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# Writing Center Editor Strategies for Addressing Student Academic Entitlement in Intervention Editing

Sarah Ann Matthey  
*Walden University*

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Sarah Matthey

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Review Committee

Dr. Ramo Lord, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty  
Dr. Robert Hogan, Committee Member, Education Faculty  
Dr. Paul Englesberg, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer

Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University  
2016

Abstract

Writing Center Editor Strategies for Addressing Student Academic Entitlement in

Intervention Editing

by

Sarah Matthey

MA, University of St. Thomas, 2004

BA, University of Minnesota, 2001

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

December 2016

## Abstract

Not all students who enroll in postsecondary institutions have the skills needed to be successful in higher education in reading and writing. At a for-profit, online university in Minnesota, many students were not completing 4 weeks of a remedial writing program, Intervention Editing (IE). According to internal surveys and personal communications, students' struggles to complete IE were partly due to academic entitlement (AE). AE is defined as students placing the responsibility for their academic success on third parties rather than on themselves. Using the theory of self-efficacy as a framework, the purpose of this intrinsic case study was to determine the editors' best practices for addressing student AE and the additional training that they needed to mentor students who exhibited AE in IE. Data were collected using semistructured interviews with a purposeful sample of 5 editors who had completed at least 1 year of IE, a semistructured interview with the IE manager, and a document review of the IE application and university student handbook. The data from the semistructured interviews and archival documents were coded for emergent themes. The following best practices emerged on mentoring students with AE in IE: exhibiting a respectful tone with students, outlining student responsibility, stressing student personal agency, and refusing unreasonable student demands. The editors also outlined the following training needs: assistance in revising the mission and application for IE and professional development on identifying student AE. A white paper was written to document and improve editors' pedagogical strategies for mentoring AE students. This study provides editors with best practices for helping AE students in IE reclaim their self-efficacy, which may lead to improved quality of capstone writing at the local study site and reduce time to degree completion.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this study to my life-long friend, Jennifer Rubin, who always inspires me to challenge myself in all facets of my life. I also dedicate this study to my beautiful daughter, Elizabeth Biernat: Elizabeth, girls can be doctors too. Finally, I dedicate this study to my grandmother, Georgina Matthey, who was the pioneer educator and writer in our family. I miss you every day, grandma.

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## Section 1: The Problem

### **Introduction**

Some students who enroll in postsecondary institutions lack the mathematics, reading, writing, and personal nonacademic skills needed to be academically successful in higher level education. According to the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (2010), as many as 60% of incoming first-year students enrolling in nonselective universities (i.e., open access) will need to take remedial classes (or participate in some remedial intervention) in a basic subject like math, reading, or writing to learn the requisite skills to participate in collegiate-level education. In addition, the interventions for students requiring remedial skill building may not be successful, as up to 70% of students taking developmental/remedial course work will not graduate (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2008). Not only are many students who enter college not academically prepared for college-level instruction, but those who are required to participate in remedial interventions are less likely to graduate from college.

This lack of preparation for college extends beyond the undergraduate level. Some students who continue their education in master's and doctoral degrees have not mastered the reading and writing skills learned in their undergraduate degree to be successful in education beyond a 4-year degree. Students pursuing master's and doctorate degrees may even self-identify weaknesses in their writing that affect their ability to complete their capstones for their degree (Rogers & Goktas, 2010). Lacking the needed reading, writing, and personal academic skills to be successful at the graduate level not only diminishes the students' ability to obtain their degree, but it also leads to poor

quality writing outcomes and academic integrity violations. Vieyra, Strickland, and Timmerman (2013) found that many master's and doctoral capstones that contained instances of plagiarism were due to the students' inability to read, write, and think critically at the graduate level. Students at the graduate level may enroll in programs without the needed skills to be successful, which can negatively affect their academic outcomes.

At a local graduate, online, for-profit university, the university chief academic officer (CAO) mandated that writing center dissertation editors work with students to improve the writing of those who have been identified by their faculty as at risk of not completing the doctoral study or dissertation (i.e., capstone) due to writing deficiencies. To address the CAO mandate, the editors at the local study site implemented a free-of-charge, optional writing intervention (herein referred to as Intervention Editing) program aimed at assisting students with their writing to “teach the student self-editing skills with the overall objective of them getting to the next stage of the approval process” (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). However, in the time frame that the Intervention Editing program has been running, the editors have not received training on how to engage with or mentor this at-risk student population (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015).

### **Definition of the Problem**

At the local study site, the dissertation editors implemented the Intervention Editing program in 2012 to assist students who have been identified by their chair as at risk of not completing the capstone due to poor writing quality (Intervention Editing

Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). The Intervention Editing program is a free, optional, 4-week program where students work one-on-one with an editor to help them improve their writing and learn how to edit their document for committee approval. However, many students drop out of the Intervention Editing program and do not complete the 4 full weeks of reviews (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). To determine the reasons for the high attrition rate in Intervention Editing, the editors surveyed Intervention Editing students and found that some students chose not to complete the 4 weeks of Intervention Editing due to academic entitlement (AE) attitudes where the students placed the ownership of the completion or approval of the proposal or capstone on the editor staff and not on themselves (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). Although the editors have expertise in American Psychological Association (APA) style, graduate writing expectations, and teaching scholarly writing to students, the editors have not received training on how to define AE or how to mentor students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). A lack of proper training on how to address student AE in Intervention Editing may prevent students from completing the 4 weeks of writing assistance, and without a writing intervention, these students may not be able to improve the quality of their writing in their capstone.

## **Rationale**

### **Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level**

At the local university, some students in the graduate program are struggling to write their capstone due to writing and researching deficiencies. To teach students the needed writing skills to complete the capstone, the dissertation editors at the local study site implemented Intervention Editing, in which students work one-on-one with a dissertation editor for 1 hour per week for 4 weeks. However, after 3 years running, the editors found that some students were not successful in Intervention Editing and did not complete the 4 full weeks of reviews. According to internal documentation, from January 2014 to August 2015, 630 students were approved to participate in Intervention Editing (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). Of those 630 students, about a third of those students did not successfully complete 4 weeks of Intervention Editing (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). To determine the reasons for the high attrition rate in Intervention Editing, the editors surveyed Intervention Editing students to determine the effective aspects of Intervention Editing and the components of Intervention Editing that could be improved.

In my normal job responsibilities as a senior dissertation editor, I had access to the results of the student survey. In the survey, a variety of themes on student perceptions of Intervention Editing emerged. Although some students praised the Intervention Editing program and accounted for how the editors helped them to become better writers, other students revealed entitlement attitudes by placing the ownership of the completion or approval of the proposal or capstone on editor staff and not on themselves. One student

stated, “I do not think the for [sic]-week period is enough time. The turnaround time with edits prevents moving along further in process. The editors should have edited the entire document for me.” Another student claimed, “Also, what started on April 25th did not end until July 3rd. When paying tuition that's a long time waiting for assistance and editing. I am a paying customer and I expect expedited service.” Another student stated,

I sent in three submissions and only received feedback on the first half my first manuscript. No one edited my entire proposal, which is what I need. I am now behind with my proposal. This is my seventh year in the PhD program and I need support to complete this degree on time. I thought [redacted] [study site] wanted graduates, not students??? I really needed this service. I DID NOT receive the service promised!

Although there may be other reasons for the high student attrition rate in Intervention Editing that are outside the scope of this study, in their responses, some students revealed that they viewed themselves as being entitled to academic success, which is a phenomenon defined as AE (Andrey et al., 2012; Baer & Cheryomukhin, 2011; Boswell, 2012). Students who believe that their academic achievement is the responsibility of faculty, staff, or persons other than themselves exhibit characteristics of AE (Andrey et al., 2012; Baer & Cheryomukhin, 2011; Boswell, 2012).

At the local study site, AE may be affecting some students' ability to complete 4 weeks of Intervention Editing because the students place the responsibility of improving their writing in the capstone, or receiving approval on the capstone, on the editors or other third parties. Although some students in Intervention Editing are exhibiting

characteristics of AE, the editors had not received any professional development on (a) how to define student AE and (b) how to re-engage students in the ownership of their academic achievement to improve the quality of their writing in the capstone (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). In order to meet the local study site CAO objectives of improving the quality of writing in capstones, the editors working in Intervention Editing required additional training on strategies to work with students who exhibit AE characteristics to encourage self-regulatory and self-efficacy behaviors so that students take responsibility for their capstone completion.

### **Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature**

The behavioral characteristics of students with AE make them less likely to succeed at the graduate level. Students with high levels of AE have an external locus of control and, if they receive a poor grade, are less likely to change their individual behaviors because they believe that their poor academic outcomes are the fault of others (Bandura, 1997; Ciani, Summers, & Easter, 2008; Greenberger, Lessard, Chen, & Farruggia, 2008; Kopp, Zinn, Finney, & Jurich, 2011; Miller, 2013; Singleton-Jackson, Jackson, & Reinhardt, 2010). In contrast, students with an internal locus of control have lower levels of AE and may be more academically successful because they use self-regulatory behaviors to change individual beliefs or behaviors, like poor writing skills, that prevent their academic success (Kitsantas, Winsler, & Huie, 2008; Martinez, Kock, & Cass, 2011; van der Westhuizen, de Beer, & Bekwa, 2011). Graduate students at the local university may have higher levels of AE, which may affect their ability to learn self-editing skills from editors in Intervention Editing (Intervention Editing Manager,

personal communication, September 1, 2015). The purpose of this qualitative, intrinsic case study was to determine the strategies that editors need to work with students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing.

### **Definitions**

*Academic entitlement (AE):* AE is defined as a student's belief that he or she deserves academic achievement without completing the action necessary for success (Chowning & Campbell, 2009).

*Incivility:* Incivility is defined as student actions that lead to the interference of learning in the classroom: These behaviors may include low intensity incivility, such as leaving a class early, arriving to a class late, or rude e-mails to instructors to higher intensity incivility, such as harassment or threatening a faculty member or student (Burke, Karl, Peluchette, & Evans, 2014; Galbraith & Jones, 2010).

*Narcissism:* Narcissism is defined as the personality trait of an individual who has an inflated sense of self, tends to lack empathy for others, and seeks recognition and compliments in an excessive nature (The American Psychological Association, 2000).

*Self-efficacy:* Self-efficacy is a person's belief that he or she can achieve a certain objective or goal (Bandura, 1997). Individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to achieve academic, personal, and career goals (Bandura, 1997).

*Student consumerism:* In education, student consumerism is defined as the student belief that he or she is a customer and the education institution is the customer service provider; therefore, if a student pays for tuition, he or she deserves a degree (Cain et al., 2012; Holdford, 2014; Kopp et al., 2011).

## **Significance**

Students with AE beliefs and behaviors are less likely to be academically successful, which may affect their ability to complete Intervention Editing and work to improve the quality of their writing in the capstone. Researchers have defined AE (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Kopp, Zinn, Finney, & Jurich, 2011) and have examined how parenting styles can increase a student's likelihood of developing AE (Greenberger et al., 2008), how gender can affect levels of AE (Ciani et al., 2008; Gibson-Beverly & Schwartz, 2008), how age affects levels of AE (Singleton-Jackson, Jackson, & Reinhardt, 2011), and how students can demonstrate higher levels of AE in the online classroom (Bressler, Bressler, & Bressler, 2012). However, scholars had not examined the training that editors need to work with students who exhibit AE characteristics, specifically in Intervention Editing. In this qualitative, intrinsic case study, I explored editors' and the Intervention Editing manager's perceptions of the training that they need to mentor students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing. The editors may use the results of this study to learn how to define and identify student AE, which may assist them in providing appropriate student interventions in Intervention Editing to help students to improve the quality of their writing in their capstone studies.

## **Guiding/Research Questions**

At the local study site, some graduate students are struggling to complete their capstone due to faculty-identified writing deficiencies. To assist these students who are at risk of not completing their capstone, the dissertation editors created the Intervention Editing program to work one-on-one with students to teach students the self-editing,

writing, and research skills that they need to complete a well-written capstone. However, some students are not successful in the Intervention Editing program due to AE characteristics and consumerist attitudes in which they place the responsibility of completing the capstone on third parties. Although the editors have received training on best practices of teaching APA and remedial writing, the editors had not received any professional development on coaching and mentoring students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing to assist the students with reclaiming ownership of their academic success. Therefore, the following research questions were used to gather the perceptions of the dissertation editors and the Intervention Editing manager on the training that they need to work with AE students.

1. What are the perceived best practices of editors in mentoring students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing?
2. What are the editors' and Intervention Editing manager's perceived training needs to mentor students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing?

### **Review of the Literature**

In this section, I present current, peer-reviewed literature and seminal works on the themes of the purpose and benefits of college writing centers, student AE, narcissism versus AE, student self-efficacy and academic achievement, editor self-efficacy and motivation, consumerism and AE, demographic factors that predict AE, academic effects of AE at the college level, and student incivility and academic achievement.

To obtain sources for the literature review, I accessed the following databases via the Walden University library: ERIC, Academic Search Premier, Education Research Complete, Psych Articles, Soci Index with Full Text, Psych Info, Psych Extra, Psych Critiques, and Sage Premier. The following terms were used interchangeably in the databases: *academic entitlement, doctoral students, master's students, writing, student incivility, academic privilege, student narcissism, self-efficacy, academic achievement, self-regulation behaviors, college students, self-regulation, college instructors, college faculty, faculty motivation, and graduate students*. The search was limited to sources from 2008 to 2016 with the exception of the inclusion of seminal studies or books on AE and self-efficacy.

### **Conceptual Framework: Self-Efficacy**

The framework of this study was based upon the theory of self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as a person's belief that he or she can achieve a certain objective or goal. Individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to achieve academic, personal, and career goals. People who are self-efficacious have an internal locus of control, which means that they believe that the responsibility to obtain success lies solely with them (Bandura, 1997; van der Westhuizen et al., 2011). In contrast, people who exhibit low self-efficacy have an external locus of control, and they believe that, if a goal or objective is not obtained, it is the fault of others external to themselves (Bandura, 1997; van der Westhuizen et al., 2011). Students' level of self-efficacy and locus of control can impact whether they will be academically successful in postsecondary education. In addition, the dissertation editors' level of self-efficacy can

influence their motivation to teach students effectively, as well as their levels of productivity in the university.

**Self-efficacy and faculty and editor motivation.** Researchers have demonstrated a link between university academic staff members' level of self-efficacy and their level of motivation to teach and mentor students effectively. Academic staffs with high levels of self-efficacy better serve students by exemplifying professionalism in academia and by demonstrating a positive portrayal of the college or university (Siddique, Aslam, Khan, & Fatima, 2011). Motivated staffs also produce more peer-reviewed research and engage in collaborative projects to review and enhance curriculum (Hardre, Beesley, Miller, & Pace, 2011). In addition, educators and academic staff members with individual self-efficacy and motivation foster higher levels of group motivation and self-efficacy, thereby encouraging staff motivation and self-efficacy across the academic institution (Olusola & Adeleke, 2012). To encourage self-efficacy and motivation in their staff members, academic leadership should ensure that faculty and staff demonstrate self-regulation or agency over the ways in which they mentor, engage, and teach students (Lechuga & Lechuga, 2012). To motivate their staff and faculty, educational leaders should also provide rewards for the effort given to mentor students and not just for the immediate completion of short-term objectives (Hardre et al., 2011). Leadership should also remove barriers to staff and faculty motivation, such as high class load and low pay (Siddique et al., 2011) and effectively mentor staff and faculty on how to work independently and establish an academic identity (Lechuga, 2014). Because staff and faculty motivation affects the effectiveness of student mentoring in the academic

institution, academic leadership should identify institutional barriers to staff self-efficacy and motivation and develop policies and procedures that encourage academic staff self-efficacy and self-regulation.

**Self-efficacy and college academic achievement.** Students with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to be academically successful in higher education than students with low levels of self-efficacy. Researchers have found that college students (undergraduate and graduate) with high GPAs also portray high levels of self-efficacy (Martinez et al., 2011; Richardson, Bond, & Abraham, 2012; van der Westhuizen et al., 2011). In addition, self-efficacious students exhibit characteristics of higher engagement in the classroom with the college instructor (Jungert & Rosander, 2010), provide more constructive criticism to college professors on how to improve class curriculum and instruction (Jungert & Rosander, 2010), take a higher class load (Bressler et al., 2012), are more likely to sustain a high GPA long term in their undergraduate degrees (Kitsantas et al., 2008), and are less likely to have anxiety about writing at the college level (Martinez et al., 2011). In these self-efficacy outcomes, students use their internal locus of control to self-regulate proactive study, assignment completion, and classroom participation behaviors, which lead to an increased likelihood of academic success at the university level.

**Demographics that predict student self-efficacy.** Certain demographic variables have been shown to predict a student's level of self-efficacy. Gender has been shown to influence a student's level of self-efficacy; however, researchers have had conflicting results in determining which gender correlates with increased self-efficacy. In examining

undergraduate student anxiety about writing, Martinez et al. (2011) found that female students were more likely to exhibit low levels of self-efficacy and anxiety in writing at the university level; yet, Chyung (2007) found that female master's degree students were more likely to improve their self-efficacy in the online classroom than their male counterparts. More research is needed on the link between gender and demonstration of self-efficacy at the college level to determine if other variables like age and the education platform may influence a student's self-efficacy level.

Age is another variable that has been linked to student self-efficacy in postsecondary education. In traditional face-to-face college classrooms, older students are more likely to actively participate in the classroom discussion and demonstrate self-regulatory and self-efficacious behaviors (Chyung, 2007). Older students in master's degree classrooms with high levels of self-efficacy are also more likely to assist the instructor with adapting and changing curriculum to meet student needs (Jungert & Rosander, 2010). However, in the online platform, although younger students participate less frequently in the discussion forums than older students, younger students are more confident in participating in distance education and may have less self-efficacy in using the technology and software programs used in online classrooms (Chyung, 2007). Older students may demonstrate more confidence and self-efficacy behaviors in traditional brick and mortar institutions versus online classrooms because they may be less comfortable showcasing their academic strengths using online technology. Younger students who are digital natives are more self-efficacious in the online environment where they have grown up learning how to communicate in the digital world.

Students who demonstrate self-efficacy may be more successful in setting and obtaining career and life goals. In a meta-analysis of 7,167 articles between 1997 and 2010, Bond (2012) found that college students with high levels of self-efficacy not only had higher GPAs, but were also more likely to be goal-setters. These goal-setting students pinpointed specific academic and career goals and outlined ways they wished to achieve them (Bond, 2012). In addition, students who exhibit self-efficacy characteristics at the university setting are more likely to demonstrate job competence after graduation and have clear career paths outlined (Fenning & May, 2013). Self-efficacy behaviors not only benefit students during their college years, but also help them to be successful in their careers after they complete their degree.

**Self-efficacy and academic entitlement.** The phenomenon of AE is related to the concept of self-efficacy. The students' belief in their ownership of academic success (self-efficacy) can affect their ability to be academically successful. Students who believe that their academic achievement is the responsibility of college faculty, staff, or persons other than themselves, exhibits characteristics of AE (Andrey et al., 2012; Baer & Cheryomukhin, 2011; Boswell, 2012). Students with high levels of AE have low levels of self-efficacy and an external locus of control and, if they receive a poor grade, are less likely to change individual behaviors that lead to poor academic outcomes because they believe that their poor academic outcomes are the fault of others and not of themselves (Bandura, 1997; Ciani et al., 2008; Greenberger et al., 2008; Kopp et al., 2011; Miller, 2013; Singleton-Jackson et al., 2010). In contrast, students with an internal locus of control have low levels of AE, demonstrate self-efficacy characteristics, and may be more

academically successful because they use self-regulatory behaviors to change individual beliefs or behaviors that prevent their academic success (Kitsantas et al., 2008; Martinez et al., 2011; van der Westhuizen et al., 2011). Administrators and educators should identify and encourage self-efficacy behaviors in the classroom, as well as be able to pinpoint students with AE and discourage AE behaviors at the college level.

### **Purposes and Benefits of College Writing Centers**

College writing centers were created in many traditional, 4-year, brick and mortar universities around 40 years ago to assist students who enrolled in college and who required remedial instruction on writing, reading, and critical thinking skills. Initially, writing center instructors were comprised of writing faculty who also worked at the university, and the relationship between a student participant in the writing center and a writing center tutor was one of a traditional faculty and student relationship (Thonus, 2002). However, as writing centers began to flourish and more universities adopted writing centers to provide writing support for students requiring remedial reading, writing, and critical thinking assistance, universities began to employ 4th-year students who demonstrated exemplary writing, reading, and critical thinking skills to peer mentor the students who visited the writing center (Thonus, 2002). This change in staffing in college writing centers helped the universities to save money by not having to employ full-time faculty to work with students in the writing center, which ultimately led to the expansion of writing centers across all types of universities (Thonus, 2002). In addition, employing senior students in the writing center to mentor remedial students changed the

dynamics of the relationship between a tutor and a writing center participant from mentor/mentee instruction to peer-to-peer instruction.

The peer-to-peer model of writing instruction in writing centers has led to increased academic outcomes for students who regularly visit a college writing center. Students who frequently visit a writing center for writing help throughout their degree have higher GPAs (Perin, 2010). Students who attend a writing center for remedial writing instruction are also more likely to have higher GPAs postwriting center visits as compared to prewriting center visits (Fowler & Boylan, 2010). For those students who enroll in a university and are required to take remedial classes, students who supplement their remedial courses with participation in the writing center are more likely to see an improvement in their grades and are also more likely to be retained (Perin, 2010). Student participants in the writing center also learn the nonacademic skills they need to be academically successful at the college level from their tutors, such as study skills, time management skills, and stress coping skills (Fowler & Boylan, 2010). Both the student and the peer tutor benefit from their collaboration together as tutors are able to solidify their writing skills through teaching, and the students are able to improve their writing skills through tutoring (DeFeo & Caparas, 2014). College writing centers are important components of an academic institution, and they have led to better academic outcomes for many types of students who benefit from one-on-one writing assistance at the college level. More information on comparisons of writing center instruction models for all types of students will be presented in the second literature review in Section 3.

### **Defining Academic Entitlement at the College Level**

Some faculty and staff at postsecondary institutions are claiming to see high levels of student AE. AE is defined as “the tendency to possess an expectation of academic success without taking personal responsibility for that success” (Chowning & Campbell, 2009, p. 982). Students who demonstrate AE may believe that university faculty, staff, or other student support services are responsible for their academic success. AE is different from other types of entitlement (i.e., White privilege, class entitlement, heterosexual entitlement) because students with AE only exhibit entitlement characteristics in the classroom and do not demonstrate entitlement behaviors in other facets of their lives (i.e., the workplace, family life, or personal life; Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Kopp et al., 2011). Therefore, AE is specific to the education field, and it differs from other sociologically identified types of entitlement. There are many negative ramifications of student AE behaviors that affect student academic success, teacher effectiveness, and the quality of postsecondary education at the administrative level.

### **Narcissism Versus Academic Entitlement**

Although narcissistic individuals share some similar traits that AE students exhibit, narcissism and AE affect students in different ways. The APA (2000) claimed that a narcissistic person has an inflated sense of self, tends to lack empathy for others, and seeks recognition and compliments in an excessive nature. In addition, narcissistic persons tend to avoid emotional intimacy with others and are more likely to use others for personal gain (Menon & Sharland, 2011). Although both narcissistic persons and

individuals with AE may not take responsibility for their actions, unlike narcissists, AE individuals only exhibit AE characteristics in the academic environment and do not portray these behaviors in other areas of their life. Furthermore, narcissism does not affect a person's ability to achieve a goal (Watson, 2012), and narcissism does not affect the students' likelihood of being successful in their career, obtaining a pay raise, or being promoted (Westerman, Bergman, Bergman, & Daly, 2012). It is important that academics do not confuse narcissistic personalities with AE traits, as persons with narcissism and AE present with different negative behaviors in different environments.

### **Consumerism and Academic Entitlement**

The increased levels of AE at the university level may be linked to postsecondary institutions' and students' link of education to consumerism. A student with a consumerist view of education will view him or herself as a customer and the education institution as the customer service provider; therefore, if a student pays for tuition, he or she, as the paying customer, deserves a degree (Cain et al., 2012; Holdford, 2014; Kopp et al., 2011). Students who believe that they are consumers purchasing their degree are also more likely to exhibit AE characteristics (Kopp et al., 2011). As paying customers, AE consumerist students expect their education to be catered to their personal, professional, and academic needs (Cain et al., 2012). To a consumerist student, faculty should provide the optimal education experience to ensure a student's academic success, with little responsibility required from the student (Cain et al., 2012). This view of education may be due to many factors outside of the student, such as university administration and employment financial pressures.

In order to adhere to the needs of a consumerist society, some postsecondary administration will promote consumerist attitudes or beliefs to increase student enrollment. AE and consumerism is encouraged by university administration and faculty who give exemplary grades for mediocre work (Holdford, 2014; Kopp et al., 2011). In addition, in order to maintain competitiveness, some universities will focus on market-based careers where the student (customer) is promised a job upon completion of a degree, instead of promising an environment where students have the potential to learn (Cain et al., 2012). To curb AE and consumerist attitudes towards a college degree, administration and faculty should instead focus on providing students the opportunity to learn where students are ultimately responsible for their academic success (Cain, Noel, Smith, & Romanelli, 2014). Ultimately, the purpose of postsecondary education is not to provide a customer service exchange, or to guarantee a certain job and level of pay, but rather to provide students with the resources and tools to learn a field of study at the university level.

### **Demographics and Variables That Predict Academic Entitlement**

**Gender and academic entitlement.** Researchers have studied how gender might affect a student's likelihood of expressing AE behaviors in the college classroom. According to many study results, males are more likely to exhibit AE at the postsecondary level than females (Boswell, 2011; Ciani et al., 2008; Jeffres, Barclay, & Stolte, 2013). This trend may be due to their assumption of receiving other patriarchal privileges that males take for granted in Western society (ie., they deserve to attend college, they deserve a well-paying job; Boswell, 2011). However, demographics such as

age or attending of a graduate school may contribute to female graduate students' likelihood of demonstrating AE than undergraduate female students (Gibson-Beverly & Schwartz, 2008). Due to their social or gender role in U.S. society, female students have less confidence and expectations to attend college and to achieve academic success compared to male students, which make them less likely to demonstrate AE.

**Age as a predictor for academic entitlement.** The age of a student may be a factor in a student's likelihood of exhibiting AE behaviors in the college classroom. The Millennial generation of students has higher instances of AE (Cain et al., 2012). In addition, 3rd-year, 4th-year, and master's degree college students demonstrate more characteristics of AE compared to 1st-year college students (Boswell, 2012; Jeffres et al., 2014). First-generation college students are less likely to portray AE in the college classroom because they do not have parental models of college success, and they place the responsibility of their degree completion upon themselves (Boswell, 2012). However, if a first-year student does demonstrate AE, he or she is more likely to persist in AE behaviors to his or her 3rd and 4th year (Miller, 2013). Older students may feel more confidence in questioning instructors or displaying negative reactions to grades or assessments because they have been in college longer and have experienced academic success in their first couple of years as students at the university level. However, Ciani et al. (2008) claimed that college instructors should specifically address AE behaviors in the course syllabi and content in order to set appropriate professional and academic boundaries on how to constructively ask for clarification on instructor feedback and to explain student academic responsibilities. In order to ensure that students of all ages in

undergraduate and graduate programs improve their self-efficacy skills and take ownership of their academic achievement, college administration and instructors should recognize AE and incorporate skills to combat AE in their university curriculum.

**Parenting style as a predictor for academic entitlement.** Although educators advocate for parental involvement early on in a child's education, certain parenting styles may lead to eventual demonstration of AE in college students. *Helicopter parents*, or those parents who overengage in their children's education and do not allow their children to make decisions or to suffer from consequences of negative choices, breed young adults who take little ownership of their college success or learning (Cain et al., 2012; Fletcher, Neumeister, & Pierson, 2014). Helicopter parents encourage the attitude that "everyone is a winner" and mere participation should lead to a reward and is a demonstration of success (Baer & Cheryomukhin, 2011). Parents are key role models to their children. To ensure that their child grows into a young adult who takes ownership for their academic and professional career, parents should allow their child to experience the successes and failures of learning beginning at an early age.

### **Academic Consequences of Academic Entitlement**

College student AE behaviors have many negative implications for the student and the university. Within the college classroom, Greenberger et al. (2008) found that students with AE were more likely to engage in academic dishonesty; because AE students do not believe that their academic success rests with them, they may not feel anxiety about engaging in unethical practices that other self-efficacious students do who would believe that cheating would reflect negatively upon themselves. In addition,

students who demonstrate AE believe that grades should reflect effort and participation and not the quality of the final product (Andrey et al., 2012). Therefore, when AE students receive a poor grade because they submit a low-quality assignment, they are more likely to react with *vengeful dissent* to the instructor (Goodboy & Frisby, 2014).

In vengeful dissent, a student will express discontent with a grade, instruction, or curriculum by making negative comments about the instructor or university to others in order to damage the credibility of the teacher instead of constructively addressing questions or criticisms directly to the faculty (Goodboy & Frisby, 2014). Some faculty may fear vengeful dissent from AE students and may then lower the standards of the class to satisfy the student and to prevent complaints (Singleton-Jackson et al., 2011). In addition, university administration may encourage grade inflation to avoid complaints from AE students (Kopp et al., 2011). This appeasement of the student does not assist the student with learning or understanding how to behave professionally in an academic environment, which ultimately does a disservice to all college students and degrades the quality of a college degree.

### **Academic Entitlement and Incivility Behaviors in the Classroom**

Students who believe that they are academically entitled may display incivility in the college classroom. According to Kopp et al. (2013), AE students exhibit incivility in the classroom to both instructors and fellow students. Incivility is defined as student actions that lead to the interference of learning in the classroom: These behaviors may include low intensity incivility, such as leaving a class early, arriving to a class late, or rude e-mails to instructors to higher intensity incivility, such as harassment or threatening

a faculty member or student (Burke et al., 2014; Galbraith & Jones, 2010). Unbeknownst to faculty, fellow students recognize when their peers are not being civil in class (Bjorklund & Rehling, 2010), and students prefer when faculty directly address student incivility in the classroom instead of ignoring inappropriate behavior (Boysen, 2012). It is important that faculty confront incivility directly in the classroom as soon as it occurs as Braxton and Jones (2008) found that students who shared classes with uncivil students were less likely to feel a sense of community with their peers, and thus were more disengaged in the classroom. Teachers should incorporate instruction on civility in first-year courses in order to assist incoming students with learning appropriate behaviors and expectations for faculty, the university, and for themselves (Connelly, 2009). When faculty actively addresses incivility in the classroom, as well as model professionalism, the student can use these skills to be successful at the postsecondary level.

### **Implications**

At the local study site of a for-profit, open admissions university, dissertation editors have been tasked with providing instruction via Intervention Editing to students struggling to complete their capstone due to writing deficiencies. However, some of the students who enroll in Intervention Editing are not able to successfully complete 4 weeks of the program, and these students do not see an improvement in their writing through their participation in Intervention Editing (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). The editors found that some of the students who drop out of Intervention Editing or who do not show improved writing in their capstone after participating in Intervention Editing exhibit characteristics of AE and student

consumerism (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). According to the literature review, students who exhibit AE and student consumerism are less likely to have positive academic outcomes (Ciani et al., 2008; Greenberger et al., 2008; Kopp et al., 2011; Miller, 2013; Singleton-Jackson et al., 2010). In order to properly mentor all students who enroll in Intervention Editing, the dissertation editors require training on how to engage with students who demonstrate AE so that the editors can assist the students in reclaiming ownership for their academic success and ultimately improve the quality of their writing in their capstone. In order to address this gap in professional development practice at the local study site, I created a project (white paper) outlining recommendations for improving editor mentorship of AE students in Intervention Editing.

### **Summary**

Many university faculty and staff have witnessed the phenomenon of student AE behaviors. Researchers have demonstrated that student AE at the college level can lead to many negative academic consequences, such as academic dishonesty, incivility in the classroom, disengagement in the classroom, and academic failure. Factors such as age, gender, year of college, and parenting styles may affect a student's level of AE. At the local university, dissertation editors must have the appropriate skills to identify AE behaviors and learn how to re-engage students in their academic success so the students in Intervention Editing are able to learn the self-editing skills needed to improve the quality of their writing in the capstone.

In Section 1, I introduced the local problem, the problem at the national level, the purpose of the study, the conceptual framework of the study, and the research questions for the study. I also presented the current peer-reviewed literature and seminal articles and books on themes related to AE and self-efficacy. In Section 2, I will outline the methodology of the study.

## Section 2: The Methodology

### **Introduction**

AE can negatively affect a student's ability to be academically successful in the postsecondary environment. Students who exhibit characteristics of AE in the classroom tend to blame others for any poor academic outcomes they receive (Ciani et al., 2008; Greenberger et al., 2008; Kopp et al., 2011; Miller, 2013; Singleton-Jackson et al., 2010). When students do not take ownership for their academic success, they cannot self-regulate or change behaviors that lead to poor academic outcomes, like writing deficiencies (Bandura, 1997). Writing center dissertation editors should learn strategies to identify and mentor student AE in Intervention Editing so that they can better assist students in improving their writing in the capstone.

The purpose of this qualitative, intrinsic case study was to explore editors' and the Intervention Editing manager's perceptions of the training that they need to mentor students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing. In Section 2, I will present the methodology and design of the study. In addition, I will outline the justification of the design, explain the criteria for participation in the study, and present the measures that will be taken to protect the participants of the study. Finally, I will describe the methods I will take to collect and analyze the data.

### **Research Design and Approach**

#### **Qualitative Methodology**

In this study, I gathered the perceptions of dissertation editors and the Intervention Editing manager who work at an online, open admissions, for-profit

university to determine their perceptions of the training they need to mentor students who display AE in Intervention Editing. A qualitative methodology was selected because I wished to determine how the participants viewed their world and how they ascribed meaning to their viewpoints or experiences (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2009). In a qualitative study, a researcher uses an inductive process to observe how participants describe the phenomena of study (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). In this study, I explored editors' and the Intervention Editing manager's perceptions of the training they need to engage with students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing.

A quantitative or mixed-method methodology would not help me to answer my research questions on gathering the perceptions of the editors and the Intervention Editing manager on the training that they need to work with students with AE. Researchers may conduct a quantitative study if they wish to use data or statistics to explain certain trends among people (Creswell, 2012; Triola, 2012). Using a deductive process, a scholar uses theory and literature to create hypotheses about predicted study outcomes and uses the data to confirm or disconfirm the hypotheses (Lodico et al., 2010; Triola, 2012). A quantitative methodology would not be the best approach for this study as there is little literature or theory relating to AE in an open admissions, for-profit university, nor is there information on training practices for university staff to mentor students who display AE; therefore, hypotheses cannot be generated to be proven or disproven, and some quantitative methods would not be appropriate for the study. A quantitative approach would not allow me to gather the in-depth perceptions of the participants and the training that they need to work with students with AE behaviors at the local study site. Although a

mixed-method approach would include a qualitative aspect to the study, most mixed-method studies have a stronger focus on the quantitative portion of the methodology and use the qualitative findings to substantiate the quantitative data (Creswell, 2009, 2012). A mixed-method study would not allow me to focus primarily on relaying the perceptions and the lived experiences of the dissertation editors and the Intervention Editing manager. Therefore, a qualitative study helped me to best answer my research questions on editors' and the Intervention Editing manager's perceptions of the training that they need to engage with students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing.

### **Case Study Design**

I chose an intrinsic case study design to help me to answer the study research questions. Researchers will conduct a case study when they wish to examine a "bounded" phenomenon using many different data sources (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Stake, 2005). The case or unit must be defined and can include a person, an organization, or a geographic location (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Merriam, 2009). Using a case study design allows a researcher to report participants' perceptions or experiences of a phenomenon or case, helping the reader to construct new knowledge about the topic of study (Stake, 2005). Researchers will conduct intrinsic case studies if they want to better understand a unit or case (Stake, 2005). In this study, I used an intrinsic case study design to gather the perceptions of the dissertation editors and the Intervention Editing manager on the training that they need to mentor students with AE (phenomenon) in the Intervention Editing program (unit). The bounded system included the Intervention Editors' AE mentoring needs at the local university.

I considered other qualitative designs for this study like ethnography, grounded theory, narrative, or phenomenological approaches; but, I found that these designs would not help me to answer my research questions. In an ethnographic study, a researcher will study a group of people to better understand an issue central to the group (Creswell, 2012; Lodico et al., 2010). In this study, I did not wish to study all writing center staff (tutors and editors) at the university to determine the professional development they need to work with students who display AE. In a grounded theory approach, a researcher will attempt to develop a theory about a phenomenon from the collection of data (Creswell, 2012; Lodico et al., 2010). A grounded theory approach was not appropriate for this study as I did not wish to develop a theory about AE or self-efficacy in Intervention Editing. A narrative researcher will pick a participant and tell his or life story or describe an individual's lived experience of a specific event (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2009). A narrative design would not help me to answer my research questions as I did not wish to tell a sole dissertation editor's life story as an editor or his or her experience working with AE students. Finally, I did not choose a phenomenological design as I did not wish to examine how an editor ascribed meaning to his or her lived experiences (Creswell, 2009, 2012; Merriam, 2009); instead, I focused on the editors' and the Intervention Editing manager's perceptions of the professional development that they need to mentor students with AE in Intervention Editing at the local study site. The case study design was the best qualitative approach to help me to answer my research questions.

## **Participants**

I used purposeful sampling to locate dissertation editors and the Intervention Editing manager who staff the Intervention Editing program to participate in one-on-one, face-to-face interviews. In purposeful sampling, the researcher intentionally picks potential participants who have experienced the phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2005). In this study, there was one criterion that the participants must meet to be eligible to participate in the study. For the dissertation editor one-on-one interviews, the participants must have mentored students in Intervention Editing for at least 1 year. This criterion ensured that the dissertation editor participants would have mentored students in Intervention Editing for enough time at the local study site to have witnessed student AE and to have formed perceptions of the training that they need to mentor AE students. I also conducted a one-on-one interview with the Intervention Editing manager to determine any training that the editors have received on AE and to determine any AE training that the manager believed the editors should be given from the administrative side.

### **Number of Participants for Interviews**

In this study, I conducted one-on-one, semistructured interviews with dissertation editors who have staffed the Intervention Editing program for at least 1 year at the local university, as well as the Intervention Editing manager. Semistructured interviews can allow a researcher to gather in-depth data about an individual's experience, which provides rich, thick data to illustrate the participants' view of a phenomenon (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). To ensure saturation of the participants' perceptions of the

training they need when working with students with AE, I contacted all editors who met the sample criterion to participate in one-on-one interviews (Creswell, 2012). This was a total population of eight editors who could participate in the study, and all eight editors were invited to participate in the study (I was not a part of the population under study). There was only one Intervention Editing manager. Soliciting participant feedback from both editors and the Intervention Editing manager ensured that I gathered the perceptions of the dissertation editors who staff Intervention Editing and the Intervention Editing manager who have experienced student AE in Intervention Editing. I interviewed five Intervention editors who had staffed the Intervention Editing program for at least 1 year where upon I reached saturation.

### **Gaining Access to Participants**

After receiving institutional review board (IRB) approval from the local study site, I began contacting dissertation editors who staffed Intervention Editing and the Intervention Editing manager to participate in my study. I e-mailed all dissertation editors who had mentored students in Intervention Editing for at least a year (eight total) and the Intervention Editing manager and (a) explained the purpose of my study; (b) invited them to participate in a one-on-one, semistructured interview to gather their perceptions of the training that they need to mentor students who display AE; and (c) explained the voluntary nature of participation, but pointed out the benefits of participation like learning the best practices that other editors use to mentor students with AE. All of the editors I contacted responded to my study query; however, two of the editors declined to participate.

### **Establishing Researcher/Participant Relationships**

Researchers must establish appropriate boundaries with their participants. As the researcher, I ensured that the study participants understood the voluntary nature of their participation and also ensured that their responses remained confidential (Creswell, 2012). To ensure confidentiality, all participant names were de-identified, and I stored all participants' responses in a password-protected computer. Researchers should also express their gratitude for the participants' willingness to participate in the study. I thanked the participants for their time at the beginning and end of the interviews, and I demonstrated further appreciation by sharing the results of the study with the participants (Turner, 2010). Properly collecting and storing data and expressing my appreciation for their participation helped me to establish effective researcher and participant relationships.

### **Protection of Participants**

It is the responsibility of researchers to protect their participants from any potential harm that they may be exposed to by participating in the study. To ensure that I protected the legal rights of my participants, I obtained IRB approval at the local study site prior to collecting any data. Once I received IRB approval, I followed the protocols outlined in the IRB agreement to protect the confidentiality of the participants and the study site. I also followed the National Institute of Health (NIH) policies on protecting participants by not harming the participants mentally, physically, or legally in any way that may not occur in normal life. In addition, I obtained each participant's informed consent to participate in the study prior to any data collection. When I presented the

informed consent, I outlined the purpose of my study, and I stressed the voluntary nature of their participation, highlighting that they may withdraw from the study at any time with no negative repercussions. All consent forms were stored in a locked cabinet in my home, and all data were stored on a password-protected laptop. I was the only individual who had access to the laptop. Using the IRB, NIH policies, and informed consent ensured that I protected the rights of my participants. All documents will be shredded, and all data deleted, after 5 years.

To further protect the privacy of the participants, I de-identified all data. Each participant was assigned a number (i.e., Editor 1, Editor 2, Editor 3, etc.), and the Intervention Editing manager was not named. I did not collect any demographic information about the participants (i.e., age, gender, race, geographic place of residence); the only identifying information that I collected was the number of years that the dissertation editor had worked for the university study site and the number of years that the editor had staffed Intervention Editing. The information about the number of years of employment at the study site and in Intervention Editing was helpful in determining if seniority or more experience in working with students at the study site and in Intervention Editing led to (a) more best practices on how to mentor students who display AE in Intervention Editing and (b) different professional development needs in learning how to work with students who display AE in Intervention Editing. However, because no other demographic information was collected from the participants besides the number of years that they had been employed at the study site and the number of years that they had staffed Intervention Editing, the identity of the participants was protected.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection for this study did not begin until I received IRB approval from the university. Walden University IRB granted me IRB approval on April 5, 2016 (IRB approval number 04-05-16-0436397). Upon IRB approval, I contacted the Intervention editors and the Intervention Editing manager who met the criterion for the study on April 6, 2016. All eight eligible editors responded to my query letter; however, two editors declined to participate. Six Intervention editors and the Intervention Editing manager agreed to participate in my study. I began conducting interviews with the Intervention editors and the Intervention Editing manager on April 19, 2016. The interview process took 2 days from April 19<sup>th</sup> to April 20<sup>th</sup>. The Intervention Editing manager and three Intervention editors were interviewed on April 19<sup>th</sup>, and two other Intervention editors were interviewed on April 20<sup>th</sup>. The sixth Intervention editor was not interviewed as I found that I had reached saturation after interviewing the fifth Intervention editor. I determined that I had reached saturation after the fifth Intervention editor interview because I found that participants were describing similar themes and responses.

In all of the interviews, I followed the interview procedures that I set out in the Data Collection section of this study. All of the interviews were audio recorded with my iPhone. I used a back-up recorder in case the primary recorder malfunctioned. At the beginning of each interview, I outlined the consent form, and the participants signed the consent form in my presence before the interviews commenced. In the consent form, I explained the voluntary nature of the study and the participants' rights to discontinue the interview at any time, with no consequence. At the beginning of each interview, I again

described the rights of the participants and their ability to stop the interview at any time. All of the participants indicated that they understood their rights, and they all agreed to continue on with the interview. The interviews took about 45 minutes, with one interview taking 90 minutes to complete. During the interviews, I took notes to add to the accuracy of the collected data.

After the interviews, I transcribed the interviews into Word documents. I presented the transcribed interview to each dissertation editor and the Intervention Editing manager for member checking to ensure that the transcripts were an accurate representation of the participants' words and ideas (Creswell, 2012). All of the editors and the Intervention Editor stated that the transcriptions accurately represented their ideas and perceptions, with three of the editors making minor grammatical changes to the transcript, which I accepted into the transcript.

**Dissertation editor interviews.** I gathered the dissertation editors' perceptions of the training that they need to work with students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing via one-on-one, semistructured interviews. The dissertation editors had to have staffed Intervention Editing for at least 1 year. The purpose of these interviews was to gather the editors' perceptions of the prevalence of student AE in Intervention Editing and the editors' best practices, if any, for mentoring students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing. Ultimately, the responses and perceptions of the dissertation editors were compared and contrasted with the AE training given by the Intervention Editing manager, if any, and the Intervention Editing manager's perceptions of the training that dissertation editors need to mentor AE students in Intervention Editing. In addition, the perceptions

and responses of the dissertation editors and the Intervention Editing manager were compared and contrasted to the university-outlined standards for student and editor academic responsibility listed in the student handbook, as well as the student and editor responsibilities for participation in Intervention Editing as outlined in the faculty application for Intervention Editing. All of these data points helped to inform the creation of the project.

**Manager interview.** I also gathered the Intervention Editing manager's perceptions of the training given and needed for dissertation editors working with students who display AE in Intervention Editing via a one-on-one, semistructured interview. The purpose of this interview was to determine any training that existed on strategies for dissertation editors who mentor students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing. I also wished to determine the Intervention Editing manager's perceptions of any additional training needed to mentor students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing. The responses and perceptions of the Intervention Editing manager were compared and contrasted to the responses of the dissertation editors who staffed Intervention Editing, as well as the academic student and editor responsibilities outlined in the university handbook and the student and editor responsibilities outlined in the Intervention Editing application. The responses of the Intervention Editing manager also helped to inform the creation of the project.

**Archival data.** Finally, I conducted a content analysis of the academic responsibilities of the students and editors who participate in Intervention Editing, which are located on the faculty application to Intervention Editing, and the local study site's

definitions of student academic responsibility, as defined in the student handbook. First, I determined the university's academic expectations for graduate students as outlined in the student handbook. Next, I obtained a copy of the Intervention Editing application that was listed in the faculty toolbox (which is not an open access document) and outlined the responsibilities of the dissertation editor and the participating student in the Intervention Editing program as listed in the application.

### **Interview Protocol**

I collected data from dissertation editor participants who staffed the Intervention Editing program and from the Intervention Editing manager in one-on-one, semistructured interviews. I audio recorded the interviews on my phone. I also used a second audio recorder to record the interviews to provide a backup of the recording in the case that my phone did not properly record the interviews. I transcribed the interviews in a Word document immediately at the end of each interview to ensure that the data remained fresh in my mind. I kept a research journal and wrote down field notes in the interviews to substantiate the audio recording of the sessions. In the journal, I also listed any ideas or reflections that I had about the research process and outlined possible ideas for future research. The audio recording, transcription, and researcher field notes and self-reflections ensured that the data collected were accurate and robust.

An interview protocol includes a script of what a researcher will say at the beginning, middle, and end of an interview, as well as prompts under each interview question to ensure that each interview is conducted in a similar manner to gather the most reliable data (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). I developed two different interview protocols to

use based upon Turner's (2010), Jacob and Furgerson's (2012), and DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree's (2006) recommendations for interview protocol and interview question construction. One protocol was for the interviews with the dissertation editors who staffed Intervention Editing, and one protocol was for the interview with the Intervention Editing Manager. In the semistructured, one-on-one interviews with the dissertation editors, I wished to better understand their experiences working with AE students. I gathered the editors' perceptions about working in the Intervention Editing program and how they coped with or mentored students who exhibited AE in Intervention Editing. I also wished to determine any recommendations for improvement of the program, specifically relating to retaining students in the program and skills for teaching writing to at-risk students. The interview protocol for the Intervention Editing manager contained more questions on (a) any training that editors received on mentoring students with AE in Intervention Editing and (b) training ideas for editors who mentor students with AE in Intervention Editing from an administrative point of view (See Appendix B for both protocols). The one-on-one interviews lasted from 45 to 90 minutes. By gathering dissertation editor and Intervention Editing manager perceptions of the training needed to mentor students with AE, I was able to make recommendations for editor training to work with AE students in the Intervention Editing program.

### **Role of the Researcher**

As a researcher for this study, I must acknowledge any previous relationships I had or do have with the participants, as this may affect my ability to remain unbiased during the data collection phase of the study (Lodico et al., 2010). I am currently a senior

dissertation editor at the study site, and I have worked with all of the dissertation editors; I began my employment at the study site in 2007. However, I have not served, nor am I currently serving, in a supervisory role over any of the study participants. Still, I bracketed my potential biases or feelings about the study topic and my working relationship with the participants to ensure that they did not affect my ability to collect and code data. Bracketing occurs when researchers overtly outline their preconceived notions about the topic or what they believe to be true about a topic (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). For this study, I documented my previous ideas or experiences of working with students who display AE in Intervention Editing in my self-reflection research journal so that I could be mindful of these potential biases when collecting and coding data. Bracketing my ideas also helped me to remain neutral in the interviews, thereby helping me to collect reliable data.

### **Data Analysis**

In this qualitative case study, I used triangulation in the data collection. According to Stake (2005), triangulation means that a researcher collects multiple forms of data (usually at least three) to verify or support the findings of the study. I collected three forms of data. Collecting these three types of data ensured that the findings of the study were consistent, reliable, and credible, and the findings provided me with the data needed to answer the study research questions and to create a project to address the problem at the local study.

## **Data Analysis of Interviews**

Immediately following each interview, the data were transcribed in a Word document from the audio recordings. Once I received confirmation from the participants that the transcription was accurate, I began coding the data. I used Creswell's (2012) seven text segment codes to code the data in the editor and manager interviews:

1. Setting and context (red). This first text segment was used to code the editors' and the Intervention Editing manager's views of the Intervention Editing program within the university and the writing center.
2. Perspectives held by participants (orange). This second text segment was used to code how the editors and the manager perceive the students in Intervention Editing.
3. Participants' ways of thinking about people and objects (yellow). This third text segment was used to code the editors' and the manager's perceptions of students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing.
4. Processes (green). This fourth text segment was used to code the editors' and the manager's best practices for mentoring AE students in Intervention Editing.
5. Activities (blue). This fifth text segment was used to code the editors' and the manager's perceptions of potential student consequences for students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing.

6. Strategies (purple). This sixth text segment was used to code the editors' and manager's recommendations for additional training for editors on how mentor students who exhibit AE in the Intervention Editing program.
7. Relationships (pink). This final text segment was used to code how the editors perceive their relationship or responsibility with students who (a) participate in Intervention Editing and (b) demonstrate AE behaviors in Intervention Editing. (p. 244)

Each of these seven text segments was assigned a color; the key to the color code was listed at the top of the Word document. I then color coded the participants' responses using the seven colors and codes established.

Once the dissertation editors and the Intervention Editing manager responses were coded, I looked for themes in the data. Themes are emergent or major ideas that are presented in the data (Creswell, 2012). Themes can encompass similar ideas, emotions, beliefs, context, or language about a topic or question (Creswell, 2012). I then reported these themes in the latter half of Section 2 and used the themes to help me to develop an appropriate project to address the problem at the local study site. I also reported any discrepant cases in the latter half of Section 2 and listed possible reasons for any contrary evidence. Any discrepant cases can form the basis for future research, as well as expand the knowledge regarding the phenomenon, and I made recommendations for future studies in Section 4 based upon any contrary findings.

### **Data Analysis of Archival Documents**

In addition to the semistructured interviews that were conducted with the Intervention Editing editors and manager, I conducted a content analysis of university archival documents on (a) student and editor academic responsibilities as outlined in the student handbook and (b) the editor and student responsibilities as listed in the Intervention Editing policies on the Intervention Editing application. In the student handbook and the Intervention Editing application, I used colors to code the following categories: student academic responsibilities in the university (red), student academic responsibilities in Intervention Editing (green), editor mentoring responsibilities to the student in Intervention Editing (blue), and editor mentoring responsibilities to the student in the university (purple). Once the categories were coded, I looked for themes in the data and presented the roles and responsibilities (according to university policy documents) of the student and editor. I then compared and contrasted the university-outlined roles of the student and editor to the participants' responses of what (a) the editors perceived their role to be to the student in Intervention Editing and in the university and (b) the editors perceived to be the student's academic responsibility in Intervention Editing and the university. Comparing and contrasting the data in the archival documents with what the participants revealed in the interviews allowed me to determine differences in the policies of student and editor academic responsibility versus what the student and editor practice in their actual roles.

## **Data Analysis Results**

In this section, I outline the results of the study. I describe how the data were gathered, analyzed, and recorded. I also compare and contrast the results of the study with current research and the conceptual framework for the study. Finally, I outline the project based upon the findings of the study and the intended audience for the distribution of the results of the study.

### **Themes of the Study**

Throughout the interviews, the following themes emerged: editor and manager perceptions of what they believed to be the purpose of Intervention Editing, the advantages and disadvantages of Intervention Editing, how AE is manifested in Intervention Editing, best practices for mentoring students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing, and suggestions for professional development on helping AE students to reclaim responsibility for their academic success.

**General editor perceptions of Intervention Editing.** In this section, I present the editors' and manager's general perceptions of Intervention Editing, including the purpose of the program and the advantages and disadvantages of the program.

***Purpose of Intervention Editing.*** The Intervention editors' perception of the goal of Intervention Editing differed from the Intervention Editing manager's perception of the mission of Intervention Editing and the mission of Intervention Editing as stated in archival documents. According to the Intervention Editing (2016) application on the faculty website, the mission of Intervention Editing is as follows:

The mission of developmental editing [name of program] is to provide students an opportunity to cooperate one-on-one with a Writing Center editor to help develop the APA, writing, and self-editing skills necessary to draft a Walden capstone study. For 4 weeks, each student will work one-on-one with an editor on a chapter, a proposal, or a publication-ready final draft of their manuscript. This service is reserved for students whose progress is impeded specifically because of their writing (para. 1).

This stated mission of Intervention Editing aligns with the university's goals as stated in the student handbook. According to the Student Handbook (2016), "quality and integrity are the cornerstones of all academic processes" (para. 8). To ensure high quality writing in the capstone, the goal of Intervention Editing is to provide struggling writers with the assistance that they need to improve their writing in their capstone.

These missions also align with the Intervention Editing manager's perception of the goal of the program. The Intervention Editing manager stated, "The stated purpose, as I envisioned it, was to help students who were unable to complete or draft a proposal for their dissertation to get to the next stage of the approval process by weekly reviews, edits, or conversations by e-mail or telephone." In these missions, the purpose of Intervention Editing is to provide one-on-one writing assistance to students who are not making progress in their capstone due to writing deficiencies.

All of the editors responded with what they believed to be the same stated mission of Intervention Editing. However, many of the editors claimed that the stated mission of the program differed than what occurred in the practice of the program. Intervention

Editor 4 believed that chairs nominated students to participate in Intervention Editing because the student was not meeting the chair's standard. Intervention Editor 4 stated, "The chair has perceived that their students are not making progress, show particular deficits in their writing. The purpose of [Intervention Editing] is to bring the student up to baseline, according to the chair's perception." Intervention Editors 1 and 5 believed that chairs used the Intervention Editing program in replacement of asking a student to hire a copy editor. Intervention Editor 1 stated, "I think it sometimes starts off like an editing or proofreading service, but I think that we curb that as much as possible." Other editors mentioned that faculty enrolled students in Intervention Editing to avoid working with struggling students. Intervention Editor 1 stated that "it is the faculty who are trying to pawn the student off." As indicated in their responses, the Intervention editors perceived there to be a difference in the manager's and archival document's stated mission of the program and what occurred in the actual practice of the program. The editors found that the mission of Intervention Editing, as outlined in the Intervention Editing application and the manager's perceived goal of Intervention, did not align with practiced purpose of the Intervention Editing program. Therefore, management may need to conduct training with the editors to ensure that editor practices align with the stated mission of Intervention Editing.

***Benefits and drawbacks of Intervention Editing.*** In their interviews, the Intervention editors and the Intervention Editing manager outlined many advantages that the Intervention Editing program provided to students and faculty. All five of the editors and the Intervention Editing manager stated that the Intervention Editing program

provided students with one-on-one, directed, and continuous feedback on their writing, which they may not have received prior to the program. Intervention Editor 3 stated,

I think the positive aspects are that directed, honest feedback. I commonly hear from students that in their life, or at least at this part of their academic experience, someone has never given them such attentive, detailed feedback on how they write, what they write, and what that means. I think it is an important step in the writing process, or more general in the career process, to have that introspective look to say ‘look, hold on. If I do it this way, it communicates clearly.’

The Intervention Editing manager also stated that the editors provide more support to the student during the capstone process. He stated, “Well, it is someone else different to talk to. And like I said, they are an independent researcher. It is only you and the library. So, if they have someone else that they can talk to, it adds to their support network.” In addition, editors reported that Intervention Editing provided a resource specifically for struggling writers who may not graduate due to writing deficits. Intervention Editor 1 stated,

People benefit from intensive, one-on-one, directed feedback in a 4-week session consistently from the same person. So, I think it is basically like a shot in the arm. It’s like a boost for people who really don’t have any other option and have a barrier to progressing with their degree working with the faculty.

In their responses, the Intervention editors and the Intervention Editing manager claimed that the program provided an opportunity for students who struggled with writing to work with a writing expert to focus solely on improving their writing skills.

The editors and the manager also outlined drawbacks to the Intervention Editing program. All of the Intervention editors and the Intervention Editing manager stated that, because Intervention Editing required extensive, active participation from students, many students drop out of the program because they are not able or willing to put in the time or effort to improve their writing and editing skills. The manager stated,

I think the issue becomes where there is attrition or nonparticipation. So, that can be difficult for the student because they come with the expectation of getting help, but the current iteration of [Intervention Editing] requires a lot of student participation and ownership, and if they don't take that advice, no one benefits.

Editors also commented that some students would not follow up with the editor after their initial review because they did not want to, or were unable to, make the revisions that the editor had indicated. Intervention Editor 5 stated, "I also see a large attrition rate. I think that there are a lot of students who either don't respond at all or who just want one review and then don't follow up after that." The editors and the manager believed that they experienced a high attrition rate in Intervention Editing because students were not willing or able to put in the time and effort to revise their document with the editorial suggestions that they received from the Intervention editors, which may be due to a lack of student self-efficacy or personal agency.

**Research Question 1.** In this section, I outline the themes that emerged from the interviews that answer the first research question for the study. Research Question 1 was the following: What are the perceived best practices of editors in mentoring students who

exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing? The editors outlined the ways in which they addressed student AE in Intervention Editing.

*Academic entitlement manifestations in Intervention Editing.* In the interviews, all of the editors stated that they had experienced student AE in Intervention Editing. Four out of five editors stated that they continued to regularly encounter student AE behaviors in Intervention Editing. However, the Intervention Editing manager claimed that students would not exhibit AE with editors or in the Intervention Editing program because editors are not in an assessing role, but in a supportive role. The manager stated,

If a student begins to manifest what has been defined as academic entitlement here, I think it is going to be with their committee because the of points at which we would work with the student either at an intervention level or at the formal approval process at the form and style review. We are a one-time thing, and we are providing information that is helpful. So, we are heroes. So, I think in general we experience it less.

As indicated in their responses, there is a disconnect between the manager's perception of a lack of editor encounters with student AE and the editors' many experiences of working with students with AE. In the interviews, all of the editors stated that they had, at one point, encountered student AE behaviors in Intervention Editing. Four out of five editors stated that they regularly worked with students with AE in the program. Some of the editors believed that students exhibited AE because the university itself promoted their programs as products and the students as customers, which set up the student to believe

that attaining their degree was akin to a customer service exchange. Intervention Editor 2 stated,

In terms of academic entitlement, I think that is kinda a problem all over because students are paying tuition. I think it's a problem possibly because they are referred to as customers, so they want to get what they paid for. They might see this as a customer transaction.

Intervention Editor 3 stated,

I don't recommend using the word customer. I don't think it ever helps. It probably functions as a trigger word for people who have been traumatized by say T Mobile, Sprint customer service, or Comcast, or insert large corporation with a call center here. The idea of going to college to better yourself, I think, is a great thing and one that should be encouraged in students. Anything that makes it seem like a *quid pro quo*, I think, is counterintuitive to the idea of building up your abilities, not hey, here is a certificate.

The editors believed that the university administration and marketing departments encouraged student AE by using customer service language to describe students, learning, and programs, which encouraged student beliefs that college is a customer service exchange and not an opportunity for students to demonstrate their learning.

The editors also claimed that some students believed that because they had paid their tuition, they were entitled to a degree. These students were not interested in having an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned in their coursework in the capstone. Instead, these AE students believed that the act of paying tuition should

automatically lead to a conferral of a degree. Intervention Editor 4 stated that students believed

Gee, I paid so many thousands of dollars for this. I get the degree. End of story. It is not about doing the work. It's about making some money. Of course, this is not helpful. They should be disabused of this attitude immediately.

Many editors also believed that AE students had unrealistic expectations of Intervention Editing. These students believed that editors would be doing most of, or all of, the work, and participation in Intervention Editing meant that the editors would guarantee that the student's manuscript was approved. Intervention Editor 2 stated,

Some people come in with the expectation that we will do the whole document or that they will write their whole proposal no matter how much was not written, badly written, or needs to be rewritten, and that is just not realistic for a month.

Intervention Editor 5 stated,

They don't want to learn, they just want someone to fix it. And those aspects are generally more difficult to work with because they generally place more responsibility on me as far as the time, as far as the proposal that does not pass their chair or their URR the next time. They, I think, sometimes will blame us. They say 'why didn't this pass? I implemented everything you wanted.' And I think that's hard to make students understand that we can help you with the writing, but we are not going to guarantee that you will pass your URR next time.

These unrealistic expectations led to student AE behaviors and frustration on behalf of the editors.

Editors also found that students had an unrealistic turn-around time in which editors could complete their edit. Intervention Editor 1 stated, “You will have students who want you to turn things around immediately if not sooner, and they expect to be the only student that you are working with, and they want to be your priority for the month.” Editor 5 also stated, “There always seems to be this kind of attitude of do it more, do it faster.” Intervention Editor 3 found that

I have had other students who want to have a kinda 2-day turn-around for the whole month. They want me to give them feedback. They will fix what I want them to fix, and they will give it back to me, and they will want another 2-day feedback, and I have to kind of put my food down and say, you know, I don't have the time in my schedule.

Students who expected editors to return edits faster than what was outlined in the Intervention Editing application would exhibit AE behaviors when the editors did not send revisions back to the student faster than what was outlined in the program.

All of the editors described experiences of working with AE students who expected a line-by-line edit of their entire document instead of working with an editor to learn self-editing skills as described in the mission of the Intervention Editing application. Intervention Editor 3 stated,

I think it is definitely the case where they are coming in with a sense of entitlement and probably not getting as much as they could because of this mindset that other people just need to give them these things, and then I accept the changes, which not how universities normally function.

Intervention Editor 1 claimed,

I think that one reason it is so hard to do it is because so many people, they are just there to have a free copy editor, but they are not interested in really digging in and seeing what needs to be revised.

The editors found that students who had expectations that they would receive a free copy edit and not work to learn self-editing and writing skills in the program were more likely to have AE characteristics.

Finally, two of the editors stated that some students believed that mere participation was enough to receive a doctoral degree. Intervention Editor 1 stated,

I think this has a lot to do, at least in my experience, with some of the academic entitlement that I see. People have been kinda shuttled through a system where showing up is really kinda enough. Everyone who shows up gets a star for participation. And everyone who shows up pressed this button and gets this.

These editors believed that student AE behavior was encouraged in the university system where students were awarded good grades or approval solely because they showed active participation.

***Best practices for mentoring students with academic entitlement in Intervention Editing.*** In this section, I present some of the best practices or strategies that editors used to mentor students who exhibited AE in Intervention Editing, which included the following: tone of communication, promoting student responsibility, promoting student personal agency, and learning how to tell students no.

*Tone of communication.* Some of the Intervention editors and the manager discussed the importance of using a respectful and kind tone in their communications to students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing. Even though the editor may feel frustration with students' lack of ownership for their academic success, the manager stated that it was important for editors to be collegial and nonjudgemental when communicating with AE students. The manager stated,

If at this point there is any other instruction taking place, I always want everyone's tones to be positive and supportive and affirming. There is no reason to be accusational or disappointed or looking to assign culpability. Instead, just realizing that this is probably the first time that the student has interacted with someone like you with your skill set and to be positive and kind.

According to the manager, using a kind and affirming tone will prevent the student from feeling defensive, which will allow the student to be more open to hearing the editor's suggestions for revision in the document.

*Student responsibility.* All of the editors stressed the importance of clearly outlining student responsibilities to the students in the beginning of the program. The editors believed that students were less likely to portray AE characteristics in the Intervention Editing program if they stated openly (a) the students' responsibility in participating in the program and (b) what to expect from their editor while participating in the program. Intervention Editor 3 stated,

But the message that I have says, among other things, alright, so this is your opportunity to get direct feedback about your writing so I want to emphasize that

this will be about the writing itself and not the content of the dissertation. Not the research design. I explicitly say this is not a copy editing service. And I also framed the time commitment and have a couple of wordings this to draw attention to the idea that is the improvement of your writing skills.

Intervention Editor 2 also stated,

I try to be clear in my feedback. I try to be clear in my expectations. Like my expectations and my role. I try to explain what I can do and what I am willing and able to do with my time so that they know what to expect.

Intervention Editor 1 claimed, “I had to say these are my boundaries and my expectations. These are your boundaries and your expectations. Now, I have fulfilled my expectations, and now it is up to you.” The editors found that proactively listing student and editor responsibilities at the beginning of the program prevented students from having AE expectations in the program. If the student portrayed AE behaviors in the program, the editors reminded the students of the editor/student responsibilities that were listed at the beginning of the program. Once students were reminded of the list of expectations, they were more likely to take responsibility for their writing and participate more fully in the program.

*Personal agency.* Many of the editors stressed the importance of university faculty, staff, and administration encouraging and expecting students to demonstrate personal agency in the completion and quality of their work. Intervention Editor 3 claimed that he mandated student personal agency in his introduction letter to the student at the beginning of the Intervention Editing program. Intervention Editor 1 explained how

she enforced student personal agency by providing students with resources, but expecting students to demonstrate self-efficacy by using the resources to improve their work. She stated,

I am a big fan of sending people to resources first. And whether or not they look at them is their business. But I will send them to the literature review webinar a lot. Look at this, look at the MEAL plan, look at these resources, or talk to a librarian. So, I will kinda give them instructions on how to find things instead of doing things for them.

The editors found that encouraging students to take personal agency in their work led to fewer AE behaviors in Intervention Editing because the editors encouraged the students to take an active role in the research and revision of the capstone.

*Telling students no.* Some of the editors described the importance of learning how to say no to students when students placed the ownership of the improvement, completion, or writing of their capstone on them. Refusing to meet AE student demands helped the editors to avoid feeling frustrated and also helped some students to reclaim ownership for their academic success. Intervention Editor 1 stated that the first thing she would advise a new hire who was staffing the Intervention Editing program for the first time was to learn how to say no and to be comfortable with saying no to a student who had unrealistic expectations of the editor or who placed undue responsibility on the editor. This editor found that, once she learned how to turn students down, she felt less frustration when working with students who exhibited AE. In addition, the student who

exhibited AE behaviors was less likely to continue expressing AE expectations because the editor had refused to conduct work that was outside of the editor's responsibility.

**Research Question 2.** Research Question 2 was the following: What are the editors' and Intervention Editing manager's perceived training needs to mentor students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing? In this section, I outline the editor professional development needs to mentor AE students in Intervention Editing. I also provide the editors' suggested revisions for improving the Intervention Editing program to better meet the needs of the students.

*Alignment of the purpose of Intervention Editing.* In the interviews, I found that, although the manager's mission of Intervention Editing aligned with the stated purpose of Intervention Editing as listed in the program application, none of the editors believed that what actually was practiced in Intervention Editing matched with the manager's and application's intended program purpose. The manager was unaware of this difference between the stated purpose of the program and what actually occurred in the practice of the program. This disconnect led some editors to be confused about what their role was in helping students to improve their writing in the program as well as how to mentor students with AE in Intervention Editing. Intervention Editor 5 stated that she had heard many of the editors asking for a clearer outline of editors' roles in the program so that they can better understand what their responsibilities were in the program. To address this concern, management could provide professional development on editor and student roles in the program.

***More stringent application process for Intervention Editing.*** Some of the editors stated that the application process to participate in Intervention Editing was too lax and encouraged students to place the ownership of the improvement or approval of their capstone on the editors. The editors believed that the application process should be revised so that students, faculty, and editors sign a contract outlining their responsibilities in the program to prevent student AE expectations of editors. Intervention Editor 5 stated, “We should restrict who participates even more. Right now, I think that anyone who applies gets in. But maybe we should have more of a process and description of what is needed to get in.” Stressing student responsibility in the application itself may prevent students from having unrealistic expectations or AE expectations of the editors.

***Training on mentoring students who have academic entitlement.*** All of the Intervention Editors claimed that they had, at one point, encountered student AE in the program, and four out of five editors stated that they still regularly saw student AE in Intervention Editing. However, the Intervention Editing manager believed that students would not demonstrate AE with editors, but were more likely to show AE to faculty. This difference in management perception over what editors actually experienced is an area for professional development. Management needs to be aware that editors do work with AE students in Intervention Editing, and three out of five editors stated that they would like more training on AE, how to motivate students, and how to encourage student personal agency and self-efficacy.

### **Discrepant Cases**

I found one discrepant case in my interviews with the Intervention Editors. Although all of the editors stated that they had, at some point, encountered student AE in Intervention Editing, Intervention Editor 3 claimed that he no longer encountered student AE in the program. However, the editor did not believe that he no longer saw student AE because it no longer existed. Rather, the editor believed that because he had proactively prevented student AE in his initial communications with a student, he preempted the AE behavior from happening in his interactions with students in the program. This outlier, therefore, was not an indication that an editor did not experience AE in Intervention Editing, but rather an example of how emphasizing student personal agency from the beginning can prevent student AE behavior from happening from the beginning.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

In this section, I outline how the findings of the study relate to the scholarly literature. I will describe how the main themes of the study (editor and manager perceptions of Intervention Editing, advantages and disadvantages of Intervention Editing, best practices for mentoring AE students, helping AE students demonstrate self-efficacy, and AE manifestation in Intervention Editing) have been discussed by researchers.

**Editor and manager perceptions of Intervention Editing.** According to the study results, the editors and the manager had different perceptions of how the mission of Intervention Editing influenced the editing or teaching practices of the editors in the program. The manager believed that the editors aligned their mentoring strategies to

students in Intervention Editing after the stated mission of the program. However, although all of the editors stated that they were aware of the mission of Intervention Editing, they claimed that the services they provided to students were different from what was outlined in the mission statement on the archival website. When the espoused mission of a program or organization is not in alignment with the actual practices of the program or organization, *mission creep* or *mission drift* is occurring (Spencer, 2009; White, 2007). Organizations will write mission statements to explain the goals of a program or an organization (Desmidt, 2016). When the mission of an organization is not reflected in company or employee practice or the mission is not clearly communicated to the employees, employee self-efficacy can be affected (Desmidt, 2016; Jau-Ming, Shue-Ching, Sang-Bing, & Tzu-Li, 2016). Employees who work for companies that have mission statements that reflect employee practice are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and self-efficacious, as demonstrated in their performance (Jau-Ming et al., 2016). One of the study findings was that, in the Intervention Editing program, mission drift or mission creep was occurring, which may affect the self-efficacy of the editors. Editors who lack self-efficacy may be less motivated to provide the high-level services needed to mentor remedial graduate students in Intervention Editing.

**Advantages and disadvantages of Intervention Editing.** According to the editors and the manager, the main advantage to the Intervention Editing program was students' opportunity to receive one-on-one, focused feedback on their writing. Several of the participants reported that the students were receiving writing tutoring for the first time in their graduate program. According to Liechty, Liao, and Schull (2009) and Seay

(2006), remedial graduate writers who do not receive directed writing help are less likely to complete their capstone. However, graduate students who receive writing tutoring are more likely to be retained and graduate from college (Calhoun & Frost, 2012; Grillo & Leist, 2014; Reinheimer & Mckenzie, 2011) and have higher GPAs (Grillo & Leist, 2014; Mills & Matthews, 2009). Students who work on their writing with writing instructors are also more likely to be motivated to learn (Grillo & Leist, 2014). Students who are motivated to learn may be more likely to demonstrate self-efficacy or personal agency in Intervention Editing, which may increase their likelihood of using the editor's feedback to learn self-editing skills and revise their capstone on their own.

The main disadvantages of Intervention Editing, according to the study respondents, were students not implementing the editors' suggested changes and students dropping out of the program. The editors stated that, upon receiving feedback from the editor in the program, students many times would not make the needed revisions, would not resubmit revised work for further editing, and would drop out of the program. The students in Intervention Editing demonstrated a lack of personal agency or self-efficacy because they did not use the resources provided by the editor to conduct further self-edits of their document. Self-efficacy can be an effective measurement of future output (Cherian & Jacob, 2013). Students who lack self-efficacy and demonstrate a lack of personal agency are less likely to have positive academic outcomes (Bandura, 1997). In addition, people who lack self-efficacy and personal agency are not likely to demonstrate persistence and engagement in achieving their goals (Consiglio, Borgogni, & Di-Tecco, 2015). In alignment with the cited authors' arguments, the students in the Intervention

Editing program had poor academic outcomes because they did not want to take personal ownership over their writing and their capstone by learning from the editors' mentorship and using those skills to conduct further self-edits of their document. This lack of student self-efficacy was a disadvantage of the program.

**Best practices for mentoring academically entitled students.** Some of the editors used specific strategies to prevent student AE in Intervention Editing, as well as addressing student AE if it occurred. One editor proactively prevented student AE expectations by outlining the student, editor, and faculty responsibilities in the introduction letter sent to the student. The editor also stressed the importance of student personal agency in the introduction letter and encouraged the students to take ownership for the quality and completion of their capstone. Knox et al. (2011) endorsed student personal agency because students should be responsible for the completion and quality of their study. Other editors who encountered student AE in Intervention Editing claimed that it was important for editors to set boundaries and not to do work that is normally the responsibility of the student. According to the editors, placing the responsibility for writing, researching, and revising the study back on the student in a positive manner increased student self-efficacy. Hansen, Trujillo, Boland, and MacKinnon (2015) stated that promoting self-efficacy by providing students with hope and motivation improves academic outcomes. As noted in the literature above, Intervention editors should establish student, faculty, and editor roles at the beginning of the program to encourage student self-efficacy. If students demonstrate AE expectations, then the editors should promote the importance of student personal agency in a positive and motivating manner.

**Academic entitlement manifestations in Intervention Editing.** The theme of how AE is manifested in Intervention Editing (ie., a customer service focus leading to student AE and participation equaling degree completion) was described in the literature. The editors all claimed that, in Intervention Editing, some students had expected them to research, write, or conduct a line-by-line edit of the entire capstone, which are characteristics of student AE. The editors also claimed that another demonstration of student AE occurred when students placed the improvement or approval of their capstone on the editors. These results are in alignment with the literature. Chowning and Campbell (2009) described the various ways that AE can manifest, including the students placing the ownership of the completion of what are normally considered student responsibilities on third parties other than themselves. In addition, the editors mentioned that the university's use of terms like customer, product, and transaction led students to view their graduate classroom not as a place to learn, but as a purchased product that should meet the needs of the paying customer, which led to student AE behavior. Cain et al. (2012), Holdford (2014), and Kopp et al. (2011) described how universities that use customer service terms to promote their programs and to attract students encourage student AE characteristics because the student is viewed as a paying customer, and in the business world, customer service by nature is transactional. Therefore, students who pay for their tuition may believe that, as paying customers, they are entitled to a degree. Some of the Intervention editors claimed that the expectation that participation equals completion led to student AE and poor quality student work. Andrey et al. (2012) outlined how some institutions promoted participation as a show of excellence where mediocre work is

accepted and applauded because the student simply submitted something to be graded. This study's themes about student AE that emerged from the editors' and manager's interviews were grounded in the research.

**Helping academically entitled students achieve self-efficacy.** All of the editors stressed the importance of encouraging student self-efficacy or personal agency to prevent student AE. The editors also stressed best practices for clearly outlining student and editor responsibilities in Intervention Editing, as well as refusing to conduct work that should be the responsibility of the student. Having clear boundaries, being able to say no, and stressing student ownership are all ways that editors can encourage student self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacious students are more likely to take personal ownership for their academic success. Students who take responsibility for the completion of quality, timely work are more likely to be academically successful as demonstrated in their GPAs (Martinez et al., 2011; Richardson et al., 2012; van der Westhuizen et al., 2011), and the editors claimed that students who demonstrated personal agency were more likely to complete the full 4 weeks of Intervention Editing, which can lead to improved writing in the capstone. The editors believed that it was important for faculty, staff, and university administration to stress student self-efficacy in the program, which aligns with the current research findings.

### **Evidence of Quality**

I ensured that quality data were collected by using member checking, bracketing my personal biases about the topic, and by triangulating the data. After I transcribed all of the interviews, I sent a copy of the transcription to each of the participants to ensure that I

accurately captured their responses to the interview questions. Four of the participants stated that the transcript was accurate, and three of the participants asked that minor grammar changes be made in the transcript. These changes were immediately made to the transcripts so that I had an accurate and approved copy of each transcript. In addition, as outlined in the Data Collection section, before I began the interviews, I wrote down my personal beliefs about AE, self-efficacy, and Intervention Editing in my researcher journal. Before each interview, I went over these notes to remind myself of my beliefs so that I would not inadvertently bias the interview. Finally, I ensure that the data were accurate and provided a clear and robust picture of editor and manager perceptions of AE in Intervention Editing by collecting data from three data points: interviews with the editors, interview with the manager, and archival documents about the Intervention Editing program. By using member checking, bracketing my personal beliefs about the research topic, and triangulating the data, I ensured that the data that I collected were accurate and credible.

### **Project**

I chose to write a white paper to outline the problem of student AE and how editors and management can improve their mentoring strategies of working with students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing. A white paper is the most appropriate project deliverable based upon my intended audience. The editors and the manager of Intervention Editing are my intended audience for the results of this study, and they are academics who prefer to learn via written research. A white paper is commonly used to teach academics or professionals about a new topic or a need for further research about a

topic (Lyons & Luginsland, 2014). In the white paper, I will outline the characteristics and negative consequences of AE as demonstrated by researchers in the literature, and I will describe the importance of stressing student self-efficacy. In addition, based upon the literature and my findings, I will present recommendations for ways that editors and editor management can better mentor students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing.

### **Summary**

In Section 2, I presented the methodology and design of the study. I justified the methodology and design choice, and outlined my responsibilities as a researcher. I reviewed the data collection and data analysis procedures to be used. I also presented the findings of the study and explained how they aligned with the current, peer-reviewed literature and the conceptual framework of the study. In Section 3, I will present the project.

### Section 3: The Project

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this intrinsic case study was to determine the strategies that Intervention editors can use to mentor students with AE behaviors in the Intervention Editing program. I interviewed five editors and the Intervention Editing manager to determine how they perceived Intervention Editing and the best practices that they used with students who exhibited AE in Intervention Editing. All of the editing participants shared the perceived advantages and disadvantages to the Intervention Editing program and how they work with students with AE, and many of the editors expressed a desire for professional development on how to motivate students and how to encourage student personal agency. Based upon the editors' and the manager's responses, I created a project, a white paper, to present the local problem, the literature related to the problem, my study findings, and recommendations for policy change for the Intervention Editing program to present to the editors and the editing administration. In this section, I outline the project for the study, a literature review justifying the project, and a project evaluation program.

#### **Description and Goals**

The purpose of my white paper is to present to the Intervention editors and Intervention Editing management the following: AE occurrence in Intervention Editing; current literature pertaining to student AE; and my recommendations, based upon the participants' responses and the literature, for modifications to the Intervention Editing program to prevent and address student AE. The discussion should include the following:

- Realigning the purpose and practices of Intervention Editing with the stated mission of the program.
- Creating a more stringent application process in which the editors, chair, and student sign a contract outlining editor, chair, and student responsibilities in the program.
- Redesigning the introduction letter to include information on student self-efficacy and personal agency.

In addition, I recommend that editors discuss ways to conduct further study about the following to better serve capstone student needs:

- Student engagement needs
- Student capstone completion need
- Student remedial writing needs
- Ways to evaluate our remedial writing programs

More information on the recommended changes to the Intervention Editing Program and need for further study will be outlined in the project (Appendix A).

### **Rationale**

I chose to write a white paper to present the findings of the study to my intended audience of Intervention editors and Intervention Editing management. My intended audience is made up of scholars (editors and editor management). Traditionally, to address a possible problem or a change in practice in the editor team or editor policy, the editors and the management team prefer to (a) research or gather information about the problem/topic, (b), discuss various ways to address the problem/ topic, and (c) come to a

consensus on how to change policy (if needed). By writing a white paper, I will provide the editors and the management a snapshot of the problem of student AE in Intervention Editing, the peer-reviewed literature pertaining to student AE, and the editors' suggested best practices on how to address student AE. Once the editors and management have reviewed the white paper, discussion can begin on how to improve Intervention Editing to prevent student AE and to meet the needs of all remedial writers. I will present more information and literature pertaining to white papers in the Review of the Literature section below.

### **Review of the Literature**

In this section, I present the main themes of the white paper that are supported by the participants' responses and the peer-reviewed literature. The main themes include the following: writing center and student academic outcomes, effective writing centers and remedial programs, evaluating remedial writing interventions, and encouraging student self-efficacy and personal agency.

I used the Walden University library to find sources for this literature review. The following databases were accessed in the Walden library: Academic Search Premier, Eric, Education Research Complete, and Sage Premier. I used the following key terms interchangeably with the databases: *college, writing interventions, writing center, effective, university, tutoring, practices, retention, outcomes, self-regulation, college instructors, college faculty, faculty motivation, white paper, position paper, and write\**. I focused mainly on articles from 2010 to 2016.

## **White Paper Genre**

The purpose of a white paper is to present a research or a workplace problem, describe the current literature about that problem, and propose ways to address the problem (Lyons & Luginsland, 2014; Owl Purdue Writing Lab, 2016). In a white paper, the author is trying to “sell” something: an objective, a product or service, or recommendations for a change in practice (Bly, 2010; Letterpile, 2016; Owl Purdue Writing Lab, 2016). The tone of the white paper should be persuasive in nature (Study Guides and Strategies, 2016). The language of a white paper is scholarly and should not contain emotionally charged verbiage (Bly, 2010; Study Guides and Strategies, 2016). White papers usually include an introduction, background section, advertisement section (if the author is selling a product), and recommendations for change (Eldawlaty, 2016; Owl Purdue Writing Lab, 2016; Xavier University Library, 2014). In addition, white papers should be well-researched, and the author should persuade the reader using evidence and examples to support his or her assertions (Cleveland State University, 2016; Simon Fraser University, 2016; Xavier University Library, 2014). The white paper is a snap shot of a business or academic problem, and the author uses evidence to promote a solution or a change in practice to address the problem.

A white paper was an effective project choice for this study for many reasons. First, white papers do not require a substantial financial or time investment by either the researcher or the stakeholder (Lyons & Luginsland, 2014). The editor or university administration would not have to provide funds for the project to be implemented. In addition, white papers are commonly used when the intended audience is made up of

technical or academic professionals because this audience prefers to learn about a workplace or research problem in a traditional, scholarly format (Bly, 2012). White or position papers should not be lengthy in nature: The papers should be concise with clear, easy to implement solutions to the stated problem (That White Paper Guy, 2016). I chose to write a white paper to present my study findings to the Intervention editors and the Intervention Editing management as the project format is inexpensive for myself and for the local university, the white paper is an appropriate format for my intended audience, and the paper will be brief and will provide suggestions for addressing the problem. The justification for the recommended changes to the Intervention Editing program and topics that need further study indicated in the white paper, as outlined by the study participants and the literature, are listed below.

### **Writing Center and Student Academic Outcomes**

The Intervention editors and the Intervention Editing manager stressed the importance of writing interventions for student who are at risk of not completing the capstone due to writing deficiencies, which aligned with other researchers' findings in the literature. In a study on determining the interventions that assist struggling dissertation students with completing their capstone, Singh (2011) found that most of the dissertations reviewed in the study contained many grammar and punctuation errors, as well as a lack of critical thinking and demonstration of graduate-level research skills. In addition, social science dissertators are less likely to complete their capstone compared to other graduate programs, perhaps because social science students are expected to be independent researchers and writers in the capstone (Nerad & Miller, 1997). A lack of foundational

writing skills can also be problematic for the dissertator as graduate students who lack basic or remedial writing skills are less likely to complete the dissertation (Liechty et al., 2009; Seay, 2006). Students who lack foundational writing skills at the dissertation level may require writing support from academic staff, such as a writing center.

Graduate students may experience many academic benefits from seeking writing assistance from writing center staff. Students who regularly interact with academic supports, such as writing support, are more likely to have higher GPAs (Grillo & Leist, 2014; Mills & Matthews, 2009). Students who engage in tutoring services are more likely to be retained and to graduate from college (Calhoun & Frost, 2012; Grillo & Leist, 2014; Reinheimer & McKenzie, 2011). Working with writing tutors can also lead to increased student motivation to learn (Grillo & Leist, 2014). Students who work with writing tutors to help them improve their writing skills are more likely to be academically successful, which speaks to the importance of having effective remedial writing interventions at the local university, such as Intervention Editing.

### **Effective Writing Centers and Remedial Programs**

In their interviews, the editors claimed that student engagement in the writing process was central to the students' ability to improve their writing skills. Writing center staff should ensure that students take an active role in improving their writing through discussions about writing with the student (Castello, Inesta, Pardo, Liesa, & Fernandez, 2012; Mackiewicz & Thompson, 2014; Sanford, 2012). When students make the revisions themselves, they learn self-editing skills that they can use in their future writing

(Sanford, 2012). Students who possess strong self-editing skills will demonstrate improved writing because they know how to revise their documents.

The Intervention Editing manager stated that editors must have and must demonstrate respect for the student as an academic and as a professional. Editors should value students as academics and should validate student opinions about their writing (Sanford, 2012). When writing center staffs are empathetic and positive in their communications with students, the students feel more confident as writers and scholars, which can improve their writing (Harris, 2010; Leonard, 2010; Mackiewicz & Thompson, 2014). Interactions between the student and the writing center staff should be collaborative in nature (Welch, 1993). Writing center staff should promote collaboration with students by helping the student to focus on the writing process, which will assist the student in gaining confidence as a writer (Lunsford & Ede, 2011). Students who believe that they are valued and respected and feel confident in their writing abilities are able to work collaboratively with the editor to improve their writing.

All of the editors stated that they had worked with students who had pressured them to or expected them to conduct a line edit of their document and to fix the writing errors for them in Intervention Editing. This student expectation is a manifestation of AE because the student expected the editor to perform work that is normally the responsibility of the student (Chowning & Campbell, 2009). All of the editors stated that they refused to revise the document for the student and, to disabuse the student of AE expectations in Intervention Editing, the editors restated the purpose of the Intervention Editing program to the student and outlined the specific student responsibilities expected

of them while working with their Intervention editor. The function of a writing center should not be to provide a proofreading service to students where editors simply revise student papers (Sanford, 2012). Instead, editors should encourage students to take ownership of the writing in their capstone and to use tutoring strategies that demand that students demonstrate their learning of self-editing skills in the revision of their document.

### **Evaluating Remedial Writing Interventions**

Many of the Intervention editors stated that they would like the Intervention Editing administrators to revise components of the Intervention Editing program. Some editors suggested that all of the editorial staff should meet to discuss ways to improve the Intervention Editing program based upon the editors' experiences of working with students. Writing center staff should hold brainstorming sessions where staff reflect on their practice and discuss best practices for improving student writing based upon what has worked for them in the past (Hall, 2011). Borg and Deane (2011) stressed the importance of writing center staff and management consistently evaluating student satisfaction with the feedback that they receive to ensure that the staffs are meeting the needs of their students. However, conducting writing center evaluations on staff practice can be difficult because there are few writing center assessments that have shown validity in the literature (Gofine, 2012). Writing centers may have to create and conduct their own assessments to determine whether or not their programs and tutoring services are effective. Gofine (2012) suggested that any created writing center assessment should include an examination of how the tutoring affects the quality of the students' writing and how students perceive the writing interventions to determine if they are meeting the

needs of the students. The Intervention Editing management team should meet with the Intervention editors to gather the editors' best practices of teaching remedial students self-editing skills as well as polling the Intervention Editing students to determine how the program could be improved.

### **Encouraging Student Self-Efficacy and Personal Agency**

All of the editors stated that student self-efficacy and personal agency were factors in students' ability to improve their writing and to complete their capstone. The editors claimed that students with low self-efficacy and a lack of personal agency were not likely to learn the self-editing needed to improve their writing in the Intervention Editing program. Students should take responsibility for the completion and quality of writing in their capstone (Knox et al., 2011). To assist the students with taking ownership of their capstone, writing center staff should provide students with hope and motivation to be academically successful (Hansen et al., 2015). Writing center staff should encourage student personal agency and self-efficacy by providing students with the tools to monitor their capstone progress and quality of writing (Lynch, 2010). Students with high self-efficacy and personal agency are more likely to make the most progress in writing their capstone (Mills & Matthews, 2009; Varney, 2010) and have improved writing outcomes (Stewart, Seifert, & Rolheiser, 2015). Because psychological factors like a lack of self-efficacy can affect a student's likelihood of completing the dissertation (Liechty et al., 2009), student self-efficacy should be a component of the Intervention Editing program, or any remedial writing intervention, because students with low self-efficacy and personal agency are less likely to implement editor writing feedback

(Wingate, 2010). Because the editors and researchers have found student self-efficacy and personal agency to be linked to improved writing outcomes, the Intervention Editing program should include components of the program that focus solely on promoting student self-efficacy and personal agency.

### **Implementation**

For my project, I wrote a white paper outlining the background of the problem related to student AE and student self-efficacy, and I outlined recommendations for improving the Intervention Editing program. The white paper is an appropriate project choice as the format of the paper aligns with the expectations and preferred learning style of the audience and because the project itself requires no financial investment on either my or the stakeholder's behalf.

### **Potential Resources and Potential Barriers**

There are few barriers to the distribution of the white paper, as the local study site will not have to provide any funds for professional development. The Intervention Editing management and the Intervention editors have expressed interest in learning about the results of my study, and the management team has set aside planned meeting time for me to present my study to the editor and management team. It is possible that some editors or the management team may resist my suggestions for changing the Intervention Editing program, as a change in program or practice can be difficult for some professionals to embrace (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). However, I will address any editor or management resistance by assuring the editor or management team member that

all possible alterations to the Intervention Editing program will be discussed and voted upon by all before a change in practice occurs.

### **Proposal for Implementation and Timetable**

The implementation of my project will occur within a month after I graduate. The management team has set aside time for an initial meeting to discuss the results of my study with a promise to schedule follow-up meetings as needed. In the first meeting, I plan to present my study to the editing and management team, with follow-up meetings that will include an editor and management discussion of my findings and recommendations for changes in the Intervention Editing program. In the follow-up meeting, I anticipate that editors and the management team will discuss my findings and determine how the team as a whole can use them to improve the Intervention Editing program.

### **Project Evaluation**

The evaluation of the project will be summative in nature. A summative evaluation occurs at the end of a program where the implementers of the program can determine the success of the instruction after the program has been completed (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). After the initial and follow-up meetings about the findings of my study and recommendations for changing the Intervention Editing program have been finished, I will survey the editors and the Intervention Editing management team (via Survey Monkey) about their perceptions of the effectiveness of the white paper in (a) helping the editor and management staff understand the local problem of student AE and low student personal agency in Intervention Editing, (b) promoting editor and management discussion

of revisions to the Intervention Editing program to prevent student AE behavior and to promote student self-efficacy, and (c) implementing editor and management changes to the Intervention Editing program. Editors and management will indicate their perceptions of effectiveness of the white paper on a 5-point Likert scale. The results will be tabulated and will be used to determine if the project met its intended goals.

### **Implications Including Social Change**

#### **Local Community**

The local study site can use the results of my study to promote positive social change within their local writing center and university environment. The Intervention editors and the Intervention Editing manager can use the results of the study as a springboard to begin discussions on how the editors can identify and discourage student AE, how the editors can promote student self-efficacy and personal agency, and how the editors can improve the tutoring of remedial writers. If the Intervention Editing program is more effective at curbing student AE and promoting student self-efficacy, the students in the Intervention Editing program are more likely to learn the self-editing skills that they need to improve the quality of their writing in their capstone. Students who write at a graduate level are more likely to be retained at the local study site, ultimately leading to higher graduation rates.

#### **Far-Reaching**

This intrinsic case study was bounded by a specific geographical location and a specific type of remedial writing program, which may limit the generalizability of the results of the study. However, other writing centers in online, for-profit, graduate

universities can use the results of this study to begin evaluating their own remedial writing interventions to determine if they address student AE behaviors and promote student self-efficacy and personal agency in the writing process. Other university writing centers can also use the results of this study to help them begin discussions of student AE in their centers and programs and brainstorm ways to better mentor students who exhibit AE characteristics at their university. Finally, other academic support teams besides university writing centers (ie., libraries, career centers, academic advising, etc.) can use the results of this study to better educate their staff members on student AE behaviors and possible ways to curb student AE and consumerist attitudes.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to determine strategies for Intervention editors to better mentor students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing. In editor and management interviews, I found that all of the editors had, at some point, worked with a student with AE characteristics in Intervention Editing. I also found that the editors believed that remedial intervention editing programs like Intervention Editing were vital to helping struggling writers. However, all of the editors expressed that student self-efficacy and personal agency were also important components of working with remedial writers, and many asked for components of self-efficacy and personal agency to be added to the Intervention Editing program. All of the editors' beliefs were outlined in the literature, and I wrote a white paper on the local problem of student AE in Intervention Editing, the need to have remedial writing programs like Intervention Editing, and the need to promote student self-efficacy and personal agency behaviors. The white paper will be

shared at an upcoming editor meeting, and the editors and the management team will discuss the findings of my study and brainstorm ways to improve components of the Intervention Editing program using the results of the study. The effectiveness of the white paper project will be evaluated using a summative evaluation. The local writing center, and writing centers and academic support teams in other universities, can use the results of this study to improve their remedial writing programs, leading to increased student retention and graduate rates. In Section 4, I outline the reflections and conclusions of the study.

## Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to determine the strategies that editors use in Intervention Editing to mentor students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing. In the interviews, the editors illustrated the ways in which they interacted with AE students in the Intervention Editing program. Despite their experiences working with AE students, the editors claimed that remedial programs like Intervention Editing were needed to assist struggling writers in writing their capstone. The editors also outlined the importance of student self-efficacy and personal agency in a student's writing success. Therefore, I created a project (white paper) to address the local problem of student AE in Intervention Editing. In this section, I will present the project strengths and limitations, recommendations for future research, and a reflection of myself as a scholar practitioner.

### **Project Strengths**

This doctoral study had strengths in its methodology, design, and study sample. I chose a qualitative approach so that I could gather the perceptions of editors and their strategies in mentoring students with AE behaviors in Intervention Editing. By using a qualitative methodology, I was able to learn more about the participants' experiences so that I could improve editor practices of mentoring AE students in Intervention Editing (Merriam, 2009). In addition, using a case study design allowed me to examine the phenomenon of AE at a bounded system or unit of the local study site (Stake, 2005). Finally, by interviewing a sample of editors who mentored students for at least 1 year in

Intervention Editing, I was able to gather a variety of veteran editor experiences and perceptions of student AE and best practices of how to work with AE students.

Scholars have examined AE and have defined the characteristics that AE students commonly present with (Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Kopp et al., 2011). Researchers have also examined how parenting styles can affect student's AE behaviors in the classroom (Greenberger et al., 2008); how AE is influenced by gender (Ciani et al., 2008; Gibson-Beverly & Schwartz, 2008); how age affects levels of AE (Singleton-Jackson et al., 2011); and how the platform of the classroom, online or face-to-face, can affect a student's level of AE in the classroom (Bressler et al., 2012). However, scholars had not examined best practices for teaching students who exhibit AE in remediation programs, like Intervention Editing, leaving a gap in local practice. In this study, I addressed this gap in literature and practice by gathering the editors' and the manager's perceptions of mentoring students with AE behaviors in Intervention Editing. I found that all of the editors had worked with AE students in Intervention Editing and that the editors stated that student personal agency and self-efficacy needed to be addressed as components of the Intervention Editing program. In this study, I addressed the local gap in practice by creating a project that outlines student AE and how editors can promote self-efficacy and personal agency to improve their mentoring of students in Intervention Editing. The study site can use the results of the study to improve the Intervention Editing program, which will lead to improved quality of student writing and increased student retention.

### **Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations**

This study had limitations in the methodology and design, study sample, and the project created. In this qualitative study, I did not test the levels of student AE in Intervention Editing, which could have been accomplished in a quantitative study using a validated instrument on student AE. I chose to examine the editors' real-life experiences of mentoring students with AE because (a) the student responses to the Intervention Editing questionnaire already showed AE attitudes so I was sure that student AE was occurring at some level in Intervention Editing and (b) I wanted to address the local problem of mentoring students who present with AE in Intervention Editing, and I would not be able to determine editor best practices for mentoring students with AE in Intervention Editing if I only measured student levels of AE in Intervention Editing.

I also did not examine writing center staff's perceptions of AE as a phenomenon that occurs in remediation programs across many types of universities, which I could have determined in a different design choice. I chose to use the case study design so that I could focus on the bounded unit or case of Intervention Editing at the local university, and so that I could examine the phenomenon, student AE in Intervention Editing, within the bounded system.

The study sample was limited to editors who had staffed Intervention Editing for at least 1 year. I did not gather the perceptions of newly hired editors who were beginning to mentor students in Intervention Editing. The newly hired editors just beginning to staff Intervention Editing could have provided insights into the general best practices that they require in teaching graduate-level writing skills to students of all abilities; however, this

topic was beyond the scope of this study. In this study, I wished to focus on the experiences of more veteran editing staff and the specific strategies that they used to mentor students with AE attitudes in Intervention Editing. I also did not gather other university staff's or faculties' perceptions of student AE, which limited the generalizability of the findings of this study to only writing center staff who instruct in remedial writing programs.

### **Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change Analysis of Self as Scholar**

During this doctoral journey, I obtained many skills that enhanced my abilities as a scholar. First, I learned more about methodology, design, and data collection and analysis techniques. These new-found skills will be beneficial for me as I continue to conduct research and publish articles on student AE, and other education topics, in the future. I also improved my research skills, and I feel comfortable being able to search for and find peer-reviewed articles in brick and mortar and online college libraries. Finally, in this study, I learned how to write for publication, and I understand the importance of having many reviewers read through a draft as each person brings a new perspective and suggestions on how to improve the writing in a document.

### **Analysis of Self as Practitioner**

In this study, I wished to determine Intervention Editors' best practices for mentoring students who exhibit AE at a local online, graduate university. From the participant responses, I learned that all of the editors had experienced student AE in Intervention Editing. I found that each editor had a new experience and idea that can

contribute to editor best practices in working with students with AE. As I practitioner, I learned the importance of respecting other editors' opinions and experiences, as these perceptions can be used to create guidelines for teaching students with AE attitudes in Intervention Editing. After completing this study, I believe that I will collaborate more effectively with my peers to define any future gaps in practice and outline best practices to address them.

### **Analysis of Self as Project Developer**

Throughout the doctoral study process, I learned about the various types of projects that can be created to address local gaps in practice. I chose to write a white paper to address the local problem of needed strategies for addressing student AE in Intervention Editing because this project format suited the academic nature of the editors who were working with me. However, as I continue to research student AE at the local study site, I feel competent in creating many different types of projects to provide professional development to all types of university staff on how to define student AE and best practices of addressing student AE.

### **The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change**

The results of this study have positive social change implications for the local study site and for all education practitioners. The local study site can use the results of this study to create further professional development for editors, other writing center staff, and other university staff on how to define student AE, as well as strategies for working with students who present with AE characteristics in the educational platform. Editors, and other staff, who are well versed in mentoring students with AE will be able

to better assist their students with reclaiming ownership of their academic success, which may lead to improved student outcomes and increased retention. In addition, education scholars can use the results of this study as a foundation for researching and learning more about the phenomenon of student AE and how university staff and faculty can address AE and help these students to be successful at the college level, which may improve learning outcomes and graduation rates at universities across the United States.

### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

The limitations of this study provide many opportunities for future research on AE and remediation programs. Scholars could measure student levels of AE in a remediation program using a quantitative study with a validated instrument. In addition, researchers could use other qualitative designs such as grounded theory to create a theory about student AE in remediation programs or a narrative design to gather the editors' first person accounts or stories of working with students with AE (Merriam, 2009). Finally, scholars could examine AE in different populations. For example, researchers could determine faculty perceptions of teaching students who exhibit AE in their classrooms or other university staff's (i.e., academic advising, library, career center, etc.) experiences of working with students with AE attitudes in other university platforms. These future studies could address other gaps in AE literature.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to determine editor best practices for mentoring students who exhibited AE in Intervention Editing. I found that editors had experienced student AE in Intervention Editing. I also found that editors believed that writing

interventions such as Intervention Editing were integral to the success of struggling writers at the local university. The editors also stressed the importance of student personal agency and self-efficacy and suggested including components of both in the Intervention Editing program. I wrote a white paper outlining the results of my study and recommendations for alterations to the Intervention Editing program to better meet the needs of remedial writers, to prevent student AE, and to promote student self-efficacy and personal agency. The local university can use the results of this study to improve their remedial writing program and address student AE behaviors in their student support teams. This study can provide a springboard for all universities to examine their writing interventions to ensure that they are addressing student AE, promoting student personal agency, and meeting the needs of struggling writers.

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## Appendix A: The Project

### Addressing Student Academic Entitlement in Intervention Editing

#### **Background of the Problem**

At [REDACTED], some students in the graduate program are struggling to write their capstone due to writing and researching deficiencies. To teach students the needed writing skills to complete the capstone, the dissertation editors at the local study site implemented Intervention Editing, in which students work one-on-one with a dissertation editor for 1 hour per week for 4 weeks. However, after 3 years running, the editors found that some students were not successful in Intervention Editing and did not complete the 4 full weeks of reviews. According to internal documentation, from January 2014 to August 2015, 630 students were approved to participate in Intervention Editing (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). Of those 630 students, about a third of those students did not successfully complete 4 weeks of Intervention Editing (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). To determine the reason for the high attrition rate, the editors surveyed Intervention Editing students to determine the effective aspects of Intervention Editing and the components of Intervention Editing that could be improved.

In the survey, a variety of themes on student perceptions of Intervention Editing emerged. Although some students praised the Intervention Editing program and accounted for how the editors helped them to become better writers, other students revealed entitlement attitudes by placing the ownership of the completion or approval of the proposal or capstone on editor staff and not on themselves. Although there may be

other reasons for the high student attrition rate in Intervention Editing that are outside the scope of this study, in their responses, some students revealed that they viewed themselves as being entitled to academic success, which is a phenomenon defined as AE (Andrey et al., 2012; Baer & Cheryomukhin, 2011; Boswell, 2012). Students who believe that their academic achievement is the responsibility of faculty, staff, or persons other than themselves exhibit characteristics of AE (Andrey et al., 2012; Baer & Cheryomukhin, 2011; Boswell, 2012).

At the local study site, AE may be affecting some students' ability to complete 4 weeks of Intervention Editing because the students place the responsibility of improving their writing in the capstone, or receiving approval on the capstone, on the editors or other third parties. Although some students in Intervention Editing are exhibiting characteristics of AE, the editors have not received any professional development on (a) how to define student AE and (b) how to re-engage students in the ownership of their academic achievement to improve the quality of their writing in the capstone (Intervention Editing Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2015). In order to meet the local study site chief academic officer objectives of improving the quality of writing in capstones, the editors working in Intervention Editing require additional training on strategies to work with students who exhibit AE characteristics to encourage self-regulatory and self-efficacy behaviors so that students take responsibility for their capstone completion.

## **Literature Related to Academic Entitlement**

### **Defining Academic Entitlement at the College Level**

Some faculty and staff at postsecondary institutions are claiming to see high levels of student AE. AE is defined as “the tendency to possess an expectation of academic success without taking personal responsibility for that success” (Chowning & Campbell, 2009, p. 982). Students who demonstrate AE may believe that university faculty, staff, or other student support services are responsible for their academic success. AE is different from other types of entitlement (i.e., White privilege, class entitlement, heterosexual entitlement) because students with AE only exhibit entitlement characteristics in the classroom and do not demonstrate entitlement behaviors in other facets of their lives (i.e., the workplace, family life, or personal life; Chowning & Campbell, 2009; Kopp et al., 2011). Therefore, AE is specific to the education field, and it differs from other sociologically identified types of entitlement. There are many negative ramifications of student AE behaviors that affect student academic success, teacher effectiveness, and the quality of postsecondary education at the administrative level.

### **Consumerism and Academic Entitlement**

Researchers have reported that the increased levels of AE at the university level may be linked to postsecondary institutions’ and students’ link of education to consumerism. A student with a consumerist view of education will view him or herself as a customer and the education institution as the customer service provider; therefore, if a student pays for tuition, he or she, as the paying customer, deserves a degree (Cain et al.,

2012; Holdford, 2014; Kopp et al., 2011). Students who believe that they are consumers purchasing their degree are also more likely to exhibit AE characteristics (Kopp et al., 2011). As paying customers, AE consumerist students expect their education to be catered to their personal, professional, and academic needs (Cain et al., 2012). To a consumerist student, faculty should provide the optimal education experience to ensure a student's academic success, with little responsibility required from the student (Cain et al., 2012). This view of education may be due to many factors outside of the student, such as university administration and employment financial pressures.

In order to adhere to the needs of a consumerist society, some postsecondary administration will promote consumerist attitudes or beliefs to increase student enrollment. AE and consumerism is encouraged by university administration and faculty who give exemplary grades for mediocre work (Holdford, 2014; Kopp et al., 2011). In addition, in order to maintain competitiveness, some universities will focus on market-based careers where the student (customer) is promised a job upon completion of a degree, instead of promising an environment where students have the potential to learn (Cain et al., 2012). To curb AE and consumerist attitudes towards a college degree, administration and faculty should instead focus on providing students the opportunity to learn where students are ultimately responsible for their academic success (Cain, Noel, Smith, & Romanelli, 2014). Ultimately, the purpose of postsecondary education is not to provide a customer service exchange, or to guarantee a certain job and level of pay, but rather to provide students with the resources and tools to learn a field of study at the university level.

### **Narcissism versus Academic Entitlement**

Although narcissistic individuals share some similar traits that AE students exhibit, narcissism and AE affect students in different ways. The American Psychological Association (2000) claimed that a narcissistic person has an inflated sense of self, tends to lack empathy for others, and seeks recognition and compliments in an excessive nature. In addition, narcissistic persons tend to avoid emotional intimacy with others and are more likely to use others for personal gain (Menon & Sharland, 2011). Although both narcissistic persons and individuals with AE may not take responsibility for their actions, unlike narcissists, AE individuals only exhibit AE characteristics in the academic environment and do not portray these behaviors in other areas of their life. Furthermore, narcissism does not affect a person's ability to achieve a goal (Watson, 2012), and narcissism does not affect the students' likelihood of being successful in their career, obtaining a pay raise, or being promoted (Westerman, Bergman, Bergman, & Daly, 2012). It is important that academics do not confuse narcissistic personalities with AE traits, as persons with narcissism and AE present with different negative behaviors in different environments.

### **Academic Consequences of Academic Entitlement**

College student AE behaviors have many negative implications for the student and the university. Within the college classroom, Greenberger et al. (2008) found that students with AE were more likely to engage in academic dishonesty; because AE students do not believe that their academic success rests with them, they may not feel anxiety about engaging in unethical practices that other self-efficacious students do who

would believe that cheating would reflect negatively upon themselves. In addition, students who demonstrate AE believe that grades should reflect effort and participation and not the quality of the final product (Andrey et al., 2012). Therefore, when AE students receive a poor grade because they submit a low-quality assignment, they are more likely to react with *vengeful dissent* to the instructor (Goodboy & Frisby, 2014).

In vengeful dissent, a student will express discontent with a grade, instruction, or curriculum by making negative comments about the instructor or university to others in order to damage the credibility of the teacher instead of constructively addressing questions or criticisms directly to the faculty (Goodboy & Frisby, 2014). Some faculty may fear vengeful dissent from AE students and may then lower the standards of the class to satisfy the student and to prevent complaints (Singleton-Jackson et al., 2011). In addition, university administration may encourage grade inflation to avoid complaints from AE students (Kopp et al., 2011). This appeasement of the student does not assist the student with learning or understanding how to behave professionally in an academic environment, which ultimately does a disservice to all college students and degrades the quality of a college degree.

### **Academic Entitlement and Incivility Behaviors in the Classroom**

Students who believe that they are academically entitled may display incivility in the college classroom. According to Kopp et al. (2013), AE students exhibit incivility in the classroom to both instructors and fellow students. Incivility is defined as student actions that lead to the interference of learning in the classroom: These behaviors may include low intensity incivility, such as leaving a class early, arriving to a class late, or

rude e-mails to instructors to higher intensity incivility, such as harassment or threatening a faculty member or student (Burke et al., 2014; Galbraith & Jones, 2010). Unbeknownst to faculty, fellow students recognize when their peers are not being civil in class (Bjorklund & Rehling, 2010), and students prefer when faculty directly address student incivility in the classroom instead of ignoring inappropriate behavior (Boysen, 2012). It is important that faculty confront incivility directly in the classroom as soon as it occurs as Braxton and Jones (2008) found that students who shared classes with uncivil students were less likely to feel a sense of community with their peers, and thus were more disengaged in the classroom. Teachers should incorporate instruction on civility in first-year courses in order to assist incoming students with learning appropriate behaviors and expectations for faculty, the university, and for themselves (Connelly, 2009). When faculty actively addresses incivility in the classroom, as well as models professionalism, the student can use these skills to be successful at the postsecondary level.

### **Purpose of the Study**

To address the local problem, I conducted a qualitative, intrinsic case study to determine the strategies that editors need to work with students who exhibit AE characteristics in Intervention Editing. Semistructured interviews were conducted with five Intervention Editors and the Intervention Editing manager to determine their perceptions of student AE in the Intervention Editing Program. No other staff or faculty members were interviewed as the scope the study was centered only on the editors' and editor management perceptions. In addition to the interviews with the editors and the

manager, a content analysis was conducted of archival documents of the Intervention Editing application and the university student handbook.

### **Results of the Study**

Throughout the interviews, many themes emerged. I found that there was a disconnect between editor and manager perceptions of what they believed to be the purpose of Intervention Editing. I also found that there was consistency in how editors perceived that AE is manifested in Intervention Editing. The editors also outlined best practices for mentoring students who exhibit AE in Intervention Editing, and the editors provided suggestions for professional development on helping AE students to reclaim responsibility for their academic success

### **Recommendations for Intervention Editing**

Based upon the participant responses, the archival data content analysis, and the literature review concerning student AE and self-efficacy, I recommend that the Intervention Editing program be amended to include the following:

1. Realign the purpose and practices of Intervention Editing with the stated mission of the program. The editors claimed that the services that they actually provided to the students were not the services listed in the mission statement for Intervention Editing. Therefore, the editors should outline specific writing steps and processes that all editors should implement to assist graduate students with improving their writing.
2. Create a more stringent application process in which the editors, chair, and student sign a contract outlining editor, chair, and student responsibilities

in the program. Many editors claimed that students demonstrated AE in Intervention Editing and expected editors to conduct services that are the responsibility of the student or the faculty. Therefore, the editors should outline (in the application process) what students can expect from their editor in Intervention Editing and what the editor expects from the student in Intervention Editing. The proactive listing of student and editor responsibilities will prevent student AE expectations from the beginning.

3. Send out an introduction letter that includes information on student self-efficacy and personal agency. All of the editors stated that many students demonstrate a lack of self-efficacy and personal agency in Intervention Editing. This lack of self-efficacy and personal agency not only increases the likelihood of the student exhibiting AE behaviors, but it may also lead to increased editor stress and frustration because students do not engage in the revision process. In the introduction letter, self-efficacy and personal agency should be defined, and the letter should include information on how students demonstrate both concepts in the revision and research process in their work with an editor.
4. Create editor policies for mentoring students who exhibit student AE in Intervention Editing. All of the editors stated that they had worked with a student who exhibited AE in Intervention Editing. Therefore, editors should receive training on best practices for identifying student AE, as

well as training on how to assist students in reclaiming responsibility for their academic success.

In addition, I recommend that editors discuss ways to conduct further study about the Intervention Editing program to determine the following:

1. Student engagement needs. Many of the editors indicated that Intervention Editing had a high attrition rate. Further study should be conducted to determine how to better engage students in the Intervention Editing program so that they complete the full 4 weeks of the program.
2. Student capstone completion needs. Many of the editors claimed that the students in the Intervention Editing program requested a copy edit of their document and that some chair enrolled students in Intervention Editing to receive a copy edit of the student's study. Further study should be conducted to determine if students would benefit from a copy editing service rather than a teaching of self-editing skills.
3. Student remedial writing needs. Some of the editors stated that the length of the Intervention Editing program was too short to teach remedial students the self-editing skills that they need to improve the quality of their writing in the capstone. Further research should be conducted to determine if Intervention Editing should be extended to ensure that students have adequate time to learn graduate-level writing skills.
4. Program evaluation methods. Currently, the editors have not created a way to evaluate if their remedial programs, like Intervention Editing, are

leading to the improvement of the quality of capstone writing. Editors should design an evaluation method to determine if their remedial programs are meeting the needs of struggling writing and their faculty.

Because it is department practice for the editors and management to meet to discuss program or policy changes before they occur, the editors and editor management should meet to discuss the results of the study and the literature review related to student AE and self-efficacy to determine best how to achieve the recommended revisions to the Intervention Editing program. A revised Intervention Editing program that meets the needs of editors and AE students may lead to improved student retention in Intervention Editing, which may ultimately improve the quality of capstone writing at the local study site.

### **Conclusion**

At ██████████, students exhibit AE behaviors in the Intervention Editing program, which affects the students' ability to learn the self-editing skills needed to improve the quality of writing in their capstone. In addition, editors who work with AE students experience frustration and stress, and, according to the results of the study, the editors would like professional development on identifying student AE, as well as strategies for assisting students in reclaiming ownership for their academic success. The editors also stressed the importance of student personal agency and self-efficacy and suggested including components of both in the Intervention Editing program. Therefore, I included recommendations for alterations to the Intervention Editing program to better meet the needs of remedial writers, to prevent student AE, and to promote student self-

efficacy and personal agency. The dissertation editors should review their Intervention Editing policies to ensure that their writing interventions are addressing student AE, promoting student personal agency, and meeting the needs of struggling writers.

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## Appendix B: Interview Protocols

██████████

Interview # \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

## Interview Protocol for Editors

*Script*

Welcome and thank you for your participation today. My name is Sarah Matthey, and I am a graduate student at Walden University conducting my project study in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctorate in education. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The interview will take about 40 to 60 minutes and will include 14 questions regarding your experiences in ██████████. I would like your permission to tape record this interview, so I may accurately document the information you convey. If at any time during the interview you wish to discontinue the use of the recorder or the interview itself, please feel free to let me know. All of your responses are confidential. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used to develop a better understanding of how you and your peers perceive ██████████ and any training you would benefit from receiving. The purpose of this study is to increase our understanding of the training you need to mentor students who exhibit academic entitlement in ██████████

At this time I would like to remind you of your written consent to participate in this study. I am the responsible investigator, specifying your participation in the research project: Writing Center Editor Strategies for Addressing Student Academic Entitlement in Intervention Editing. You and I have both signed and dated each copy, certifying that we agree to continue this interview. You will receive one copy and I will keep the other under lock and key, separate from your reported responses. Thank you.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. If at any time you need to stop, take a break, or to a question, please let me know. You may also withdraw your participation at any time without consequence. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then with your permission we will begin the interview.

**Demographic Questions:**

1. How many years have you worked as a dissertation editor at ██████████
2. How many years have you worked as an editor in the ██████████ program?

### Interview Questions

The next few questions concern your overall perceptions of the [REDACTED] Program.

3. Reflecting on your experience working as an editor in [REDACTED], what do you believe the purpose of [REDACTED] is?

3. What are your overall perceptions of [REDACTED]?

4. Tell me about a typical experience as a developmental editor.

5. In your opinion, what are the aspects of [REDACTED], if any, that need to be improved?

6. In your opinion, what are the positive aspects, if any, of [REDACTED]

7. What skills would you like training on to improve your mentoring of students in [REDACTED]?

As we discussed earlier in the interview, I am studying the training, if any, that editors need to mentor students who exhibit academic entitlement in [REDACTED]. In this study, academic entitlement is defined as a student placing the responsibility for the improvement of writing in the capstone, the approval of his or her capstone, or the completion of his or her capstone on the editors or other third parties. The next few questions have to do specifically with your experience of working with students who demonstrate academic entitlement in [REDACTED]

8. Please share your experiences, if any, of working with students who demonstrate academic entitlement in [REDACTED]

9. Thinking about your experiences of working with students who exhibit academic entitlement, what were the strategies that you used, if any, to assist the student in improving his or her writing in [REDACTED]

10. In [REDACTED], what were the strategies that you used, if any, to mentor a student to reclaim responsibility for his or her academic success?

11. What are some aspects of mentoring students with academic entitlement in [REDACTED] that you would like more professional development on?

12. What advice would you give to a new hire who was staffing [REDACTED] for the first time?

13. What advice would you give to a student in the first week of [REDACTED]

14. Before we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share with me about your perceptions of [REDACTED] or working with students who exhibit academic entitlement?

**Thank the participant for his/her participation.**

Interview # \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Protocol for \_\_\_\_\_ Manager

*Script*

Welcome and thank you for your participation today. My name is Sarah Matthey, and I am a graduate student at \_\_\_\_\_ conducting my project study in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctorate in education. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The interview will take about 40 minutes and will include 14 questions regarding your experiences of managing editors that staff \_\_\_\_\_. I would like your permission to tape record this interview, so I may accurately document the information you convey. If at any time during the interview you wish to discontinue the use of the recorder or the interview itself, please feel free to let me know. All of your responses are confidential. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used to develop a better understanding of how you perceive \_\_\_\_\_ and any training that you think your editor staff would benefit from receiving. The purpose of this study is to increase our understanding of the training that editors need to mentor students who exhibit academic entitlement in \_\_\_\_\_.

At this time I would like to remind you of your written consent to participate in this study. I am the responsible investigator, specifying your participation in the research project: Writing Center Editor Strategies for Addressing Student Academic Entitlement in Intervention Editing. You and I have both signed and dated each copy, certifying that we agree to continue this interview. You will receive one copy and I will keep the other under lock and key, separate from your reported responses. Thank you.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. If at any time you need to stop, take a break, or to a question, please let me know. You may also withdraw your participation at any time without consequence. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then with your permission we will begin the interview.

**Demographic Questions:**

1. How many years have you worked at \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many years have you worked as the manager of the \_\_\_\_\_ program?

### Interview Questions

The next few questions concern your overall perceptions of the [REDACTED] Program.

3. Reflecting on your experience working as the manager of [REDACTED] what do you believe the purpose of [REDACTED] is?
  
4. In your opinion, what are the positive aspects, if any, of [REDACTED] for the student?
  
5. In your opinion, what are the positive aspects, if any, of [REDACTED] for the editor or faculty member?
  
6. In your opinion, what are the aspects of [REDACTED], if any, that need to be improved for the student?
  
7. In your opinion, what are the aspects of [REDACTED], if any, that need to be improved for the editor or faculty?
  
8. What are your overall perceptions of [REDACTED]?

9. What skills would you like the editors to be trained on to improve their mentoring of students in [REDACTED]g?

As we discussed earlier in the interview, I am studying the training, if any, that editors need to mentor students who exhibit academic entitlement in [REDACTED]. In this study, academic entitlement is defined as a student placing the responsibility for the improvement of writing in the capstone, the approval or his or her capstone, or the completion of his or her capstone on the editors or other third parties. The next few questions have to do specifically with your experience of managing editors mentor students that demonstrate academic entitlement in [REDACTED]

10. Please share some of your experiences, if any, of managing editors who mentor students that demonstrate academic entitlement in [REDACTED]

11. Thinking about your experiences of managing the editors in [REDACTED], what strategies did you recommend that editors use, if any, to assist the student to improve his or her writing in [REDACTED]?

12. In [REDACTED], what were the strategies that you have recommended that editors use, if any, to mentor a student to reclaim responsibility for his or her academic success?

13. What advice would you give to an editor who is staffing in [REDACTED] for the first time?

14. What are some aspects of mentoring students exhibit academic entitlement in [REDACTED] that you would like the editors to receive more professional development on?

15. Before we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share with me about your perceptions of managing [REDACTED] or assisting editors in mentoring students with academic entitlement?

**Thank the participant for his/her participation.**

## Appendix C: E-mail to Participate in the Study

Dear Dissertation Editor,

My name is Sarah Matthey, and I am a, EdD student at [REDACTED]. I am cooperating with your manager, [REDACTED], to conduct a study on the dissertation editors' perceptions of their training needs to mentor students with academic entitlement in [REDACTED]. You have been selected to participate in this study because you have staffed [REDACTED] for at least 1 year. I will be conducting in-person interviews with any interested editors. The interviews will last around 40 minutes. If you are interested in participating, reply to this e-mail, and I will put your name on the list. All responses will be kept confidential, and I will provide further information on confidentiality and answer any questions you may have at the interview at a later date.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Sarah Matthey