be determined)

Why: To deepen learning FLC experience and continue dialogue with peers for

co-constructed change in scholar-practice; to envision next steps for

enacting inclusive learning environments for ADP students

When: Mid-May, 2015

Where: Serra Retreat Center, Malibu, CA or Mater Dolorosa Passionist Retreat

Center, Sierra Madre, CA

What: Emergent material from FLC participants and facilitators

What For: Increased critical consciousness and greater acuity teaching through a

social justice framework (knowledge of what faculty bring, what students

bring, course materials, and teaching strategies).

How: Reflective assessment of FLC effectiveness through pair-share activities,

short written reflections, and a group teaching activity designed to

explicate learning from the semester meetings.

Appendix B: Phase I Survey Reflective Assessment Instrument*

1.   Gender:
        Female
        Male

2.   Age Group:
        20-29   30-39   40-49   50-59   60+

3.   ADP Program(s) in which you teach:
        BSOL
        MLOS
        LIBS
        MCIS
        BSIS

4.   How long have you been teaching in ADP programs?
        Less than 1 year   1-5 years   6-10 years   11-15 years   16+ years

5.   What courses do you teach? Please list.

6.   Ethnicity Group:
        Alaskan Native
        American Indian
        Asian
        Black
        Hispanic
        Native Hawaiian
        Pacific Islander
        White

7.   Christian Denomination or Faith Tradition:_____

        FACULTY QUESTIONS: WHAT I BRING TO THE CLASSROOM

8.   When it comes to diversity, I am open about the difficulties I experience in the
        classroom.
        (Select only one response) Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

9.   I examine my own attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs about what it means to
        work in diverse environments and with diverse individuals.

        (Select only one response) Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

10.   I participate in professional development activities that explore diversity-related topics.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

11.   When it comes to diversity (race, class, gender, etc.), I know what triggers me in a classroom setting.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

12.   I intentionally think through how I will respond when triggered in the classroom.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

13.   I feel comfortable in the presence of diverse populations of students.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

14.   I have a personal connection with a diverse array of students.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

15.   Please provide any additional comments related to your responses above.

COURSE CONTENT: CURRICULUM, MATERIALS, AND RESOURCES

16.   When designing a course, I intentionally incorporate topics that touch on issues of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sex, religion, culture, and/or social class.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

17.   The course readings I select are written by individuals who represent diverse perspectives (i.e., political opinions, racial or ethnic backgrounds, class statuses, genders, etc.)
(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

18.   I challenge my students to move beyond what is culturally familiar or culturally relevant to explore unfamiliar topics and issues.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

19.   My course content provides opportunities for students to interact and develop relationships with individuals from cultures other than their own.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

20.   I facilitate processes wherein students can examine issues, concepts, themes, and human events through multiple perspectives of different cultures.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

21.   Please provide any additional comments related to your responses above.

TEACHING METHODS: PROCESSES I USE TO EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE STUDENTS

22.   My teaching strategies go beyond traditional lectures and assigned readings.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

23.   In my classes, I include collaborative learning, such as small group assignments and/or team-based learning.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

24.   In incorporate service learning into my courses.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

25.   When I don't feel equipped to address diverse perspectives on an issue or topic, I bring in a guest speaker or a subject matter expert.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

26.   I incorporate students' personal narratives into my teaching style, allowing them opportunities to practice their newfound knowledge and skills by implementing and integrating the content into their personal lives.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

27.   Please provide any additional comment related to your responses above.

STUDENTS: WHAT I PERCEIVE STUDENTS BRING TO THE CLASSROOM

28.   I am well-versed in the various social and cultural backgrounds of my students.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

29.   I understand how academic knowledge is perceived in the cultures of my learners.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

30.   I understand the kind of knowledge, skills, and commitments that are valued in the cultures of my learners.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

31.   I seek to understand what prior knowledge and experience my students bring to the classroom.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

32.   I intentionally incorporate activities that foster classroom engagement.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

33.   I utilize class exercises that foster critical thinking in students and invite them to formulate opinions regarding the content we are covering in my courses.

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

34.   Students believe the learning environment I facilitate fosters inclusivity, respect of differences, awareness of diversity, and deepened understanding of the experiences of others (as evidenced through anecdotal feedback, IDEA responses, etc.)

(Select only one response)   Always   Often   Sometimes   Minimally   Not at all

35.   Please provide any additional comments related to your response above.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION! *This survey was created in a Zoomerang (Monkey Survey) format, but was not readable when transferred into the doctoral study document, so was re-typed in current format for better viewing.

Appendix C: Visser Letter of Permission

October 15, 2013

Dear Stephanie,

Based upon my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to use the self-reflective instrument I designed based upon Marchesani and Adams (1992) multicultural teaching model. I contacted the authors and received permission to use their work as a foundation for the questions I placed in the reflective instrument.

Sincerely,

Sarah Visser, M.Ed.
Assistant Professor, Department of Leadership and Organizational Psychology
Program Director, Leadership Minor
School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences

Appendix D: Focus Group Script and Questions

Focus Group Questions for Phase II Data Collection – Fenwick HEAL Case Study

Introduction/Instructions:

> Introduce facilitator, co-facilitator, and recorder/observer; explain the purpose of the focus group, Appreciative inquiry as a positive change process, and the function of the recorder/observer. Emphasize that you are there to listen to faculty member's descriptions of what it is like to teach in highly diverse, ADP classrooms and that their narrative experiences will serve to enhance the data already collected in Phase I of the research from the reflective instrument they completed. Explain that the first hour will be spent exploring the four sections of the reflective assessment survey and teaching through a social justice perspective. The second hour will be spent in a mini "Appreciative inquiry" (definition, discovery, dream, design, and destiny/delivery) (Cockell & McArthur-Blair, 2012) dialogue activity, which will be explained more in detail later in the session. Emphasize that everything said in the room is confidential. While members are asked to keep information confidential, the principal investigator cannot guarantee that all members will honor that confidentiality request. Also, although the comments are being recorded and the observer is making note of faculty members' input, no names will be attached to those comments and only grouped data will be used. In addition, the faculty members are asked to respect one another's right to privacy. What is said in the room stays in the room. Go around the table and have everyone introduce themselves, using first names only. Ask what program(s) they teach in and how long they have been teaching for ADP.

> Flip chart and markers will be used to summarize what faculty members are saying. The session will be audio-recorded.

Warm-up questions:

1. When you think about ADP students and diversity in the classroom, can you describe all of the things that come to mind when using the word "diverse?" (For example, religious differences, gender, ethnicity, etc.)
2. What prompted you to volunteer as a focus group member today?

Part I – Exploration of Survey Assessment Responses

The data that we are hoping you can help us unpack in this first part of the session is from the reflective exercise survey that you took as part of Phase I of the research study. The survey was based upon Marchesani and Adams's (1992) multicultural teaching model and encompassed four areas of teaching practice: what faculty bring, what content is used, what teaching methods are used, and what students bring to the learning endeavor.

In responding to the survey, you made an assessment of your practice in the four areas described, and one of the goals of the focus group is to give you an opportunity to voice more fully what some of those responses meant.

Course Content:
1. When designing a course, what are some ways you intentionally incorporate topics that touch on issues of race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexuality, culture, and/or social class?
2. In what ways do you challenge your students to move beyond what is culturally familiar or culturally relevant to explore unfamiliar topics and issues?
3. In what ways does your course provide opportunities for students to interact and develop relationships with individuals from cultures other than their own?
4. How do you facilitate processes wherein students can examine issues, concepts, themes, and human events through multiple perspectives of different cultures?

Teaching Strategies:
1. In what ways do your teaching strategies go beyond traditional lecture and assigned readings?
2. In what ways do you incorporate students' personal narratives into your teaching style, allowing them opportunities to address issues that are real and challenging to them?
3. What strategies do you use when you don't feel equipped to address diverse perspectives on an issue or topic?

Student Experience – What they bring as active participants:
1. In what ways have you developed an understanding of the various social and cultural backgrounds of your students? Can you give an example of how that understanding may have increased student learning engagement in your classroom?
2. In what ways have you developed an understanding of how academic knowledge is perceived in the cultures of your learners? Can you give some examples of how that understanding impacts your course design, materials, and/or learning activities?
3. In what ways have you come to understand the kind of knowledge, skills, and commitments that are valued in the cultures of your learners?
4. In what ways do you seek to understand what prior knowledge and experience your students bring to the classroom?
5. In what ways do you intentionally incorporate activities that foster classroom engagement and critical thinking? Can you give an example of an activity that you enjoy using?
6. What feedback do you receive from students that help you know whether they perceive the learning environment in your classroom as one that fosters inclusivity, respect of differences, awareness of diversity, and a deepened

understanding of the experiences of others? (For example, IDEA comments, anecdotal feedback, etc.)

Faculty Experience – What you bring to the classroom:
1. What are some of the difficulties you experience in the classroom related to diversity?
2. What are some ways that ADP or the larger university could better support your efforts in the classroom related to diversity?
3. What are some things that trigger you in a classroom setting related to race, class, gender, or other differences? Can you give an example of a recent time during a class session when you were triggered? What emotions did you experience?
4. What are some ways you have intentionally thought through how you will respond to situations that do trigger you related to race, class, gender, or other differences?
5. In what ways do you examine your own attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs about what it means to work in diverse environments and with diverse individuals?
6. How would you describe your comfort level in the presence of diverse populations of students?
7. When an uncomfortable situation occurs in your classroom related to diversity, what are some ways in which navigate that situation? (For example, a student makes an intolerant comment about someone else's religious views, etc.)
8. What is your experience having a personal connection with a diverse array of students? Can you give an example of when and how this occurs for you? (For example, one-on-one mentoring, etc.)
9. What kinds of development opportunities have been available for you regarding effectively engaging student learning in diverse classrooms? Were they helpful? Why or why not?

Part II – Teaching through a Social Justice Perspective

Adams and Love (2005) took the earlier multicultural teaching model containing the four elements we just unpacked and gave an overarching framework to it that encompasses what they call teaching through a social justice perspective. That perspective assumes an understanding of dominant and subordinate social structures that play out in our classrooms, based upon the larger communities of which we are a part. It also assumes that unless we are actively seeking to break through those inequities, they are constantly being reproduced through the educational system, and hence in our classrooms. Truly engaging diverse student populations means having an awareness of those structures and intentional strategies for "interrupting these unequal relationships both by helping people understand social inequality, and by modeling more reciprocal and equitable relationships in the classroom" (p. 587).
1. When you think of dominant or subordinate social structures, what kinds of examples come to mind? (For example, gaps in pay based upon gender, inaccessible building structures for those who are physically disabled, etc.)

2. What are some ways in which you have seen inequitable social structures play out in your classroom experience?
3. We all carry around more than one social identifier that serves to create our social reality. For example, gender, age, ability, etc. work together to make up how we perceive ourselves in relationship to cultural norms and values. In what ways does your understanding of your own social identity and that of your students influence your teaching practice?

Part III – Appreciative inquiry Dialogue using a Critically Appreciative Lens
Definition (Choosing the positive as the focus of the inquiry):
1. Effectively engaging a highly diverse student population

Discover (Inquiring into exceptionally positive moments/share stories and lifegiving moments):
1. What things are currently lifegiving about your classroom practice in relationship to diversity? Can you give specific examples about times when you have felt energized while dealing with difference or inclusion in the classroom? Share a story of even a small success or satisfying moment related to diversity and your classroom practice.
2. What things do you perceive as lifegiving about the larger university in relationship to diversity and inclusivity? Share a story about inspired leadership or innovations that you see as having made a difference for diverse student populations. Share a story that has made a positive difference in the community or in a more global context related to diversity.

Dream (Create a shared image of a preferred future):
1. What possibilities do you envision as you think about what could be done to support you in your scholar-practice with diverse students and effective learning engagement?
2. What unique contributions do you see ADP making to facilitate understanding of diverse student populations?
3. How do you see your work with diverse students impacting the community? The world?

Design & Destiny/Delivery (Innovate and improvise ways to create that future):
1. What structural elements would need to be in place in order to create even more inclusive learning environments and to foster a consistently inclusive learning community?

Appendix E: Interview Questions

Interview Questions for Phase III Data Collection – Fenwick HEAL Case Study

1. What were your thoughts and impressions as you went through and completed the initial reflective assessment instrument related to diversity practice in APS classrooms?

2. What were your thoughts and impressions as you went through the focus group session?

3. What strengths do you feel you currently possess in teaching a highly diverse student population in APS programs?

4. What challenges exist for you as you teach a highly diverse student population in APS programs?

5. In what ways did the Marchesani & Adams (1992) multicultural teaching model used in the survey that examined four areas of your teaching practice impact your understanding of effectively engaging diverse learners?

6. In what ways did Critical appreciative inquiry (CAI) as part of the focus group session help you give voice to your unique teaching experience related to effectively engaging diverse learners?

7. From your experiences in the focus group session, do you believe that using CAI could create a space for positive dialogue about diversity? Why or why not?

8. Why do you think that conversations about cultural competence and diversity can sometimes be difficult in faith-based institutions of higher learning?

9. What avenues of support do you feel would be most beneficial for you as a faculty member teaching in APS classrooms around issues of diversity?

10. Do you have any other comments or insights you would like to offer?