CRITICAL STUDENT AFFAIRS PEDAGOGY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF
STUDENT AFFAIRS EDUCATORS’ BELIEFS AND PRACTICES FOR
TEACHING IN UNDERGRADUATE CLASSROOM SETTINGS

A Chapter Style Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership

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By Michael Drucker

We recommend acceptance of this dissertation in partial fulfillment of the candidate’s requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. The candidate has completed the oral defense of the dissertation.

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ABSTRACT


After nearly 100 years, student affairs’ educational role in colleges and universities continues to be debated (ACPA, 1937; McCaughey & Welsh, 2021; Penney, 1969;). While student affairs personnel, at the field’s origins, contributed to student learning through outside-the-classroom experiences (Long, 2012), student affairs educators are increasingly serving as instructors in classroom settings (Skipper, 2017; Young & Hopp, 2014). No literature has studied the experiences of student affairs educators who create and maintain a pedagogy for classroom teaching. Using critical, hermeneutic phenomenology, this story explored the lived experiences of student affairs educators’ pedagogy. Following Peoples’ (2021) six-step process of analysis, the data revealed five major themes: (a) student affairs educators’ belief in co-creation of knowledge, (b) putting their beliefs to practice through facilitation techniques, (c) developing students for serving the interests of a greater good, (d) personal influences, doubts, and motivations for their pedagogies, and (e) cultural and structural challenges to enacting student affairs pedagogy. A discussion and interpretation considered the participants’ pedagogies as an expression of critical pedagogy as contextualized by critical pedagogy scholarship (hooks, 1994, Freire, 1971) and contemporary culturally engaging and critical publications in student affairs (Museus, 2013; Quaye et al., 2018).
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

“The long-sought ‘profession’ of student personnel work has not been, is not, and will not be recognized or accepted as a vital aspect of the academic world” proclaimed James Penney (1969), lamenting student personnel as a “profession stillborn” (p. 961). At the time of its publication in the late 1960s, student affairs was nearly half a century old. Student affairs had established its role in institutions across the nation and had developed a professional community with the founding of two far-reaching associations—National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and American College Personnel Association - College Student Educators International (ACPA ;Hevel, 2016). Student affairs had also, by this time, created a scholarly community of researchers who produced a body of literature (Long, 2012). Those accomplishments may have suggested that student affairs was off to a successful start. By 1969, though, disappointed by its lack of progress to solidify a place within the curricular, academic, and pedagogical realm of a college education, Penney was ready to announce the figurative time-of-death on student personnel entirely.

Today, just over 50 years since Penney’s (1969) proclamation about student affairs, the profession is still here. After roughly 100 years of organized existence, though, where has the student affairs profession staked its claim within the educational enterprise of college and university life? Was Penney’s lament about a profession that
will never be accepted as a vital aspect of the academic world correct? Contemporary
debate on student affairs’ role and contributions towards student learning indicates that
this question has not been universally answered. In the fall of 2021, two faculty at
Appalachian State University published an editorial for the Association American of
University Professors (McCaughey & Welsh, 2021), claiming student affairs educators
“cross the line where faculty govern and inappropriately conflate moral or political
training (if not indoctrination) with inquiry” (McCaughey & Welsh, 2021). Such
sentiments highlighted the recurring tension in the academy over student affairs. For
example, the authors of ACPA’s (1994) *The Student Learning Imperative* in the mid-
1990s cautioned readers that some “will conclude that to proceed as this document
suggests will force student affairs to invade faculty territory” (p. 5).

Other 21st-century contemporaries since then, namely those connected to student
affairs professional associations, have supported *The Student Learning Imperative*’s call
for a presence of student affairs within the educational world of college operations.
for Racial Justice and Decolonization* (SIRJD) asserted their perception of student
affairs’ role in student learning. The SIRJD document suggested that student affairs has a
role to play in higher education to transform power with liberatory ideologies and
practices. From Penney to recent editorial critiques to the SIRJD document, historical and
contemporary voices have demonstrated that the questions of what our students learn,
how they learn it, and from whom have never been more compelling than they are today.

A longstanding perception of the division of labor in higher education has created
an in-the-classroom versus outside-the-classroom dichotomy of learning (Keeling, 2004).
This division provides a structure where faculty serve as instructors of credit-bearing courses in the classroom while student affairs practitioners serve as educators who foster learning through experiences outside the classroom. That separation, though, is not always maintained. Increased partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs have created various student affairs initiatives with curricular components, including credit-bearing courses taught by student affairs staff (Skipper, 2017; Young & Hopp, 2014). In fact, national survey data reported that certain types of first-year experience seminars are primarily taught by student affairs staff (Young, 2019).

While the prevalence of student affairs instructors in the classroom has continued to rise, research on the topic has not followed at a similar rate of frequency or volume. This study addresses the lack of scholarly literature on student affairs educators as classroom instructors. As such, this study will contribute to the body of scholarly literature to broaden and deepen the understanding of the role student affairs plays in the education of college students.

Statement of the Problem

Higher education scholars have illustrated that engagement with student affairs programs, activities, and advisement enhanced student learning while in college (Calhoun, 1996; Baxter-Magolda, 2003; Keeling, 2004; Kuh, 2005; Mayhew et al., 2016; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Quaye et al., 2019; Sriram et al., 2020). The educational activities and outcomes that student affairs scholarship has identified is most often cited as having occurred outside of the classroom environment (Long, 2012). Some scholarship aimed specifically at the partnerships between student affairs and academic affairs has often highlighted synergies between the two divisions through the continued separation
of student affairs staff from the classroom while focused on the potential of staff roles to support student learning administratively and through co-curricular means (Cho & Sriram, 2016; Kezar, 2003).

The idea that student affairs has contributed to student learning outside the classroom developed alongside the profession’s own evolution of approaching its work through one of student affairs’ most defining characteristics—the holistic lens, or the concept of recognizing the whole student. Student affairs leaders and scholars have articulated their value of holistic learning and support since its very early days as an emerging professional field (Long, 2012). The American Council on Education (ACE) published *The Student Personnel Point of View* (SPPV) in 1937 and again in 1949. Among other concepts, the documents articulated a directive to student personnel to both conceptualize learning and enact their educational contributions through a holistic lens. While the wording “holistic learning” was not a phrase widely used at the time, the emphasis, for example, on emotional, vocational, and physical learning alongside intellectual development is considered today to be one of the guideposts in the trajectory of the student affairs profession (Evans & Reason, 2001; Mann, 2010).

As a result, the SPPVs helped position the importance and expertise of student affairs as relevant to out-of-classroom learning, development, and support. The authors of the revised SPPV (ACE, 1949) conceived the importance of holistic co-curricular learning and development for college students, suggesting the proper activities of a well-rounded student:

Through his college experiences, he should acquire an appreciation of cultural values, the ability to adapt to changing social conditions, motivation to seek and
to create desirable social changes, emotional control to direct his activities, moral and ethical values for himself and for his community, standards and habits of personal physical well-being, and the ability to choose a vocation which makes maximum use of his talents and enables him to make appropriate contributions to his society. (p. 3)

The SPPV’s holistic approach characterized student affairs’ professional culture with an emphasis on social, cultural, and moral development. Over the years, student affairs developed these areas more deeply alongside social movements and political advancements for human rights. Quaye et al.’s (2018) SIRJD document is one of the most recent demonstrations of some student affairs leaders’ desire to incorporate moral and political values inside the work they pursue. Increasingly, student affairs master’s degree curricula have incorporated courses covering topics such as institutional diversity and self-reflexive social-identity development in areas like racial consciousness (Dam, 2014; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008;).

The SPPVs gave philosophical direction to student affairs staff and their professional associations (Evans & Reason, 2001). It supplied student affairs staff on the ground a rationale with which to explain their roles within the college student experience. It is possible that these documents on one hand strengthened student affairs’ ability to expand their scope and secure larger financial resources that allowed decades of practitioners the ability to enact educational activities with students. With hindsight, some may wonder, though, if this very rationale that supported student affairs’ expansion to flourish also created higher barriers for student affairs’ inclusion in the formal academic curriculum.
Evidence suggests that the figurative barriers to academic inclusion have been lowered through various means. Higher education leaders (ACPA, 1994; Keeling, 2004; Kezar & Lester, 2009; Nesheim et al., 2007; Schroeder, 1999) encouraged partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs to emerge in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. NASPA created a knowledge community called “Student Affairs Partnering with Academic Affairs” and cited the group as a knowledge community with one of the highest memberships in the association (NASPA). Working alongside a group of scholars and a decades-long trajectory of publications that deepened his understanding of student engagement (Kuh & Schuh, 1991; Kuh et al., 2005), Kuh (2005) widened the partnership possibilities for both faculty and student affairs staff through his research that highlighted high impact practices (HIPs) for student learning. Some HIPs are even directly related to locations within higher education that defy the traditional division of labor between faculty and staff—the first-year seminar (FYS).

The first HIP on Kuh’s list was FYS courses (Kuh, 2005). Kuh (2008) suggested that “the highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students’ intellectual and practical competencies” (p.21). Despite this academic curricular emphasis, FYS courses have never been uniform since their inception, their variation has helped diversify what is taught and by whom. Barefoot (1992) classified FYS courses into five distinct types, ranging from academic-oriented courses designed to prepare students for college-level writing composition to the extended orientation style that emphasizes teaching students about campus resources, community building, and other topics.
Survey researchers from the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (NRC) documented a prevalence of student affairs educators serving as classroom instructors for credit-bearing FYS courses (Young & Hopp. 2014; Skipper, 2017; Young, 2019). The NRC’s data indicated a blur of the separation between academic affairs and staff/student affairs. Young’s (2019) report also indicated that many institutions who responded to his survey required all students to take an FYS course. Of those institutions, 71% of reported using student affairs educators to instruct the courses. These data demonstrate that student affairs’ contribution to student learning occurs inside the classroom instead of only outside the classroom. The literature on student affairs’ contributions to student learning, however, includes little about student affairs educators serving as classroom instructors. The lack of scholarship on student affairs’ classroom pedagogy is a gap in the literature that is a problem because it may perpetuate the false idea that student affairs educators do not contribute to undergraduates’ learning through classroom instruction. Research must fill this gap to provide a more accurate base of knowledge about student learning in higher education.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study is to explore the pedagogical practices of student affairs educators in the classroom. Using critical hermeneutic phenomenology, I will study the perceptions of student affairs educators’ lived experiences creating and maintaining a pedagogy for classroom teaching and learning.

**Research Questions**

The specific research questions include:
1. What are the lived experiences of student affairs educators developing and using a pedagogy for the classroom setting?

2. How, if at all, do student affairs educators perceive the critical and culturally engaging characteristics of their pedagogy in the classroom?

3. What are the perceptions of student affairs educators creating and maintaining pedagogy in the context of their institutional setting and the landscape of higher education?

**Overview of Research Design**

I will conduct this study using critical hermeneutic phenomenology. Phenomenological research design seeks to understand the lived experience of its participants (Husserl, 1962; Heidegger, 1982). A researcher seeks out data within individual interviews or focus groups to portray a shared experience within the conscious world and day-to-day life of its participants. Within this approach, the researcher assumes that participants share an essence of commonality due to the familiarity of a shared experience. Through rich descriptions, a phenomenological researcher can contribute a deeper understanding of a specific experience to scholarly literature. Within phenomenology, researchers assume that the participants are the holders of valuable knowledge needed to understand the study’s research questions.

Phenomenology has not had, nor does it today, require an approach using critical theory. I utilized critical constructivism as informed by Kincheloe (2005) and Darder (2015) as my paradigm of inquiry that also influenced my methodology to include a critical approach. The critical constructivist approach helped me design the collection and
analysis of my data to account for structures of power and oppression with the goal of scholarship that contributed to efforts of social change and liberation.

**Rationale and Significance**

Student affairs’ contributions to the experience of students in college was originally found in outside-the-classroom settings (Evans & Reason, 2001; Long, 2012). Researchers (Young & Hopp, 2014, Skipper, 2017) have demonstrated, however, that student affairs educators serve as instructors inside the classroom frequently. Little research has studied the approach to teaching and learning taken by student affairs educators when they serve as instructors in a classroom setting. This study addressed the gap in the literature by using critical hermeneutic phenomenology to explore the experiences of student affairs educators who have created and maintained a pedagogy for their roles as instructors in the classroom.

The question of student affairs’ role in higher education has persisted through its roughly 100 years of organized existence as evidenced by Penney’s (1969) concerns, higher education leaders’ call for student affairs and academic affairs strengthened partnerships (ACPA, 1994), and recent editorial discourse critiquing the “shadow curriculum of student affairs” (McCaughey & Welsh, 2021). This study is significant to the ongoing conversation about student affairs’ educational contributions to the undergraduate learning experience.

As a result of this research, the broad field of higher education may have a richer understanding of the pedagogical approaches used by student affairs educators. A stronger pedagogical understanding of student affairs may lead to deeper partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs, improving the services provided to
students. Such partnerships may allow for more robust advancement of students’ intellectual, cultural, social, emotional, vocational, and physical development. The significance of this research may lead to both environmental enhancements of students’ experiences in college as well as an increase in outcomes such as persistence towards graduation.

**Researcher Positionality**

I was prepared to approach this research due to my relevant educational experiences. I have completed a Master of Education degree specializing in higher education and student affairs administration. My academic training and socialization in the field of student affairs during my master’s program readied me to reflect on the theoretical and practical matters of teaching and learning through a student affairs lens. I have continued to specialize my education in the field while seeking a Doctor of Education degree in student affairs administration. Doing so, I have immersed myself in the contemporary scholarly literature of student affairs.

My professional experience also prepared me well to conduct this research. I began my student affairs work experience as a para-professional during my master’s program working in both academic affairs and student affairs. I served as a graduate assistant in academic services and academic advising as well as serving as a community aid in residential life. Working in both academic and student affairs during my para-professional years established a strong foundation for me in both areas of higher education. I then served in residential life for six years with progressive responsibility in a student affairs environment. I have most recently switched to academic affairs where I served as a leadership team member for an office responsible for providing academic
advising services and instructing the campus’s first-year experience course. That role was housed within academic affairs but incorporated student affairs research and practices into our delivery of academic advising and FYS course instruction. Now, I am about to begin a new role dedicated to academic support for students on academic probation. As such, my professional experience prepares me well to embark on a study examining the student affairs field with a focus on classroom instruction and academic affairs.

I bring perspectives to this research that reflect the internalized socialization of my social identities such as my White racial identity. I used a critical constructivist paradigm of inquiry, detailed further in Chapter III, that required me as the researcher to contextualize my study and its results within structures of power and oppression. In pursuit of that goal, my Whiteness presented a potential barrier to deeply examining racism within the study’s design or its results due to defense mechanisms and racial discomfort that is characteristic of White fragility (DiAngelo, 2018). Other privileged identities such as my current socio-economic status (SES), temporary ability, and citizenship status posed similar threats to my role as researcher for this study. My identities of religion, gender, sexuality, and SES-of-origin provided me with personal perspectives of marginalization that may have increased my ability to identify the influence of bias in the data or analysis.

**Definition of Key Terms**

The following terms are ones used in this study that either do not have general understanding across the literature or may reasonably be interpreted differently from reader to reader. I will define each to provide understanding for their meaning in this research study.
Pedagogy, in this study, refers to the practical and conceptual approach teachers use to enact their teaching philosophy and foster student learning. As Alexander (2013) described, pedagogy is the bigger picture of teaching—what teachers do and why they do it.

Critical pedagogy, in this study, refers to the methods and concepts of teaching used to identify and subvert structures of social power and oppression for the purpose of social change. In this study, critical pedagogy will refer directly to the academic and professional implementation of the field as influenced of Paulo Freire’s (1970) Pedagogy of the Oppressed and hooks’s (1994) Teaching to Transgress. I will review the influential authors and concepts of critical pedagogy thoroughly in the next chapter.

Holistic, in this study, refers to the multiple dimensions of development and wellness humans and, therefore, students possess. My use of the term holistic includes social, emotional, intellectual, occupational, physical, financial, environmental, spiritual dimensions of development and wellness (SAMHSA, 2016). In a higher education and student affairs context, I will reference the influence of ACPA’s (1937, 1949) Student Personnel Point of View as a foundational orientation to the concept of holistic student support and learning.

Academic affairs, in this study, refers to branches of higher education organizational structure housing the faculty body and administrative offices directly supporting the functions of student coursework. This group includes all academic departments (of all majors, minors, and programs of study), registrar, academic advising services, academic support services, and more. While a clear definition of academic affairs is simple when it comes to academic departments, the administrative offices
supporting academic functions may have a blend of characteristics between academic affairs and student affairs, such as staff educated or previously serving in student affairs, organizational reporting structures that do not cleanly split between academic and student affairs, or practical and conceptual practices that are influenced by student affairs. For the sake of this study, the process of narrowly defining which offices fall within one area or the other is not manageable. Rather, the purpose of defining academic affairs is to identify individuals, tasks, and departments of the university that primarily serve the functions of a university in granting students’ degrees through coursework, academic requirements, and academic evaluation.

*Student affairs,* in this study, refers to the branches of higher education organization structure housing individuals, functions, and offices primarily serving the needs, rights, and responsibilities of students outside the demands of their degree requirements. These areas are comprised of a wide array of roles and offices including deans of students; diversity, equity, and inclusion educational initiatives; residential life; cultural and identity centers; student conduct; new student orientation and programming; student life/student involvement; leadership and civic engagement; student programming; and more.

*Student affairs educator,* in this study, refers to the individuals who have been educated through the academic discipline of student affairs administration and/or have been professionally trained through work experience in student affairs. McCoy et al. (2020) explained their usage of the term *student affairs practitioner-educator* in reference broadly to those “whose primary roles involve student engagement and development” (p.28). I chose to use the term student affairs educator instead of student affairs.
professional/personnel/practitioner to align with the literature’s growing comfort with identifying ourselves as educators, or those who valuably contribute to student learning in higher education.

*Student affairs pedagogy,* in this study, refers to practical and conceptual approaches to teaching and fostering student learning as identified and utilized by student affairs educators. As this term is not yet established in the literature, the results of this study’s data will help provide direction for future understanding of this term.

**Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is divided into five chapters with this introduction serving as the first. In Chapter II, I will review literature relevant to this study’s purpose and research questions with attention to the prevalence of student affairs educators in the classroom, critical pedagogy, student development theory, and influential documents in student affairs. Then, I will explain the methods of this study in Chapter III. The results of the study are shared through five major themes in Chapter IV. Lastly, Chapter V concludes this dissertation with a discussion of the results relevance to the study’s research questions, interpretations of the results, implications and recommendations to the field, and suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the following chapter, I will review five dimensions of the literature that are relevant to this research study. First, I will explore the role of student affairs educators inside classroom settings with a particular focus on first-year seminar (FYS) courses. Second, I will introduce critical pedagogy as the first component of the conceptual framework of my dissertation. The review of critical pedagogy will profile the work of Freire (1970), hooks (1994), Grande (2008), and Rendón (2009). Third, I will review student development theory in student affairs literature including a critical interpretation of the literature over time. Fourth, I will then review student affairs’ foundational documents as artifacts that provide insight into the pedagogical influences on student affairs educators including the Student Personnel Point of View, The Student Learning Imperative, and Learning Reconsidered I and II. Finally, I will conclude the review of student affairs documents with an overview of Quaye et al.’s (2019) A Bold Vision Forward: A Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization and Museus’ (2013) culturally engaging campus environments model and position the two as the remaining components of my study’s conceptual framework.

Student Affairs Educators in the Classroom

Foundational documents such as The Student Personnel Point of View chronicle the bifurcation of faculty as classroom educators and student affairs professionals as outside-the-classroom educators (ACE, 1937, 1949). That strict division of labor,
however, may be more of a myth than reality. For as long as institutions of higher education have been open in the United States, in fact, faculty members have been appointed to administrator roles overseeing both operational and educational purviews of responsibility (McClellan, 2009). Since its emergence as a field in the early 20th century, student affairs educators have largely occupied roles in out-of-classroom learning environments such as multicultural affairs, residence life, orientation programs, academic advising, and more. Like their faculty counterparts, though, they have also found themselves on “the other side” of the proverbial house as classroom instructors.

The most well-documented example of student affairs educators serving as classroom instructors within existing literature is first-year seminar courses (FYS; Skipper, 2017; Young & Hopp, 2014). In the early 1990s, colleges and universities implemented the first FYS courses aimed largely at the development of academic skills such as college-level reading and writing (Barefoot, 1992). Within the first few years of FYS development, the field expanded to include general life skills and topics relevant to college student development. As such, many student affairs educators have instructed these FYS courses. Other examples of student affairs educators in the classroom might include courses designed to correspond with service-learning or civic engagement activities; courses designed to support college transition for population-specific cohort programs such as those serving first-generation, low-income (FGLI) students; and courses designed to prepare students intellectually and behaviorally for the demands of student-leadership in residence life and housing. Since the literature on student affairs educators’ participation as classroom instructors within FYS is the most robust, the following section will review the literature on this topic.
First-Year Seminars and Student Affairs Educators

Barefoot (1992) was the first to categorize FYS courses into distinctive types. Her research categorized the four most common FYS types that have been offered on college campuses and studied in the literature over the past three decades. The four types include (a) extended orientation, (b) academic seminar with uniform content, (c) academic seminar with variable content, and (d) hybrid (Skipper, 2017).

Barefoot’s (1992) research described the following types to help scholars and practitioners understand the overlap and differences between the various types of FYS. Both academic seminar types (uniform content and variable content) are related to each other through their primary mission of intellectually orienting a student to the collegiate nature of academic inquiry and exploration. These academic seminar types range widely as to the inclusion of other aspects of student development and general orientation to college life within their curricula. In contrast, the extended orientation type is primarily focused on adding other areas such as social, relational, and emotional development to the curriculum alongside intellectual life. Additionally, the extended orientation type often shares a kinship with new student orientation activities by merging the learning during orientation at the very beginning of the school year into their first semester or first-year. The extended orientation FYS courses use this connection to either deepen or reenforce learning material previously delivered during orientation activities. The hybrid category refers to courses that are a mixture of academic and extended orientation types.

The NRC administers a survey every three years to collect data on first-year experience programming, including FYS courses. The data from this survey offers a look into the way extended orientation FYS courses have created a bridge between academic
affairs and student affairs as two administrative branches who both contribute to students’ educational experiences in the classroom.

The NRC’s most recently published sets of results (Young & Hopp, 2014; Skipper, 2017) reported that extended orientation FYS were the most common type offered at higher education institutions. Young and Hopp’s (2014) data from this survey reported that 71% of responding institutions indicated they utilized student affairs educators to instruct their extended orientation style FYS courses. Furthermore, Skipper’s (2017) survey results from the NRC reported that 94.5% of their participating institutions indicated that their extended orientation FYS courses took concepts that were often covered within student affairs initiatives outside of the classroom and included them in their syllabi. Of that 94.5%, 85.2% offered those extended orientation FYS courses as credit-bearing with graded assignments and final letter grades. With such prevalence, extended orientation courses have become an important example of student affairs entering the formal academic life within higher education by way of serving as instructors in the classroom for FYS courses (Skipper, 2017).

Extended orientation FYS curricula often include topics such as building students’ familiarity with campus resources/services, time-management skill development, academic and career planning, and personal development. Barefoot’s (1992) research findings indicated these courses also included topics on equality such as racial and gender justice. Additionally, many extended orientation FYS offer opportunities to deepen learning through real-world applications, with 28.6% incorporating a service-learning component into the curriculum (Skipper, 2017).
In summary, the existing research demonstrates the commonness of student affairs educators as classroom instructors, but little about the creation and maintenance of their pedagogy, or approach to teaching and learning, in the classroom setting. Given the scarcity of research directly examining student affairs educators’ classroom pedagogies, the remainder of this chapter explores what is known about the various influences on student affairs educators’ pedagogies. The remaining content is divided into three main categories: conceptual framework of critical pedagogy, college student development theory, and foundational documents in student affairs.

**Critical Pedagogy as Influence on Student Affairs and Conceptual Framework**

I have chosen to use critical pedagogy as the conceptual framework for this dissertation. I will use the idea of a conceptual framework to refer to the core set of beliefs I have chosen to bring into this study about the nature of reality, the construction of knowledge, and an orientation towards the design of research. I will use concepts and characteristics of critical pedagogy throughout this dissertation. The following section describes critical pedagogy’s major scholarly figures, its political history, the salient concepts and characteristics constructed by each scholar, and its development over time. This deep dive into critical pedagogy will serve as the context from which the reader may understand all subsequent references to critical pedagogy concepts and characteristics throughout the remainder of my dissertation.

Over the 20th and 21st centuries, critical pedagogy scholars widely contributed to the body of literature on teaching and learning (Darder, 2019; Freire, 2000; Giroux, 2013; hooks, 1994; McLaren, 2002). The origins of critical pedagogy stem from Marxism with further development taking place at The Frankfurt School in the early 20th century. The
dialectical revolution in Western thought by German academics such as Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse incubated a divergent mode of learning that broke away from the capitalist-influenced Enlightenment era (Darder, 2019). This collection of thinkers in the early 20th century used Marx’s sharp critiques of capitalism with concepts like alienation of workers from profits and exploitation of labor to articulate what would soon become a foundational principle within critical pedagogy—dialectical thought (McClaren, 2002). They considered the nature of critical theory, and the dialectical, to be a figurative and tangible grasping of the relationships that exist in society between the particular and the whole—or the self and environments. These German academics, the early critical pedagogues, believed juxtaposing these elements (particular/whole or self/environment) made it possible to discover contradictions and, thus, identify inequity.

Influenced by Marx, The Frankfurt School thinkers recognized capitalism not simply as an economic structure but as a societal superstructure that influenced culture, politics, and even cognition. For example, both Marxism and the early critical pedagogues analyzed capitalism’s superstructure as the architect of a society where people were implicitly and explicitly taught to be competitive, anxious, conformist, and politically complacent. Additionally, they incorporated the enlightenment era’s development of positivism as an overlapping barrier or threat to critical and dialectical thinking. Darder et al. (2019) commented on the adversarial relationship between positivism/enlightenment and critical/dialectical thought when suggesting, “dialectical thought replaces positivist forms of social inquiry. That is, the logic of predictability, verifiability, transferability, and operationalism is replaced by a dialectical mode of
thinking that stresses the historical, relational, and normative dimensions of social inquiry and knowledge” (p. 49).

The following sections explore the journey of critical pedagogy past the 19th century’s Marxist ideologies and 20th century’s germinations of dialectical thinking. The late 20th and early 21st centuries saw the ideology and practice of critical pedagogy travel around the world, expand greatly, and also face critique. Each section considers one author or pedagogical movement closely as a single entity while also examining the following authors’ similarities and differences across time, place, positionality, and worldviews. These reviews on the development of critical pedagogy not only serve as a valuable contribution towards the literature review of higher education pedagogy, but they also serve the purpose of defining the conceptual framework for this dissertation. I will begin with the work of Paulo Freire as a prominent figure within critical pedagogy before moving to the works of bell hooks, Laura Rendón, and Sandy Grande. Within each section, I will examine the direct connection between the authors’ work and its influence upon the understanding of pedagogy within American higher education and student affairs.

**Paulo Freire and the Pedagogy of the Oppressed**

Freire’s (1970/2000, 1994, 1998) scholarly writing on pedagogy, most notably through the book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, built a bridge connecting the early chapters of critical pedagogy characterized by Marxist thought and The Frankfurt School to the next era of its influence on teaching and learning in the 20th and 21st centuries. Freire decided to devote himself to adult literacy among farm workers in rural Brazil and integrated topics about the students’ political conditions in their struggle for labor rights
and protection into literacy lessons. McLaren (1997) drew the connection from Marxist ideology to Freire’s teaching work commenting that his education style “was anti-authoritarian, dialogical and interactive, and put power into the hands of students and workers. Most important, Freirean pedagogy put social and political analysis of everyday life at the center of the curriculum” (p. 150).

Freire’s origins of education with adult literacy among laborers became a foundation for his conception of education and oppression. The following section reviews core Freirean concepts relevant to the overall review of literature regarding pedagogy, student affairs, and higher education. Five topics written within Freire’s (1970/2000, 1994, 1998) texts are relevant to my review of the literature for this dissertation: (a) banking model of education; (b) problem-posing education; (c) dehumanization/humanization; (d) dialogue and praxis; and (e) critical consciousness.

**Banking Model of Education**

Freire (1970) observed the method of traditional education around him and critiqued it in his writing. He coined the banking model of education as referring to an approach of teaching in which the teacher holds an imbalance of power over the student. Freire likened this manner to one the oppressor takes toward their relationship with the oppressed. He criticized the banking model’s assumption that the teacher is positioned as the owner of knowledge which is characterized by objectivity and singularity of truth. The ownership of this knowledge establishes power over the students who are positioned as “empty receptacles” to be filled with the gifts bestowed upon them from the teacher (Freire, 2000, p. 72). Freire chose his words precisely when he coined this model in terms of banking. He believed likening this mode of education to the transactional relationship
between a customer and teller at a bank was an apt analogy. As he saw it, the teacher
made deposits into the students who were perceived as passive, empty containers. They
were then tasked with absorbing, holding, and reissuing that knowledge as exact
withdrawal from their bank if called upon to do so.

Freire’s (1970) banking model holds historical significance within educational
literature because it added an explicit consideration of power and oppression. Freire
considered the banking model as projecting absolute ignorance onto its students and
likened such an approach to the characteristics found within the ideology of oppression
that requires unquestioned submission of the oppressed to the oppressor. In Pedagogy of
the Oppressed, Freire called on society to reconcile the power relationship between
teacher and student in order to make education liberatory in itself and to function as a
vehicle towards liberation in the student’s environment. Freire’s identification and
critique of the banking model influenced pedagogy in late 20th and early 21st century
scholars such as the works of Laura Rendón’s (2009) sentipensante (sensing/thinking)
pedagogy. Rendón’s work will be reviewed alongside other the works of similar
pedagogues later in this chapter.

Problem-Posing Education

In a direct response to the banking model, Freire endorsed an alternative method
of teaching and learning he labeled problem-posing. Viewing teacher and student as co-
investigators of knowledge, Freire (1970) considered problem-posing as a “constant
unveiling of reality” through the “posing of problems of human beings in their relation
with the world” (p. 79, 81). Freire suggested that this method would change the role of
student and teacher. Whereas the banking model prescribed the relationship between
student and teacher as fixed, imbalanced, and unidirectional, problem-posing positioned the student as also a teacher and the teacher as also a student. Under those conditions of multi-positionality, the students and teacher could engage in dialogue to use problem-posing education as a “practice of freedom” where they became “jointly responsible for a process in which all grow” (Freire, 2000, p. 79).

The foundation of problem-posing is based upon a dialectical approach consistent with the 19th and early 20th century scholars of critical pedagogy through the Frankfurt School (McLaren, 2019). Fundamentally, problem-posing education was founded on the idea of students observing contradictions in their environment and inquiring about those incongruences. In the dialectical tradition of critical pedagogy, problem-posing emphasized a reorganization of power in society. In contrast to the injustices of the banking model, Freire believed in the following assumptions of the problem-posing method: (a) students hold knowledge through their lived experiences, (b) students produce knowledge through their engagement with education, and (c) students do not accept knowledge unconditionally but rather are actively interpreting the nature of knowledge truth and perspective through its incongruences.

**Dehumanization and Humanization**

Freire (1970) opened his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, with a contemplation on humanity itself, laying the foundation of his understanding of the relationship between oppression and methods of teaching and learning. Three essential components comprised Freire’s underpinnings of dehumanization and humanization. First, Freire asserted that dehumanization was not an inevitable outcome of human nature but rather an indication that some individuals made choices to become oppressors and actively dehumanized
others into those that were oppressed. Second, Freire (2000) believed the process by which dehumanization occurred and the existence of the dehumanized oppressed “marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also (in a different way) those who have stolen it” (p. 44). Last, Freire advised that, in seeking to regain stolen humanity, the oppressed must not become oppressors of the oppressors. The aim, rather, was to seek the restoration of humanity for both. Such a concept reflected the thinking of Black and feminist scholars of Freire’s time, such as Audre Lorde’s (1983) intersectionality-focused essay, *The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House*. The relationship between Freire’s concepts and American Black feminist scholars will be explored further while examining the work of bell hooks later in this literature review.

**Dialogue and Praxis**

Once Freire (1970) established his perceptions of oppression, its consequences on education, and the importance of utilizing real world problems within teaching and learning, he narrowed down further on how to accomplish a liberatory education. He proposed dialogue and praxis as two interconnected components of what were to happen within a successful attempt at problem-posing education. Freire considered the core element of dialogue to be the word and argued that, to communicate an authentic word, one must successfully complete the word’s two constitutive components—reflection and action. Freire coined the cyclical relationship of action and reflection as “praxis.” An attempt at one without the other was insufficient to Freire. Dialogue without action would lead to what he called verbalism whereas action without reflection he referred to as activism. Thus, according to Freire, authentic dialogue was praxis. Further, he believed those who engaged in praxis transformed the world.
Critical Consciousness

Freire (1970) coined the term critical consciousness, or conscientização, as a culmination of the preceding four topics. In the same way he believed praxis was cyclical rather than linear, his ideas of critical consciousness did not assume any person could reach an ending point. Rather, critical consciousness was a process of ongoing, iterative engagement with all components within the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire was inspired by Frantz Fanon (1952), a Black post-colonial theorist whose publication, *Black Skin, White Masks*, detailed the dialectical experience of subjugated Black people in the West Indies who learned to see the contradictions of their surroundings and navigate Whiteness within a Black body through language.

In the dialectical tradition of critical pedagogy, Freire (2018) considered critical consciousness as the process of “decoding” situations in the environment through the “deepening of the attitude of awareness” (p. 105, 109). According to Freire (2000), problem-posing education along with dialogue and praxis could allow students access to this consciousness and “exist in a dialectical relationship between the determination of limits and their own freedom” (p. 99). Thus, the experience of building a critical consciousness was a process of empowerment.

Critical Pedagogy and Higher Education in the Late 20th and Early 21st Centuries

In the decades following Freire’s (1970) first release of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, pedagogues and relevant cultural theorists incorporated, interpreted, and critiqued his work. The following section reviews the landscape of critical pedagogy before and after the turn of the millennium through the writings of Black feminist thinkers (hooks, 1994), social justice educator scholars (Adams et al., 2007; Landreman,
bell hooks

The scholar most commonly associated with Freire’s work has been feminist and cultural theorist, bell hooks. While hooks has a wide library of publications on many topics, her trilogy series of books (1994, 2003, 2010) about teaching chronicled her interpretation of critical pedagogy. The first entry into her pedagogical series was *Teaching to Transgress* (1994). Educational scholars (Carolissen et al., 2011; Specia & Osman, 2015) characterize this book by her auto-biographical voice that provided accessibility to a wide range of readers reflecting the inclusive nature and personal story-based approach to education she promoted. Remarking on hooks’s auto-biographical writing style, Carolissen et al. (2011) commented that, “This narrative technique is powerful because it allows insight into the content and process of particular experiences of marginalization and also illustrates how the personal is fundamentally political” (p. 158).

After the first book, hooks (2003, 2010) published two additional related books, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* and *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom*. These books expanded on themes covered in *Teaching to Transgress* and continued hooks’s focus on storytelling, the concept of the personal as political, the experiences of marginalization in American classrooms, and the balance of conceptual ruminations on pedagogy alongside practice-oriented guidance for teachers. As Savonick (2021) reflected, “hooks gave us permission to take teaching seriously, then showed us how to do it well” (p. 7).
As a result of those pedagogical books, hooks served as a bridge for Freire’s version of critical pedagogy from Brazil of the 1970s to an American context at the turn of the century, often citing Freire throughout each book (Specia & Osman, 2015). The context of time, place, and social identity (namely race and gender) through hooks’s often auto-biographical writing was a defining characteristic of her work distinguishing hooks’s work as an expansion on, not an exact replica of, Freire’s writing. Critical pedagogy educators in the United States commonly use this approach of storytelling and auto-biographical reflection today, marking the evolution of critical pedagogy through her influence.

In *Teaching Critical Thinking*, hooks (2010) solidified her approach to critical pedagogy called *engaged pedagogy*. hooks embraced Freirean concepts such as problem-posing education, a rejection of the banking model, and the utilization of dialogue in her writing. According to hooks, the teacher was not the sole member responsible for the leadership of learning in a classroom. “Expanding heart and mind” she wrote, “engaged pedagogy makes us better learners because it asks us to embrace and explore the practice of knowing together, to see intelligence as resource that can strengthen our common good” (p. 22). Thus, hooks shared firmly in Freire’s belief that education was a communal process between teacher and learner.

Throughout hooks’s pedagogical writing, hooks told auto-biographical stories of her experiences as a teacher being a Black woman in the United States. She used her personal stories to highlight the existence of sexism and anti-Black racism in American classrooms and the way she considered the role of feminism and racial civil rights in her teaching. She wrote accounts of her experiences, such as the integration of Black and
White school systems as a child and the instances of White students challenging her expertise in the classroom. By doing so, hooks role-modeled two important characteristics of American critical pedagogy: storytelling and positionality within a diverse learning environment. hooks’s writing contextualized a Freirean dialectical approach to critical pedagogy within an educational environment of the United States where her concept of self-actualization (1994, 2010) required a knowing of one’s own experience and the attention to power differentials within the classroom in real time. Such approaches to critical pedagogy have been incorporated into educational practices within higher education and student affairs, namely in the fields of intergroup dialogue (IGD) and social justice education (SJE).

**Higher Education Applications of Freire and hooks: Social Justice Education and Intergroup Dialogue**

Critical pedagogy scholars influenced the development by higher education scholars (Accapadi, 2007; Adams et al., 2007; Bell et al., 2016; Nash et al., 2012; Sleeter & Bernal, 2004) of practice-oriented tools for facilitating “diversity,” “multicultural,” or “social justice” workshops. The anthologies of social justice education (SJE) resources edited by Adams et al. (2007) and Bell et al. (2016), Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, directly addressed their audience of higher education professionals and educators. Those volumes included a balanced combination of information about a given system of oppression and instructional methods for teachers and facilitators to teach students. A wide variety of SJE scholar-practitioners were cited in those volumes such as early SJE publications like McIntosh’s (1988) invisible knapsack of White privilege activity and more theory-oriented tools for SJE instruction such as Harro’s (2005) Cycle of Liberation
and Cycle of Socialization. These SJE texts offered student affairs educators strategies to teach college students about social identity and systems of power in lesson planning and facilitation such as using Harro’s (2005) model to identify how students have been previously socialized into reproducing power at its status-quo and making choices to subvert that part towards liberation. As such, SJE has served as one example of how critical pedagogy elements such as problem-posing and critical consciousness have been put into practice by student affairs educators. Another example is intergroup dialogue.

During the same time period, other scholars (Clark, 2005; Gurin et al., 2013; Nagda et al., 2009; Zuniga et al., 2002) collaborated closely to develop the foundations of intergroup dialogue. While this strategy was designed for use in organizations beyond higher education, the literature provided strong examples of its implementation and evaluation in higher education settings (Alimo et al., 2002; Lopez & Zuniga, 2010). Often in response to campus incidents of bias or prejudice, student affairs sought guidance on how to offer direct support to their affected students while creating a learning opportunity for all. The intergroup dialogue method provided higher education and student affairs professionals with instructions on how to facilitate sensitive and political conversations with students on campus (Gurin et al., 2013).

The concept of dialogue from Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, while similar in name, is not an exact copy within the intergroup dialogue process. Still, intergroup dialogue (Nagda et al., 2009) includes components from both Freire’s and hooks’s writings on critical pedagogy. Freire’s concepts of theory and practice, or praxis, and problem-posing education are embedded within the intergroup dialogue process. Additionally, hooks’s American-focused considerations of positionality, North American
contexts of race and racism, and introspective storytelling for enhanced understanding across difference are prominently featured across intergroup dialogue instructional materials (Maxwell et al., 2011). Intergroup dialogue firmly situated its practice within a tradition of a dialectal approach, aligning with critical pedagogues from the Frankfurt school through Freire and hooks.

**Indigenous and Non-Western Influences on Higher Education Pedagogy**

Some scholars contributed to critical pedagogy literature using a lens that highlighted ways of knowing outside Western viewpoints. Grande’s (2008) red pedagogy and Rendón’s (2009) sentipensante (sensing/thinking) pedagogy provided relevant examples. Both authors’ pedagogies offered an alignment with the tradition of critical pedagogy. Grande’s work offers a more direct critique and divergence while Rendón’s work offers an intentional expansion.

*Sandy Grande*

Grande’s (2008, 2015) work took a direct opposition to the cultural, psychological, and murderous violence of boarding schools that North American settler colonizers enacted upon Indigenous communities under the disguise of education and bolstered by religion (Christianity). Through such a historical lens, Grande’s (2008) *Red Pedagogy* rationalized that “Native students and educators deserve a pedagogy that cultivates a sense of collective agency as well as a praxis that targets the dismantling of colonialism, helping them navigate the excesses of dominant power and revitalization of Indigenous communities” (p. 236). Critical pedagogy techniques fall short if they are not specific about decolonization, but red pedagogy contextualizes learning in the personal and political contexts of indigenous teachers and students’ lives.
Grande (2008) argued that Indigenous scholars have spent less time than other academics steeped in the scholarly community of critical pedagogy with their attention on “the social and political urgencies of their own community… against such immediate needs, engagement in abstract theory seems indulgent (a luxury and privilege of the academic elite)” (p. 236). Due to this disparity, Grande believed critical pedagogy and Indigenous scholarship were relationally distant to one another where the former existed too far into the abstract without engaging in the tangibility and decolonial context of the indigenous academic pursuits she sought. She identified red pedagogy as a step towards bridging the gap between Indigenous scholars and critical theories of education like critical pedagogy. In pursuit of bridging that gap, Grande entered the critical pedagogy scholarship to apply critiques through a red pedagogy lens. Her approach to these critiques included acknowledging critical pedagogy’s Eurocentric origins, and continued tradition, as a western product. In contrast, she noted that Red Pedagogy could poise future generations to cultivate decolonized concepts of land, sovereignty, democracy, and citizenship.

Grande (2008) challenged a viewpoint of widely-cited critical pedagogy author, Peter McLaren, whose publications are often cited by contemporary, American critical pedagogy scholars such as Darder. Writing about the nature of critical subjectivity, McLaren’s (1997) argued the goal of critical consciousness was to occupy a figurative liminal space of in-betweenness and placelessness. Grande analyzed McLaren’s notions of placelessness as ones that reflected a western, colonizer detachment of person/community to place. For Grande, Red Pedagogy inextricably integrates critical consciousness with place and land, rather than separating them. Her critique illuminated
the importance that the role of place and land holds for an Indigenous scholar in the context of an academic community rooted in colonization. Placelessness, to Grande, did not have the same consequences for McLaren who had not experienced the United States’ crimes against Indigenous nations.

Grande (2008) proposed improving critical pedagogy concepts by incorporating red pedagogy requiring “a construct that is geographically rooted and historically placed” (p. 240). To accomplish that goal, Grande asserted that red pedagogy needs to: (a) be fundamentally rooted in Indigenous knowledge and praxis, (b) promote decolonization and Indigenous sovereignty, (c) and cultivate collective agency and hope (Grande, 2008, 2015).

Laura Rendón

While Rendón’s (1994) validation theory is cited widely as a major contributor to college student development theory, her later work on pedagogy offers this literature review valuable theoretical and practical concepts to consider. Rendón (2009) greeted readers at the start of sentipensante with the hope of assisting the “transformation of teaching and learning in higher education so that it is unitive in nature, emphasizing the balanced, harmonic relationship between two concepts, such as intellectualism and intuition, the learner and learning material, and Western and non-Western ways of knowing” (p.1). Rendón’s work emphasized a reconsideration of epistemology, or ways of knowing, in the teaching and learning methods within higher education. She described dominant westernized epistemologies as ones that valued separation rather than wholeness, evidenced by separating the student from the subject they were learning or separating the mind from intuition in favor of logic and reason.
In addition to epistemology, Rendón (2009) considered ontology, or an understanding of the nature of being, through an Indigenous lens of wholeness, challenging western influences on education. Calling upon characteristics of Indigenous cultures from the Mayas and Aztecs to isiZulu and Aboriginal, Rendón (2009) wrote about her understanding of Indigenous ontology that expresses the “nature of humanity as seeking belonging, as being in community with others and with the world” (p.65). Rendón did not suggest that Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies are a monolith across nations and lands. Instead, she contrasted her understanding of the overarching ontological concepts within Indigenous cultures against western ones to showcase her more nuanced perceptions. For example, she borrowed an insight from Moodie (2004) that highlighted ontological differences through reimagining Descartes’ famous saying of “‘I think therefore I am’” (p.67). In this statement, the act of thinking substantiates the existence of one’s being. Rendón offered a contrasting viewpoint by changing the phrase to, ‘I belong, therefore I am’” (Moodie, 2004, p. 67 as cited in Rendón, 2009). In the edited version of Descartes’ phrase, thinking is replaced with belonging (to one’s community and place) indicating that existence has meaning rather than prioritizing the individualized experiences of thought.

Rendón (2009) described her work as a “new dream field of pedagogy” employing an “integrative, consonant pedagogy rooted in social justice” (p. 27, 68). For Rendón, integrative referred to the “unitive elements of what appear to be solely oppositional concepts” and consonance referred to “the harmony that exists between two complementary concepts” (p. 65). She situated these concepts within the tradition of several pedagogues, feminists, and theorists, including Freire and hooks. Rendón cited
the influence of hooks’s engaged pedagogy on her writing through hooks’s unification of students’ lived experiences and their classroom learning.

Freire’s concepts of critical consciousness and praxis also influenced Rendón through her hope for higher education learning to embrace spirituality as a component of seeking social justice. Within Rendón’s explanation of what spiritual knowledge meant for a higher education setting, she described that educators need skills of dialectical learning need to recognize inequities in the environment. She further warned away from fostering self-development in students without a connection to the common good—an alignment with Freire’s concept of verbalism.

Overall, Rendón’s (2009) scholarly and cultural contributions widened the existing literature on student affairs pedagogy. She expanded the epistemological and ontological frames of critical pedagogy, as articulated by Freire and hooks, to incorporate the unification of seemingly disparate concepts and the balancing of complementary ones. Her work exists at a unique crossroads of critical pedagogy, student development theory, and the study of teaching and learning in higher education.

**Summary of Critical Pedagogy, Looking Towards College Student Development Theory**

Critical pedagogy stems from the 19th century Marxist origins, emerging from the Frankfurt school in the 20th century and leading to its most prominent author, Paulo Freire. The concepts Freire (1970) outlined in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* influenced other critical pedagogy scholars, such as hooks, Rendón, and Grandé. All of these critical pedagogy scholars are relevant to understanding the influences upon student affairs educators in higher education. As a result of this influence on student affairs practice, the
concepts and characteristics of critical pedagogy lay the foundation of this study’s conceptual framework.

Critical pedagogy provides insight into one salient area that has pedagogically influenced student affairs. Another area is college student development theory. The following section reviews student development theory in higher education. Through a comparative and critical analysis, I will review the literature across the 20th and early 21st centuries to develop an understanding of student development theory’s changing nature and influence on student affairs educators.

**Student Development Theory in Higher Education and Student Affairs**

College student development theory has never been a singular discipline. Rather it represents a large and diverse set of scholarly work. In this section I will review the literature of college student development theory in two parts. First, I will describe the origins and overarching themes of college student development theory. Second, I will use Jones and Stewart’s (2016) and Abes et al.’s (2019) concept of “waves” to take a deeper look at college student development theory through the lens of critical and poststructural theory.

**Origins and Overview of College Student Development Theory**

The longstanding pillars of student development theory include psychosocial theories (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Erickson, 1959), cognitive development theories (Baxter-Magolda, 1992; King & Kitchener, 1994; Perry, 1968; Rodgers, 1990), and environmental theories (Kuh, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Strange & Banning, 2001; Strange & King, 1990). Further theories such as moral reasoning development (Gilligan, 1982/1993; Kohlberg, 1981; Rest et al., 2000) and integrative theories (Baxter-
Magolda, 2001; Fowler, 1996; Kegan, 1994; Schlossberg et al., 1995) added to the body of literature.

Through the second half of the 20th century, social movements for human rights and equality shifted cultural norms in the United States. As social and political conditions evolved on college campuses, representation of diversity grew among theorists and scholars alongside the growing enthusiasm among students and staff for diversity, equity, inclusion, and multiculturalism. The result was the publication of social-identity development theories covering such areas as racial identity development (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001; Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Helms, 1995; Sue & Sue, 2003; Wijeyesinghe, 2001), gender (Bem, 1983; Bilodeau, 2005; Lev, 2000), sexuality (Cass, 1979; McCarn & Fasinger, 1996), faith (Fowler, 2000), and disability (Freer & Kaefer, 2021; McRuer, 2006).

Several scholars edited anthologies (Abes et al., 2019; Evans et al., 2009; McClellan & Stringer, 2016) written for an audience of student affairs practitioners and students, covering the deep history and far-reaching breadth of student development theories. These publications stated that the prominence of theory within student affairs scholarship represented an important contribution towards to student learning by student affairs educators. The authors recognized theory in student affairs’ emphasis on cycling practical implementation with reflection.

Student development theories have occupied an important position in the approach student affairs practitioners have taken toward student learning and teaching (Patton et al., 2016; Torres & LePeau, 2013). Students affairs has utilized theory to enact learning activities for students outside the classroom. For example, Patton and Harper
(2009) reviewed Perry’s (1968) cognitive developmental theory and illustrated how it might be used by a student affairs professional. Within Perry’s theory, dualistic thinking is a stage that precedes multiplicity, where a thinker advances from binary, all-or-nothing thinking (in which all questions have definitive answers) to complex thinking of multiplicity where truth may be pluralized, layered, or relative. Patton and Harper then described how residence hall staff might design a program for the floor on “hot topics” to foster the expression of differing or opposing viewpoints on various topics, as a means of encouraging the development of cognitive thinking from embracing one truth to many (Patton & Harper, 2009, p. 154). Such direct application of theory into designing learning activities demonstrates student affairs educators’ ability to purposefully contribute to out-of-the-classroom educational environments.

Emerging higher education scholars, in the second decade of the 21st century, advanced the conceptual and practical nature of college student development by questioning the representation of identities among both researchers and participants, diversifying the epistemological foundations of theory, and challenging the goals of research to extend past the expansion of knowledge into advocacy and social change. Two such texts are Jones and Stewart’s (2016) Evolution of Student Development Theory and Abes, Jones, and Stewart’s (2019) Rethinking College Student Development Theory Using Critical Frameworks. Jones and Stewart (2016) wrote their analysis of student development’s history through three distinct waves. Abes et al. (2019) expanded on Jones and Stewards (2016) work by incorporating critical theory and poststructural theory to reconsider existing student development theories. The following section will utilize the concept of waves to more deeply understand the student development theories discussed,
thus far, through a disciplinarily-comparative and epistemological lens. In essence, the following description of theory categorized by various waves over time will compare ideas and theoretical models across academic disciplines rather than considering each in their own silo. The authors contemplate the fundamental assumptions about the construction of knowledge during each wave helping us make a deeper meaning of the theory’s place in the literature with historical and political context.

Waves of Theory: Epistemologies and Disciplinary Foci through Time

Jones and Stewart (2016) described the first wave of college student development theory as including those theories derived largely from psychological influences. First wave theorists, including Chickering, Erickson, Perry, and Kegan, produced the cognitive developmental and psychosocial theories of the mid-to-late 20th century. Jones and Stewart (2016) identified several assumptions that characterized theories in the first wave. First, these theories assumed a desired outcome of a college education was the student’s passage through scaffolded, linear phases or stages in developmental achievements. Often, the passing from one phase to the subsequently more advanced phase included “individuals moving toward increasingly complex ways of making meaning of the issues that they face and in the areas of their concern, which are considered developmental tasks” (Abes et al., 2019, p. 23). Thus, this approach treated development as predictable and reliable making it easy to chart a student’s progression along a linear path towards developmental maturity.

Second, according to Stewart and Jones (2016), the first wave assumed a universality of theory that, although the specific experiences and developmental tasks were not identical, suggested college students generally experienced a similar process of
development. Finally, they noted that the first wave was epistemologically grounded in positivism. Through such a positivist understanding of knowledge, first wave theorists assumed developmental processes and outcomes were facts that could be discoverable through measured, quantifiable inquiry with the goal of prediction and generalizability for all students (Jones & Stewart, 2016).

Jones and Stewart (2016) recognized a network of interconnected publications introducing racial identity development, sexual identity development, and ethnic identity development across 1980s through early 2000’s. According to the authors, this network of social-identity developmental theories characterized the second wave of college student development theory. The second wave, while overlapping with the latter half of the first wave, was a product of changing political and social environments for both students and scholars from the 1970s through the 1990s. As such, these theories sought to provide insight into the experiences of a student’s social identities so that student affairs as a field could provide contextually relevant services and support.

Abes et al. (2019) observed similarities between the second wave and first wave. Similar to the first wave, many second wave theorists were influenced by psychological origins. Additionally, many theories during the second wave utilized phases or stages of development which carried over epistemological assumptions, such as the perception of linear progression through development. For example, Helms (1992) and Cross (1991) both offered models to explain the development of racial identity from one stage to the next. Initial stages in both models indicated a minimal amount of awareness of racial identity and racial constructs while the final stages reflected an elevated state of racial understanding.
The second wave also diverged from the first wave in important ways (Abes et al., 2019). The second wave shifted from theories focused on domain areas, such as cognitive or psychosocial development, to theories focused on specific minoritized student populations. In doing so, the second wave was instrumental in moving student development theory away from the first wave’s focus on students of privileged identities. This shift increased interdisciplinary inquiry where higher education researchers more frequently pulled in scholarship from ethnic studies, women’s studies, and Black studies. The second wave theorists utilized these disciplines to incorporate the lens of power, privilege, and oppression. Such an approach highlighted the second wave’s priority to fulfill an often-recognized mission within student affairs—that is, to serve and support the whole student. Widely cited theorists who exemplify the characteristics of the second wave include Jones and McEwen’s (2000) model of multiple dimensions of identity and Baxter-Magolda’s (2001) theory of self-authorship (Abes et al., 2019; Jones & Stewart, 2016). While the authors of the second wave added models designed to include social identity, the third wave of student development theory, described next, identifies the second wave’s limitations and the potential for critical theory to deepen student development theory’s hopes for justice and liberation.

One of the historical contributions of Jones and Stewart (2016) and Abes et al.’s (2019) was the authors’ naming of the third wave in student development theory. In contrast to the second wave that Jones and Stewart (2016) and Abes et al. (2019) viewed as stopping short of addressing the role of inequitable environments and hegemonic dominance of privileged identities, the third wave adopted a critical theory and poststructural approach. Abes et al. (2019) noted that both terms (critical theory and
poststructural) fall within the same umbrella of critical frameworks but are distinct from one another.

To define critical theory, Abes et al. (2019) referred to the pedagogical tradition passed through The Frankfurt School and critical pedagogues, such as bell hooks, described earlier. The authors recognized that these theorists emphasized “putting forward philosophical reflections and social criticism on economic and sociocultural structures that reproduce systems of domination, with the goal of emancipation and liberation” (Abes et al., 2019, p. 12). Poststructural goals do not merely aim to uncover “life as it is,” but rather “suggest that structure to life cannot exist” meaning that the construction of categories can serve as tools for a society to maintain systems of social domination and subordination (Abes et al., 2019, p. 2). The authors cited the influence of scholars like Foucault and Butler who notably published works challenging the existence of constructs within topics ranging from prisons to gender where categorizations assist a hegemonic reproduction of oppressive norms and institutions. The nature of poststructuralism rejects positivist notions of truth and categorization.

Knowledge and truth, through a poststructural lens, are characterized by decentralizing the notion of the individual. Meaning making is perpetually unstable rather than fixed and discoverable and, thus, deconstruction is a valuable strategy for disrupting oppressive narratives. The notable difference between critical theory and poststructuralism is the belief in the existence of categories. For example, Butler (1999) reexamined not just the inequalities between gender roles within a society governed by social norms of sexism, but rather that the constructs of gender categories all together. She believed the socially constructed categories of genders needed our critical
reimagination. In essence, while the social norms and consequences of gendered bodies such as woman and man exist, the actual existence of these categories is a product of social and cultural contexts rather than a fixed reality. For example, associating a specific set of clothing, speech patterns, or vocational aptitudes to each gender is only a reality if one accepts the categories of gender a society has created. A poststructural reality, like one suggested in Butler’s writing, would suggest that the categories of these genders are not innate or even real, rather our perceptions and societal structure around them provides an illusion of their reality.

Such categories in student development theory that may need reimagining, such as Butler’s interrogation of gender, are reflected in the first wave’s stages or phases. With the earlier example of racial identity development model, Helms (1992) recognized each stage from “contact to autonomy” as constructs of developmental categories. A poststructural approach to critiquing Helms’s model would extend further than simply questioning if stages are irrelevant categories, but it may ask about the systems of racial dominance such as Whiteness and colonialism from which the conceptual categories in those phases were created. In essence, even in pursuit of racial justice and solidarity, a poststructural view would question how the categories of each phase in the racial identity development model still might serve a reproduction on power and status-quo.

Abes et al. (2019) considered every aspect of college student development through either a critical or poststructural frame. Abes et al. suggested that a critical or poststructural critique would make the context of oppressive forces, the inclusion of intersectionality, and the emphasis of agency foundational to all aspects of theory-to-practice in higher education. The authors expanded on this notion, remarking, “in the
third wave it will never be enough to simply describe students’ experiences or the meaning they make of those experiences; instead, this perspective of a holistic view requires critical analysis of the intersecting domains of power and structures of inequality that frame development in the first place” (Abes et al., 2019, p. 27).

In summary, college student development theories represent an important body of literature relevant to pedagogy in student affairs. This review of college student development theory illuminated the influence that various ways of knowing and ways of understanding reality influenced each over time. Each wave has had a distinct context to better understand the assumptions each researcher used to develop the theories they published to guide student affairs educators in the field. The following section will review foundational documents in student affairs and their influence on teaching and learning in the field.

**Foundational Documents in Student Affairs**

Over the history of student affairs’ organized existence, leading scholarly and professional voices influenced the field’s practitioners through published writings. Some of these publications have reported on research (Museus, 2013) while others were non-research based monographs and articles affiliated with student affairs’ professional associations (ACE, 1937/1949; Calhoun, 1996; Keeling, 2004; Quaye et al., 2018). These documents reflected the values and beliefs of influential leaders in the student affairs field who provided guidance to practitioners on the ground. The following sub-sections are ordered chronologically and provide insight into how student affairs’ orientation toward student learning over time.

**Origins: Student Personnel Point of View**
Scholars (Calhoun, 1996; Keeling, 2004) have regarded the two iterations of *The Student Personnel Point of View* (SPPV; American Council on Education [ACE], 1937, 1949) as the foundational documents of student affairs. ACE gathered a group of eleven influential educators led by Esther Lloyd-Jones from Teacher’s College, Columbia University and W.H. Cowley of Ohio State University. The impetus for this group stemmed from a growing sentiment in the early-to-mid 1920s that the vocational development of college men needed greater attention. While the earliest origins of SPPV may have been focused narrowly on a specific demographic of students and subject matter, ACE’s (1937, 1949) published versions of SPPV established the initial framework for the student affairs profession and introduced the concept of the whole student.

The charge of student personnel, according to the SPPVs, was to assist students in reaching their full potential and, thereby, contribute to society’s betterment. The SPPV documents marked a moment in higher education history in which intellectual development was no longer considered to be the sole product of a college experience. As Evans et al. (2009) described, the SPPV documents argued that personal development of a college student was a “worthy and noble goal” (p. 9). With the pursuit of personal development bolstered as a worthwhile goal of higher education through the SPPV documents, student personnel followed the documents’ call to action by adding the emotional, physical, social, vocational, and moral development of students to their list of educational priorities.

ACE’s (1949) reissue of the SPPV provided several edits and additions. The revisions with historical relevance to this literature review was a new consideration of the
changing population of college students. ACE’s recognition of changing student
demographics obliged student personnel to recognize and account for the diverse
backgrounds between students. While the SPPV documents have been reviewed with
both celebratory and critical eyes (Barber & Bureau, 2012; Roberts, 2012), they remain
the first foundational documents solidifying student affairs’ emphasis on the development
of the whole student and the recognition of diversity within our student populations.

The following section moves to the end of the 20th century to examine scholars’
calls to end the separation of academic affairs and student affairs. Calhoun’s (1996) *The
Student Learning Imperative* and Keeling’s (2004) *Learning Reconsidered* mark a
moment in student affairs history when the field found voice to declare the separation
between the two no longer pedagogically productive.

**Blurring of Academic and Student Affairs**

By the 1990s, student affairs practitioners and scholars alike took notice of a
change in the environment of higher education. Student affairs grew more self-assured of
its role within the learning experience of an undergraduate college student (Keeling,
2004). A series of works published across the last decade of the 20th century and the first
decade of the 21st century pointedly drew attention to the division of labor between
academic affairs and student affairs. The literature discussed in this section demonstrated
the separation between academic and student affairs did not serve the educational
missions of higher education institutions. Their work suggested that the separation did
not allow institutions of higher education the ability to reach their highest potential for
student learning.
In 1993, the president of ACPA charged a group of higher education leaders to examine how student affairs educators could enhance student learning and personal development. A group of leading higher education and student affairs scholars, including among others Astin, Cross, Kuh, and Pascarella, convened at a retreat and wrote the first publication of *The Student Learning Imperative* in 1994. ACPA published a second version reflective of comments and suggestions for improvements in 1996.

*The Student Learning Imperative* (ACPA, 1994/Calhoun, 1996) took the position that the concepts of learning, student development, and personal development were inextricably intertwined. Thus, the authors found no reason to support a traditional organization of higher education that viewed academic affairs and student affairs as separate. Justifying their position, they noted “this dichotomy has little relevance to post-college life, where the quality of one’s job performance, family life, and community activities are all highly dependent on cognitive and affective skills” (p.2).

*The Student Learning Imperative* offered student affairs a firm voice, calling for integration and collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs. *The Student Learning Imperative*’s group of authors drew upon higher education research to argue that the meaningful learning within college environments for students comes from both classroom environments and experiences outside the classroom. As such, they believed college students would benefit from an environment cultivated by its faculty and student affairs staff together to offer richly integrated experiences of learning inside and outside the classroom. The authors, then, suggested five characteristics for a student affairs division to adopt for better integrating student learning and development into their
mission and daily practices. The list of suggestions ranged from resource allocation for learning activities to explicit collaboration with faculty partners.

After the turn of the millennium, ACPA and NASPA (along with other professional association partners) responded to growing interest in the collaboration between academic and student affairs with the publication of two complimentary documents called *Learning Reconsidered* and *Learning Reconsidered II*. Both editions were edited by Richard Keeling, a medical school professor who also gained acclaim in the scholarly community of higher education and student learning. Over his time at the University of Virginia and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Keeling extended his work beyond the medical school classroom and into administrative conversations about student learning, organization, and partnerships across campus. The first entry into this series offered ideas and concepts to foster an environment of student learning within student affairs while the second volume provided practical suggestions and guides. Pedagogical influences on these documents included Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning model and Gardner’s (2011) theory of multiple intelligences in addition to ACPA’s (1994) call for collaboration across campus in *The Student Learning Imperative*.

In its first volume, *Learning Reconsidered* advised higher education and faculty and staff to seek synergy with one another in changing their frame of mind around the work that may limit a faculty member or student affairs member to think solely in terms of their “side of the house.” Instead of seeing faculty’s work as the product and the student affairs staff as auxiliary support and service, Keeling (2004) suggested that faculty and student affairs practitioners needed to work together to design student learning outcomes for an undergraduate experience. The authors of *Learning*
*Reconsidered* I and II suggested that co-creation of student learning outcomes would the contributions made by both faculty and student affairs towards their students’ learning.

Whether one’s educational contributions were extended in the classroom or outside of it, *Learning Reconsidered* insisted that educators need to repeatedly ask themselves questions of meaning and purpose of any activity towards the mission of student learning outcomes. Through that lens, Keeling called for faculty and student affairs to reconsider potentially long held assumptions of the nature of their work. For example, through this new paradigm faculty needed to think of themselves as a coach for students’ learning in addition to subject experts. To be both developmentally oriented coaches and subject experts, faculty also need to shed limiting notions of “hard learning” versus “soft learning.” Hard learning may be considered as that which occurs in the classroom, research-oriented learning activities, and examinations, whereas soft learning occurs outside the classroom, interpersonal skills, identity development, and more.

Similarly, Keeling called on student affairs staff to let go of transactional notions of various student service functions and connect their work in all ways to student learning. Even in a student service role such as the registrar’s office, *Learning Reconsidered I* and *II*’s framework suggested the moments of seemingly simple transactions with students about course registration included elements connected to their development as a college student.

The second volume of the series focused on implementation strategies to actualize the concepts from the first document. Some of those ideas included fostering intentional dialogue between academic and student affairs leaders on campus to establish shared learning outcomes and embracing the potential for pilot programs as a low-risk
opportunity to try new initiatives. Together, Keeling’s (2004; 2006) Learning
Reconsidered I and II called upon all of higher education, faculty and student affairs
alike, to approach student teaching and learning in higher education in a collaborative
way.

Critical and Culturally-Engaging Documents in Contemporary Student Affairs

The final set of student affairs documents under review reflect a critical lens
towards student affairs and higher education. The word critical, here, again refers to an
approach of naming and deconstructing existing power structures of oppression and
rebuilding new structures through both reflection and action. In a similar fashion as the
three waves of student development theory identified by Abes, Jones, and Stewart (2019),
the authors of student affairs foundational documents have also departed from a second-
wave style approach and moved instead into an intentionally critical one.

Quaye et al.’s A Bold Vision Forward: A Framework for the Strategic Imperative
for Racial Justice and Decolonization (SIRJD) exemplifies this shift as does Museus’
(2013) model for culturally engaging campus environments (CECE). Both SIRJD and the
CECE model will be incorporated into the conceptual framework in critical pedagogy
that will guide this study. I will discuss both the SIRJD and CECE model next.

A Bold Vision Forward: The Framework for the Strategic Imperative for Racial
Justice and Decolonization

A group of scholars, educators, and practitioners of higher education/student
affairs gathered to co-author a guiding document for cultivating racial justice and
decolonization in the field of student affairs. This group of authors—Quaye, Aho, Beard
Jacob, Domingue, Guido, Lange, Squire, and Stewart—represented leaders in student
affairs administration and graduate preparation program faculty. In a similar fashion as

*The Student Learning Imperative* document in 1993, ACPA charged this group of leaders
to examine the field’s next steps towards racial justice and decolonization. ACPA
membership and leadership felt strongly in 2016 about reinvigorating their commitment
to racial justice which led to a series of meetings, dialogues, and plans over the
subsequent years. One product was ACPA publishing Quaye et al.’s *A Bold Vision
Forward: A Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice* and then, in 2018, *A Bold Vision
Forward: The Framework for the Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and
Decolonization* (SIRJD).

In the SIRJD document, Quaye, Aho, Jacob, Domingue, Guido, Lange, Squire,
Stewart, acknowledged ACPA’s difficulty in fulfilling the goals of Strategic Imperative,
noting that the original version of the mandate did not reference decolonization. After
Indigenous scholar-practitioners called out this failure, the authors of *A Bold Vision
Forward* recognized the insidious nature of settler colonialism in the development of the
Strategic Imperative and incorporated decolonization as a core component of the framing
document. In fact, an analysis of settler colonialism became an important connection for
the authors to neoliberal capitalism and the maintenance of Whiteness and anti-Black
racism in higher education.

The SIRJD document represents a clearly defined departure from generalized
calls for diversity, inclusion, or multiculturalism in the practice of higher education and
student affairs. The authors utilized a critical framework that addressed institutional
culpability and structural reproduction of oppression within which they described student
affairs as an extension of cross-generational hegemony. As such, the SIRJD authors
asserted that institutions of higher education maintain and recreate systems of power that continue to benefit or marginalize within the same systems of power they did at their founding. For example, while the vehicle for maintaining White supremacy in higher education may have evolved over centuries, institutions continue to operate within systems of White supremacy that continue to benefit Whiteness and White people over Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). In this way, the SIRJD document declared that simply including marginalized people to diversify higher education was not enough. Instead, the authors argued the systems of power needed to be changed. Quaye et al. (2018) wrote,

The realities of inequity and injustice, particularly targeting Indigenous and racially minoritized peoples in the U.S. and globally, continue to confront us. Systems of racism, White supremacy, and settler colonialism intersect with structures of classism, ableism, genderism, heterosexism, and nationalism to create situations of increasing jeopardy for Indigenous and racially minoritized peoples. Gentrification, mass incarceration, underdevelopment, and disinvestment make these communities vulnerable while normalizing and increasing the power and advantages afforded to Whiteness, wealth, and coloniality.

Our college and university campuses are not insulated from these conditions. In fact, policies and practices within postsecondary education contribute to, exacerbate, and profit from these intersectional systems of exclusion and dehumanization. As a result, colleges and universities become homes for circumstances that reproduce outcomes of push-out and exclusion, as well as tokenism and exceptionalism. The institutional promotion of grit, resilience, and
belongingness subject Indigenous and racially minoritized students to rhetoric of disadvantage that presume they are in need of fixing, instead of our institutions. We must put the focus on institutions, institutional systems, and the people who reproduce and profit from the societal disadvantaging of Indigenous and racially minoritized communities. (p. 6)

The shift from personal responsibility at the individual level to a focus on institutions and systems reflects a dialectical and problem-posing approach reminiscent of critical pedagogy concepts. In fact, the SIRJD document is ripe with examples of critical pedagogy characteristics such as when the authors recalled a challenging moment in the group about how to identify their own social identities. The group chose to include a summary of the dialogue they held about this topic in the SIRJD document. The authors described the struggle they experienced with questions of self-disclosure asking whether they should share their social identities to the reader and, if so, how they would do so. Not only was this moment a reflection of dialogic communication among the authors, but their choice also to record it on the page for the reader to experience represented a Freirean renegotiation of power between the authors and the readers. The authors entrusted the readers with the vulnerability of their group’s disagreements and difficulties. In opposition to a tradition of scholarly writing where authors assume the role of authority (or teacher in a Freirean setting) and readers assume a position of passive absorption (empty student receptable in the banking model of education), the SIRJD authors used this moment of transparency to lower power differentials between the authors and readers.
The SIRJD’s most prominent incorporation of critical pedagogy was through their framework, depicted here in Figure 1. Four of the concepts included within the “outcomes” circle and the “vanes” of the framework are directly reflective of critical pedagogy concepts described earlier in this literature review: critical consciousness, humanization, dialogue, and problem-posing education. Quaye et al. (2018) described each component of the framework in detail.

**Figure 1**

*Racial Justice and Decolonization Framework*


The SIRJD document focused intentionally on guiding the field of student affairs through a framework for racial justice and decolonization but did not focus its work on any one specific functional area within the field. In that way, this guiding document is not
specifically an influence on teaching and learning within student affairs work as was the case with other foundational documents like The Strategic Learning Imperative and *Learning Reconsidered* I and II. The SIRJD is more likened to the broad sweeping nature of the earliest documents, such as the *Student Personnel Point of View* (ACE, 1937, 1948) whose general moral and philosophical orientation influenced generations of student affairs scholarship and practice.

With its intentional incorporation of critical pedagogy characteristics, the SIRJD holds a great deal of relevance for this study of student affairs pedagogy. The authors used critical pedagogy characteristics to design their framework for racial justice and decolonization. By doing so, the authors asserted their belief that a framework and strategy for racial justice and decolonization inherently belonged within a pedagogical approach—an approach rooted in teaching and learning. As such, the SIRJD document serves not only as a relevant piece of literature but also as a potential guide for my study that seeks understanding of the lived experiences of student affairs educators creating and carrying out their pedagogies in a classroom setting.

*Culturally Engaging Campus Environments*

In 2013, Museus published a new model called the culturally engaging campus environments (CECE). He responded to the need for new theoretical models and assessment tools to help higher education institutions better understand the nature of success for racially and culturally marginalized student populations. Museus (2013) described the need to bring “a sense of urgency so that institutions can reverse the effects of institutionalized racial and cultural bias that can adversely affect the experiences and outcomes of diverse student populations” (p. 193). His emphasis on institutions’ actions
and responsibility mirrors that of the critical framework used by the SIRJD document authors.

The foundation of Museus’ model was built upon a critique of Tinto’s theory of departure. Tinto’s (1975) work explored the reasons students left college. One characteristic Tinto identified for students leaving was a failure to acclimate to the collegiate environmental setting. Museus (2013) suggested that an over-representation of White students in the research sample produced cultural and social assumptions centering and privileging characteristics of Whiteness as a universal truth about student departure. That critique is known in the literature that challenges Tinto’s work as the “cultural foundations critique.” Museus (2013) summarized the cultural foundations critique and its exclusion of students of color:

In contrast to framing cultures of origin as something from which students must detach and conceptualizing postsecondary institutions as having cultures into which students must assimilate, these scholars (who challenge Tinto’s theoretical assumptions) have provided alternative perspectives that both take into account the value in students’ cultural backgrounds and shed light on the more complex ways that campus cultures interact with students’ cultures of origin to mutually shape their experiences and outcomes. (p. 196)

Museus et al. (2017) described “the importance of college educators understanding how to foster a sense of belonging among their students” as a duty of a higher education leader. Thus, the nine elements of the culturally engaging campus environment model, described shortly, were intended to be relevant for both senior administrators and individual educators directly facing students. While Museus’ CECE
model did not specify which types of educators he was targeting (classroom teachers, student affairs professionals, administrators, etc.), he noted that his model shifted from considering students’ transition and integration to college away from purely an academic sense to one integrating cultural affirmation. Museus recognized the cultural, psychological, and social aspects of creating belongingness within and beyond the academic realm meaning that he believed in institutional efforts to increase belonging both in and out of the classroom. The CECE model, then, blended academic affairs and student affairs together, suggesting participation from both was required to create a critical approach to cultural engagement on campus.

Museus (2013) organized the nine total elements of a culturally engaging campus environment into two overarching categories. The first five of the nine elements were categorized as cultural relevance, referring to “the degree to which students’ campus environments are relevant to their cultural backgrounds and identities” (Museus et al., 2017, p. 192). The remaining four were categorized as cultural responsiveness, referring to “the extent to which campus programs and practices effectively respond to the needs of culturally diverse student populations” (Museus et al., 2017, p. 192). Museus et al. (2017) outlined the nine elements of the CECE model as follows:

First, *cultural familiarity* is the extent to which college students have opportunities to physically connect with faculty, staff, and peers who understand their backgrounds and experiences. Second, *culturally relevant knowledge* refers to the degree to which students have opportunities to learn and exchange knowledge about their own cultural communities. Third, *cultural community service* refers to opportunities for students to give back to and positively
transform their communities via activities aimed at spreading awareness, engaging in community activism, or engaging in problem-based research to solve problems relevant to their cultural communities. Fourth, meaningful cross-cultural engagement involves students’ levels of participation in discussions about solving real social and political problems with peers from diverse backgrounds. Culturally validating environments refers to the extent to which students feel that their cultural knowledge, backgrounds, and identities are valued by their respective campuses. Collectivist cultural orientations refer to the extent to which campuses are characterized by values of teamwork and mutual success, rather than individualism and competition. Humanized educational environments refer to environs in which institutional agents care about, are committed to, and develop meaningful relationships with students. Proactive philosophies drive the behavior of institutional agents who go above and beyond making information, opportunities, and support available to ensuring that students have knowledge and take advantage of that information, opportunities, and support. Finally, holistic support refers to the extent to which students have access to at least one faculty and staff member who they trust to provide the information and support that they need, or connect them to that information and support, regardless of the question or problem that they face. (p.192)

In summary, Museus’ (2013) CECE model critiqued Tinto’s (1975) theory of departure to illustrate the need for campuses to shape themselves culturally around their students instead of expecting students to assimilate to the campus. In that pursuit, Museus offered nine elements for college campuses to adopt to seek a more culturally engaging
campus climate for their students. In the following section, I will discuss the CECE model and SIRJD document’s relevance to my conceptual framework alongside critical pedagogy by posing an essential question around inquiring about the practical influence this model and document may have had on contemporary student affairs educators in classroom settings.

**Conceptual Framework**

Critical pedagogy, the SIRJD document, and the CECE model serve as the conceptual framework for my study. These areas share three characteristics: (a) they are oriented through a primary lens of pedagogy—teaching and learning, (b) they situate the concepts of teaching and learning in a critical approach that requires teachers and students alike to identify oppressive power structures, critique them, and rebuild new ways of learning or living for social liberation, and (c) they have all have the theoretical potential to directly influence practice within the field of students affairs in higher education.

At the beginning of this literature review, I demonstrated the prevalence of student affairs educations who teach in classroom settings such as first-year seminar (FYS) courses. I have presented an overview of student affairs’ history of student development theory scholarship and theory-to-practice documents of the field over time. I led up to the contemporary examples of the SIRJD document and Museus’ CECE model that offer guidance to higher education administrators and educators who wish to foster robust student learning with a primary lens of belonging, inclusion, and social justice.

My dissertation study gathered data that may help scholars and practitioners by deepening our understanding how the literature can be contextualized in student affairs
educators’ practices in the classroom. In upcoming chapters, I return to critical pedagogy, student development theory, the SIRJD document, and the CECE model during data analysis and the discussion of results.

Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed the literature relevant to completing the goals of this research study. While student affairs educators often enact their educational contributions through outside-the-classroom settings, student affairs educators also serve as instructors in the classroom as primarily evidenced through the literature on first-year seminar (FYS) courses. Critical pedagogy, as demonstrated through the work of Freire, hooks, Grande, and Rendón, provided an insight into the conceptual framework for this study. College student development theory in student affairs, with a critical analysis over time, provided a deeper understanding on how student affairs educators understand the cognitive, social, psychological, and political nature of college students’ experiences. My review of student affairs’ foundational documents provided insight into the pedagogical influences on student affairs educators including the Student Personnel Point of View, The Student Learning Imperative, and Learning Reconsidered I and II. Quaye et al.’s (2019) A Bold Vision Forward: A Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization and Museus’ (2013) culturally engaging campus environments model strengthened my conceptual framework bridging critical perspectives into a contemporary setting of teaching and learning in higher education. In the following chapter, I will discuss my study’s paradigm of inquiry, methodology, methods of data collection, and considerations for ethics and trustworthiness.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will describe the methods of my study. First, I will explain the paradigm of inquiry. Then, I will describe critical hermeneutic phenomenology as the methodology of the study. The following section will define the purpose of the study and outline the three research questions that guided the collection and analysis of the data. I will conclude by detailing how I ensured the rigor of the study.

Paradigm of Inquiry

Critical constructivism, a tradition of social constructivism extended into the frameworks of critical theory, serves as the inquiry paradigm guiding this study. Scholars of critical theory have influenced phenomenology by shifting the ontological and epistemological frameworks applied to interpretive research (Kincheloe, 2005; Darder, 2015). My chosen methodology, critical hermeneutic phenomenology, will align with this critical constructivist paradigmatic orientation.

Kincheloe (2005) described that a core belief of constructivism was that different individuals coming from different backgrounds will see the world in different ways. Kincheloe described constructivism’s ontology, or the way of understanding the nature of reality, as built by the perceptions relative to the beholder. The perception of that reality can change or add layers of co-existing realities depending on the various perceptions of anybody involved with constructing the truth of a given moment. Similarly, constructivism’s epistemology, or the way of understanding how knowledge is created, is
one that is relative to the layered perceptions of the one or many creators.

Kincheloe (2005) saw such a paradigm as lacking. He believed a critical constructivist approach was a required evolution for the constructivist paradigm. Doing so would account not only for the lack of singular objectivity but that truth and reality are inextricably tied to power and oppression. No one action or lived experience can be described or perceived, in a critical constructivist lens, free from the value-laden interlocking system of power in a society. In a United States context, such influences would include settler colonialism, white supremacy, hetero-patriarchy, and neoliberal capitalism, among others. Accordingly, a constructivist understanding of reality (constructed through the perspective of the participant) needs to also be understood through the context of power with a consideration of history, environmental setting, and structural circumstances. The Freirean concepts of critical consciousness and problem-posing education, as described in Chapter II, illuminate such an orientation, asking us to not simply describe (the “word”) but also understand (the “world”). In other words, Freire believed that content of learning, such as the act of learning to read words, cannot be separated from the context of power and politics in the world surrounding the learner.

In *Critical Constructivism Primer*, Kincheloe (2005) created a path for education researchers to evolve traditional notions of constructivism into a critical realm allowing them a critical consciousness, or a way to understand the creation of knowledge in the context of power and politics surrounding the research material. *Critical constructivism* is rooted in the epistemological assumption of constructivism that “nothing represents a neutral perspective… no truly objective way of seeing exits. Nothing exists before consciousness shapes it into something we can perceive” (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 8).
Kincheloe’s words conceptually agree with Freire’s thoughts on being unable to learn content in a vacuum, devoid of meaning within the context of its surrounding circumstances. Applied to a critical constructivist research paradigm, Kincheloe suggests that a researcher’s purpose and questions have a similar context of power and politics to consider.

Kincheloe’s (2005) contributions to critical constructivism as an ontological paradigm for this study also serves as a guide for the epistemological orientation of my methods to collect data. The purpose of a critical constructivist research study is to not simply richly describe the experiences of its participants, but to ask how those experiences are tied to history, power, and emancipatory outcomes. Kincheloe (2005) connected the paradigm of inquiry, data collection methods, and intended outcomes of social change in the following passage:

Critical constructivist action researchers see a socially constructed world and ask what are the forces that construct the consciousness, the ways of seeing the actors who live in it? Uncritical researchers attempt to provide the accurate portrayals of educational reality, but they stop short of analyzing the origins of the forces that construct actor consciousness. Without such information, critical constructivist researchers maintain, emancipatory action is impossible. (p. 34)

In short, critical constructivists seek to not only richly describe their findings, but also to ask why and how these circumstances came to be. To Kincheloe, digging deeper into questions of power gives a more substantive understanding of the topic at hand and a greater ability for the researcher, its participants, and society to make change for the betterment of justice and liberation.
Similarly, Darder (2015) called for interpretive research to analyze the origins of power that construct participant’s and researcher perceptions through a process of decolonization using critical theory frameworks. While my study differs in fundamental characteristics from the critical bicultural methodology Darder described, her paradigm of inquiry will guide my utilization of critical frameworks within a phenomenological methodology. Darder wrote that a critical, dialectical approach can decolonize interpretive research. Without doing so, interpretive research may hegemonically reproduce oppressive power. Firmly rooted in the location of the subaltern, or voices of those othered by colonial forces, bicultural researchers use the juxtaposition of dominant cultures and subaltern cultures to identify the inherently power-bound nature of observations and knowledge. Important characteristics of Darder’s critical interpretive approach include the integration of critical pedagogy concepts, a meta-analysis of the research process itself, and the belief in the power of communally constructed knowledge.

I used a critical approach to constructivism, informed by Kincheloe (2005) and Darder’s (2015) writing, as the paradigm of inquiry for my study’s methodology. This paradigm supported my research goal to understand the perceptions of lived experiences as constructed by my participants within the context of power structures and contributions towards efforts for liberation and change. The following section will explore these concepts further by describing this study’s methodology.

**Methodology**

I conducted this study using the qualitative methodology of critical hermeneutic phenomenology. Researchers use qualitative methods when they are interested in “how
people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p.5). In contrast, experimental research hopes to “determine cause of events and to predict similar events in the future (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), p. 5). A qualitative methodology was most appropriate for my research because I sought to explore how people interpreted and made meaning of the pedagogical experiences in their lives.

Phenomenological research design seeks to understand the lived experience of its participants (Husserl, 1962; Heidegger, 1982). A researcher seeks out data through individual interviews or focus groups to portray a shared experience in the conscious world and day-to-day life of its participants. Within this approach, the researcher assumes that participants share an essence of commonality due to the familiarity of a shared experience. Through rich descriptions, a phenomenological researcher can contribute a deeper understanding of a specific experience to scholarly literature. Within phenomenology, researchers assume that the participants are the holders of valuable knowledge needed to reach the aims of its purpose. The phenomenological researcher maintains the belief that outcomes of the study are directed by perceptions that participants construct of their own lived experiences (Kincheloe, 2005).

Two fundamental branches characterize the field of phenomenology: transcendental (or descriptive research) and hermeneutic (or interpretive research). The former was established by the late 19th and early 20th century philosopher, Husserl. Considered the father of phenomenology, Husserl believed in a rigorous observation, and subsequent description, of the lived experience. The rigor he sought was applied through methods mirroring positivist scientific experiments at times where the researcher
distanced themselves from the research. The risk of researcher bias, through the Husserl approach, is believed to compromise the integrity of its finding. Transcendental phenomenologists *bracket* prejudgments and biases that may influence the collection and description of data. This process is also known as *epoché*. The researcher’s goal in this process is to temporarily suspend their biases for the purpose of the research with an understanding that one’s prejudgments cannot be eliminated entirely (Peoples, 2021).

In contrast to the transcendental, descriptive approach to phenomenology, mid-20th century phenomenologist, Heidegger (1982) offered a variation now known as the hermeneutic approach to phenomenology. Before describing Heidegger’s philosophical contributions to phenomenology, I want to make a consideration of his involvement with the German Nazi party. Scholars of Heidegger’s history (Stolorow et al., 2010; Wolfson, 2019) described how Heidegger joined the Nazi part after Hitler became the German chancellor in 1933, utilizing his proximity to power to advance his career to the presidency of the University of Freiburg. Wolfson (2019) demonstrated that Heidegger’s history with Nazism was not confined to careerist opportunity, but that he also aligned his philosophical works during those years with German nationalism and antisemitism.

As a Jewish doctoral student, I paused to reconsider my usage of a methodological tradition descending from a philosopher with this past. As a researcher who is using critical frameworks to produce research in an attempt to produce social change and liberation, I have concerns about Heidegger’s history. Ultimately, I decided to continue with incorporating the Heideggerian approach to phenomenology because its orientation towards the relationship between researcher and subjects of research more closely aligned with the goals of my study than the Husserl approach. Additionally, I
integrated critical frameworks used to evolve constructivist research in a purposefully anti-oppressive direction. Heidegger’s philosophical contributions to phenomenology are useful to the design of a study I need to explore my research questions and, as such, I will continue onto the following sections that describes Heidegger’s departure from Husserl’s ideas and how I will used this approach as a component of my research design.

Heidegger approach branched off from Husserl by narrowing the distance between researcher and subject, rejecting the bracketing concept of compartmentalizing the researcher away from their own study (Peoples, 2021). Coined as “Dasein”, Heidegger asserted that one is always in and of the world around them, rendering the Husserl concept of bracketing not possible. Both approaches seek the same goal of deeply knowing and portraying the lived experiences of participants through rich descriptions. The difference between the two was that Husserl believed in distancing the researcher’s biases from the work while Heidegger believed in embedding them into the process through the *hermeneutic circle* (Peoples, 2021).

To account for the ever-shifting, relative nature of understanding, Heidegger (1982) suggested a process of zooming in and out of the details to the whole picture in order to make meaning of the information in context of the researcher’s own biases. For example, during data collection the researcher may keep a journal and record their bias towards an interview where a participant used a niche term that the researcher culturally understood through experience. The researcher may record that their positionality as researcher for that interview influences their understanding of the participant’s lived experience through their own experience and identity.
The critical hermeneutic approach of phenomenology aligned most closely with the critical constructivist paradigm that guides this study. As Darder (2015) encouraged, interpretive research such as hermeneutic phenomenology can incorporate elements of critical theory aimed to increase social action for liberation and anti-oppression. I used the interpretive, hermeneutic approach to embrace the presence of my positionality and internalized epistemological and ontological orientations, meaning that I maintained a journal during the interview process and contextualized my worldview on the nature of reality and knowledge during data collection and analysis. Such an approach allowed me to place myself in the research as someone who held both similar and differing experience than those of my participants.

**Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to explore the pedagogical practices of student affairs educators in the classroom. Using critical hermeneutic phenomenology, I studied the lived experiences of student affairs educators’ as they create and maintain a pedagogy for classroom teaching and learning. The specific research questions included:

1. What are the lived experiences of student affairs educators developing and using a pedagogy for the classroom setting?
2. How, if at all, do student affairs educators perceive the critical and culturally engaging characteristics of their pedagogy in the classroom?
3. What are the perceptions of student affairs educators creating and maintaining pedagogy in the context of their institutional setting and the landscape of higher education?

**Research Design**
A qualitative research design was most appropriate for this study. The sampling, data collection, and data analysis methods align with the methodological approach of critical hermeneutic phenomenology. This section provides details on each component of my research design.

**Sample**

I used purposeful sampling (Chein, 1981; Patton, 2015) to identify participants with the most insight into this study’s research questions. Patton (2015) argued that qualitative research benefits from ‘information-rich’ cases. I used purposeful sampling to generate a small, specific set of participants to allow for depth of understanding of student affairs educators’ lived experiences and perceptions of creating and maintaining pedagogy.

I used “criterion-based selection” (LeCompte and Schensul, 2010) to identify a sample. To be considered an information-rich participant, a prospective participant must:

- have completed a master’s degree in student affairs administration or a hybrid of student affairs and higher education,
- currently be listed, or formerly have been listed, as an instructor for credit-bearing or degree-requirement-fulfilling undergraduate courses,
- currently be teaching, or formerly have taught, course(s) that primarily focused on student affairs-related content, and
- be currently engaged with or have had past exposure to the ACPA and NASPA professional association environments in the student affairs career field.

To be considered eligible for participation, prospective participants must have met all four criteria points. Prospective participants were only eligible for participation if their
master’s degree was specialized in student affairs administration or a hybrid of higher education and student affairs administration. Prospective participants with social work, counseling, and higher education programs were not considered information-rich candidates for participation, as they were not closely enough aligned with my study’s research questions about student affairs. Examples of courses with primarily student affairs-related content included first-year seminars, scholar-program courses, under-represented minority (URM) cohort-program courses, service learning and civic engagement courses, resident assistant preparation courses, leadership development courses, or other courses with a connection to student affairs literature and fieldwork.

Examples of engagement with ACPA and NASPA included attendance at a national convention; reading literature from the professional associations including blogs, white papers, and journal articles; participation in an undergraduate or early career mentorship program; volunteer or leadership involvement with a professional association commission or knowledge community; or other forms of exposure to professional association values, resources, and professional development experiences.

I recruited participants by contacting individuals in my existing network of colleagues, former classmates, and professional acquaintances to share my call for participants. This effort resulted in the call for participants being shared through graduate program listservs in student affairs, direct email forwarding through personal networks, and direct recommendations of potential eligible participants. I also used snowball sampling to seek out potential new participants connected to existing confirmed participants.

**Data collection methods and tools**
All nine participants attended the first-round interview. Two participants, Talia and Skariah, did not complete a second interview due to pre-negotiated time/capacity constraints (Talia) and scheduling difficulties during second round interviews (Skariah). I chose to keep both participants’ data due to the richness of the data each participant provided in their initial interview. Additionally, Alberto did not meet the eligibility requirement of a graduate degree specialized in student affairs administration. While his graduate degrees focused on educational leadership instead of student affairs specifically, I chose to include him as a participant due the rich professional experience in student affairs he demonstrated through involvement with student affairs professional associations and leadership roles for student life.

Individual interviews were held over video conferencing software, Zoom. The interviews were recorded through Zoom collecting both audio and video. Participants were informed that the video had to recorded as Zoom did not allow for recording only audio. I deleted the video files and kept the audio recording files for transcription.

I began interviews in November, 2022, and completed the final interview in May, 2023. Each interview lasted approximately 60-75 minutes. As an incentive to participate, I provided participants the option to receive a $50 Amazon gift card payment. All but one participant accepted the gift card incentive.

**Data analysis and synthesis**

I completed data analysis following Peoples’ (2021) guidance for analyzing phenomenological dissertation research. The six-step process included: (a) initial reading/listening of interview transcripts, (b) labeling quotations as preliminary meaning units, (c) explicating final meaning units as themes and sub-themes, (d) characterizing
situated narratives of the data represented by participant quotations, (e) creating general narratives of the final meaning units, and (f) discussing the overall phenomenon studied as a general description.

In the first step, I uploaded all interview audio files that I saved from Zoom to Descript audio transcription software. The software identified speakers using voice recognition technology. Once the software produced a raw transcript, I skinned for correct speaker labels attributing the appropriate words to either the participant or myself. I then performed the first review of all interviews by reading and listening to the transcript and corresponding audio file simultaneously. The purpose of this step was to immerse myself as the researcher in the overall story of the participant’s lived experience.

In the second step, I downloaded the transcript files from Descript and uploaded both the transcript and audio files of all interviews to a qualitative coding software, Atlas.ti. Once uploaded, I listened and read the interviews again using the software’s quotation manager tool to tag and label preliminary meaning units. Peoples’ (2021) suggested utilizing preliminary meaning units to identify pieces of data that “reveal a feature or trait of the phenomenon being investigated” (p. 60). By the end of reading and listening to all 18 interviews, I assigned tags and labels to 1,001 quotations denoting the preliminary meaning units. A list of labels representing all preliminary meaning units are included in Appendix E.

During the procedure of identifying preliminary meaning units, the quotations were categorized through a process of heuristic coding. As Saldana (2013) outlined, coding can include both linear and cyclical processes. The linear process included moving through the tangible, bite-sized piece of data from interview transcripts while
also producing qualitative codes that represented shared concepts across quotations, transcripts, and participants. As a hermeneutic phenomenological research study, the process of analysis followed the Heideggerian tradition of zooming in and out from the small details to the whole picture to understand both in context of each other (Peoples, 2021). I reviewed preliminary meaning units to produce codes. The codes assisted with categorizing the data so that I could zoom in and zoom out between fine details of participants quotations to the broader view of the phenomenon overall. I produced an initial set of codes after my initial reading/listening during the first step. I then removed, merged, and added new codes through the second step of identifying preliminary meaning units for all quotations. The final list of 118 codes and sub-codes is listed in Appendix F. During this process, I reviewed the journal I maintained during data collection and used my notes to assist myself in process of zooming in and out of the data to create the coding structure.

For the third step, I used the code manager tool and quotation manager tool to assist with organization and navigation in Atlas.ti. I reviewed the preliminary meaning units to explicate final meaning units in search of deepened understanding of the lived experiences of student affairs educators serving as instructors in classroom settings. The final meaning units are represented in the results chapter as the study’s major themes and their accompanying sub-themes.

The fourth step was to establish situated narratives that thematically reiterated the participants’ experiences as identified in the final meaning units (Peoples, 2021). To highlight the data as situated narratives, I reported direct quotations in the results chapter
demonstrating their connection to each final meaning unit as represented by the themes and sub-themes of the findings.

To produce general narratives from the situated narratives, I unified participants’ experiences in the results chapter providing overall descriptions of the final meaning units. Using Peoples’ (2021) guidance for accurately portraying the prevalence of participant experience across themes, I used descriptors like “most”, “many”, and “some” to signify a theme that was shared across all or nearly all participants, 50% or more of the participants, or only a few participants respectively.

Lastly, I reviewed the final meaning units, situated narratives, and general narratives to “unite major phenomenological themes into a cohesive general description” (Peoples, 2021, p. 62). The general description that the data revealed is included in the discussion and interpretation sections of the final chapter.

The six steps process I used to analyze the data aligned with the phenomenological method I used for data collection. Through guidance from Saldana (2013) and Peoples (2021), I utilized meaning units, narratives, coding and qualitative data software to cyclically review the data discovering both small units of insight and overall descriptions of the phenomenon studied.

**Standards of Rigor**

The following section details the standards of rigor in my study. First, I will review elements of ethical considerations including confidentiality, responsibility, and reciprocity. Second, I will review the trustworthiness of my study through factors of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

**Ethical considerations**
I employed various strategies for maintaining a high level of ethical consideration for the protection of and benefits to participants in my study. I will describe my adherence to institutional standards, the benefit of reciprocity participants may have experienced, and the measures I took to increase confidentiality of my participants’ identity.

Participants were offered a tool to increase confidentiality by using self-chosen pseudonyms, the removal of their institution’s name from reported results, and the removal of uniquely identifying personal descriptors that were captured in field notes. Participants filled out a participant survey that asked for their chosen pseudonym. The participant survey also asked for demographic information including race/ethnicity, gender, and identification with a first-generation college student experience. For race/ethnicity and gender, participants were asked to write their own words to represent their identities instead of selecting from options I could have provided. I chose to employ this strategy as to place a high level of respect for my participants’ identities and the words they choose to represent them for this study.

Ethical considerations also included reciprocity. The participants may have experienced benefits, such as meaningful reflection on their lives otherwise not afforded in a formal and organized way. Many participants expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to think deeply about their pedagogy in the classroom and enjoyed talking about it with someone else. Further, several participants commented on their excitement for their participation to contribute to the field developing a deeper understanding of teaching in a classroom setting as a student affairs educator.

Trustworthiness
In the following sections, I describe how I ensured the trustworthiness of the study through considerations of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability.

Credibility refers to the extent to which my portrayal of the participants accurately represented their thoughts and feelings. First round individual interviews informed follow-up questions for second round interviews. I used the second round interview questions to focus on topics from the first round that needed further clarification or exploration. Doing so, I ensured that I collected multiple points of data in the interviews to substantiate the analysis I conducted. Multiple participant interviews, with as many participants as was possible, allowed me as the researcher to collect the sharpest portrayal of the lived experiences expressed by participants in the study.

To boost credibility, I used member checks with participants. During member checks, I provided the transcript of the participant’s interview(s) and supplied a briefing of the finding’s themes and sub-themes. The findings brief included short descriptions to explain each theme and sub-theme. I asked participants to confirm if the materials accurately reflected their experiences. Eight of nine participants replied and indicated that the materials accurately reflected their experience. In addition, several participants shared gratitude for their participation in the study and the opportunity to intentionally reflect on their classroom pedagogy.

For a qualitative study like mine, the transferability of the study refers to the reader’s ability to determine if the findings might resonate with their own settings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). To provide the reader enough information to decide if the findings of this study are transferable to their settings, I richly described the context of
the study, the participants, the methods, and the results. I provided detailed descriptions of the institutional settings including type, size, and basic classification helping the reader to make decisions about the extent to which the study is transferable to their environment.

Dependability refers to the stability of my collected data over time to ensure that my procedures were well documented and sensible. Confirmability refers to the extent to which the results I concluded were derived from the data rather than my own biases (Peoples, 2021).

To bolster the trustworthiness of this study’s dependability and confirmability, I maintained an audit trail. The audit trail includes the raw data; documented records, including a research journal comprised of interview notes, reflexivity memos, and analysis memos; communication records with participants; and notes detailing the evolution of the study’s design over time.

I kept a research journal throughout the duration of the study. I utilized a hand-written journal during interviews, and I also utilized Microsoft OneNote to record further digital memos after interviews. A research journal assisted my process of self-reflexivity during the study so that I note my biases during the data collection process. I will write memos in the journal to self-reflexively interpret the observations I make during interviews. A journal will also be used as a strategy to take notes so I may produce detailed descriptions of the participants’ expressions, presentation of ideas, and contextual indicators relevant to the information.

**Limitations**

The small sample size of my study was small including nine participants. As such, my study does not offer generalizability about student affairs educators at large.
Generalizability is not the purpose of phenomenological research with sample sizes often too small to suggest generalizations to an entire population (Peoples, 2021). In alignment with phenomenology’s methodological tradition, I sought a small sample of participants according to eligibility requirements that I established. This study was limited to the experiences of participants who met all the eligibility requirements for participation. I declined participation from prospective participants due to incongruence with the eligibility requirements. Namely, I declined participation from active student affairs professionals who taught in the classroom as a component of their job if their master’s degree was not specialized in student affairs or higher education/student affairs.

To recruit participants, I used a snowball technique. By doing so, I focused on prospective participants who could easily access my study’s promotional material as first, second, or perhaps third-degree separation from my personal and professional network. The process of the snowball technique allows for widespread sharing of the call for participants, but the pool of prospective participants was most likely within one or two degrees of referral from contacts in my network.

I used Carnegie Classification’s methodology for Basic Classifications to ask my participants for their institutional affiliations. No participants in this study served at associate’s colleges, tribal colleges and universities, or special focus institutions. All participants worked and taught at one or a combination of the following: baccalaureate colleges, master’s colleges and universities, and doctoral universities. The findings in this study are limited to experiences at four-year colleges and universities where the cultural, political, and economic environment may differ from experiences of student affairs educators at two-year colleges. Additionally, no participants served at private, for-profit
institutions where the institutional setting may differ from the private and public non-profit schools represented by my participants.

**Chapter Summary**

I have described the methodology of my study in this chapter. The paradigm of inquiry as critical constructivism will allow me to utilize the ontological and epistemological characteristics of critical theory to contextualize the social constructions of my research questions and participants’ perceptions of their lived experience. I will use critical hermeneutic phenomenology as the methodology of the study. The purpose of my research is to study the perceptions of student affairs educators’ lived experiences creating and maintaining a pedagogy for classroom teaching and learning. To accomplish the purpose of my study I will use three research questions to guide the collection and analysis of the data. I have described the strategies I will employ to increase the ethical consideration and trustworthiness of this study. In the next chapter, I will provide thick, rich descriptions of the data’s results.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this research was to explore the lived experiences of student affairs educators as they created and maintained pedagogy for classroom instruction. This chapter presents the participants and their experiences with pedagogy as a student affairs educator in the classroom. I will present the findings of this research through a structure of themes and sub-themes. I will provide rich descriptions of the participants’ lived experiences through direct quotations and paraphrasing.

Participants

In the following three tables, I outline participant demographics. I recruited participants using a purposive, snowball technique. Participants submitted interest via a Google Form, and I selected participants based on their compatibility with the study’s eligibility requirements. I first present participant identity demographics in Table 1. Participants supplied identity information using self-identifying labels for their race/ethnicity and gender. The table lists their words verbatim. Participants answered yes or no to the identity of first-generation college student experience. All participants provided pseudonyms to represent their names.
### Table 1

**Participant Demographics by Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and First-Generation Experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>First-Gen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akira</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>Cis-woman</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberto</td>
<td>Latine/Part of the Black Diaspora</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Black, African American</td>
<td>Nonbinary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arwen</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Genderqueer/Transfemme</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mario</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Cis-man</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescott</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skariah</td>
<td>Malayalee Indian American</td>
<td>Cis-woman</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talia</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Akira**

Akira served as an instructor for a first-year seminar at a professional college within a large, private university. She also served as the program administrator for the course overall leading curricular design, training of instructors, and course evaluation for the first-year seminar. Akira identified as an Asian cis-woman who did not identify with the first-general college student experience.

**Alberto**

Alberto taught multiple courses at more than one school bringing experience in teaching at small and large private institutions. He served as a student affairs administrator at a small, liberal arts college at the time of the interviews. Alberto identified as a Latine male and part of the Black diaspora. Alberto identified with the first-generation college student experience.

**Alex**

Alex taught several courses across multiple institutions. Their teaching and work experience spanned across small and large institutions as well as public and private
schools. They served as a full-time administrator for a social justice scholars’ program at a large university at the time interviews took place. Alex identified as nonbinary and as Black, African American. Alex identified with the first-generation college student experience.

**Andy**

Andy taught courses at a large, public university but also referenced professional and undergraduate experiences at small, private institutions. Andy served as a student services administrator at the time of the interviews. He identified as a multiracial man. Andy identified with the first-generation college student experience.

**Arwen**

Arwen taught at large colleges and universities spanning across both public and private institutions. Arwen identified as transfemme and genderqueer. She also identified as White. While Arwen did not identify with the first-generation college student experience, they mentioned similarities of experience to their working-class upbringing in a rural setting. At the time of interviews, Arwen was studying higher education full time as a doctoral student who had student affairs administrator and teaching experience prior to doctoral studies.

**Mario**

Mario taught at large, public universities. He identified as a White cis-man and grew up with a working-class background. While he did not identify with the first-generation college student experience, he identified similarities between first-gen experiences and that of his socio-economic background. Mario served as a student retention specialist at the time of interviews.
Prescott

Prescott taught at large, public universities. He identified as a White man. Prescott identified with the first-generation college student experience. At the time of interviews, Prescott served as a full-time faculty for higher education studies but focused his responses during interviews on his undergraduate teaching experience prior to his faculty role.

Skariah

Skariah taught at a medium sized, private university. She identified as a Malayalee Indian American woman. Skariah identified with the first-generation college student experience. At the time of interviews, Skariah served as a student life administrator.

Talia

Talia taught at a medium sized, private university. She identified as a White cis-woman. Talia did not identify with the first-generation college student experience. At the time of interviews, Talia served as an administrator for a first-year seminar course who oversaw the management of the course as well as teaching the course in the past and actively serving as an ongoing substitute for absent instructors.

In Table 2, I provide institutional settings for each participants’ teaching experience. Participants selected all answers applying to their experience across all institutions for which they served as classroom instructors. I provided participants hyperlinks to Carnegie classifications to select categories representing the size and basic classifications for all institutions they referenced in the study. I provided participants the options of public, private (non-profit), and private (for profit).
Table 2

*Participants’ Teaching Experience by Institutional Setting*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Basic Classification</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akira</td>
<td>Large – More than 10,000</td>
<td>Doctoral Universities</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberto</td>
<td>Small – 1,000-2,999</td>
<td>Baccalaureate Colleges</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Small – 1,000-2,999</td>
<td>Baccalaureate Colleges</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Large – More than 10,000</td>
<td>Doctoral Universities</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Large – More than 10,000</td>
<td>Baccalaureate Colleges</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Doctoral Universities</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arwen</td>
<td>Large – More than 10,000</td>
<td>Master’s College &amp; Universities</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Doctoral Universities</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mario</td>
<td>Large – More than 10,000</td>
<td>Master’s College &amp; Universities</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Doctoral Universities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescott</td>
<td>Large – More than 10,000</td>
<td>Master’s Colleges &amp; Universities</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skariah</td>
<td>Medium – 3,000-9,999</td>
<td>Master’s Colleges &amp; Universities</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talia</td>
<td>Medium – 3,000-9,999</td>
<td>Doctoral Universities</td>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 3, I outline the descriptors participants chose to represent topics and categories of the courses they instructed in higher education classroom settings. I asked participants to select all that applied to the courses they instructed across all institutions where they taught.
### Table 3

*Participant Teaching Experience by Descriptors of Course Topics/Categorization*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Akira</th>
<th>Alberto</th>
<th>Alex</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Arwen</th>
<th>Mario</th>
<th>Prescott</th>
<th>Skariah</th>
<th>Talia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Leader/Employee Preparation</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-year Seminar</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Transition for Specific Populations</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Social Justice</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergroup Dialogue</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wellness</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Development</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development &amp; Residential Life</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity &amp; Cultural Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Setting

All participants joined Zoom video meetings to take part in the study. I informed participants that the platform’s recording feature captured both video and audio files, but that I would delete the video files and keep the audio files for transcription. The participants joined the online interview meetings from either their office at work or from their homes. All nine participants attended the first-round interview and seven completed second round interviews.

Findings

The data analysis process outlined in Chapter III yielded results along five major themes. Abbreviations of themes are included below in parentheses corresponding with Table 4’s listing of themes and sub-themes:

- All participants created a style of pedagogy in which knowledge in the classroom was co-created with students. Co-creating knowledge with students guided participants’ pedagogy. (Co-creation of Knowledge)
- All participants used facilitation techniques largely developed through their student affairs background as teaching practices for the classroom. Facilitation techniques honed through student affairs practice shaped classroom teaching practices. (Facilitation)
- Participants emphasized a greater purpose of developing critically-minded students who act in the interest of public good. (Self/Others/Society)
- Social identity, personal history, and desires to “give back” influenced participants’ pedagogy. (Intrapersonal Relationships of the SA Pedagogue)
Participants faced external challenges to their pedagogy and classroom teaching experience. (Interrelationships of SA Pedagogy)

Each major theme is comprised of smaller sub-themes. Table 4 lists the themes and their sub-themes. I will use the remainder of this chapter to briefly present each major theme followed by detailed explanations of its sub-themes. To convey the meaning of each theme and sub-theme, I relied on direct quotations from the participants.

**Table 4**

*Themes and Sub-Themes 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-creation of Knowledge</td>
<td>Banking Model of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multiple Forms of Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agreements/Limit-setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Co-teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Circle/Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multi-modal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mobility &amp; Physical Space</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ritual</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scaffolding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust/Consent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self/Others/Society</td>
<td>Critical Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Critical Self-Reflexivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What? So What? Now What?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrarelationships of the SA Pedagogue</td>
<td>Personal Influences</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imposter Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empowerment and Giving Back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrelationships of SA Pedagogy</td>
<td>Student Engagement &amp; Resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenges with Administering SA Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exclusion from Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA Pedagogy Aspirations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Theme 1: Co-creation of Knowledge

All participants in this study described their pedagogy with characteristics that broadly fell in the realm of critical pedagogy’s concept of co-creation of knowledge.

Most participants directly cited the critical pedagogy writers, Paulo Freire and bell hooks, as academic and political influences on their pedagogy. Participants noted hooks and Freire’s influence on values for teaching and the practices they implemented in the classroom to maintain their pedagogy.

Inspired by Freire and hooks, Andy summarized his experiences with students in the classroom as reciprocal and iterative:

Sometimes students draw out information that makes me question components of something that I believe based on their experiences and how they contextualize the information. That to me feels very bell hooks, very Paulo Freire very like, this idea that we’re going to engage in education together and ultimately honor the process. And make it a process as opposed to me as an instructor giving you knowledge or giving you information. You know, I’m not just imparting what I know to you. We’re learning and growing together and, and I really appreciate that.

Some participants did not directly use the words critical pedagogy or mention hooks and Freire directly but described their teaching style in similar ways. For example, Alberto echoed the emphasis Andy placed on reciprocal learning with his students, describing a “particular sense that I will learn as much from them as they’re going to learn from me.”
All participants described their values and practices for teaching with characteristics either directly influenced by, or indirectly relevant to, critical pedagogy. Due to its high prevalence among all participants, co-creation of knowledge is the first theme of this study’s results. This section covers the following two sub-themes: banking model of education and multiple forms of knowledge.

**Banking Model of Education**

All participants identified co-creation of knowledge as a component of their pedagogy. The overarching connection among all participants was that knowledge was not produced, owned, or legitimized through any singular entity. Since the participants believed knowledge was not held by one entity, they expressed a rejection of a hierarchy of knowledge where the teacher traditionally is regarded as having superior knowledge over their students. Thus, the participants believed that knowledge could not be exclusively delivered from one direction to another. Many participants referred directly to Freire’s concept of the banking model of education notably included in his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Arwen noted their rejection of the model:

> Now, I’m going to the banking model, you know, the Freire banking model. I tell you something, you regurgitate back to me. That’s not my style of teaching. And I think that’s not how I construct a classroom. And that tends to happen in seminar style courses.

Andy also did not want to tell his students content and have them simply repeat it back. Andy expressed his negative emotions about the banking model when he explained his preference for co-creating knowledge with students:
Creating or co-creating is what I think I find most compelling about working with students. You know, like I don’t get excited when I am with students and they repeat something I just said and walk away. I’m not like, “oh, that, that’s really rewarding. I have like passed on my knowledge to them and they’re better for it.” You know? Like that never feels good.

For Andy, the idea of co-creating knowledge disrupted the notion that education was a product or form of capital that a student receives from a professor or institution who is the keeper of that knowledge. Andy said:

I think that, like many people, I grew up feeling as though education was kind of embodied in the banking model. I remember having peers in college talking about how they had earned their education. You know, “I came to college to get an education.” “I’m paying this much for my education.” Those were quotes that I remember hearing. And, you know, almost as if it was a form of capital that you had an education, you had this capital. It was something that you earned by sitting through a certain amount of classes. And that’s what an education kind of was. And you got it from the people who already had it, who had earned it, who were, you know, kind of the experts in whatever field or topic, um, that you were studying.

In addition to Andy’s sentiments about the banking model enforcing an idea that teachers bestow a product of education to their students, the participants connected banking model to power dynamics. Prescott commented on the dimensions of unequal power built into the transactions of learning in the banking model:
You’re standing in front of a classroom, there’s a clear dynamic, uh, power dynamic there that says, “I’m gonna stand in front of you, I’m gonna lecture at you, I’m gonna, share this knowledge that I, that I have a degree and I’m qualified to teach, teach you in this area, and you’re gonna take notes and then I’m gonna give you a test and you’re gonna you know six weeks later, you’re gonna tell me everything you’ve learned.”

In addition to imbalanced power, participants also saw students’ knowledge as an added value. Mario believed his classrooms benefitted from drawing on students’ experiences as knowledge in addition to his own as the instructor:

In that setting, the students are living it way more than me. Right? There’s 19 of them. There’s one of me. So, there’s 19 more experiences that we can tap into to help inform that conversation. And there’s only so much that I’m able to communicate or deliver, but there’s a lot that I can pull out.

All participants shared this belief that instructors could learn from students in the classroom. Alberto described a “particular sense that I will learn as much from them as they’re going to learn from me.” Talia felt that her place in the classroom was not to act as an authority on knowledge but rather as someone who could learn from students:

I don’t wanna appear to be the authority on anything. I believe that I can learn from the students, um, sometimes more than they can learn from me. Um, and I think too, I, I would rather hear what they have to say than listen to myself speak.

Similarly, Alex said they wanted to disrupt the idea that the instructor’s knowledge was superior in favor of valuing knowledge held by students as well. They said:
It’s like, yes, I’ve had more years of schooling, surely. But, the knowledge that I bring to this space is not, should not, be held to a higher regard or whatever, than the expertise that I believe my students can bring to the space.

Arwen agreed with the idea of shared knowledge between teacher and student. Arwen commented:

I try really hard to disrupt the idea that I have all of the knowledge and I have the knowledge you need to know and which is a typical understanding of a classroom, right? The academics, the teachers, the expert, they have all the knowledge you need to know.

Alex, similarly, not only embraced pluralism of knowledge in the classroom, but also promoted the idea of humility on the part of the instructor:

To me, the co-creation of a learning space in particular means that there is no, like one way transaction of knowledge… I believe that my students and I have things to share with each other that are just as valuable. So, the knowledge transfer in all directions is important, is valued, is enhancing our learning. It also positions me in this space as not only the facilitator or teacher, um, but also as a learner. And so, I think it comes with also this like element of humility that like, I am not better than, greater than.

For all participants, knowledge was not a finite, singular entity owned by the teacher. Instead, the participants viewed knowledge and their role in the classroom, either directly or indirectly, through Freire’s critique on the banking model of education. In the next section, I will show how the participants expanded on their rejection of the banking model by how they described embracing multiple forms of knowledge.
Multiple forms of knowledge in the classroom

All participants reported that they practiced co-creation of knowledge in their classrooms using various strategies. Most participants used various techniques to reject the banking model and renegotiate the relationship of power between teacher and student. Participants used techniques such as student self-evaluation, student feedback, instructor transparency and self-disclosure of identities, and incorporation of a wide scope of source materials.

Prescott reported that he used student self-evaluation instead of the traditional instructor-evaluated participation grade. By doing so, Prescott described adding the student’s voice to the process of grading in a component of the course typically reserved for valuing the instructor’s voice alone:

that 25% of their grade is they assign themselves a letter grade at the end of the class. And they have to assign, you know, tell me what they think their grade should be for the class. And it’s an active engagement reflection. And they have up to three pages to essentially articulate to me why they deserve that grade. And, I want them to have that ownership and that co-construction, co-creating that learning space. Which again, I think goes back to recognizing the power dynamics and teacher versus student.

As another form of incorporating student voice, Akira explained how she surveyed the students’ experiences and made adjustments to her lesson plans accordingly:

for example, students are looking for more of this, meaning they’re looking for more opportunities to work in groups. They’re looking for more, uh, tangible skill building, you know, for, they wanna learn more about time management, they
wanna learn more about presentation skills, like they ask for those things. And so able to incorporate into lesson plan year after year based on what we hear from students.

Other participants renegotiated power in their classroom through the technique of transparency. Mario explained his rationale and process to students in real time, “My students would actually always make fun of me, because I would say, ‘let’s get meta,’ or ‘let’s pull back the curtain,’ or ‘let’s talk about what we are doing as instructors.’” He used this technique in a variety of circumstances including moments when he had tension with the material for the course:

There were many times I would say, I would be very blunt with the students and say, “yeah, this is the, the topic this week. I don’t like it. We’re gonna do this instead.” And, you know, I think to an extent that is building trust with the students as well. You know, “I don’t think I’m gonna give you my best with how this is written. And you deserve my best. Right?” Like, that is something you are here in this class to build relationships with each other, understand the university… and I believe I can do a better job by doing X.

Prescott added a layer to this idea of transparency by practicing self-disclosure of his identities with the students for the hope of setting the tone for a more inclusive classroom environment:

There’s also the side of positionality and how my own identities that I hold, how that informs my work and how, especially as a white man and white male teacher oftentimes standing in front of a class of students who are much more diverse and like, as we see college students today, how identity impacts their experience. And
it’s also my responsibility to name that from an identity and to create space for students to reflect on their identities and how they can show up in authentic ways to create an inclusive learning environment.

In a similar spirit of self-disclosure, Skariah role-modeled vulnerability by sharing her identities and background with students to build relationships with them:

I would also explain a little bit about me and how I even came to education in my field so that way they would get to know me always in the first class would always, um, be open to who I was and why I was there and my values and um, and how I wanna support them in ways I can support them. And then always throughout the classes, I’m asking them to be vulnerable, so I make sure I’m vulnerable.

Akira used self-disclosure of her identities to relate to students who shared similar experiences and also to enrich the meaning-making process of course content for all students:

I do talk about my background as much as the students are willing to listen. So, I talk about my experience and why I’m doing the work that I’m doing. Part of it is because it aligns really nicely with some of our course content, which is, “let’s think about our careers, and not only from like an industry perspective, but also within the work that you get to do as a professional once you graduate from college you have to think about your values. What motivates you? Why do you do the work that you do? Why are you in the industry that you are in?” And so that just really naturally allows me the space to be able to share my own social identities. We actually do even highlight those like worksheets like “what are
your social identities” and we have students fill it out. I certainly share mine as well. So, it’s definitely something that I’m keenly aware of. And, I definitely use it to my advantage when connecting with students, particularly if they share a part of my identity or share a similar identity with me. It’s just like that connection that I make with them is even greater.

For Arwen, self-disclosure of instructor identities was important not only for strengthening connection to students but also for renegotiating the relationship of power between students and teachers:

I wish other people knew about my pedagogy that your individual stories as an instructor can be a strength to your teaching because I do feel like a lot of academics approach the classroom and, like, have this wall about themselves. Like, “you’re not gonna know me, but I’m gonna know you.” And, in fact, like that is a huge, I would say, like a weakness to pedagogy.

In addition to using the strategies above, many participants also diversified the forms of knowledge in the classroom by casting a wide net for source materials. Alex reflected on making deviations from traditional norms in teaching:

One of the gaps is that sometimes students aren’t, I think undergrads in particular, are not given the green light to find their own information. And so, there’s like components of the syllabus that I create that will include like, “you need to incorporate this many sources outside of the course content” that you go to the, you know, library resource available through the institution and that you do some searching for yourself on like whatever that thing is that you’re interested in. And
if you need help accessing the library resources cuz you don’t know how to do a
search or sift through all the hundreds of journal articles, then you let me know.

Some participants cited media, in its many forms, as an important source of
knowledge to add to the classroom environment. Arwen intentionally incorporated
multiple types of sources in addition to traditional academic sources, commenting:

In my experience when I facilitate, I do bring a lot of different source, source
materials into a learning space that might not be like a peer reviewed research
article, but like still talks about these big concepts or theories in unique ways.

For Arwen, using source material outside of academia helped incorporate diverse
forms of knowledge, “I use a lot of stories to illuminate a certain topic and um, I like to
use a lot of media with different stories, particularly for voices that are absent from the
classroom.”

To elicit storytelling, Alex assigned students to engage in an activity they called
an “artifact share.” They used this activity for two courses they taught about social justice
movements and asked students to bring in an artifact to represent the movement the
students chose to study:

So, it could have been like a photo series or like some story that was written up by
Teen Vogue about some protests or something like, it could be anything really,
but had to be connected to like a social cause that was important to them… some
people brought in like disability influencers or like disability fashion or just
something disability related to get the conversation going. So, I think it’s
important for me to think outside of what can I look up in the school library.
Overwhelmingly, all participants in this study expressed their belief that knowledge was not a finite or singular entity held by the teacher alone to be passed to students. Rather, the first theme addressed the teaching philosophies of these student affairs educators to view knowledge as expansive, abundant, and discovered as a collective learning community in their classrooms.

**Summary of Theme 1: Co-creation of Knowledge**

The essence of the co-creation of knowledge theme is the shared experience from all participants that their philosophy for teaching does not include a singular or one-sided concept of knowledge. All participants believed that their students bring knowledge to the classroom and that knowledge was discovered as a collective classroom community rather than the teach delivering absolute knowledge to the students. The next section will review the second theme—facilitation.

**Theme 2: Facilitation within Classroom Teaching**

Most participants characterized their pedagogy by describing their teaching as facilitation. Most participants connected facilitation as an approach to teaching influenced by their professional experiences working in student affairs. Most participants also discussed facilitation as an approach to teaching that supported their teaching philosophy from the first theme of co-creation of knowledge. Participants built intentional environments for their classrooms to accomplish their facilitation style of pedagogy. Some participants referred to these environments as a *container*.

For Talia, facilitation represented a foil to a lecture style of teaching. They said, “When I’m teaching, I take on much more of a facilitator [role] rather than a lecturer.
approach. Um, I don’t wanna lecture students.” Many participants connected facilitation to the sub-themes discussed in the first theme of critical pedagogy. Prescott noted,

There’s of course Freire’s work on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and the banking model of education. So, my philosophy of teaching, it’s my job to create a space to serve as more as a facilitator and a moderator of learning for students in the classroom.

Prescott further elaborated, describing co-creation of knowledge as related to the experience of learning and not simply delivering content through lecture:

I tell my students early on in the semester, “I’m not here to just stand in front of you and lecture at you and just drop all this knowledge into you.” It’s really about co-creating this space together. So, it’s a, it’s the ownership of co-creating your learning environment and co-creating your own experience.

Similarly, Akira explained that facilitation meant enriching her pedagogy with hands-on learning techniques to emphasize the student experience and de-emphasize the instructor’s voice:

My philosophy is making sure as much as possible the pedagogy for this class is not me standing there delivering content that they can probably get from a website… [it] is to create all these spaces as much as possible to engage in conversation, to do different hands-on activities. For them to work with each other to learn from each other. So, I’m just really a facilitator. Um, with a little bit of light lecturing, but really think of myself as a facilitator of these conversations, of these connections, that hopefully will continue throughout their time with us at the school.
For many, this interactive style of facilitation related to their work experience in student affairs. Arwen directly connected facilitation techniques to their professional experiences developed in the field of student affairs. Contemplating the tension between the concepts of teaching versus facilitation, Arwen found a sense of pride:

For the longest time I told myself I facilitate, I don’t teach. I know how to facilitate. I feel really good about it. I don’t know how to teach. And then when I started teaching while at the [university name], I’m like, “I know how to do this and I think I’m pretty good at it.” And I learned how to be a facilitator in student affairs. I learned how to context-set. How to invite people in. How to think through macro/micro approaches to a topic. How to engage different pedagogical approaches around interactivity and accessibility. Like I know how to do that from a facilitator standpoint, and that was all in student affairs… So, all of those pieces around how to hold a space and facilitate a space deeply influence how I am as an instructor… It’s like every job I’ve ever had, I’ve facilitated as part of my job.

Overall, most participants described a connection to the concept of facilitation as an expression of their teaching philosophy put into practice. Motivations and influences for this facilitation style came from areas like critical pedagogy and their work experience in student affairs.

To facilitate, participants described the need to build an intentional environment. Some participants described doing so through the concept of a container. For these participants, a container referred to the classroom as not only a physical space, but a multi-dimensional one that held within it a bounded environment of intentions for
teaching and learning. While only some participants referred to this concept as a container by name, all participants described teaching practices that relate to this concept.

Alberto named the container of his classroom as an intentional technique to incorporate findings such as transparency and trust/consent:

One of the ways that I built a container and built trust was emphasizing that it’s actually not just my responsibility as the instructor to know all your names. It’s actually all of your responsibility to know each other. And what you’re saying in there is that it’s not just my responsibility to build trust and build a container for a student. It is each other’s responsibility to build community that holds one another in this particular learning community that we’re building.

The participants used a variety of techniques to build a container for their pedagogical style of facilitation. The remainder of this section covers the following sub-themes of facilitation: accessibility, agreement/limit setting, co-teaching, full circle/guide, fun, multi-modal, mobility and physical space, ritual, scaffolding, and trust/consent.

**Accessibility**

Some participants shared that accessibility was important in their classroom. In these cases, accessibility could be for students with disabilities or foreign language speakers, among others. The purpose of accessibility regardless of the form was to increase the ability for students to engage.

Alex related their approach to accessibility in their syllabus to a more general way of helping their students take care of their human needs:

There is a statement right underneath the disability accommodation statement of like, “here’s how you register with disability services.” But there’s also a
statement, like, “I recognize there are barriers to accessing the formal resources related to disability services and accommodations. If you have a way that the class can be made more accessible to you and your learning needs, feel free to communicate that to me,” you know, in an email or something like it. So, there are ways that I’m trying… there’s like messaging in there about taking care of your needs as a human.

For Alex, accessibility included the tactic of thinking expansively as they described the multiple ways a student could engage or communicate with them. Similarly, Talia connected accessibility to the multi-modal sub-theme discussed later in this section that encourages expansive options for students’ engagement. She said:

I am always approaching it from a way that students should have some method of engaging, regardless of how they engage in the class… and thinking about the access pieces of that they can get into small groups with each other and share in those spaces, they can reflect individually, that they might be able to do that engagement through some virtual means like a word cloud or a Kahoot or a concept board or what have you.

For some, though, accessibility related to language. Akira shared that accessibility meant keeping in mind her international students who may be still developing higher level English skills:

I try to keep that in mind whenever I’m speaking about adjusting to college, thinking about, study habits or skills, or even just language… Not every student knows the popular vernacular because they’re like, I’ve never heard this before.
Many participants described their classroom practices as driven by these kinds of considerations, noting the diversity of their students’ backgrounds, learning styles, language proficiencies, and disabilities.

Agreements/Limit Setting

Many participants described using group agreements or limit-setting techniques to help build the container of their classroom. Alberto referenced his work outside-the-classroom settings to build expectations with students and how we brought the technique to his classroom teaching:

It’s stuff that I think we do outside of the classroom frequently, right? Like when you do agreements, this is how we engage with those kinds of things… we did agreements upfront in terms of how we engage one another and how we tend, how we ask questions of one another. How we tend to friction that should exist in the classroom.

Alex also borrowed classroom agreements/group norms from their work in Intergroup Dialogue (IGD) that they practiced outside the classroom. They described how they designed the activity for students to create their own agreements while also setting limits by ensuring certain agreements were included:

And what we do that’s very intergroup dialogue-ish of me is create like classroom agreements, like group norms, to sort of operate from for this semester. I have ones to start us off that are like, “one mic”, you know, one person speaking at a time or move up, move back, like don’t take up too much space. But then the rest is open for the class to come up with.
Others also reflected on the influence of student affairs work on these practices.

Arwen decided to start using group agreements after not using them at first:

I told myself, “Well, it’s not a workshop… we don’t need to do ground rules.”

And I realized, no, that was something I should have done… that’s something I do every semester, which is very influenced by student affairs. Like “let’s talk about some of the ground rule community agreements. What happens when, how can we hold people accountable? And what are your ideas? Can we agree to this?”

As a part of building the container for their facilitation, participants used tactics to set limits and build communal agreements for behaviors and expectations in the classroom.

*Co-teaching*

All participants used co-teaching or team-teaching at some point in their experience as a classroom instructor. Many participants cited this practice as distinctly related to training or experience in student affairs.

Alex compared their experience teaching as an adjunct lecturer at a university to courses they instructed connected to a student affairs program:

I think as a lecturer, I have been empowered to do whatever I want and not consider how that might influence or compare to others in my department. It’s almost like an encouragement for, like a disregard for what anybody else thinks about what I’m doing. And, the more student affairs settings have been about, like a shared responsibility with my co-instructor on course creation, the activities, the facilitations switching off, like that kind of thing that feels very natural.
Alex did not view the autonomy of lecturing in a traditional academic environment as useful as the benefits of working collaboratively with a co-instructor. Others cited specific benefits of co-teaching such as emotional support for sensitive topics. Skariah, for instance, communicated with her co-facilitators to prepare for potential triggers and support one another in the classroom:

We would have lesson planning, but we’d also have co-facilitation development… us getting to know each other, too. So, because that co-facilitator relationship impacts how you teach the class in the classroom space and us getting to know each other for when different triggers happen or when we’re trying to facilitate, we know how to operate with each other. We have our signals or like just know each other to know what’s going on.

In addition to managing emotional wellbeing, co-teaching also provided representational benefits for identity. For Alex, co-teaching served an important role in representing diverse voices that complimented the content of the course:

The social identity piece, like it matters from like every aspect… it is important in those situations to make sure that the facilitators hold different identities in some way. It could be gender, it could be race, it could be disability or whatever like that. It has been important so far in my career that these courses are being taught by teams that hold and represent different identities.

All participants indicated using co-teaching as a tactic of their facilitation. The widespread use of co-teaching indicated that this was a common pedagogical characteristic for student affairs educators. Participants commented on the benefits they
enjoyed from co-teaching such as collaboration, emotional wellbeing, and diversity of represented identities in the classroom setting.

**Full circle/Guide**

Most participants viewed their role of a facilitator as one that guides the group. For many participants, they described this technique as a process of bringing the group full-circle or connecting back to the important lessons of that day. Within the participants’ pedagogical philosophies that allowed for expansive thinking and student co-creation of knowledge, participants believed good facilitation included the ability to bring the learning altogether.

Talia explained her facilitation approach included “trying to tie together for students how it connects back to the content or how it connects back to the things that they’ve said previously, or how it connects to other sentiments that have been shared in the class.” Skariah similarly allowed students to explore their interests in class. At the same time, she used the purpose of the first-year seminar course to connect the students’ comments back to the class:

I also allow them to be free to be who they are of whatever they want to talk about, too. But I would always find ways to connect it back to the work. And so, they would be like, “you always find ways to connect,” and I was like, “because this class is about life.”

In addition to tying ideas together, this sub-theme included participants setting boundaries. Andy reflected on the direction he could provide the group as a guide in a way that also set boundaries or limits on where the conversation went:
You need to always be a facilitator ultimately and be prepared to guide the
direction, lead the conversation, and sometimes yes, to be a content expert. Um,
so it’s not all one end of the spectrum or the other. I think as a facilitator you’re
always kind of figuring out what works best for the particular group on any given
day, if that makes sense.

Akira also used this technique to highlight the important content of the course by
repeating connections to the students in her first-year seminar:

To the class, it may feel repetitive, but I do it because there’s different ways to
look at it. And there’s different ways that it should show up in your life. And it’s
also because it’s important. I don’t spend time on things that aren’t important.
And so, if it feels repetitive, hopefully by the end of the course it’s clear because
we’re not just talking about it for the sake of talking about it. It’s because it is
something that’s going to be important in so many facets of your college career
and beyond.

As a facilitator, participants created a container for their classroom environment
that included tactics like tying ideas together and creating boundaries. In this way, the
participants acted as guides for the classroom in pursuit of finding cohesion and
interconnected meaning in the students’ learning.

Fun

Some participants incorporated having fun in their pedagogy. These participants
expressed that they did not view having fun as frivolous or inappropriate for a classroom
setting. Many participants believed part of their responsibility as an instructor was to
keep their students stimulated as a strategy for maintaining student engagement. Many of
these participants noted that they valued this approach through as a result of their experiences working in student affairs, viewing that as an asset to their teaching.

Some participants did not name their style as specifically incorporating fun but emphasized a similar sentiment of stimulating content to promote engagement from students. For Alex, mixing up source material was an important strategy for increasing student engagement:

One of the priorities I have is really like engagement with the students. Like making sure that they’re not bored. I think there’s a lot of journal article reading and like that kind of thing happening in other classes. I try to keep things engaging in a number of ways, including bringing in current, easily accessible forms of content we’re talking about.

Others, like Prescott, mentioned the concept of fun by name. To Prescott, having fun was also a part of the students co-create in the classroom: “Having them have fun with the content, fun with the material but that reflective process is important I think in helping co-create that space.”

Akira also used the concept of fun to engage her students and promote deeper learning:

With this class, it’s required, so they have to be there. Because attendance is a huge part of the grading process, once they’re there, we want them to really get something out of it. And so, if it’s something we couch in the fun experience, like “I had a fun conversation with my classmate. I had a really fun time thinking about a new business venture, a fake business venture, but a fun time being creative about it.” If they walk away feeling good about that experience hopefully
some of the other like underlying learning objectives and goals for this class will sink in.

Akira further expressed her value for fun in the classroom as a way to grapple with the demands of this first-year seminar being self-reflexive and a degree requirement:

I do think having fun while couched in learning about yourself, self-awareness, building your leadership skills, building your competencies, working with teams, I think all that because this class focuses on the relationship building, I think the fun aspect just really helps push that forward. And, I guess the opposite would be if it’s boring… we’ll have more students who are just phoning it in that just are there because they need the passing grade. So that’s why I think fun, I think that’s really an important piece of this class.

For many participants, facilitation included having fun. Incorporating fun was often cited as a tactic for promoting student engagement and often connected to participants’ work experience in student affairs.

*Multi-modal*

All participants used dynamic lesson plans that mixed up various types of activities in the classroom which characterizes the multi-modal technique of this sub-theme. The participants used the multi-modal technique to achieve various goals such as enhancing accessibility, managing student energy levels, increasing engagement, and applying knowledge through experiential learning.

Furthering their solutions to discomfort with lecturing alone, Alex included classroom lecture, but only in a small amount. They said, “Part of that class session was opening up, as usual, was sort of like a mini lecture I called the *lecturette.*” The multi-
modal approach allowed participants to live out other sub-themes of facilitation such as accessibility, fun, ritual, scaffolding and experiential learning by incorporating other types of learning activities in addition to lectures. In a simple explanation, Arwen explained the rationale for using multi-modal lesson plans to “spice it up, I spice it up.” Talia found herself “always thinking, ‘What is an activity? What is a prompt? What is something that I can do and bring into the classroom that will get them to engage?'”

The participants described many ways to keep things changing and dynamic in their classrooms. Akira described how activities and modalities changed quickly when she and her co-facilitators “break them up into groups of five or six. And then we give them four different challenges that they have to complete very quickly as a team. A lot of discussion, we give them like huge chart paper markers, like we just say, ‘be creative.’”

Skariah noted the importance of changing things up to maintain energy and focus while building connections among students:

I go about it to figure out a variety of different ways to make it different so that way they’re awake and excited to be there. And it doesn’t always feel so mundane and the same. Always asking them questions, pair share, but like kind of getting them moving around and things like that too, while also getting to know each other.

Other participants also used multi-modal lesson plans to help with building connections among students. Akira used the multi-modal technique to scaffold the students’ comfort levels up slowly to engage with each other and the content:

If you raise a question to the entire group right away, you have those few brave students who raised their hands, but I found that when you give them a chance to
speak with a partner. They are much more willing to share it to larger [group] because they’ve had a chance to think through what their response to be.

For some, multi-modal lesson plans provided additional benefits like mixing up activities as an important part of keeping students thinking deeply about sensitive topics. Mario sometimes jumped directly into lesson plans by mixing things up when he led a class session on citizenship and nationality:

I’m pretty sure what I did for this class was just like cold started on that. I’d be like, “Hey everyone, welcome to week 11. We’re gonna take a test. We’re just gonna like do it together. We’re gonna like play around with it” and then introduce the topic of nationalism versus patriotism. And what I had this class really focus on was them getting into groups. And defining the words as they understand them in their experience using the citizenship test as a reference point, right?

Echoing Mario’s level of intentionality, Alex used multi-modal techniques to increase accessibility in the classroom by adding a weekly journal as an alternative to vocal in-class participation:

I think that’s kind of a real shift for a lot of people that they don’t have to contribute out loud in class. Um, which I think is like ableist anyway. So, that’s like part of the reason this happens, this like journal entry thing is that people don’t have to do like an out loud representation of like I read for today.

Talia also stated that she did not require students to demonstrate engagement through only one method:
I don’t necessarily need to hear the engagement. I wanna see the engagement. So, there are a lot of silent activities that I’ve done or post-it note activities that I’ve done, gallery walk type activities that I’ve done that have really illuminated that, where it’s not necessarily tied to a specific individual cuz you might not know who did it or said what.

In addition to building aspects of the classroom’s container such as accessibility, student engagement and energy, and vulnerability for sensitive topics, the participants utilized multi-modal teaching techniques to apply knowledge through experiential learning. Most participants valued the concept of learning by doing. This hands-on approach served as a solution to their discomfort with lecture-style lesson plans. Experiential learning also helped participants in their pursuit for holistic student development so that their lesson plans engaged multiple parts of students’ learning whether intellectual, professional/vocational, social, or otherwise.

Akira, for instance, used the experience of students working together as a learning opportunity that aimed to offer deeper meaning than her lectures:

I really am interested in experiential learning. And, I think so much of that experience is built amongst the students themselves… I can lecture extensively about community building or leadership styles, and I can give that information. Here’s some charts. Here’s some graphs. Here’s some theorists. But, I don’t think that that’s the best way for students to retain that information.

Akira did not want her students to only think about topics like community building or leadership skills, but to apply the knowledge. Similarly, Prescott described experiential learning as a process of the students,
…moving from this abstract, ‘What is followership, what is leadership?’ And then to give some type of example that they can reflect on—a reflective activity. And then I want them to practice something. I want them to do something.

Further describing his experiential approach, Prescott recalled a lesson plan for a leadership development course where students were learning Tuckman’s stages of group development:

We took the five stages of group development and Tuckman’s model with forming, storming, norming… And I put them into five groups and they each got a different piece of the model. So, they had to get up and they had to create skits to act it out. So, and then of course they had to get up and, and act it out, and they had to guess.

Many participants viewed their role as a facilitator as one that asked their students to do, not just to think. Experiential learning, to these participants, meant that learning was deepened through application instead of lecture or conceptual consideration.

Multi-modal lesson plans meant that the participants kept activities dynamic and frequently would change the style of engagement throughout the class session. For all participants, multi-modal pedagogy was incorporated into their approach to facilitation. As such, these findings indicated that multi-modal learning was a widespread characteristic in student affairs pedagogy for these participants.

**Mobility and Physical Space of Classroom**

Most participants made use of the physical space of their classroom to make it a dynamic or intentional place for learning. This often meant rearranging desks and
furniture for a desired effect. Additionally, instructors reported moving themselves around the room to be among the students in the physical space.

Arwen explained their insight between facilitation and physical space relating to energy level and engagement:

I think facilitation often demands that we play around with how people are positioned in a space. Like when I’m facilitating a whole day workshop and it’s just people in rows listening to me, I know that you’re gonna check out by like within an hour or two. So oftentimes facilitators are like, “how can we break up the space? Let’s move the chairs around, let’s get people up and moving.” Things that like help disrupt the ways in which our energy levels might plateau. Then we stop engaging. Stop learning.

In addition to managing energy levels, participants arranged the physical space to complement interactive learning between students. Prescott rearranged desks in a circle so that the physical space of the classroom complemented his dialogic style of teaching and learning:

I have all my classes move the desks in a circle. So, I always rearrange the classroom, every class I teach. So… the physical space is important for me to make sure that is more of a discussion, dialogue, and the circle obviously being an important part of that.

Participants not only paid attention to arrangement of furniture, but also to where they were located around the room. Talia actively moved around the classroom to help her facilitation:
There’s a circulation too that I think you have to do as a facilitator. Particularly in larger spaces, as the type of facilitator that I am, when I’m in more of an in-person space, I like to be around the class.

Other participants related the concept of space to their position of power as an instructor. Prescott noted:

I typically will sit at the table with them and I think that’s an important move for me because again it relieves some of that power in many ways of the classroom dynamic. And so, I will set that, I will sit at the table with them or within the circle at the chairs.

In a similar spirit, Alex also sought to renegotiate traditional power dynamics in the classroom through communicating expectations around the physical space and mobility in their syllabi:

There’s not like a reason you would need to tell me that you’re going to take a phone call or that you need to go to the bathroom. You just get up and you come back when you can… So, there are things I think that are going into the syllabus that are not standard that I always hope to communicate to students that, um, their, like human needs come before any of this, like bureaucracy and like, um, requirements components.

For most participants, facilitation meant that they acknowledged and embraced the tangible, physical realm of learning in a classroom to enhance the learning experience. Participants arranged furniture to support dialogic learning, moved around the space to be among the students, and renegotiated power dynamics associated with expectations for students about taking care of their own needs in a physical space.
Ritual

Many participants used rituals to create a sense of familiarity, rhythm, accessibility, and humanity into their pedagogy. The rituals had a set frequency that either occurred every class session or on a weekly basis.

Skariah used a ritual at every class session connected to the course’s objectives they explored in that day’s lesson: “For all my classes, I make sure there’s some sort of community builder… I always start the class out with the community builder. And the community builder always has a lesson that’s related to the objectives of that class.”

Also, at the beginning of every class session, Akira used a ritual of open-ended, large group discussion with the students to foster a sense of holistic wellness and relationship-building:

I often spend probably a good 10 minutes of free flow conversation. So, asking students, “how are things going? How are your academics? Are you getting enough sleep? How are you? Have you been to these really important events that the school has hosted? What are your thoughts on midterm exams coming up?”

So just standing in front of the classroom, um, and just asking these open-ended questions… hopefully that shows my philosophy in creating a space of care, showing that I myself as an individual care for their wellbeing and wellness.

Also seeking connection and relationship-building, Prescott used a check-in activity as a ritual to ask students to reflect on their past week:

I call them J.A.R.’s (Joy is Appreciation of Ripples). Kinda like rose, bud and thorns… what’s one thing that that’s brought you joy in the last week? Or an appreciation for someone. Or, ripple, something you’ve had an impact on
someone’s life. So, I’ll start every single session with just a general check-in to help make sure we’re anchored in relationships in the classroom.

For some participants, rituals emphasized the importance of a routine placeholder for communal reflection, but the participants may have changed the exact activity from time to time. For example, Alberto created the space for a regularly occurring ritual that varied in topic or activity but revolved around the purpose of honoring the classroom time as a place to be present fully and pause from the life outside the classroom:

Depending on, on what I was feeling in that check-in question, we might have, um, a quick meditation, um, you know, in, in that space again, to center the body, a quick breathing exercise, uh, to center us in that space. There’s some version of like a check in question that would happen. And that is related to like this like, “I need you to check in. I need you to be here. I know that you got a lot of stuff happening outside of this space, but while you’re here with me for the next two and a half hours, let’s be present.”

For some, creating rituals contributed to increasing accessibility by removing uncertainty about what would happen next in the course. Alex created a ritual of sending weekly emails to their students that transitioned the group from the last class session and prepared them for the week ahead:

Something that I tried in the disability studies course that I haven’t tried in another course is to do a weekly email. So, this weekly email happens after class and it says, you know, “thanks for a great class, good discussion. Here are the things you need to review for next week.” And it could be that like assigned recording or article or both or whatever. And “here are some key questions for
you to think about for the week ahead” and those key questions. And so, the students know when we come to class the next week the questions I’m gonna ask… they’ve ideally already done some thinking on, so. I try to make as little like surprise elements as possible.

Many participants used rituals to build rhythm, reflection, connections, and accessibility. The activities that participants facilitated as rituals varied from participant to participant, but the purpose of hosting rituals was similar across participants.

**Scaffolding**

Most participants discussed designing learning experiences as incremental processes often called scaffolding. Whether it was for a daily lesson plan or the arc of a semester’s syllabus, the participants considered how to help their students uncover meaning of the material through small steps that built to larger concepts and interconnected understanding. The scaffolding sub-theme intersects with other sub-themes of facilitation such as accessibility, multi-modal techniques, and experiential learning. It also overlaps with the next section that focuses on critical development and student development theory.

Prescott took a backwards design approach to his pedagogy using the destination as a guiding star for which he built a scaffolded pedagogical journey:

I often think of backwards planning and backwards design. And always starting with, “what do you want students to be able to leave with in that class and their outcomes and their learning. What do you want students to take away?” And then building back, what are the activities and what is the scaffold of curriculum going
to look like to be able to ensure that those students are leaving with that knowledge and skills.

Mario similarly considered outcomes as an important tool for creating the building blocks of learning in his classroom needed to keep his teaching practices aligned with his values:

I understand learning outcomes to be the first thing you design, and you build your course around that after. So, when we were building that internship course, we said, we are not going to talk about content. We are not going to talk about recruitment strategy until we know our two, three, or four learning outcomes for the semester. When we know what we want our students to leave with… what is that point? What is that overarching picture or goal, the learning outcome for a course? And everything should trickle from there. If it doesn’t, we are either not meeting our learning outcomes or we are coming in with some sort of predetermined strategy or plan and forcing it into a learning outcome that is already there.

Participants considered learning as a process of strategic, incremental building blocks of understanding they often referred to as scaffolding. Many participants used scaffolding techniques in the design of the lesson plans and connected scaffolding to the objectives of the course.

Trust/Consent

All participants identified their teaching as, in some part, an introduction to social justice topics that involved sensitive material and interactive vulnerability. Thus, many participants described the ways they crafted the container of their classroom to be
hospitable for such conditions. For most participants, management of the emotional, social and psychological wellbeing of their classroom took form in creating trust and seeking consent for activities with their students.

Andy noted his need to create a learning environment “where you have trust of the people in the space to have like a really earnest conversation and to share their perspectives and to hear others’ perspectives.” Prescott also felt that trust was needed in order to accomplish the goals of his course topics and pedagogical practices:

If they don’t feel that they can, you know, be vulnerable in that space or that there’s trust established between me and the students or trust with one another, the other classmates, then I don’t think they’re gonna engage authentically in that way that’s gonna co-create that knowledge together.

To build this trust, Arwen role-modeled vulnerable classroom activities to increase the students’ likelihood of engaging with the assignment:

Before I let them do the activity, I do share an example of what I did where I talk a little bit about my high school experience. That’s very much, I think part of my pedagogy is kind of, I don’t want to ask students to do something, especially if it might seem vulnerable that I might not do myself.

Talia mentioned that, in her role as a program administrator for the first-year seminar course, all instructors were trained in techniques that tended to the sensitive nature of classroom topics that required trust:

I do think it’s one of the reasons why we provide within our program a lot around facilitation of dialogue in a classroom space with recognition of various backgrounds of students with recognition of trauma informed practices, with
recognition of communication practices as well. And, also a reminder of what it means to try and create some of that connectedness feeling to create some of that sense of shared community within the classroom.

Similarly, Alberto sought consent with his students around activities that asked students to share personal stories about their life or their families. Alberto held individual meetings with students leading up to a storytelling project:

Those one-on-one practices certainly help me with preparing them for like, “are you okay with me asking these kind [of questions]”?… There’s a level of consent that I was trying to like, get to ensure like, “I’m gonna ask a version of this and are you okay with that?”

Alberto further explained the individual meetings he held with students for the storytelling project. Alberto developed the one-on-one meetings with his students because the project required students to connect to their emotions in addition to their thoughts. Alberto explained how the meetings acted as preparation for the students:

I was asking those kinds of questions in open space with their peers and they were then tapping into feelings and needs and not prepared to do so. I think that that sense to be able to kind of capture the, you know, heart and mind. Right? And not just like simply the things you wrote down. I think are the pieces that make like for a fuller education. So, that particular practice of the one-on-ones didn’t happen until, like, I was just witnessing my own students not quite shutting down, but not being as open maybe as I would’ve liked them to, or at least not, not understanding why. Maybe they were being a bit more guarded, and so like I learned that I needed to ask those questions one-on-one, around feelings and
needs and experience both in like the somatic piece is just like your body’s experiencing something while you’re asking these questions of someone that you care about, especially if that someone is in close proximity to you.

Most participants discussed the belief that building trust in the classroom was important to accomplish their pedagogical style. Doing so required the participants to enact various trust-building and consent-seeking activities.

**Summary of Theme 2: Facilitation**

The participants enacted their teaching philosophies through a variety of facilitation techniques creating a container to hold the intentionality and sensitivities of their pedagogy. Participants chose facilitation techniques that complimented the critical pedagogy values and beliefs described in the first theme. Through their experiences facilitating workshops and trainings in their student affairs professional roles, the participants brought the practical knowledge of teaching from student affairs practice to their classroom instruction.

**Theme 3: Self/Others/Society**

The third theme, *Self/Others/Society* (SOS), refers to how all participants created and maintained styles of pedagogy for the purpose of serving a greater good. The participants hoped to see their students grow in their development in three areas with the intention of having an impact on empowerment, justice, equity, and social change. The three areas included (a) the self, (b) others in one’s immediate surroundings, and (c) society at large.

In this section, I will first review student development theory with an emphasis on a critical lens towards diversity, equity, inclusion that my participants used in the sub-
theme of critical development. Then, I will discuss Critical Self-Reflexivity as a representation of how the participants approached development at the individual level with attention to their surroundings including others in their immediate community and greater society at large. Lastly, I will close this theme with a review of the findings in a section called What? So What? Now What? (W/SW/NW) which culminates the participants pedagogical practices for student development towards action and social change.

**Critical Development**

All participants used student development theory in their pedagogy to engage in the student’s process of learning or being. Whenever participants discussed student development theory, they did so with an attention to a critical lens to bring concepts of social identity, power, and privilege into the conversation. All participants in the study considered the developmental models and theories that influenced their pedagogy through a lens of critical inquiry, suggesting an emphasis on critical development.

Skariah, for instance, explained, “I really, really geeked and loved the development theories because I felt that is a great way to figure out where to meet people where they’re at.” For Skariah, the critical lens of developmental theory meant that in addition to being informed by Perry’s cognitive developmental model and Chickering’s vectors in her teaching style, she reported integrating identity development theories as a “framework to get hints and clues from my students and each person where they’re at developmentally based on whatever identity, um, that they’re trying to work on.”

Mario took his critical lens in the direction of deconstructing categorization and linear models because he believed sequential models narrowly confined his students to a
prescribed journey of development. Alternatively, Mario favored an identity-centered approach to development that placed the student in context of the student’s surroundings. Doing so, Mario favored an approach to theory that allowed greater flexibility to mold to the experiences of each student:

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model was always the one that stuck with me. But the reason that is, is because that model, I think, captures that there is no model. There is no one approach. There is no one answer. There are no seven vectors. There are no five whatevers… that model has [the] student as the core and their identities are, you know who they are, what make them up. And then there’s the filter, uh, with which they experience the world around them and the world relates to that person.

In a similar vein, Andy emphasized context rather than fixed models. Andy used student development theory, both older models and newer critical models, to cultivate empathy, lower judgement, and create a more egalitarian learning community where student and instructor alike were in a constant process of development:

For me, student development theory helped me concretize the idea that nobody is fixed in their personality and that everything is contextual. And I think as an educator, that is so important because I feel like one of the primary goals of any kind of educational experience is getting people to reflect on what they consider to be their reality…But I think when you approach a student as being just a fixed human being, it’s easy to be judgmental. I think it’s easier to get triggered by things they say that are problematic. I think it’s easier to give up on people if they’re struggling. I think it’s easier to make assumptions about who they are and
who they’re going to be. I think student development theory as a whole, whether it’s racial identity development or psychosocial development, just to me is, is a really clear articulation that this is a moment in time for each individual student and for some students, they’re gonna be at their best or in really good spaces, and some of them are gonna be at places that aren’t necessarily appealing or helpful, um, to them as students or to us as instructors. And that’s okay because that’s just where they’re at right now. To me it feels very much a tool for cultivating empathy. And ultimately like not giving up on people when maybe they’re not at their best.

Mario, similarly, used development theory to critically reconsider the notion of a static stage of finishing development while also equalizing student and teacher:

I think it helps us understand that college students are still developing. Practitioners are still developing. That is sort of my main takeaway is, you know, any theory or set of vectors or what have you that includes arrival or a finish line… like those I immediately discount and don’t pay attention to.

In addition to these strategies for using theory with students, some participants used development theory self-reflexively for their own approach as an instructor. Prescott cited student development theory as a motivator to engage in critical reflection about his social identities: “Student development theory has influenced my engagement. It’s made me be better, be a better professional to do the work and to be grounded and to constantly engage in that critical reflection around identity work and intersectionality.”

Prescott further reflected on the trajectory of student development theory over time as evolving to include social identity, equity, and social justice:
I think how we’re now seeing student development theory and the focus on identity development and social identity development and the intersectionality of identities. Like that’s really what’s leading in that space of student development theories, as it should because as college students and as students are coming to us with Gen Z, they’re expecting student affairs folks to know this, right? And to be able to meet them where they are. So, the demand is there, the expectation is there for student affairs people to be at the forefront of identity work and the forefront of social justice work and equity work.

Akira found inspiration to develop a course for undergraduate students based in the Social Change Model after attending a lecture by scholar Susan Komives:

In the way that she framed it, like the individual… focus on community… focus on society like, it just really stuck with me. And so, how do you create change within higher ed, how do you create change in a broader society and so I often think about how do you make granular level changes for individuals. And then how you then shift that to the community, how you then shift that to the larger society. And so I really appreciate that. And in fact, the leadership course that I created was based on that social change model.

Also inspired by scholars, while referring to bell hooks’ influence on her teaching approach, Arwen pondered, “how do we nurture a reflective and critical stance for students around their social realities?” Similarly, Andy made a connection between those critical pedagogy scholars and student development theory. He considered Freire, hooks, and student development theories to be the three core components in the foundation of his teaching:
The sort of Freire foundation of like shared learning. And that teachers have much to learn alongside their students. Like that to me feels like a really foundational place to kind of start when it comes to how I show up in the classroom. I think building off that the commitment to the worth that people bring to the space via their experiences and their insights and perspectives. Like to me, that feels very like bell hooks. Like, let’s create space for people to share, for people to be authentic, for people to be human… And then I think maybe the third component I would say just informed by student development theory in general, that we are all developing… and so I think acknowledging that brings me to a place of wanting to be wildly empathetic in knowing that everybody in the space is in process.

Participants demonstrated a commitment to integrating a critical lens and identity development whenever they used traditional student development theories like cognitive and psycho-social models. This sub-theme of critical development acknowledges the merging of these two concepts through the findings from participants.

Critical Self-Reflexivity

Critical self-reflexivity picks up where critical development leaves off. This sub-theme moves from the critical lens with which the participants used student development theories into the ways participants employed critical development with their students in a process of deep personal reflection. All participants considered self-reflexivity to be a unique benefit of their pedagogy. By this, most participants meant that they expected their students to place themselves in the material rather than considering the material objectively or as an onlooking third party.
Andy explained the difference between the kind of learning he did in college about race and racism and the self-reflexive style he incorporated in his pedagogy:

When I was in college, I learned a lot about social identity and privilege and oppression through a very intellectual lens. And so, for example, I took a course on race and racism in U.S. cinema. And it was all about the creation of different racial stereotypes and things like that through cinema and through media… but, it was always very bound in this kind of abstract intellectual space that didn’t take me to places where I was reflecting on who I was and kind of the implications of my social identities as a person.

For Alberto, it was important to express to his students that their stories were relevant to the academic environment: “I want students to like become comfortable, like with how they’ve learned and what they know. Particularly for the courses that I was teaching, that their own narratives are worthy of intellectual curiosity.”

While participants, like Alberto, focused on building a sense of self-reflection for empowerment with the students’ identities, participants also emphasized this process of critical self-reflexivity as an important component of working with others. Akira emphasized personal introspection as an important part of students navigating the world around them including:

Our goal with this activity, this course is that developing those interpersonal skills, developing the self-awareness really truly understanding who you are it’s really just a vehicle to teach them how to be effective leaders, how to be effective team members, and how to navigate differences.
Continuing the idea of the self in context of others and society around oneself, Arwen considered how self-reflexivity about students’ processes of socialization influenced how they questioned their surroundings or their learning process:

I’m like really invested in how students develop. Like how do students develop a critical awareness? How do they question society around them? Like why is it like this? Essentially. Like what are some of those taken for granted [things] that we accept in our society and why? Why should we question them? Seeing self within the content of the course, but also like how your socialization influences what you’re learning, how you’re coming to learning.

Participants recalled tactics in the classroom when they put these ideas into practice. For example, Prescott told a story about using probing questions as a facilitation technique to dig deeper to reach a level of self-reflexive learning with a student:

She started telling a story about her interactions advising a first-generation college student. And she gave kind of this still up-in-the-clouds response, more of a general response. And I said, “well, why did you react that way” or “why did you approach it that way?” And, she answered that layered question. And I said, “why did you do it that way?” or “how did you know to do it that way? Like, “what informed you?” And then I ended up asking about four why questions. And then finally we really get at the core of her own informal theory, her own informal way of engaging with first gen college students. And come to find out much of that was based off her own lived experience. And which again is what informal theory often is ranked around is it’s your own lived experience. And so I think could see the other students in the classroom, like all their minds were turning because they
were starting to see a pattern, what I was aiming for, of like deeper, deeper, deeper, and asking those really those why questions.

For Alberto, having students look at their own lives, families, and communities fostered a source of empowerment in his Black and Latino leadership development course. Alberto believed that in order to lead, his students needed to first develop a deep appreciation for their own worth:

The majority of [the students] are Black and Latino students. Like, to feel like that they have… I think like potential for leadership only comes… I mean, I guess there are people maybe that, that could be in leadership positions that don’t value themselves, but I think you gotta like have a sense of, of worthiness. In that particular activity I think for me is like a, uh, a good example of how I’m trying to instill a sense of worthiness, both in the individuals and for the individuals in their own life… that [they are] worthy and that they matter.

In order to achieve that sense of self-reflexive worthiness, Alberto assigned a semester-long project for his students to interview an elder in their life/family/community about the elder’s life and leadership. Inspired by Afro-Surrealism, Alberto explained how, by students telling their elders’ stories, they amplified marginalized voices. Alberto believed the students not only increased their own sense of worthiness but also contributed to increasing empathy and understanding across difference:

I think there’s elements of it for me that are influenced by Afro-Surrealism in thinking about the way, like how do we center marginalized voices? That felt important. So in telling the stories about their elders, they also then had to tell stories about themselves. Right? There wasn’t a way to disconnect that because
you had to then inform and let us know about why you chose this person, why this person was important to you, right? What is that relationship? So, I wanted to sort through and amplify those particular narratives. I think Afro-Surrealism also affords people the opportunity to foster some empathy and understanding. I’m a strong believer that storytelling and narratives allow for that across experiences and commonalities and differences.

Alberto hoped the takeaway of this assignment was that the students fostered a sense of caring curiosity for themselves and others they came across in life:

I would hope that folks left the class like that particular course with a curiosity. Oftentimes these [elders] are these folks they deeply appreciated. And maybe they knew only knew a fraction of this individual that they really kind of like admired, right? These kinds of conversations open up and expand this relationship and this appreciation that you have for this person. And to like, to demonstrate that curiosity to other people that come across your life. I think with the intention of a recognition that people or that particular person, like they matter. Um, and to not underestimate the impact of signaling to someone who doesn’t, particularly for marginalized folks who don’t historically think they matter.

All participants approached student development theory with a critical lens that emphasized an increased awareness of the self. This critical self-reflection played an important role for participants’ ability to demonstrate how students did not exist in a vacuum but rather in a dynamic setting of others around them and a larger society.

What? So What? Now What?
The What? So What? Now What?(W/SW/NW) sub-theme extends this conversation toward consideration of students interacting with their surroundings and society at large to take actions in their lives and to serve the public good. All participants in the study created a pedagogy intended to influence positive change to society at large through the developmental processes reviewed in the previous two sub-themes. The participants guided students through a reflective meaning-making process toward action.

Alex noted,

In just about every class I’ve taught lately, we always do a, “Where do we go from?” Here is the last class theme. And it’s like, “Okay, I’ve gained this new knowledge this semester. What am I going to do with it?” And that must get us outside the classroom context.

Alex designed their curriculum to ask their students about putting their knowledge to action outside the classroom, as did other participants. Andy, for example, reflected, “I think ideal pedagogy that serves the individual is a great developmental experience and like, hopefully, has a sort of impact on the people that that person goes on to interact with in the world at large.”

Putting these action-oriented ideas to work, Prescott encouraged students in a leadership development course to think and act in a process of theory-to-practice while debriefing a learning activity:

So, helping students, you know, I’ll say that language theory-to-practice, but I really want them to, rather than naming it, I will say, “Why did we do this? What was the purpose of this?” And, using almost this what, so what, now what framework, which is super easy and simple. Which again is basic student affairs
and reflective practice. And so, helping them understand the “what, so what, now what” of a situation. Asking them specifically to unpack those things in the classroom so they can really reflect on that and see how these things, being able to see what is the definition? Why is this important and why should I care? What am I gonna do with this in the future? How am I gonna put this into practice in the future?

Similarly, Andy discussed the motivation to do “So what? Now what?” approach coming from former teachers he had. Andy recalled a professor in college who helped shape his views on pedagogy:

I once had a professor in college who I absolutely adored. She was a playwriting professor. She was great. And she said one day, very staunchly in class, that she feels like, “If you don’t walk out of an educational experience a better human being then that educational experience failed you.” And I’ve shared that sentiment with people who have pushed back really hard and been like, “That’s not the goal of education.” You know, and, that’s fine. And also, being a better human being is a really abstract thing. That could mean a million different things to a million different people. But that has always stayed with me… And, I think that when you are fundamentally improved as a person, it betters the world around you.

Continuing to offer examples of how to incorporate this W/SW/NW theme to practice, Talia linked critical self-reflection to concepts of actions and social impact using a critical lens:

Understanding themselves in relation to others… really thinking about the way that privilege, power, inequity show up, how they perpetuate that, how they can
work towards dismantling that, how they can work towards repairing harm that happens within their communities, how they can work towards a collective sense of liberation in those communities when needed. And, kind of be co-conspirators and also think about themselves from a lens of constant improvement. Improvement of, you know, you have to critically self-reflect. You need to think about your actions, you need to think about the impact of them. Um, you need to think about how when things happen to you that has an impact, it changes how you think.

Also bridging theory to their pedagogical practice, Arwen discussed the influence transfemme praxis had on her pedagogy. Arwen described transfemme praxis as a critical theory with four components shaped by the experiences of transfemme navigating a transphobic world. While explaining the model’s first component of desire, Arwen asked:

How do we think about desire in the classroom? Not like, attraction desire, but like how we desire for something more. How do we desire for a world that actually is inclusive of… not inclusive… that is like free and open for us.

Skariah also expressed concepts of freedom and imagination through explaining her pedagogy’s orientation towards liberation even when her surroundings did not always align. While struggling with the tension between the style of education her students received in other courses compared to her classroom’s pedagogy, Skariah commented:

I wish people understood that foundation of education for liberation versus… Because you can still educate through liberation while still knowing and understanding that there are other classes and how to learn and understand other classes… maybe there may be more banking system. There are still ways to create
a classroom, in my mind, that is rooted in liberation, rooted in problem solving education, while still knowing and understanding that the rest of the world does not operate like that.

Putting his beliefs in action for the classroom, Andy instructed a course that prepared students to join a social justice theatre troupe on campus. In contrast to the intellectualized version of education about identities he experienced in college, he took pride in his students learning by taking knowledge into practice and creating change with others:

Teaching students about foundations of social justice and then like translating it into scripts or like written pieces… I love that because you get to see not only somebody learn about DEI, but then they take it and are applying it to their own lives and kind of creating, you know, an educational experience for somebody else to have… Like there’s evidence of you learn something, you’re taking it, you’re applying it, and now like you’re creating a space for someone else to reflect. And I really enjoy that.

Furthering this connection of W/SW/NW to social justice efforts, Skariah explained how she used facilitation techniques to integrate an additional layer of learning about self, others, and society:

I feel like those different levels of internalized level, interpersonal level, systemic level, I am trying to also incorporate that within my experiential learning. Okay. With journaling, it’s that internalized. That pair-share, that interpersonal… whether pair-share or a group of three or four. And then large group, is that like systemic. Let’s connect this to the larger picture of context of everything. So, I
think for me, that I look at it in that way to figure out how can I incorporate all these variety of different levels into each class, into each lesson plan.

All participants discussed how they emphasized designing their pedagogy to increase their students’ awareness, skills, and motivation for taking action in the interest of the greater good. In doing so, these student affairs educators described a self-reflexive approach that encouraged their students to think at three levels—the self, others around them, and society at large.

**Summary of Theme 3: Self/Others/Society**

All participants created and maintained styles of pedagogy for the purpose of serving a greater good. The participants used student affairs’ longstanding tradition of student development theory but added an intentionally critical lens. Doing so, the participants hoped to see their students grow in their development with the intention of having an impact on empowerment, justice, equity, and social change. Participants emphasized three areas for growth and impact including (a) the self, (b) others in one’s immediate surroundings, and (c) society at large.

**Theme 4: Intrarelationships of the SA Pedagogue**

Formative experiences, salient identities, self-perceptions, and close relationships within one’s personal life influenced the creation of all participants’ pedagogies. The fourth theme in this study explores the reflections and perceptions each participant had of their own personal experiences and identities. These reflections and perceptions reflected relationships they maintained with their experiences or identities. Some of these intrarelationships participants described included feelings of gratitude or accomplishment based on their personal backgrounds and upbringing. Other times, participants’
perceptions of inadequacy created a sense of being an imposter. Ultimately, most participants used their identities and personal experiences as a motivation for giving back through a sense of empowerment about themselves and wanting to build empowerment for their students. This section is divided into three sub-sections: personal influences, imposter syndrome, and empowerment and giving back.

**Influences from Identity and Personal Experiences**

Identities and personal experiences shaped the development of all participants’ pedagogies. This sub-theme illustrates the relationship between participants’ social identities and their pedagogy. Andy reflected on the dual nature of influence his identities had on him, “I think I have identities that have, I think, made me a stronger educator. And I think I have identities and experiences that have created circumstances where I know I need to improve.”

Andy recalled a formative experience in graduate school when he began emotionally and cognitively grappling with his identities and self-perceptions:

I didn’t even know about first gen identity, you know? Like I knew I was the first person in my family to go to college, but I didn’t know what that meant, you know? Or that there was like implications about that. You know? I just thought that it was an experience I had. And so, I remember as a grad student being thrown into this program and this department that were so, you know, like DEI focused. It was like absolute immersion and like, holy moly, did I like say some problematic things, think some problematic things. Process things that were really hard. I remember coming home from a class one day just sitting on my computer,
like sobbing in front of my supervisor and I was like, I don’t know if I’m a good person or a bad person, or like, you know, like I was just so overwhelmed.

Similarly reflecting on the influential strength of identities and personal experiences, Arwen found inspiration from a mentor relating to identity and values. Recalling the mentor,

…who was the first non-binary person I had ever met, we sadly have lost touch, but the way that they, this is gonna sound cliche, but the way that they always like kind of spoke truth to power, but they did a really good job of like holding space for people while still challenging them. I think that influences me a lot today.

Relating to the importance of representation, Alberto described the powerful experience of the first time he had his racial identity intentionally prioritized in a classroom:

One of the most significant things that happened to me academically was I started to take Black Studies classes and I think while I understood myself to be a person of like the diaspora, you know, I think I took those classes because I wanted to learn more about that subject. And, then I realized that that subject was like, oh, I was… I’m learning about myself. Right? In this very particular way, or learning how to think about the world in my own way, in my own skin. And, it wasn’t just simply like the kind of learning around racism and oppression, but it was this way in which, you know, Black Studies was asking me to center particular narratives that aren’t typically told that I found really powerful.
Alex also expressed the importance of identity in the close relationships they found with educators and mentors through jazz and music education. When thinking about who influenced their pedagogy, Alex shared:

It has been educators that I’ve had in my life and the earliest teacher who was actually a band director. And, I think I’ve learned so much about facilitation and teaching from my musical instruction that happened in the really formative years of my life. And this sort of tracked me into college. Like those educators that were around me were so influential in my life and I wanted to be just like them, I wanted to be a music teacher, like early on. Like I went to school for music, to be a music teacher. Like that is what I wanted to do. And so, these guys, all of them men, all of them Black men, I wanted to be like them.

At times, individuals in participants’ lives created adverse environments related to a participant’s identity. Alberto recalled a negative influence that created doubt about his abilities:

I don’t have a capacity to remember difficult things very easily. So, I don’t remember this man’s name… I just remember submitting a paper and him pulling me in and refusing to gimme a grade because he believed somebody else wrote the paper. Right? And so, in this case I’m being seen, but this is not the thing you wanna be seen for. And, yeah, I mean he in that moment, like, challenging my own intellectual capacity and ability, right? That I could not do this thing. So that’s kind a different kind of influence like in the power someone has to lay seeds of doubt. You know? Like, I wish I knew where he was, you know, I got
my PhD now, you know, and I think, I think for a while that it did stick with me. Like I really doubted my own ability.

Alberto, in that story, found motivation to succeed based on the negative actions of a former teacher about racialized perceptions of Alberto’s capabilities. Other participants found motivation to thrive based on personal experiences spanning across social difference but felt empowering rather than discouraging. Skariah had a transformative experience in college during a study-abroad semester in South Africa where she developed a close relationship with the concept of *Umbuntu*—or, as she described it, the concept of, “I am because we are.” Skariah internalized this concept as part of her worldview and pedagogy when her electronics were stolen on the trip. The response she received from those around her impacted her greatly:

> It was just like all this love that like if that happened in the U.S. we’d be like, “Oh, sorry, that sucks. Like, I hope it gets better.” But like, it was just the way they were all there. Our pain was their pain and it just literally changed my life of making me see this balance of communal love and self-love. Because I was used to my Indian side being so communal that it was all about what the people want versus what about me, too. And then American culture, which was so individualistic that it’s like, “Fuck everybody else, screw everybody else.” And so this was like the first time I felt like this balance of self-love and communal love that has played a foundation to me going into student affairs and is the type of embodiment of that I would love to bring to everything and be who I want to be.

Another powerful personal experience influencing a participant’s pedagogy was Alex’s background with jazz performance and music education. Alex reflected on how
influential jazz was on their style of pedagogy relating to concepts of co-creation of knowledge and facilitation from the first two themes:

One of the things that’s important to me in a teaching setting is autonomy. Okay. When you’re in a jazz ensemble, you’ve got a solo. And so that’s your… you take it like that’s, that’s you. Like, you’re driving here. And, within that solo, you’re given a set of parameters. You have some boundaries on like what you can be adding to this situation, what you can be adding to the tune. You have boundaries because you’re in a certain key. You can’t play out of key. Like that’s just, that’s the rules. But you’re in charge of how you approach that key, how you approach the tune. You are really driving what you contribute to the space. And, I think communicating that in like the settings I’m in now with like these students… it’s like actually you get to decide how involved you wanna be in the co-creation of this learning space.

All participants described identities and personal experiences that shaped their values and beliefs for teaching. Many participants borrowed teaching practices from their own personal experiences. At times, participants recalled stories of their identities and personal experiences that represented adversity and challenge. At other times, their stories reflected inspiration, support, and connectedness. These student affairs educators used the knowledge from their own upbringing, family, and educational settings to motivate change for the better or replicate beneficial learning environments they experienced.
**Imposter Syndrome**

Most participants reported feelings of doubt or inadequacy. Some described it directly as feeling like an imposter and that they were not qualified to teach. Participants described various reasons for this feeling of being an imposter including social identities and their background as student affairs practitioners rather than faculty. Andy shared:

I think I still have elements of, what’s the term when you are… imposter syndrome. Such that I think of an educator, you know, as being a very specific trade or specific field that I don’t know if I feel confident calling myself an educator, but I feel like that is the label that I most align with.

Also feeling doubtful at times, Akira discussed her relationship to her social and personal identities relating to her self-perception as a teacher in the classroom:

I am acutely aware every time I step in front of an audience of students of my salient identity. So, as a woman, I identify as an Asian woman. And, though I have years of experience in this field, years of experience teaching, there’s still, and this is less so social identity, but more so my own personal identity, just sometimes feeling like I don’t have the authority. So, I have to really make sure that I’m one prepared to go into the classroom, prepared to engage in whatever students throw my way in terms of questions and challenges and I definitely am slowly becoming more comfortable with my identity, with this teaching role. Certainly, it’s still, something I need to work on and master.

Talia also questioned whether she was meant to be teaching in the classroom due to her identity as an instructor with a learning disability:
I’m thinking too about my disability also shows up in my confidence in a classroom environment because I am always kind of thinking like, “Will they know?” Because, I can see it when it shows up. Like I know like, “Oh, that’s my disability showing up in that moment.” But, I don’t often think that other people notice it the same way that I do. It is something that kind of messes with your mind. Promotes imposter syndrome as a facilitator and educator in a classroom space of am I really meant to be here. And, having to lean into, “You’ve been doing this for a while. I think you’re okay.”

For others, feelings of doubt arose related to their background in student affairs in comparison to a research and teaching faculty pedigree. Arwen reflected on their experience of transitioning from facilitation of workshops to teaching in the classroom:

While I had a lot of confidence as a facilitator talking to like director-level people about identity and equity, I noticed when I was in the classroom some, I don’t wanna say imposter syndrome cause it’s overused, but some like questioning of my own confidence and my own legitimacy in the classroom. Like, “Oh, should I be here?”

Andy also described this experience of doubt but also described a sense of pride for the value facilitation experience brought to him and student affairs:

I feel like we are always kind of in this head space, the feeling like we’re not as seasoned as faculty, we’re not as smart as faculty. We’re not as qualified to teach as faculty when in reality, especially at large institutions, many of the faculty have probably way less facilitation and teaching experience and direct student one-on-one experience than the administrators.
In response to the concept of, Alberto felt strongly that student affairs educators brought value to classroom teaching in higher education:

I think sometimes we could be, um, you know, that kind of imposter syndrome. Like, “We’re not faculty and so that’s not the thing we’re supposed to do.” And I just think there is a science to teaching and art to teaching. Some of that requires experience. Like you gotta get yourself in the classroom. But I would say that in, in many respects, particularly for folks who have a few years of higher education/student affairs work under their belt, like we are more prepared to teach than a first-year doc student who’s just graduated and like, “Okay, now I’m a content expert and I want to teach on this subject.” Like, we’re more prepared than that person even a few years in because of the things that we do… to center community and people in our work.

Many participants experienced feelings of doubt and inadequacy as a teacher in the classroom. The reasons for this feeling of being an imposter ranged from personal characteristics, their role in student affairs rather than faculty, or identities.

**Empowerment and Giving Back**

Participants expressed a personal connection to the concept of giving back through their teaching, generating the final sub-theme of empowerment and giving back. For some participants, that concept meant returning the favor of empowerment or support they received as a student. For others, giving back meant changing how their classroom operated in response to their own disappointing educational experiences.

Andy was motivated to join the field of student affairs partly due to the potential for giving back: “Working in higher ed in the capacity of somebody who might be able to
guide students, direct students as somebody who lacked a lot of guidance myself, something about that resonated with me.”

Alberto found ways to give back by prioritizing time devoted to spending with his students both inside and outside the classroom: “The work that you do in the classroom, between classes… What does it mean to make time for students outside, like for me, right? What does it mean to make time for students outside of my nine to five?”

In relation to his background and identities, Alberto reflected on not always being valued in the classroom. Alberto considered his experiences as motivation to emphasize community building with his students for their whole personhood:

There’s something about being a child of immigrants. There’s something about being a person of color. Something about being someone of the diaspora, African, Black diaspora, that I don’t know I felt… there are times I have not felt seen. Right? And so, I think that that’s part of the reason why I value community building so much in that space. This particular acknowledgement that there is this whole person.

Skariah also sought self-empowerment and to build empowerment for her students recalling how she “…knew at a young age through some traumatic events that I wanted to do something that made a difference.” Umbuntu helped Skariah think holistically about her life experiences and her motivation she developed during college and her career for student affairs work:

I think because of all those experiences, why Umbuntu felt so important to me because it made me recognize the good and the bad of my life and how that made me who I was, my strengths and weaknesses… which made me feel so
empowered by education and student affairs philosophies and like how to really be there for people… So, I would say honestly, all my identities, all my lived experiences play a pretty big role of why I got to where I was and who I am and how I operate.

In this spirit of empowerment and giving, Arwen was motivated to foster a pedagogy that included the What? So what? Now What? technique discussed earlier in relation to her working-class background:

…And, part of my philosophy, I think, about this “So what?” comes from a specific place of, like working world, like working class reality that I grew up with and that I continue to experience or rub up against when I come home. And my parents are like, “So, what are you teaching? Why does this matter? What are you, why are you in school again?” And so, the “Now what?” as part of my philosophy is a big part of kind of where I come from in thinking about civic and community engagement.

To Arwen, her teaching philosophy needed to have the “So what?” component in order to honor the working-class background she described. Other participants shared similar sentiments when reflecting on their first-generation college student experiences. Being able to relate to the first-generation college student experience allowed Mario to understand his students better:

We have a lot of first-generation college students. We have a lot of students who are working through their undergrads. So, I, you know, it is obviously a different world than it was when I was an undergrad. But… I get it. Like, I get that experience of “education is more than my political science classes.” You know,
“I’m learning way more by simply being at college than I am being in the classroom.”

Also considering her own identities, Akira shared how her experience as a former international student influenced how she paid attention to her presence with current international students,

…and so just that experience and just like still remember decades later, how scary it was to be in a space, a new space where you don’t feel comfortable. So now fast forward. We have a lot of international students… took the really the leap of faith to say, I want to come to the school, and I hope I’m making the right decision.

And so, I’m constantly reminding myself with that international students lens.

Some participants felt motivated to make changes to improve conditions they did not appreciate during their college experiences. Alex noted a lack of racial diversity in their college experience majoring in sociology:

I completed my undergraduate degree in sociology, and we read so much of the dead old white guys that it was just like, “When I get to teach, I’m gonna make sure that the syllabus doesn’t all have people who identify in the same way.” I think that there was so much of my undergraduate kind of career that was like reading the works of people who didn’t identify the same way as me… Like an underrepresentation of voices of color, for example, that I was like, when I get to teach, I’m gonna make sure that this isn’t the case.

Alberto also wanted to make changes so that his courses were better than the ones he had. Alberto taught a course on Black and Latino leadership development that he also
had taken during his undergraduate years. Alberto described the difference he wanted to make:

Like the focus of it was like on like how to run a meeting and I forgot there was some stuff like, “What’s the Robert’s Rules of order?” It was just like not… you know? Yeah. And, then I would learn about like, you know, Southern Christian student alliances and learn about the Black Panthers and learn about the Young Lords, right? It was like these really kind of like particular like models of what it meant to be acknowledged as a leader. And I really wanted to ensure that students left there with understanding their own spheres of influence and then the sphere, like the people who have influenced them in that way.

**Summary of Theme 4: Intrarelationships of the Student Affairs Pedagogue**

Participants expressed reflections and perceptions of their own identities and personal experiences. The expressions reflected relationships they maintained with the identities and experiences that influenced their pedagogies. Participants, at times, felt doubtful of their ability and role as a teacher in a classroom setting. Most participants, though, used their personal experiences and identities as motivation give back by providing more diverse, empowering, and equitable learning environments for their students.

**Theme 5: Interrelationships of Student Affairs Pedagogy**

In contrast to the fourth theme that illustrated the participants’ relationships with themselves in the context of developing and maintaining their pedagogy, the fifth theme highlights participants’ experiences of others relating to their pedagogies. The sub-themes address how student affairs educators experienced the creation and maintenance
of their pedagogies in relation to four entities: student engagement and resistance, challenges with administering student affairs courses, faculty perceptions, and structural exclusion from teaching.

**Student Engagement & Resistance**

Some participants commented on their experience of engaging students with their style of pedagogy. Most comments acknowledged the challenges of engaging students as a product of the nontraditional characteristics of the participant’s pedagogy in comparison to a more traditional form of learning. As Andy mentioned, “I don’t know if a lot of students are used to that approach given, you know, how they were educated in high school.”

Alex felt similarly and expressed the challenge of needing to perform their pedagogy in addition to helping students practice how to learn in a new way:

The biggest challenge is students have been schooled for their whole lives and they get to our classroom and they actually don’t know how to make sense of the different kinds of approaches that we’re using. And so, it is not only an introduction to the course content, but also an introduction to a different teaching style that our students just are not ready for.

Alex’s students struggled to adjust to Alex’s pedagogy due to the freedom and co-creation of knowledge emphasized in this teaching style. Alex commented:

They’re not as comfortable with the amount of freedom that they receive from like a classroom environment like ours. So, it’s actually really hard, and people say like, unschooling, it’s like actually really hard to like rewire students. To believe that they have like ownership in the space of the classroom that up until
this point, most of them have been taught that they arrive to the classroom to be taught not to teach, not to add their own spin to things like, not to be an active participant in the knowledge creation component… What I get is, “Hey, I looked at the prompt for the assignment. I’m really struggling with this and this. Can you tell me exactly what you’re looking for in X, Y, Z?” And it’s like, “Oh no, you read it right.” Like, “It is what’s in the syllabus.” …I know I’m gonna have students who are made very uncomfortable by being allowed the room to think bigger than the piece of paper that has the assignment on it.

Andy had both rewarding and disappointing experiences engaging with students. He commented on the reality of not always being able to live out the ideals of his pedagogy:

I have existed in classroom spaces where there is not good community in the classroom where the students are there because they have to be there or because it’s for some requirement or something like that. I have instructed classes that clearly students are not super engaged. I’m not super engaged. We kind of have this mutual agreement that like none of us are enthusiastic about the material and so we’re just gonna barrel through it. That always feels really unfortunate and uncomfortable to me. And on the sort of flip side, I have been in spaces in the classroom where there is, like I spoke about earlier, a lot of intentionality, a lot of good community, a lot of engagement in the material.

Arwen similarly shared about experiences of teaching with a disengaged classroom and the challenges of using a critical pedagogy:
I do get resistance from students. And a lot of resistance from students who seem to just want to phone it in or who, I think, want to sit back and take it in and not like actively participate. And there’s a lot of reasons for that resistance. It could be that they just don’t agree with the course content, but I think some of that resistance comes from the space of so much of your schooling experience is just to sit, take in information and regurgitate it. It’s not to critically think, it’s not to like fully comprehend, it’s not to meaning-make, it’s not all these pieces that I’m asking you to do.

Alex encouraged their fellow student affairs educators to critique the system of schooling that did not prepare their students for a different style of pedagogy:

I think it’s so easy to be like, our colleagues don’t understand, or the faculty don’t understand, which is true and we should talk about that. But, it’s also like we need to have a conversation about like, well the, the system that we’ve created of schooling has also produced students that can struggle greatly with our particular style of pedagogy. And that’s a reality.

In addition to some students struggling with an alternative or critical pedagogy, some participants speculated about student engagement or resistance based on whether courses remained relevant as times change. Akira questioned if the newest generation of students attending college will continue to see value in her first-year seminar:

I can definitely see a cultural shift potentially being an issue in the future.

Meaning that if we are not, as instructors, I’m gonna say student-first practitioners, if we’re not up-to-date with the needs of students, how they wanna be communicated to, what are their needs, what are their expectations? I’ve done
a lot of research around Gen Z and, and the way their needs are and what they’re expecting. What is the return on investment if those things are not aligned with what we’re offering? I can definitely see students, the student culture shifting away from seeing the value of this class.

While pursuing their pedagogies in the classroom, participants shared honestly about the difficulty they experienced with students’ engagement. Most participants did not blame the students but rather explained the resistance from students systemically, noting how students’ prior schooling environments did not match well with the participants’ pedagogies.

**Challenges with Administering Student Affairs Courses**

Some participants experienced hurdles in maintaining their student affairs pedagogies due to challenging environments. Participants described feeling pressures of administrative management of student affairs courses, mostly large courses like first-year experience seminars. These participants reported challenges with various aspects like course structure, capacity of labor, time constraints, and more. Two participants expressed significant disruption to their experience of living out the pedagogies due to the tensions and pressures from the administrative management of the course. Both participants served as instructors at large, public universities where efficiency, outcomes, and timely completion of tasks mattered greatly.

Andy described the pragmatism of student affairs courses he observed in his setting and how he both appreciated them and wished for something different:

I think what’s really hard about pedagogy in the world of student affairs is that I think a lot of times in student affairs we create curricula to serve a very specific
purpose. I know that there are lots of leadership classes. I think there are lots of RA prep classes. A lot of orientation leader prep classes, you know, intro to college. Like, I think there are a lot of courses designed to support students that feel, to me, very, I believe the word is, pragmatic, or like utilitarian. Like, we’re going to teach you about the resources. We’re going to help you learn strategies for being a successful student, and we’re gonna make sure that you feel like you’re a part of the community. And I think those are really noble and useful. And I still hold on to this, I don’t know if it’s romantic or if it’s just good pedagogy… this notion of like really prioritizing reflection and critical thinking and learning as process.

Also concerned about the pragmatism of some courses, Mario worried about the efficiency of the first-year seminar course he instructed in the past. He reflected on the grand scale at which the course operated:

So there’s, I mean, hundreds of sections, right? Hundreds of sections of a course. And let’s say there’s an instructor absent, they can email hundreds of other instructors and ask someone to cover week seven, which is this topic. And, “it doesn’t matter who you are. It doesn’t matter what classroom you’ve taught in, you don’t even need to know my students, don’t worry about it. They don’t participate anyway. Just show up and do the lesson. Uh, thanks for covering my course.” Like that’s sort of the vibe is that anyone can do any part of this course. It’s, very plug and play. It’s become efficient. What I mean by one size fits all, so it’s very efficient.
Andy perceived his own sense of daily urgency and efficiency at work as a challenge for instruction. Upon this reflection, Andy encouraged himself and others to slow down and think critically as instructors:

I feel like as an administrator it can be very easy to click into what I would almost name like, like, efficient capitalist mode. Like, you got a lot to get done and you have a finite amount of time in which to get it done. And so you need to figure out a way to be efficient and those are like tasks. Those are tasks that we all do. Those are the things that you just roll through your to-do list. And I think that the danger can come when, when instructing people, you know, or in the classroom, it can feel that way. Like, oh, I gotta get through this class, gotta build the syllabus, gotta do this program, get these materials ready to go and then like we’re done or whatever. So that, that’s a very, student affairs kinda… my training in student affairs. “I’m good. We’ll go, go, go.” And you have to be reflective of being able to pause and just think about the curriculum design.

In addition to Mario and Andy, Prescott commented on the benefits of efficiency within daily tasks as an administrator in student affairs but how that same efficiency could be a threat to classroom instruction:

I’m good at operationalizing things… my background is student affairs, overseeing campus activities, student engagement, student life stuff. I’m really good at the operational side of things… you have to get the work done. And so, for me, I think I oftentimes jump straight to what activities and, and learning scenarios we enact in the classroom without actually pausing and thinking about what are the outcomes I want the students to really take away from this session or
from this week? And how do those building blocks add to the entire course outcomes?

Mario worried about the divided attention and strained capacity of both the instructors of the seminar and the curriculum coordinators:

The people who are doing this, it’s a side project. This is not anyone’s job. And I think that’s what it comes down to for this kind of thing is someone who is an advisor is also charged with creating the curriculum for this and then training other instructors. And those instructors are also advisors, or those instructors are also assistant directors of retention and now you just have a bunch of people who are doing this at a side gig.

Continuing his thoughts on the challenges he faced as a student affairs educator for a course operated as such a large and complex program, Mario questioned the amount of control he had over the content of his classroom. Mario presented a hypothetical example of,

…a class coordinator for something like the first-year seminar saying, “Actually, we want all the students to know about campus recreation this year, their attendance numbers are low.’ And they want us to talk to the students… So we’re going to do that in week seven.”

In this kind of scenario, Mario contemplated the administrative challenges of that kind of course and his level of academic freedom:

That’s the kind of situation I have a problem with where the powers that be can take over. Many times, the courses that student affairs administrators are running, because they are tied to a piece of program or a first-year seminar or that diversity
peer educator was tied to a campus department. So, there’s always going to be some kind of external influence into the course content, course design, regardless of what we may as instructors say that’s not part of our learning outcomes and because they’re the bosses. Then it’s the rub of I’m not necessarily an instructor when I say no. I’m also your subordinate. And now I’m saying no. And do I have that same kind of academic freedom? Not necessarily.

This sub-theme represented a strongly felt yet not widespread experience among participants. For these participants, the high level of access to teaching in classrooms through student affairs’ administered courses came along with the feelings of not having their pedagogy be fully able to shine. For this small group of participants, the findings in this sub-theme were highly influential and, at times, disruptive to their ability to carry out their pedagogy.

**Exclusion from Teaching**

Most participants experienced challenges accessing opportunities to teach in the classroom. While some participants were hired or recruited to teach in large-scale courses housed within student affairs initiatives, many participants experienced some level of exclusion from being able to teach in a classroom. Participants described cultural attitudes such as the disbelief that student affairs educators knew how to teach and structural barriers such as narrow policies that kept them from serving as classroom instructors. Alberto explained, “the faculty are the kind of keepers of the curriculum.” In a system where student affairs educators historically serve in outside-the-classroom roles, many participants experienced cultural and structural barriers to classroom instruction.
Arwen discussed their difficulty accessing teaching opportunities and the perception of not having their pedagogy valued:

It took me a while to actually teach a course because I either wasn’t in the right unit or I didn’t have a PhD. And you know, at a research one institution, there’s all these assumptions around you have to be pursuing your doctor if you want to teach. And I often got frustrated because I was like, I teach all the time. I mean, you know, I facilitate all the time. I’m having conversations with hundreds of people about, in this case, LGBTQ news, whatever. Like I can teach, I don’t need this piece of paper to show that I can teach. So, I wish, particularly the academy saw the value of how teaching or facilitating outside of the classroom can better impact the classroom.

Alex commented on the desire for student affairs educators’ work to be valued through the classroom environment:

I just think there’s something about like this pursuit of legitimacy that I think is from both ends. It’s like the student affairs program that I’m running right now is like in pursuit of being taken seriously, and one of the ways to do that is to attach a class to being involved in this student affairs program. And then the teaching part is like, no, this is an academic discipline like this is a department. And that like sort of made the work we were doing, although very student affairs-y in the classroom was made legitimate by being attached to an academic department, being housed somewhere.

Prescott also felt questioned in his credibility as a teacher, “I was like frustrated because of their perception of our field of student affairs. And I’m like, ‘Oh, you think
my colleagues and student affairs, you think that we don’t know… that we can’t do what you do.” Reflecting on his time working in a full-time student affairs role, Prescott noted the ways he sought to prove the legitimacy of his teaching:

When I was full-time student affairs, definitely, there was a barrier and a perception that I didn’t have the credibility to be in the classroom, to teach in the classroom. And, then that did shift when I started saying… like using that language from the academic affairs side of things about pedagogy, about scaffolded learning, learning outcomes, all of these things… I was using the word curriculum cause I wanted there to be… that has power behind it. And there I wanted the faculty to take our department seriously.

Alex recalled a former institution they served where the opportunities for student affairs educators to teach in the classroom were challenging to attain:

The first place that I worked, a small private liberal arts college, so difficult to get into the classroom. I think for a lot of reasons, but like an institution that is very like, as much as it likes to not say this, an institution very like set in an old school traditional way of… validating is not the word… Um, old school way of legitimizing people who can be in the classroom. Like, who’s a keeper of knowledge that is dictated by a very specific set of criteria. And one of those, for example, is having a terminal degree. And at the time, and I still don’t, but at the time I was working there, did not have a terminal degree. And so that was an immediate, like, no.

Alex continued to explain how they found a way to teach in a classroom was through a partnership with a professor on campus:
It was only through the couple of faculty members that I had close working relationships with that would say, “You know what? You can teach. You should co-teach this thing. I would like to put you in the classroom.” Like, if, if it were not for them, then I wouldn’t have gotten that experience.

Alex explained how each institution they have served is different regarding how student affairs administrators are considered for teaching. They commented, “…it’s actually written into my role that I teach this course now. And so, I am listed as the instructor.”

Alberto also experienced strong relationships with faculty members who brought him into the classroom: “The only way that I got chance to teach here before was that a faculty member had to take me in essentially and I could be a co-teacher, but I could not be the principal instructor of a class.” He explained that due to his advocacy and the momentum of others who wished to see changes to the policy, the governing entities of the faculty decided to implement a new, yet still limited, policy:

You have to have a terminal degree now to teach a class, you have to be adopted by a department to teach that class. You can’t do it two consecutive semesters… that, that’ll be an interesting barrier cuz I do think there’s something about repetition of the course that helps with that… and it has to be a content area specific to the work that you’re responsible for.

Ultimately, Alberto felt disappointed about the missed opportunities created by excluding student affairs educators from the classroom: “Our students are missing out. I’m missing out on both personal and professional development. And the institution, you
know, is missing out because we’ve put particular barriers in place that we haven’t been able to be creative about.”

Most participants shared some experience with cultural and structural barriers to teaching in the classroom. Participants recalled limiting policies and attitudes of doubt about student affairs’ pedagogical ability.

**Student Affairs Pedagogy Aspirations**

Most participants hoped for a future of higher education in which student affairs pedagogy would be more prominently valued and encouraged. Reflecting on how many instructors in higher education use traditional teaching styles in comparison to his student affairs pedagogy, Prescott believed in the potential of adding student affairs pedagogy more deeply into the landscape of higher education:

So, I think there is a gap that’s being filled that we can show students, that student affairs people actually know what they’re doing and we’re doing some really cool, we’re doing some really cool things that we’re doing in programs outside the classroom and bringing those into the classroom.

Many participants described the experience of others misperceiving their pedagogy as disorganized or loose, but many participants used the words intentional and strategic instead. Alex expressed pride for their pedagogy in the face of potential misinterpretations from others:

Everything I do like it might seem on the outside a little hippy-dippy and free for all, but it is not… And I’m not like ashamed of that… I wish mainly colleagues knew that everything I’m doing has a purpose.
Also feeling pride for student affairs pedagogy, Akira proposed that student affairs educators may complement the work of research-oriented professors who do not have the time or capacity to attend to teaching and development in the way student affairs instructor could. Akira noted the demands of what she needs to help undergraduate students learn and may not happen in other courses:

They have to be able to do all these things that we talk about… have emotional intelligence, to have leadership skills, to have self-awareness, and hopefully we through this class teach that. That maybe other classes don’t have the bandwidth or that’s not the focus of the class.

Akira commented further on the potential for student affairs educators teaching in the classroom, drawing on bureaucratic, academic, and development rationales:

I certainly don’t want to paint with a broad brush but, with different institutions teaching, pedagogy, student experience… it’s not top priority. Research is bringing in the research dollars… and maybe the benefit of student affairs or like the added nature of student affairs being in these classrooms is that we’re not bringing in research dollars. We’re here really solely to teach and focus on the student wellbeing and connection and supporting them. And so maybe that’s the contribution that we do.

Alberto wanted to see a version of higher education where the classroom was a space more accessible to student affairs educators for the benefit of all:

The classroom is just such a unique and special place to build community. It is just such a distinct place and for me to kind of utilize the things that I’ve learned through residential life work, student affairs work… That I think our students are
missing, are missing out on opportunities. And, and I also think there are other faculty members who could benefit from understanding how I might structure a classroom.

**Summary of Theme 5: Interrelationships of Student Affairs Pedagogy**

The participants in this study may have expressed feelings of doubt, experiences of resistance, and instances of exclusion, but overwhelmingly all participants also felt pride. Participants believed in the value of student affairs pedagogy to contribute beneficially to the mission of teaching at colleges and universities. These participants dreamed and hoped for cultural and structural change at higher education institutions to make better use of student affairs pedagogy for the benefit of all.

**Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I introduced the participants of the study, presented the five major themes from the data, and provided detailed descriptions of all themes and sub-themes. These data describe the lived experiences of student affairs educators who have created and maintained a style of pedagogy for classroom settings. The student affairs educators who participated in this study perceived knowledge as a process of co-creation with their students where they did not consider knowledge in a hierarchy or fixed flow from teacher to student. These educators also utilized a variety of facilitation techniques largely developed through their student affairs backgrounds. All participants’ pedagogies emphasized the value of critically developing students to act in the interest of the greater good. Lastly, the participants negotiated internal relationships with their personal influences in addition to navigating external relationships with their pedagogy in their institutional environments. The final chapter extends the conversation about the findings.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

Chapter I opened with Penney’s (1969) assertion that the student affairs profession “has not been, is not, and will not be recognized or accepted as a vital aspect of the academic world” (Penney, 1969, p. 961). Other contemplations demonstrated that the public conversation about student affairs’ role in higher education is unresolved and, at times, pointedly contested. For example, foundational documents like the Student Personnel Point of View (SPPV), from the field’s earliest professional associations, urged emerging practitioners to holistically support students with attention to intellectual, social, emotional, moral, and cultural development. Yet, as recently as 2021, a faculty-written opinion article claimed that with a “shadow curriculum of student affairs,” student affairs educators “cross the line where faculty govern and inappropriately conflate moral or political training (if not indoctrination) with inquiry” (McCaughey & Welsh, 2021).

Collections of publications from McCaughey & Welsh’s (2021) article to the breadth of contemporary student development scholarship suggest that questions like what our students learn, how they learn it, and from whom have never been more compelling than they are today. While a longstanding perception of the division of labor perpetuates an impression that faculty teach in the classroom while student affairs only educates outside the classroom, data indicate otherwise. Increasing numbers of student
affairs practitioners serve as instructors in the classroom (Skipper, 2017; Young, 2019; Young & Hopp, 2014).

While the prevalence of student affairs instructors in the classroom has risen, research on the topic has not followed at a similar rate. This study addressed the lack of scholarly literature on student affairs educators as classroom instructors. As such, it sought to broaden and deepen our understanding of the role student affairs plays in the education of college students.

Using a critical hermeneutic phenomenological methodology, I explored the lived experiences of student affairs educators who teach as instructors in the classroom setting. My study was guided by three research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of student affairs educators developing and using a pedagogy for the classroom setting?
2. How, if at all, do student affairs educators perceive the critical and culturally engaging characteristics of their pedagogy in the classroom?
3. What are the perceptions of student affairs educators creating and maintaining pedagogy in the context of their institutional setting and the landscape of higher education?

This chapter (a) begins with a discussion of how the findings answered the research questions, then, (b) considers the findings through a lens of critical pedagogy organized as an interpretive review of the literature, (c) details implications of the findings, and (d) offers recommendations for practice and future research.
Discussion

A traditional dissertation may organize the discussion section around three components: (a) answering the research questions through (b) the findings of the study and (c) further explain the results in context of the scholarly literature. I chose to organize this discussion section through only answering the research questions by making connections to the findings. The interpretation section following the discussion will contextualize the literature to strengthen the interpretation I will make.

Question 1: Lived experiences of developing and using pedagogy for the classroom

Participants used many strategies to develop and carry out a style of pedagogy for classroom instruction as revealed in the themes of co-creation of knowledge, facilitation, self/others/society (SOS), and intrarelationships of the student affairs pedagogue. Participants described being influenced by authors and theorists, such as bell hooks and Paulo Freire, in shaping their beliefs about the nature of learning. As demonstrated in the co-creation of knowledge theme, all participants understood knowledge as not produced, owned, or legitimized through any singular entity. Participants believed that knowledge could not be exclusively delivered from one direction to another. The sub-themes in the co-creation of knowledge theme detailed the participants’ rejection of the banking model of education and how they shaped their pedagogies around the ideas of abundance and collective discovery. The findings indicated that the student affairs educators in this study shaped their pedagogies around the value of student voice, storytelling, and collaboration in the learning process.

The facilitation theme, with its many sub-themes of facilitation techniques, described how the participants put their beliefs of co-creation of knowledge to practice.
The participants carried out their pedagogies through a style of facilitation that they noted was complementary to, but distinct from, teaching. Facilitation techniques like multi-modal lesson plans, engaging in rituals, serving as a guide for expansive yet bounded learning, and fostering consent and trust were some of the methods they employed to implement the values and beliefs of their pedagogy.

The SOS theme demonstrated the influence student development theory had on the participants’ pedagogy in the classroom. Namely, the participants integrated a critical lens to their developmental practices so that they understood the role of identity, power, and oppression on the lives of their students. Doing so, the participants facilitated self-reflexive growth for their students that placed the students in the learning. The participants encouraged students to consider how identity shaped the way they understood the material in the present moment but also how it fit in students’ past experiences and future behaviors in life. The participants’ goal was to prepare their students well to be able to act in the interest of the greater public good.

Lastly, participants were influenced by social identities and personal life experiences that shaped how they taught in the classroom. Some of these identities and experiences included race, nationality, first-generation college status, class background, disability, travel opportunities, and their own history with schooling. The participants also described being influenced by experiences of doubt and motivating feelings of empowerment. Often, the lived experiences of doubt and empowerment were not mutually exclusive but interacted with each other in a way that provided inspiration for how the participants approached creating and maintain their pedagogies.
Participants’ lived experiences revealed the development of, and commitment to, a critical pedagogy. They rejected the banking model as evidenced in the co-creation of knowledge theme. In addition, they employed facilitation techniques to implement the values and beliefs of their pedagogies. Participants were also influenced by their own life experiences and identities.

**Question 2: Cultural and critical characteristics of participants’ pedagogy**

The second research question explored the cultural and critical characteristics of participants’ pedagogies. This question was also answered by the same four themes that provided insight to the first research question: co-creation of knowledge, facilitation, self/others/society/, and the intrarelationships of the student affairs pedagogue.

Co-creation of knowledge, and its sub-themes of banking model of education and multiple forms of knowledge, included several direct references from the participants to critical pedagogy scholars including bell hooks and Paolo Freire. Participants viewed co-creation of knowledge as a belief for teaching that re-negotiated traditional top-down power from teacher to student. The participants used this approach to infuse a critical lens that attended to imbalances of power in the classroom. Participants fostered a classroom environment of approaching power dynamics with a critical eye that they encouraged students to employ in their own lives in the world around them.

Facilitation acted as way to put the values of the co-creation theme to practice. The facilitation theme was another part of the findings that provided insight into the cultural and politically/socially conscious characteristics of critical theory that participants included in their pedagogy. Some examples included the accessibility techniques that addressed disability and second language experiences of international
students. Participants cited using the co-teaching technique as a method of adding diversity of teacher representation for social identities to their students. The multi-modal facilitation sub-theme was a widespread tactic used by all participants. Multi-modal lesson plans considered how offering dynamic options for engagement helped address the learning needs of diverse experiences. Lastly, participants used trust-building and consent-seeking facilitation techniques to successfully implement the vulnerable, critical, and self-reflective lesson plans they facilitated.

Furthermore, the self/others/society theme detailed the participants’ intentions for preparing students for engaging with their peers and society at large through a lens of equity and justice. The participants included cultural elements in their teaching through the integration of social identity development models and critical theories into traditional student development models. For many participants, adding cultural elements in developmental models meant a self-reflexive approach that encouraged students to recognize the value of their own backgrounds and identities.

Lastly, the personal influences and empowerment/giving back sub-themes of the intrarelationships of the student affairs pedagogue theme revealed the participants’ reflections on how their own cultural backgrounds influenced their pedagogy. From their desire for first-generation students to navigate college easier than they did to inspiration from Black jazz educators, the participants’ own backgrounds provided insight to the cultural and critical characteristics of their pedagogy.

Participants experiences revealed their incorporation of cultural and critical elements to their pedagogies. All participants sought out a renegotiation of power dynamics in their classrooms through the co-creation of knowledge theme. Facilitation
techniques represented practices participants employed to implement the beliefs of teaching inspired by the critical pedagogy components in the co-creation of knowledge theme. To promote self-reflexive, culturally-inclusive classrooms, participants encouraged students to consider their own backgrounds, identities, and stories as knowledge worthy of study in the classroom.

**Question 3: Institutional setting and landscape of higher education**

Participants expressed perceptions about their pedagogies in context of institutional settings and the landscape of higher education in the final theme of the findings—interrelationships of student affairs pedagogy. The participants’ perceptions were mixed between challenges, successes, and hopes for the future.

The participants mostly shared in their experience of struggling, at times, to engage students. Some participants noted the incongruence between their student affairs pedagogy and the teaching styles their students grew up learning in more traditional environments. The participants, while enthusiastic about helping their students learn a new style of engaging in the classroom, also expressed frustration with the difficulties they faced from student resistance.

Some participants enjoyed the benefit of easier access to classroom instruction through formally organized student affairs courses such as first-year seminars. Some participants, however, expressed difficulty with characteristics they experienced in these settings such as a pressure for efficiency, a lack of flexibility with provided curricula, and the desire to more fully carry out the values and beliefs of their own student affairs pedagogy.
Most participants related to cultural and structural barriers that excluded them at some point in their careers from serving as instructors in the classroom. Some participants told stories of having their intellect and capabilities questioned by faculty colleagues. Other participants recalled narrow policies that barred them from teaching in the classroom due to characteristics like their role in student affairs or a lack of a terminal degree.

Participants experienced challenges creating and maintaining classroom pedagogies. Many participants expressed disappointment with student affairs pedagogy not being fully utilized by the institution and wanted expansion of opportunities to teach and collaborate across campus. The participants wished that the critical and developmentally oriented teaching capabilities of their student affairs peers be more widely integrated across institutional endeavors. Participants shared in the belief that the pedagogical expertise from student affairs could contribute beneficially to their institutions’ mission for teaching if culture were to change and further embrace student affairs pedagogy.

Ultimately, the five major themes offered key insights to answer the three research questions posed by the study. These themes include co-creation of knowledge, facilitation, self/others/society, the intrarelationships of the student affairs pedagogue, and the interrelationships of student affairs pedagogy. Next, I will further contextualize these findings with the scholarly literature in the interpretations section. The literature tells us a story of critical pedagogy, student development theory, and the student affairs profession over time. Through this story we can make deeper meaning of the participants’ lived experiences of creating and carrying out pedagogies of their own.
Interpretation

On the first day of fall classes, I sat to the side of the classroom as my student peer-facilitators led the new first-year students through our lesson plan. Earlier that morning I commuted to work wrapped up in thoughts about the draft of the results chapter I was writing at the time. I was feeling doubtful. I wondered if my study was relevant and if my results were truthful to the reality of other student affairs educators (outside the experiences my participants shared with me). I knew my goal with a phenomenological methodology was not to aim for generalizability, but I still felt insecure about the usefulness and applicability of my study.

With those doubtful thoughts still lingering, I sat and observed my student co-facilitators guide the first-year students through one of our first lessons. The activity sought to explore academic behaviors and norms for being a successful student at our university. I started to notice this study’s themes and sub-themes pop up one after the other as my students facilitated the lesson plan. The activity was planned with a multi-modal design, the students moved around the room, the topics were scaffolded up in levels of complexity. The facilitators asked questions about various academic behaviors but focused the learning on students’ sharing their own experiences and insights rather than the facilitators dictating what to think and do. The questions and conversation were guided by the student co-facilitators allowing for expansiveness and highlighting nuances of social identity and the role privilege plays in how the new students will make various choices in college. This activity was not planned by them or me. It was a part of the curriculum a centralized team provided to us. That team was not connected to me or my dissertation research either.

In that moment, I was reinvigorated with a sense of purpose and passion for the results my research produced. I was struck by the thought that these student facilitators, without knowing it, were a part of a long lineage of student affairs pedagogy. These facilitators, and the curriculum they were enacting, represented an approach to teaching and learning descended through time from the origins of critical pedagogy making its way through our profession of student affairs to the continually growing expertise of student affairs pedagogy in classroom settings.

- M. Drucker, reflective memo during the drafting of Chapter V

For this interpretation section, I will consider the results through the lens of critical pedagogy, illustrating how it acted as a connecting link between all the findings. For the participants in this study, teaching in the classroom was an expression of critical pedagogy. To provide deeper consideration, I will contextualize the findings through scholarly literature. In particular, I will focus on (a) the foundational critical pedagogy
works of Paolo Freire and bell hooks, (b) critical theory’s influence on student
development theory, and (c) critical/culturally engaging documents in contemporary
student affairs. This consideration will highlight the idea of a lineage of student affairs
pedagogy, as described in my reflective memo above.

Contextualizing Findings with Critical Pedagogy Works of Freire and hooks

Critical pedagogy grew out of 19th century Marxist influence on educational
philosophy. In their own respective contexts, the thought leaders I reviewed expanded the
tradition of critical pedagogy. Freire, hooks, Grande, and Rendón all contributed to
critical pedagogy by embracing a critical lens to both teacher and student so that
structures of power were subverted in search of social, political, and economic liberation.

The participants’ experiences reported in Chapter IV aligned with the literature on
critical pedagogy from these authors, particularly the works of Freire and hooks. I will
discuss the following themes and sub-themes to enrich my interpretation: co-creation of
knowledge, self/other/societies (SOS), and intrarelationships of the student affairs
pedagogue.

The theme of co-creation of knowledge represented the direct congruence
between Freirean concepts and the participants’ pedagogies. The strongest element was
all of the participants’ rejection of the banking model of education. Many participants
referenced this concept by name and Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Those that did
not mention this concept by name and author described their values and beliefs about
teaching in alignment with the concept.

In essence, all student affairs educators in this study developed and utilized a
pedagogy in which the traditional structure of power in a classroom was rejected. For
these educators, the banking model of education represented an illusion that knowledge is immutable, objective, and owned by the teacher to be relayed to ignorant students. In contrast, all participants described their teaching philosophy as founded on the belief that students possessed knowledge as well as the teacher.

Problem-posing education was a Freirean concept that responded to the power imbalance of the banking model in which students and teachers were “jointly responsible for a process in which all grow” (Freire, 2000, p. 79). Student affairs demonstrated using the problem-posing approach such as who Alberto noted, “it’s not just my responsibility to build trust and build a container for a student. It is each other’s responsibility to build community that holds one another in this particular learning community that we’re building.”

Furthermore, problem-posing education was founded on the idea that students observe contradictions in their environment and inquire about those incongruences. Within this principle of critical pedagogy, problem-posing emphasized a reorganization of power in society. Alex shared how their approach to knowledge in the classroom subverted power between student and teacher saying, “the knowledge that I bring to this space is not, should not, be held to a higher regard or whatever, than the expertise that I believe my students can bring to the space.”

Power imbalance between student and teacher was not the only critical aspect prioritized in the participants’ pedagogy. As documented through the self/other/society (SOS) theme and, specifically, the what? so what? now what? (W/SW/NW) sub-theme, the participants emphasized a justice-oriented mission for their renegotiation of power within their pedagogy.
Talia reflected on a layered process of self-development aimed at building students’ capacity to act supportively to others and society when commenting on the importance of, understanding themselves in relations to others… really thinking about the way that privilege, power, inequity show up, how they perpetuate that, how they can work towards dismantling that, how they can work towards repairing harm that happens within their communities, how they can work towards a collective sense of liberation in those communities when needed.

The desire for their pedagogies to “work towards a collective sense of liberation” in communities and larger society was a defining characteristic of student affairs pedagogy for this study. Freire’s work resonated with this sentiment not only through problem-posing education, but with his concepts of dialogue, praxis and critical consciousness. Altogether, these Freirean teachings fostered a cyclical practice of personal reflection and outward action to foster personal/communal empowerment and reject contradictions that maintain oppression.

One of bell hooks’ core concepts of teaching, engaged pedagogy, complemented Freire’s notions in the way it embraced and explored “the practice of knowing together, to see intelligence as resource that can strengthen our common good” (hooks, 2010, p.22). Her trilogy of books on teaching expanded Freire’s work for a uniquely racialized and gendered American context. hooks’ pedagogy emphasized storytelling and lived experiences as forms of knowledge. Engaged pedagogy required a practice of self-actualization demanding a knowing of one’s own experience and the attention to power differentials within the classroom in real time (hooks, 1994).
All participants reported a value and belief in their students’ personal stories as valuable knowledge for the classroom setting. Alberto’s semester-long assignment for his Black and Latino Leadership course, for example, demonstrated the integration of these beliefs into classroom practices. Alberto tasked his students to interview elders from their family or community of origin to honor the leadership knowledge innate in the lived experiences of each student’s life and background, building confidence and empowerment. As Alberto described, “I want students to become comfortable, like with how they’ve learned and what they know. Particularly for the courses that I was teaching, that their own narratives are worthy of intellectual curiosity.”

Alberto’s leadership assignment was a good example of overlapping themes from the findings. In pursuit of the assignment’s mission to “instill a sense of worthiness,” Alberto’s story demonstrated a direct connection to the study’s themes, such as rejecting a banking model of education and embracing engaged pedagogy. This contextualization in critical pedagogy concepts also gives way to other more deeply considering other themes such as the (W/SW/NW) theme for social justice and liberation. While expanding on what the sense of worthiness meant for his classroom, Alberto, reflecting on the intention of the assignment, explained the influence of good that can result from this exercise:

I would hope that folks left the class, like that particular course, with a curiosity. Oftentimes these [elders] are these folks they deeply appreciated. And maybe they knew only a fraction of this individual that they really kind of like admired, right? These kinds of conversations open up and expand this relationship and this appreciation that you have for this person. And to like, to demonstrate that
curiosity to other people that come across your life. I think with the intention of a recognition that people or that particular person, like they matter. Um, and to not underestimate the impact of signaling to someone who doesn’t, particularly for marginalized folks, who don’t historically think they matter.

The story Alberto shared is a rich case study that demonstrated the interconnectedness between (a) his values and beliefs for teaching/learning and (b) his intentions for students to think critically about power and justice and to (c) carry a compassionate sense of curiosity for others with them out in the world. His story about this assignment also showed how a participant’s values and beliefs led to the distinct set of facilitation tactics he employed to successfully conduct the project with his students. For example, since his assignment required students to collect and create knowledge from their own families and home communities, Alberto shared that the intimacy of such a task required him to also act critically in his facilitation.

Alberto’s words helped illustrate sub-themes for facilitation such as building an intentional container, fostering shared responsibility among students and teacher in the classroom, and actively seeking consent and building trust. When Alberto described how he carried out those facilitation tactics, he frequently connected the purpose of those tactics to the demands or nature of the assignments like the elder interviews from his Black and Latino Leadership course. For example, Alberto established the one-on-one preparation meetings with each student after they completed the elder interview and before the student presented in class. Alberto recalled,

Those one-on-one practices certainly help me with preparing them for like, “are you okay with me asking these kind [of questions]”?… There’s a level of consent
that I was trying to like, get to ensure like, “I’m gonna ask a version of this and are you okay with that?”

For Alberto, and the other participants, carrying out a teaching philosophy founded in empowerment and liberation required facilitation tactics that aligned accordingly to allow these student affairs educators to accomplish their pedagogical goals.

Similarly, Skariah demonstrated this type of philosophical and tactical congruence when she described the connection between teaching the social justice concept of “levels of oppression” and employing dynamic multi-modal engagement activities. Skariah explained the connection as:

I feel like those different levels of internalized level, interpersonal level, systemic level, I am trying to also incorporate that within my experiential learning. Okay. With journaling, it’s that internalized. That pair-share, that interpersonal… whether pair-share or a group of three or four. And then large group, is that like systemic. Let’s connect this to the larger picture of context of everything. So, I think for me, that I look at it in that way to figure out how can I incorporate all these variety of different levels into each class, into each lesson plan.

Skariah’s story demonstrated the way participants’ reflections can illustrate represent multiple themes of the results at one time showing the interconnectedness of the findings as they similarly did in Alberto’s story. These examples demonstrated that the participants’ pedagogies were not only characterized by a philosophy for teaching nor the content being delivered, but also how the philosophy and content were facilitated for student learning. All three of these aspects—philosophy, content, and facilitation, were
considered harmoniously by the student affairs educators in this study suggesting the presence of critical pedagogy as an overarching characteristic for their teaching.

Lastly, the sub-themes of personal influences and giving back/empowerment were important to all participants. For some, this meant that the background of their upbringing or their social identities motivated their pursuit of a critical pedagogy and shaped the way they carried it out. Mario identified strongly with experiences of first-generation college students, motivating his belief that every lesson plan needed to have hands-on application to build professional development and relevance to the tangible world rather than simply a theoretical one. For Alex, their presence in a classroom meant that they had the influence to increase representation of racially diverse voices in response to the lack of diversity they experienced in their undergraduate courses. They accomplished this increase of representation through deliberate incorporation of racially diverse authors and non-academic source materials such as pop-culture and internet content.

Critical pedagogy’s rejection of centralized power located in the hands of the teacher meant, for many participants, that self-disclosure to their students helped renegotiate the power dynamics in their classrooms. Arwen mentioned frequently using their transgender identity as a focal point for storytelling to connect their own lived experience to the content of the course. Doing so, Arwen explained that she used her identity as a vehicle not only for instruction but also to role-model the kind of self-reflective vulnerability that she expected of her students. Similarly, Prescott believed that when he role-modeled storytelling from his own stories, such as his first-generation student experiences, he helped show the students that he did not support traditional
notions of power in the classroom that might prevent a teacher from showing vulnerability.

The critical pedagogy works of Freire and hooks helped explain the experiences of the participants through its concepts of problem-posing education, engaged pedagogy, critical consciousness, and storytelling. Critical pedagogy literature provided one foundation to contextualize the findings and dimension can be found next through considering the scholarly literature on college student development theory.

**Contextualizing Findings with College Student Development Theory**

Critical pedagogy authors like Freire and hooks largely overlapped in history at the same time as student development theory with influential publications from the 19th century onward. Student development theories did not, however, integrate critical theories such as critical pedagogy until the 21st century. The participants in this study represented this modern amalgamation between the two fields. For instance, Prescott’s reflection about the contemporary state of college student development theory represented the takeaway from this section well, “we’re now seeing student development theory and the focus on identity development and social identity development and the intersectionality of identities. Like, that’s really what’s leading in that space of student development theories.”

The origins of college student development theory included psychosocial theories (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Erickson, 1959), cognitive development theories (Baxter-Magolda, 1992; King & Kitchener, 1994, Perry 1968), moral reasoning development (Gilligan, 1982/1993; Kohlberg, 1981) and integrative theories (Baxter-Magolda, 2001; Kegan, 1994; Schlossberg et al., 1995). While these various branches of student
development theory represent a wide array of multi-disciplinary scholarship, they share a commonality relevant to this chapter—a lack of a critical lens, one that places emphasis on identifying and dismantling systems of oppression in order to restructure power dynamics for social and political liberation (Abes et al., 2019; Jones & Stewart, 2016).

By the turn of the 21st century, higher education scholars began to wonder, for example, how a model for cognitive development would suffice for serving their students if the model absolved itself from the permeations of oppression. Jones & Stewart (2016) and Abes et al. (2019) catalogued the history of student development theory through identifying waves of time. Those publications have built momentum for ongoing and future infusion of critical and post structural theory into the body of student development literature for higher education.

For the participants in this study, and the authors just mentioned, critical pedagogy played a role in their formulation for a critically-oriented approach to student development theory. Jones and Stewart’s (2016) chapter Evolution of Student Development Theory, opened with a quote from hooks’ (1994) Teaching to Transgress: “Theory is not inherently healing, liberatory, or revolutionary. It fulfills this function only when we ask it to do so and direct our theorizing toward this end” (p. 61). In essence, hooks argued that theory could serve a purpose for social justice, but only if we intentionally included it as a goal. Similarly, participants asked how they could explicitly add intentions of liberation into their teaching.

Arwen also noted, “I’m trying to consistently think about ‘how do we talk about possibility and liberation?’” Skariah also reflected on how her undergraduate academic choices and co-curricular involvement in student affairs influenced her intentions for
teach. She indicated that her studies “ended up making me learn Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Audre Lorde, and bell hooks and how education should be liberating versus oppressive.”

The critical self-reflexivity sub-theme in the self/others/society theme included examples of how the participants infused critical theory into student development theory toward their goals of liberation. In pursuit of developing students who act in solidarity with social justice efforts, the participants emphasized the role of personal reflection that added an intentional critical layer.

Andy talked about his motivations in the classroom, specifically recalling how he was not asked to put his own life and identity in the context of the political material he learned in undergraduate courses. He said:

When I was in college, I learned a lot about social identity and privilege and oppression through a very intellectual lens. And so, for example, I took a course on race and racism in U.S. cinema. And it was all about the creation of different racial stereotypes and things like that through cinema and through media… but, it was always very bound in this kind of abstract intellectual space that didn’t take me to places where I was reflecting on who I was and kind of the implications of my social identities as a person.

In contrast, the participants in this study sought to change that third-person, objective approach by pushing their students to consider their identities and stories for the purpose of making meaning on how they interact with their surrounding environments. Prescott, for instance, explained how he put that belief to practice in everyday moments.
such as asking purposefully self-reflective questions to his students during classroom discussions.

In a leadership studies discussion, one of Prescott’s students shared her fulfillment with how she provided support to another student. Prescott probed this student to celebrate that fulfillment but also to take her meaning-making process further inward:

She started telling a story about her interactions advising a first-generation college student. And she gave kind of this still up-in-the-clouds response, more of a general response. And I said, “well, why did you react that way” or “why did you approach it that way?” And, she answered that layered question. And I said, “why did you do it that way?” or “how did you know to do it that way? Like, “what informed you?” And then I ended up asking about four why questions.

Prescott utilized a questioning facilitation technique because his style of pedagogy, rooted in the traditions of critical pedagogy, compelled him to ask this student about her own decision-making process. Prescott invited the students’ own form of personal knowledge to the room. He continued the story:

And then finally we really get at the core of her own informal theory, her own informal way of engaging with first gen college students. And come to find out much of that was based off her own lived experience. Which again is what informal theory often is based around… it’s your own lived experience. And so, I think could see the other students in the classroom, like all their minds were turning because they were starting to see a pattern, what I was aiming for, of like deeper, deeper, deeper, and asking those why questions.
Prescott’s questioning technique allowed for his student to cite the student’s own background and lived experience as a form of knowledge that informed her actions. In this way, Prescott used critical pedagogy’s appreciation for storytelling and multiple forms of knowledge to help the student’s self-reflective development. Further, that development process was done in context of a critical lens in support of liberatory behavior by connecting the student to her own first-gen college experience. Doing so, the participant that related the student’s social identity-informed knowledge to that of another student who was struggling creating a deeper meaning for how the student can understand relating to her own experiences and those of others.

Prescott did not simply want this student to leave with a sense of fulfillment for her leadership skills because she helped someone. Rather, Prescott wanted to encourage the students to consider her background as an asset building a sense of empowerment in pursuit of leadership skills conscious of the social and political dynamics of what it means to be a first-generation college student. In essence, this story is one that convenes the student affairs utilization of college student development theory with a lens of critical theory that encapsulates the essence of this interpretation section.

Jones and Stewart (2016) wrote that they believed in the historical and ongoing utility of student development theory but that it only may provide usefulness if we do so from a purposefully critical and liberatory approach. Whether it was Prescott’s story just mentioned, Alberto’s elder interview project, or Skariah’s multi-modal discussion tactics for analogizing the multiple levels of oppression, the educators in this study demonstrated they strongly infused elements of critical pedagogy in their roles as student development specialists. Thus, they illustrated the ongoing usefulness of student development theory if
merged with critical pedagogy. Furthermore, they demonstrated a responsiveness to the field’s calls to action, as outlined in the following sub-section.

**Contextualizing Findings in Contemporary Critical and Culturally Engaging Documents**

Higher education scholars increasingly integrated critical theories in student development theories through the late 20th and early 21st centuries (Abes et al., 2019; Jones & Stewart, 2016). The same time period also saw a growing number of student affairs educators serving as instructors in the classroom (Skipper, 2017; Young, 2019; Young & Hopp, 2014). The participants in this study represented examples of both these historical elements—the integration of critical theory in student development theory and a growing number of student affairs educators teaching in classrooms. The participants’ lived experiences revealed challenges they faced while creating and carrying out their pedagogies.

I will first review challenges that participants experienced, as evidenced in the fifth theme and one sub-theme of the fourth theme. I will then explore participants’ challenges by contextualizing these results in the “Critical and Culturally Engaging Documents in Contemporary Student Affairs” section from Chapter II’s literature review. The participants’ pedagogies represented one way student affairs educators have answered the call of what Museus’ (2013) model of Culturally and Engaging Campus Environments (CECE) and Quaye et al.’s (2018) *Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization (SIRJD)* advised our professional community to do. As such, the challenges the participants experienced in creating and maintaining their pedagogies
revealed useful insights for contemporary, critical, and action-oriented literature in student affairs.

**Identifying Challenges in Institutional Settings and the Cultural Landscape of Higher Education**

The findings demonstrated that participants placed a high level of philosophical and action-oriented intention in their teaching styles. Yet, the findings also revealed that their pursuits to put values and beliefs into action often encountered challenges. Some challenges loomed large in an institutional and cultural landscape where participants reported perceptions of not being respected or valued for their developmental and pedagogical expertise.

Prescott remarked on the attitudes he encountered doubting his abilities when he sought inclusion by faculty in the teaching realm of the university’s work. He said, “I was like frustrated because of their perception of our field of student affairs. And I’m like, ‘Oh, you think my colleagues and student affairs, you think that we don’t know… that we can’t do what you do.’” Prescott was reacting to times he recalled being in meetings with faculty and feeling confused and hurt by the faculty’s surprised responses: “I was able to speak some of the academic jargon, like the language from faculty. And the members in the room were kind of blown away. They’re like ‘Oh, you actually know what we’re talking about?’ I was like, ‘What are you… what… what’s happening?’ You know what I mean?” Prescott’s story reflected the cultural norms of higher education settings he experienced where colleagues across campus did not associate students affairs with the knowledge or ability for teaching.
Arwen also wanted their pedagogy to be valued more highly. Arwen wanted their experience in co-curricular or staff training facilitation to be valued pedagogically when getting rejected from trying to teach in the classroom:

I often got frustrated because I was like, I teach all the time. I mean, you know, I facilitate all the time. I’m having conversations with hundreds of people about, in this case, LGBTQ news, whatever. Like I can teach, I don’t need this piece of paper to show that I can teach. So, I wish, particularly the academy saw the value of how teaching or facilitating outside of the classroom can better impact the classroom.

Arwen further commented that, “There’s just a different level of legitimacy in the institution that facilitation of a co-curricular workshop is never gonna be at the same level… it’s never gonna reach that legitimacy or that valuation or that value at the institution.”

Alex contemplated a similar notion of legitimacy reflecting on their teaching experience:

There’s something about this pursuit of legitimacy … the student affairs program I’m running right now is in pursuit of being taken seriously, and one of the ways to do that is to attach a class to being involved in this student affairs program.

Those contemplations on legitimacy related to the imposter syndrome sub-theme from the fourth theme of intrarelationships of the student affairs pedagogue. In an environment in which student affairs educators have been doubted for their capabilities and a structural environment that prevents them from accessing opportunities classroom instruction, student affairs educators have struggled to identity as educators. Andy noted:
I think I still have elements of, what’s the term when you are… imposter syndrome. Such that I think of an educator, you know, as being a very specific trade or specific field that I don’t know if I feel confident calling myself an educator, but I feel like that is the label that I most align with.

Alberto similarly resonated with the sentiment of imposter syndrome on the student affairs field commenting that, “I think sometimes we could be, um, you know, that kind of imposter syndrome. Like, ‘We’re not faculty and so that’s not the thing we’re supposed to do.’”

For some, this sense of unworthiness caused doubt about the value of their pedagogy. Andy talked about second-guessing the usefulness of his pedagogy rooted in “transformative education,” “deeper thinking,” and many aspects of social justice that he infused into his teaching style. Andy noted, “I really struggle with feeling like maybe that’s like a romantic thing. Like it, it’s too abstract. Or maybe it’s too, um, maybe it’s unrealistic or maybe it’s not even worth people’s time.”

Similarly, Skariah expressed passion for addressing this sense of out-of-placeness about her liberatory pedagogy. She dreamed of a version of higher education that allowed room for her pedagogy’s liberatory aspirations even if it was not shared by others all the time:

I wish people understood that foundation of education for liberation versus… Because you can still educate through liberation while still knowing and understanding that there are other classes and how to learn and understand other classes… maybe there may be more banking system. There are still ways to create a classroom, in my mind, that is rooted in liberation, rooted in problem solving
education, while still knowing and understanding that the rest of the world does not operate like that.

The findings suggested that institutional settings mattered when considering how participants perceived their sense of respect and value for their pedagogy. Some participants who had experiences at small, private institutions, like Alberto and Alex, described not being allowed to serve as an officially recognized instructor for a course. In these instances, they needed a faculty member to lead the course and invite them as guest-instructors. In those cases, the structure of the college curriculum and governance excluded their access to teaching. They found respect and appreciation for their pedagogies, though, from faculty members, especially faculty of color, who asked them to join their classrooms due to the relevance of their pedagogies’ emphasis on using a critical lens and empowerment for students’ social identities.

For others at larger, public institutions, they often experienced structural inclusion for serving as instructors in classroom settings such as first-year experience courses or student-leader preparation courses, but they did not perceive a large amount of respect for the actual expertise they brought to the role. Mario, for example, listed several teaching opportunities he had at his institution, but also struggled in settings where large, programmatic courses hampered his autonomy as an instructor. In contrast to some participants who felt discomfort with identifying as an educator, Mario took pride in the educator label to acknowledge his purposeful place and potential as a student affairs practitioner in a classroom. Mario critiqued the teaching circumstances he experienced that did not allow for the fullness of his pedagogical approach noting:
I think the higher education landscape broadly views student affairs practitioners in the classroom as sort of like resource experts, resource referral agents. You know, we are not educators. We are deliverers. And I think I do not view myself as someone who delivers. I view myself as an educator. And I think that is maybe the clearest way I can describe it.

Mario explained that the perception of student affairs practitioners as referral agents and deliverers is related to the way the curriculum for those large courses have been streamlined for efficiency, “it’s very plug and play. It’s become efficient. What I mean by one size fits all, so it’s very efficient.” Mario described restrictions in being able to modify the curriculum when he wanted to incorporate his style of pedagogy that emphasized dynamic student engagement, professional development for first-generation college students, and deeper level connection to identity and social justice. Other times, though, he reported the curriculum being changed by program administrators who wanted help promoting various campus services and he questioned his autonomy and level of respect as an instructor calling it the, “… rub of I’m not necessarily an instructor when I say no. I’m also your subordinate. And now I’m saying no. And do I have that same kind of academic freedom [as faculty]? Not necessarily.”

Participants revealed challenges they encountered in pursuit of carrying out their pedagogies. At times, challenges came in the form of interpersonal slights in a cultural norm of not believing in student affairs’ ability to teach. Other times, the challenges were structural including formal exclusion from teaching opportunities. And, yet, depending on institutional settings, some participants had easier access to teaching opportunities but
faced challenges in how they were allowed to teach limiting the expression of their critical and developmentally oriented pedagogy.

**Contextualizing in Contemporary Student Affairs Documents**

In the field of student affairs, scholars and professional associations have produced a rich body of literature supporting practitioners providing best and better practices for on-the-ground work with students. Museus’ (2013) *Culturally Engaging Campus Environments* (CECE) and Quaye et al.’s (2018) *Strategic Imperative for Racial Justice and Decolonization* (SIRJD) were two critical and culturally-oriented publications particularly relevant to this study. The findings provided insight for how student affairs educators put guidance, such as those from the CECE Model and SIRJD document, to practice. The participants experienced both meaningfulness and success while they also encountering obstacles and challenges. Considering the participants’ student affairs pedagogies as not only an expression of critical pedagogy, but also in context of literature like the CECE Model and SIRJD documents, this study may help the student affairs field apply the guidance of these publications further in the future. Doing so may support the successes of further application such further research and expansion of student affairs pedagogy. This study may also help troubleshoot challenges to reduce existing obstacles such as cultural and structural barriers for student affairs educators to teach and carry out their pedagogy.

In this subsection, I first will contextualize this study’s findings in the literature of the CECE Model and the SIRJD document. Then, I will consider the historical and contemporary implications for connections between critical pedagogy, contemporary student affairs practice, and the findings of this study.
For the CECE model, participants fulfilled Museus’ elements of creating a culturally engaging campus environment. Elements like cultural familiarity called for students accessing staff, teachers, and administrators who understand their cultural backgrounds. Participants represented this element as evidenced by their use of self-disclosure about their identities and experiences with an intention to promote more diversity in the classroom. Other elements—such as collectivist and cultural orientations, humanized educational environments, and holistic support—called for college campuses to prioritize teamwork rather than individualism, develop meaningful relationships between teacher and student, and dedicate support for multiple facets of the student experience in and outside the classroom. The participants’ use of co-creation of knowledge, storytelling, and holistic facilitation techniques aligned with those elements. Lastly, Museus called for meaningful cross-cultural engagement and culturally validating environments to appreciate solving real-world problems while valuing students’ cultural background and knowledge. The results of this study like themes of co-creation of knowledge, facilitation, and self/others/society aligned well with the CECE model.

Quaye et al.’s (2018) SIRJD document framed their imperative for racial justice and decolonization in the context of ongoing inequity:

The realities of inequity and injustice, particularly targeting Indigenous and racially minoritized peoples in the U.S. and globally, continue to confront us. Systems of racism, White supremacy, and settler colonialism intersect with structures of classism, ableism, genderism, heterosexism, and nationalism to create situations of increasing jeopardy for Indigenous and racially minoritized peoples.
The authors utilized a critical framework that addressed institutional culpability and structural reproduction of oppression within which they described student affairs as an extension of cross-generational hegemony reproducing power and privilege. In fact, they wrote, “Our college and university campuses are not insulated from these conditions. In fact, policies and practices within postsecondary education contribute to, exacerbate, and profit from these intersectional systems of exclusion and dehumanization” (Quaye et al., 2018, p. 6).

The SIRJD document marked a notable shift from personal responsibility at the individual level of diversity and inclusion to a focus on institutions and systems. That systemic approach reflects a dialectical and problem-posing approach reminiscent of critical pedagogy concepts. In fact, the SIRJD document included many examples of critical pedagogy characteristics. Four of the concepts included in the imperative’s “outcomes” circle and “vanes” of the framework relate closely to critical pedagogy concepts: critical consciousness, humanization, dialogue, and problem-posing education.

In addition to those four concepts, this study’s results align well with the concepts of questioning the knowledges we use, suspending efficiency, embracing dialogue, developing authentic relationships, and watching out for each other. These connections link the influence of critical pedagogy to both the SIRJD document’s framework and to the pedagogies developed and maintained by the student affairs educators in this study.

**Conclusion of Interpretation**

My interpretation has told a story over time. The participants’ beliefs and actions for pedagogy demonstrated direct or indirect influence from critical pedagogy authors like Paulo Freire and bell hooks. In the 21st century, critical and postsructural theory
integrated in the student affairs’ body of literature on development theory. Both of those scholarly movements influenced student affairs supporting culturally engaging and critically oriented theory-to-practice literature.

The origins of critical pedagogy date back to the late 19th century with Freire and hooks’ writing marking its influence in the mid and late 20th century. From there, the revitalization of college student development theory for social and political relevance in the 21st century was organized by authors like Abes, Stewart, and Jones who demanded a rigorous reconceptualization of college student development theory by incorporating critical and poststructural theory.

This timeline is relevant to contextualizing the findings within the contemporary student affairs documents. The CECE model and SIRJD document represent two 21st century student affairs publications that emphasized a critical lens in practice. They both aligned with the shift in student development theory at the turn of the 21st century to create identity-forward and social justice-oriented recommendations to student affairs practitioners. The authors of the CECE model and SIRJD document published them as calls to action for student affairs practitioners. Both pieces of literature encouraged methods for how student affairs educators could pursue critical and culturally engaging outcomes in their settings at work.

Through analyzing and discussing the data, this study revealed that the participants’ pedagogies were an expression of critical pedagogy. As such, the creation and execution of their pedagogies existed as a cyclical, symbiotic process of reflection and action, or the Freirean concepts of dialogue and praxis (Freire, 2000). The student affairs educators in this study displayed reflection and action in their roles as classroom
instructors that aligned with the guidance of the CECE model and the SIRJD document reflecting a synergy between student affairs literature and practice on the ground. This study’s findings fit in a history of critical pedagogy, student development theory, and guidance from contemporary theory-to-practice publications. The participants’ pedagogies, therefore, were not only an expression of critical pedagogy, but also served as an example of how student affairs practitioners fit in the context of student affairs’ theory-to-practice literature. In the following sections, I will detail the implications of this research for higher education, make recommendations to the field, and propose directions for future research.

Implications

Student affairs’ role in the educational mission of higher education has been questioned and debated (McCaughey & Welsh, 2021; Penney, 1969). Some have advocated for close partnerships between student affairs and academic affairs (ACPA, 1994/Calhoun, 1996; Keeling, 2004). Others have called for student affairs to contribute to efforts of racial justice and decolonization for the betterment of our institutions and society (Quaye et al., 2018). From this review of the literature, the questions about what student affairs does, what our students learn, and from whom they learn it remain compelling queries for scholarship and practice. In this section, I will discuss the implications of this study in the ongoing conversation about the role student affairs can play.

Student affairs pedagogy’s critical and liberatory emphasis for student development contributes, in part, to the public good offered by higher education to our communities at large. As such, the role student affairs can play for the teaching missions
of higher education can be one that (a) supports financing efforts, (b) further compliments and supports faculty colleagues, (c) enriches critically oriented student development, and (d) produces common good for communities on campus and beyond.

Politicians and higher education leaders have contemplated the purpose of higher education and who should fund it, leading to the sharp rise and fall of publicly funded dollars supporting higher education over the 20th and early 21st centuries (Goastellec & Picard, 2014). Some have argued for reinvigorating governmental subsidy to support higher education under the rationale that colleges and universities provide public good to our collective lives in the way we think of roads, various household utilities, or the primary and secondary schooling systems (Marginson, 2011; Pusser, 2006).

Opponents of such public support, as Williams (2016) noted, “argue that higher education needs resources, so someone must pay for it and it is more equitable for the costs to be borne by those who benefit most from it” (p. 413). These opponents to public funding of higher education support the idea that the graduates themselves actualize the most benefits of college through higher lifetime earnings and career opportunities. Pusser (2006) argued, however, that the view of higher education as a product that only benefits students as they assume roles as private consumers drastically limits our understanding of the shared benefits of higher education. Supporters of higher education as a public good frequently cite justifications such as the collective value of research, an educated and civically engaged citizenry, and the foundational strengthening of public spheres that cyclically support the existence of other public goods we have come to expect (Pusser, 2006).
The participants’ student affairs pedagogies in this study were an expression of critical pedagogy. As such, the participants described commitment to preparing college students for a lifestyle of critical self-reflection for the purpose of enacting positive influence and change for the self, others around them, and society at large. Themes from this study—such as co-creation of knowledge, facilitation techniques, and self/others/society—align with the scholarly literature on critical pedagogy, student development theory, and contemporary critical and culturally engaging student affairs documents. Cumulatively, the implications of this study extend beyond the conversation about college teaching alone. In the context of the debate on financing higher education, this study may contribute as one additional piece of support to the greater fight to demonstrate higher education’s role as a public good. As such, this study may help substantiate claims for maintaining and increasing state and federal support for financing higher education. While the connection between student affairs pedagogy may provide support for the argument that higher education serves a public good, scholars and practitioners would need to discern the usefulness of showcasing student affairs’ pedagogies critical elements in context of the political environment in their local and state-level settings. Communities across the United States have increasingly campaigned against critical race theory in both the k-12 section (Grice, 2022) and at the higher education level (Miller et al., 2022). Thus, the implication outlined thus far relating to funding and the public good would only prove effective if political conditions find the utility of critical theories in education.

Considering implications further, supporting and expanding opportunities for student affairs pedagogy on campuses may assist in the moral and educational missions
of colleges and universities. As noted by some participants, institutions of higher
education face a challenging demand for teaching undergraduate populations and many
student affairs educators show capability and interest for teaching. While none of the
student affairs educators in this study presumed to be able to teach academic disciplines
out of their expertise, they all believed in their capacity to contribute to students’
education and growth. Many participants described their belief that a developmental
emphasis in their teaching helped students learn how to be more nuanced, critical, self-
reflective, and justice-oriented learners that supports the specialized learning in the
disciplines in their other courses.

Further implications could suggest strengthened connections between student
affairs courses and students’ majors. Akira, for example, contemplated how the lessons of
teamwork and leadership in her first-year seminar were recalled or applied in her
students’ more advanced courses later in their degree. For the professional school she
served, Akira noted the way her class utilized simulation activities that related to the
student’s professional field of specialty, but her focus was on the interpersonal and self-
reflective skillset she built with them and not the depth of that field’s specialty content.
Akira knew they would receive deep learning on the content of their professional
specialty from the expertise of other faculty. In this case, however, Akira celebrated the
coordinated yet separate responsibility of teaching where she noted that her classroom
was the place for stakes to be lower about getting the content right so that they may focus
on honing their teamwork and leadership skills. Those skills, Akira noted, would be
expected of them to demonstrate later on but likely not emphasized in curricula due to
constraints of time and faculty capacity in the students’ advanced coursework.
Other implications could include meaningful integration of student affairs pedagogy with students’ other coursework for more meaningful pursuit of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. Andy recalled his undergraduate courses that studied race and racism without an expectation for him to consider his own identity and realizing the difference between his student affairs masters-level courses that demanded critical self-reflexivity. Expanding student affairs pedagogy could mean not only creating more opportunities for student affairs educators to teach but also cross-curricula integration of self-reflexive and critical learning for other subjects. Some institutions have core curricula that emphasize building common values and socially oriented skillsets with students. Student affairs classrooms may play an important role in accomplishing the goals of those core curricula and may assist faculty in various academic departments to lean on as reference for their own coursework and content. As such, the student affairs pedagogies studied in this research present many ways to consider partnerships between student affairs and academic affairs.

The implications of this study expand the conversation about student affairs’ role in higher education and may benefit higher education in terms of financing, meeting demands for teaching undergraduates, enriching developmental growth for students’ specialized learning in their majors, and amplifying critical, self-reflexive learning. Higher education may benefit from student affairs pedagogies that strive to prepare students for socially just beliefs and actions empowering their own identities, supporting the communities around them, and contributing to society at large. Drawing from these findings, recommendations to improve conditions for student affairs educators to enact their pedagogy for the betterment of our institutions and communities follow.
Recommendations for the Field

Recommendations for the field are split into recommendations for (a) student affairs educators, (b) administrators who oversee courses affiliated with student affairs offices or partnerships, (c) faculty, and (d) recommendations for culture change.

Recommendations for Student Affairs Educators

I recommend student affairs educators read the results of this study and consider if they resonate with the experiences of the participants. This recommendation is useful due to the participants’ experiences of doubt about their ability to teach or hesitation to assume an identity as a teacher among the cultural norms of higher education that place student affairs outside the classroom. Many participants expressed a wish that they could have recognized earlier in their career that they had a pedagogy and wished for other student affairs educators to discover their own through reading this study. I recommend that readers reflect on (a) the values and beliefs for their teaching philosophy, (b) identify the ways they put that philosophy to practice, and (c) acknowledge the value of what they do based on the answers they discover for the first two items in this list. If the theme and sub-themes of this study resonate with student affairs educators, they may benefit from nurturing their pedagogy for further growth by seeking out opportunities to teach in classrooms, collaborate with faculty, and connect their pedagogies to institutional missions for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Recommendations for Administrators of Programmatic Student Affairs Courses

I recommend that institutions that already have the privilege of student affairs courses, like first-year seminars or student-leader preparation, resist the urge for administrative efficiency. Examples of efficiency include the pressure for delivering
content quickly and with fidelity to the prescribed curricula. Instead, course
administrators may prioritize trust and autonomy for the student affairs educators they
employ to instruct these courses. Extending autonomy and trust to instructors could take
shape by providing common learning outcomes for each session with shared source
material but allowing each instructor to create their own lesson plans. Student affairs
educators, similar to faculty, want autonomy and creative influence over their
pedagogical approaches along with the capacity to shape the classroom environment.

**Recommendations for Faculty**

Faculty may support a culture shift that embraces student affairs pedagogy by
understanding the beliefs, practices, and experiences the participants of this study
described in the results. Doing so offers all members of a campus community, not just
faculty, the opportunity to become familiar with the pedagogy of student affairs
educators. In pursuit of continued and more integrated partnerships between student
affairs and academic affairs, faculty may find usefulness in the nuances of student affairs
pedagogy detailed in this study for their own efforts for cross-campus collaborations.

Faculty who already use critical pedagogy and/or student development theory in
their teaching may find interest in the results of this study to find further commonality
between one another’s teaching efforts. Faculty who are less familiar with beliefs and
practice of facilitation and critical pedagogy may find interest in exploring the topics
further. This study aimed to explore what student affairs educator participants do in their
classrooms to add knowledge to an under studied topic. Student affairs educators may use
the results of this study to communicate their styles of pedagogy to others but must do so
with a mutual respect and understanding for the day-to-day expertise of faculty pedagogy in their classrooms, as well.

Graduate level faculty for higher education and student affairs programs may want to evaluate their curriculum to incorporate conversations about teaching and pedagogy in student affairs practice if such opportunities do not already exist. Each theme and sub-theme of this study’s findings may serve as useful topics for study and reflection for graduate students in students affairs who show interest in undergraduate teaching or facilitation.

**Recommendations to Reduce Cultural and Structural Barriers**

The final recommendations are not directed toward any single role on campus but can be encapsulated in the idea of any faculty, staff, or administrators championing a culture of change. I recommend seeking changes in the spirit of pedagogical expansiveness. Educators who were trained or influenced by the tradition of student affairs pedagogy may serve in all parts of campus administration and not just divisions of student affairs. Those who seek further promoting student affairs pedagogy should not limit themselves to practitioners in divisions of student affairs or student life alone. I advise approaching the following recommendations with the ambition of rich partnership across campus in the tradition of the Student Learning Imperative (ACPA, 1994) and Learning Reconsidered I and II (Keeling 2004; 2006) with a focus on enriching pedagogy, in its many forms, for students.

First, address restrictive policies so that student affairs educators may access the classroom more easily. Participants at both large and small institutions described structural barriers that impeded their ability to serve as instructors in the classroom. The
participants described either being excluded from the classroom in the face of such restrictive policies or only finding ways to teach in the classroom by serving as guest instructors for a professor. Depending on the system of governance at an institution, reforming these policies may be complex and require strong partnerships across roles and divisions to accomplish.

For settings where a terminal degree is required, create pathways to classroom teaching where a master’s degree will suffice. For institutions where there is no method to create a course outside of an established academic department, create new mechanisms where student affairs educators can build courses in their specialty areas. Take inspiration from institutions that have already established student affairs partnerships for classroom instruction, such as those institutions with robust first-year experience courses. When doing so, note the previous sub-sections’ recommendation about not compromising autonomy and respect for the instructors in pursuit of efficiency.

In the previous section, I connected the findings of this study to the ongoing conversation about higher education’s role in society as either a public good or a private commodity. The participants’ student affairs pedagogies in this study demonstrated a commitment to preparing college students for a lifestyle of critical self-reflection for personal development and justice-oriented change for the self, others around them, and society at large. As such, use the findings to help further make the case that higher education contributes to the public good. Create pathways for student affairs educators to teach in the classroom with enthusiasm with a shared appreciation of its strength as an additional piece of supporting evidence to assist the fight for public funding in higher
education, supports institutional demands of undergraduate teaching, and develops students for self-reflective, critical action.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

In this research, I studied an underexplored topic in the student affairs literature. While a large body of scholarship addresses the educational practices and outcomes by student affairs educators in outside-the-classroom settings, researchers have not yet deeply studied the classroom experience created by student affairs educators. As such, my dissertation served as foundational and exploratory research. I posed research questions aimed at uncovering the basic essence of the pedagogies my participants created and carried out in their classrooms. While the data produced meaningful results, I propose scholars continue to expand and deepen our knowledge on this topic.

I recommend the following areas as starting points when scholars consider future research:

- Continue inquiry into the facilitation techniques student affairs educators employ.
- Further study into the personal, cultural, and political influences of student affairs educators’ teaching philosophies.
- Survey and quantitative research to better understand the prevalence of student affairs educators in the classroom and the topics of those courses.
- Further inquiry into methods of enacting culture change in higher education to support partnerships and applications of student affairs pedagogy.
- Policy reviews to better understand the structures across institutions governing access to classroom instruction for student affairs educators.
• Deeper exploration into the role teaching in the classroom plays for student affairs educators’ sense of job fulfillment and retention in the field.

• Perceptions of development and growth from students who take courses taught by student affairs educators. Researchers may use the themes of this study to organize initial research questions and/or research instruments.

• Advocate for state and federal financial support to higher education by adding student affairs pedagogy to the ongoing list of evidence to support the claim that higher education provides a public good.

Conclusion

This study sought to explore the lived experiences of student affairs educators who create and maintain a pedagogy for teaching in classrooms settings. Using a critical, hermeneutic phenomenological methodology, I conducted qualitative interviews exploring three research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of student affairs educators developing and using a pedagogy for the classroom setting?

2. How, if at all, do student affairs educators perceive the critical and culturally engaging characteristics of their pedagogy in the classroom?

3. What are the perceptions of student affairs educators creating and maintaining pedagogy in the context of their institutional setting and the landscape of higher education?

Data analysis revealed five major themes: (a) co-creation of knowledge, (b) facilitation, (c) self/others/society, (d) intrarelationships of the student affairs pedagogue, and (e) interrelationships of student affairs pedagogy. The participants’ pedagogies
represented an expression of critical pedagogy. The findings also may be contextualized in the scholarly literature with an emphasis on the field’s influence from critical pedagogy, student development theory, and the contemporary critical and culturally engaging guidance of theory-to-practice literature. Student affairs pedagogy may serve as one component of understanding how higher education contributes to the public good. As such, recommendations from this study include methods for embracing and expanding student affairs pedagogy and reducing cultural and structural barriers to teaching for student affairs educators.
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APPENDIX A

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS
Hello,

Do you have a student affairs pedagogy? Have you taught in the past, or currently teach, as an instructor inside the classroom?

I’m Michael Drucker, a doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse’s Ed.D. program in Student Affairs Administration and Leadership. I am seeking participants for my dissertation research. The purpose of this study is to explore the pedagogical practices of student affairs educators in the classroom. The results of this study will contribute to an under-studied area of higher education literature by gathering stories of student affairs educators’ lived experiences creating and maintaining a pedagogy for classroom teaching and learning.

Eligible participants are invited to participate in two semi-structured, individualized interviews and an optional group interview to explore your experiences creating and maintaining a pedagogical approach in the classroom setting.

I am looking for participants who meet all the following criteria:

- have completed a master’s degree in student affairs administration or a hybrid of student affairs and higher education,
- currently, or formerly, served as an instructor for a credit-bearing or degree-requirement-fulfilling undergraduate course(s),
- content of course(s) primarily focus on student affairs-related areas*,
- current or past engagement with ACPA and/or NASPA professional associations.^

*including but not limited to first-year experience, identity development, scholars’ programs, bridge programs, identity-based cohorts, leadership development, R.A. preparation, fraternity and sorority life.
^engagement and exposure includes but is not limited to event/conference/convention attendance, reading/watching/listening to association-sponsored professional development content, volunteer work, leadership roles, and awards.

If you are interested in participating, please fill out this form and I will reach out to you for follow-up.

If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact Michael Drucker at drucker9419@uwlax.edu. Thank you for considering this study.
APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT IMAGE
WHAT'S YOUR STUDENT AFFAIRS PEDAGOGY?

CALL FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Eligibility criteria:
- GRADUATE DEGREE IN STUDENT AFFAIRS
- CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPERIENCE
  (W/ COURSE CONTENT BROADLY RELATED TO STUDENT AFFAIRS WORK)
- ANY AMOUNT OF ENGAGEMENT WITH ACPA OR NASPA

LEARN MORE AND SUBMIT INTEREST TO:

HYPERLINK
APPENDIX C

FIRST INTERVIEW PROTOCOL
Thank you for taking time to talk with me. As you know, the purpose of this study is to better understand the lived experiences of student affairs educators creating and maintaining a pedagogy for classroom teaching. In the process, I will ask you to reflect and describe your personal and professional memories. If at any point you become uncomfortable with those questions, you can simply say “pass” and I’ll move to the next question. The goal of this study is to provide the field with valuable insight into student affairs pedagogies through the richness of your experience. Please choose the level of personal disclosure for your responses that will provide you emotional safety throughout our time together.

1. To start our conversation, tell me a little about you. Possible prompts:
   a. Where did you grow up?
   b. Where do you live now?
   c. Are you currently working in the student affairs field? If no, what do you do now?

2. To get a deeper understanding of your classroom teaching practices in context of your experiences within student affairs, I’m interested in learning about your journey into student affairs. How did you learn about the field? How did you get started academically and professionally in student affairs? Possible prompts:
   a. What were your motivations to seek a career in student affairs?
   b. What was your experience like in your master’s program?
   c. What reflections do you have on your early years of working in the field?

3. I want to learn how you characterize yourself within your work. What characteristics would you use to describe your approach to student affairs and higher education work? Possible prompts:
   a. What words or labels do you use to describe your role in higher education? Some examples include student affairs practitioner/educator/professional/administrator.
   b. If you were to describe your core values for your work, what would they be?
   c. What are ways you put your values into practice?

4. Please tell me about the circumstances of your classroom teaching experience. Possible prompts:
   a. How long have you taught? Has it been consecutive classroom instruction or sporadic over your career?
   b. What have your course(s) offered students in credits or for fulfillment of academic requirements?
   c. What courses have you taught? How would you describe the learning objectives of your courses?

5. To better understand teaching pedagogies in student affairs, I want to learn about your teaching philosophy and pedagogical influences. How would you describe your philosophy for teaching? Possible prompts:
   a. How have your identities influenced your values and beliefs in teaching?
b. Who (personal/professional/academic) has influenced your values and beliefs in teaching?

c. How has your involvement with the field of student affairs (master’s program, professional associations, etc.) influenced your values and beliefs in teaching?

d. How would you describe the influence of student development theory on your values and beliefs in teaching?

e. How has your professional experience working in student affairs influenced your values and beliefs in teaching?

f. What else has influenced your teaching philosophy not already covered?

6. Now that we’ve explored your values and beliefs for teaching and your pedagogical influences, how would you describe the way you put that into practice? Possible prompts:

a. How do you approach communication in your classroom? How do students communicate with each other? How do you and students communicate with each other?

b. What learning activities do you use that represent your pedagogical approach?

c. How do you view the role of learning outcomes in your classroom?

d. What practices do you use to increase accessibility in your classroom?

e. How would you describe your approach to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in your classroom practices or teaching habits?

f. How do you approach evaluating and assessing student learning?

7. Pedagogy in reflection (uniqueness, pride, accomplishments, desires, next steps)

a. What was your early understanding of student affairs’ role in student learning?

b. Where do you find comradery, community, or kinship for your style of pedagogy?

c. What do you think makes your pedagogy unique or distinct?

d. What do you wish you did differently or could improve in your teaching?

e. How would you describe the overall influence of your academic and professional experience in student affairs on your pedagogy?

8. What do you wish people understood better about your pedagogy?

9. What role does your pedagogy serve in the landscape of higher education?

10. What else would you like me to know about you?
APPENDIX D

SECOND INTERVIEW PROTOCOL
Note: This interview protocol serves as a guide, not a prescriptive script for the second interview. To prepare best for our time together, you may review these questions ahead of time. You are not expected to prepare writing. After my first-round interviews with participants, I decided to increase accessibility for my second-round interviews by offering the questions in writing ahead of time. This allows time to read and interpret the potential questions we may cover.

What have you been thinking about since our first interview? Is there anything that came to you later that you wish you had said?

In any of the courses you teach now or have taught in the past, think about a class session that represents both your teaching philosophy and your pedagogical techniques well. Describe that class session to me.

- What was prepared for that course?
- What was the lesson plan’s itinerary of activities?
- How did things go as planned? How did things not go as planned?
- How did the content connect to your student affairs pedagogy?
- How did the activities represent your style of pedagogy as a student affairs educator?

What barriers or challenges do you experience in enacting your pedagogy?

- From student affairs colleagues or the field? From faculty? From students? From the institution?
- How do you make sense of the challenges? How do you manage them? How do you find your pedagogy enduring through the challenges?

Co-creation of knowledge and confronting the banking-model of education: You mentioned valuing co-creation of knowledge in your first interview. It is important to you that students bring their knowledge to the room in addition to your knowledge as the instructor creating meaning together as a learning community?

- Can you give me more examples of what that looks like in terms of activities and real-life moments in the classroom?
- What is important to you about this style? How does it connect to your values and beliefs of your pedagogy?
- How does this approach connect to your academic and/or professional training in student affairs?

Reflecting on the wide range of theory used in student affairs to prepare our graduate students, which practices in your classroom pedagogy connect to theory? (Theories include but are not limited to critical theories, post-structural theory, critical pedagogy, social identity development theory, psychosocial models, cognitive models, moral reasoning development, etc.)

Tell me more about the outcomes your pedagogy aims to achieve? Who or what do these outcomes serve? When are these outcomes achieved, are they immediately observable or latent?
How do you maintain your pedagogy overtime?

- What influences or inspires you in an ongoing basis?
- How do you manage the development of your pedagogy differently now than you did when you first began?
- What parts of classroom teaching do you still hope to gain proficiency? What parts give you doubt about your approach?
APPENDIX E

PRELIMINARY MEANING UNITS
Preliminary Meaning Units
(n = 1,001)

Not feeling safe at school
Parents didn’t go to college
Homeschooling
Attended liberal arts undergrad
First gen college student navigational capital
Giving back to college students having struggled in college himself
Humanitarian and developmental essence of student affairs work
Educator label explanation for SA work
Imposter syndrome of using educator label
bell hooks (Teaching to Transgress) - education as a communal experience
Paulo Freire - teachers can learn from students hooks/Freire influence - humility and introspection in communal learning
Tension between pedagogy and provided curricula for courses
Students unprepared/unfamiliar with a critical pedagogy experience in classroom
Lack of opportunity to use critical pedagogy in SA-instructed courses with provided curricula
Body movement and mobility around classroom relating to shifted power dynamic between teacher and student
Banking model of education - An education as earned capital to receive from another entity
Banking model - process vs product oriented education contrasted a banking model in college
Critical pedagogy vs banking model - compared and contrasted
Identities - Has made him a strong educator and also shows areas to improve
First gen - Personal experiences inform current choices as instructor
First gen - Never makes assumptions about navigational capital w/ students
First gen - Importance of building students’ confidence through opp’s to speak
Restorative - Uses restorative practices to give speaking time (first gen influence)
Family history - Mom’s teachings and first gen identity
Family influence - Built critical thinking in unconventional ways
DEIB/Social justice - Intro course for on-campus social justice theatre troupe
Tension between surface level and deeper transformative learning with students
Intellectualized/third-party learning about oppression in traditional classrooms
HESA master’s grad assistantship training - First time pushed to study identity self-reflexively
Critical consciousness in HESA training
Critical consciousness in HESA translates to personal life not just work
Developmental theory allows educators to see students through growth mindset

Developmental theory - creates empathy in educators for students
Course Topic - RA prep course - 1 credit, DEI, conflict res, campus resources, etc.
Course topic - First gen intro to college course
Course topic - Social justice theatre troupe prep course, 4 credit, Readings for Diversity and Social Justice.
SJE - Green book, readings for diversity and social justice
Course topic: Transfer student seminar
SA-led course partners/serve SA programmatic function
Academic affairs and student affairs collaboration
Lesson plan example - Problem-posing education for professionalism training
Banking model - Turning away from lecture to conversation style in lesson plan example
Co-creation of knowledge via shared list of professionalism norms rather than provided expectations
Participatory engagement from students
Facilitator creating boundaries and provided direction as limit-setting tactic
Freire and hooks - co-learning as influence
Instructor questioning their own thoughts/beliefs from student contribution
Critical pedagogy allowing for instructor to rethink beliefs in co-learning
Learning activity: Visuals from magazine clippings to create gender binary collages
Tangible and artistic expression of understanding and knowledge
Learning activity: Critical media analysis, music video activity
Always wants teachings to have a tangible/visible representation and application
Knowledge not fixed, but multiple
Tension of SA-led courses between serving pragmatic goals vs deeper level learning
Romantic idea of pedagogy being reflection, critical thinking, and learning as a process
SA-led courses being pragmatic or utilitarian
Self-doubt about the value of their pedagogy
Tension in pragmatic benefits while believing in benefits of human development
Introspection will always help students as human beings in whatever they do
Pragmatism vs deeper learning - balance between both in pedagogy
Transformative education - Maybe it doesn’t always need to be in lieu of efficiency
Value felt when delivering transformative education experiences
Family history: Mosaic of incomes in neighborhood informed SA practice
Undergrad student involvement led into grad work and beyond
Motivation for SA work: Direct student contact and variety
Macro and micro level work in SA, student contact and big picture impact
Res Life work early in career
Res Life to academic advising
First man in family to go to college: Feeling of making up as he went along
First gen-ish. No traditional college going example in family.
Experiential education for life skills via first gen experience
Giving back: First gen students and learning beyond the traditional classroom
Course topic: First year seminar
Course topic: University scholars honors program
Course topic: Graduate level practicum course, co-instructor
Course topic: Diversity peer educators
Experiential learning: Diversity peer educators must apply understanding
Experiential education: If they aren’t learning by doing, we are failing them
Experiential education: Builds professional development and eliminates career paths by elimination process
Learning outcomes: Build community and introduce campus resources
Tension between pedagogy and provided curricula:
Added a learning outcome for experiential education
Introjection in learning outcomes: Not just the "What", but the "Why?"
Public good: Your learning doesn’t end here.
Deeper learning: Using introspection to define and make personal meaning
Tension between pedagogy and the provided curricula
Autonomy of pedagogy: Throwing away provided curriculum if deemed neccessary
Banking model: Rejecting one-way delivery of static info in favor of conversation and engagement
Tension with pedagogy and provided curricula: The slides won’t get them to use the mental health service
Banking model: Rejecting info repository and authority of one-way teaching, designs unique activities
Team teaching
Problem-posing education: Class sesion on
development and eliminates career paths by elimination process
Learning outcomes: build community and introduce campus resources
Heart experience: Theory to practice also means mind to heart.
Professional associations: Involved, but high fees and not moved to action
Public good: Make the world a better place with what we do with undergrad students
Professional associations: Wants all engagement to relate to making world a better place with students, not always the case
Professional associations: Cometitiveness and pressure don’t align with values
Development theory: Valuing theories that don’t constrain in stages/phases but rather open to analyzing world around you
Developmental theory: The point is students and practitioners are always still developing
Development theory: Rejecting linear models
Communication with students: Flat system with open door
Experiential learning: Communication is goal oriented to practice
Holistic and relationship centered: Ask about res halls during grading conversation
Learning outcomes: Creates map and narrative of course content
Learning outcomes: SA losing sight of how to use learning outcomes
Learning outcomes: Tension with how SA field uses them
Tension with SA-led courses’ partnership with SA administration. Outside forces addning content.
Tension with admin and pedagogy. Academic Freedom? Instructor or employee subordinate?
High volume of students requires efficiency and consistency. Tension with pedagogy.
Provided curricula: Confidene to make lesson plan changes knowing the template was designed for efficiency and better ways exist
Meaning making rather than information delivery: I don’t need 5 slides on counseling center contact info
Meaning making and engagement rather than information delivery: Pair share about why it’s hard to ask for help or go to counseling center
Educators not info deliverers - misconception about SA instructors and SA-led courses
Utilization of SA strengths: Don’t just deliver content, but use expertise for student connection in courses
Academic affairs and student affairs - Fill gap where traditional academics don’t have the same association with resources, facilitation, development
Respect desired for academic background and campus professional experience
ACademic affairs and student affairs collaboration:
That’s one student struggling with multiple problems not separate students
Childhood locations: Moved locations, mixture of U.S. and Japan
Res Life undergrad experience
Student involvement in undergrad led to SA career
Self-development of interpersonal skills through student affairs training/experience
Res Life experience in graduate school
Insititutional type - Intentionally choosing new experiences to grow
Professional learning curve - Early career jobs learned how to build inclusive communities
Academic unit doing student affairs work
Student affairs work in academic unit
Administrative decisions have impact on community, learning curve from student to professional
Responsibility of impact through administrator decisions in SA/HE field
Admin role tasks the employee with finding balance in serving needs of all with needs of specific students
Motivation for choosing SA field, building connections with students
Giving back - International student experience of finding belonging in SA undergrad involvement
Changing approach to values of inclusion and connection with further experience in the field
Less direct connection through one on one with students as a director
Admin role of director fosters macro level approach to building student connection via system thinking, staff development, and resource allocation
Course topic: RA prep
Provided curriculum, weekly guided plan provided
Curriculum building in addition to instruction as director for program
Curriculum design came later with a promotion after instructor for a few years
Years of experience, eight years program manager for curriculum design and instruction
Non-credited course, but requirement of degree
Course content, RA prep class. DEI, leadership, conflict res, community building, wellness
Leadership infused throughout the course. Core concept. Relates to affiliated school/college of the course.
Student feedback and making changes to curriculum
Social impact added as lens to understand leadership skills due to student feedback for the course
Learning activity: Create a social media plan to consider leadership using design thinking
Creativity - Encouraging design thinking and creativity as component of leadership
Emotional intelligence as a component of creativity needed for design thinking
Course content: Active listening, self awareness, community building, time management.
Career education, promote DEI in career development
Course topic: Culturall competency
Not a content deliverer, but student connector.
Friendship is a goal for the course, fear of sounding "hokey", connects to SA value of connection
Not content delivere they can get on website
Goal is engage in conversation and do hands-on activities.
Facilitator role for the students to work and learn from each other
Friendship for students recognizes the majority of their time at college is outside classroom and hopes they are connected to people who will support them
Friendship: Intentionally bringing friendship making into academic settings
Goal is to promote students’ self awareness, their values, and motivations.
Resources: Making sure students know resources to be successful
Lost in the shuffle at a big school, takeaway of course is to have someone to turn to if need arises
Identities shape teaching
Race and gender identity of instructor as influence on teaching
Personal identity: Feeling lack of authority causes intentional preparation for classroom
Teaching as learned skill rather than natural talent
Self-disclosure of social identity from instructor to students looped into lesson plans
Affinity with students sharing same identities creates connection
Giving back: International student experience, language barrier, transition and adjustment
Popular vernacular, international student considerations, accessibility habits of instruction
Influence from professional SA mentors in teaching
Empathy in face of challenging work
Loving life philosophy
Emotional intelligence and empathy as a way to approach admin role/policy, but also teaching philosophy
Being ok without satisfying everything students ask for
Contrasting supervisor styles in higher ed to learn their style
Academic influence: Susan Covarez, The Social Change Model
Focus on individual, community society
Theory (social change model) influencing design of course curriculum
Professional association conferences: Learning from colleagues new approaches based in theory
Student feedback influences teaching philosophy on day to day basis in SA work with students
Day to day interactions teach what students want and how they define success
Student voice creates enhanced approaches to building student belonging on campus
Doctoral level education in HE/SA keeps SA educator informed on best practices
Student-first approach to work that is fostered at professional associations and culture of SA field
Navigational capital: exploring the complex web of HE so students can feel empowered to get support they need
Pedagogy, teaching, student experience is not top priority over research in faculty context
SA’s added value to institution as the part that does not need to prioritize research so we can contribute to the school via our enhanced teaching practices
Academic affairs and student affairs teamwork: SA has the space without pressure of research/publishing to be the added value of teaching/pedagogy/student development in classrooms.
Classroom ritual: 10 minutes of free conversation with students about how they are, celebrations, hardships, etc.

Philosophy to action: Showing care for students and their wellness with opening ritual each class

Holistic approach, instructor proactively asks questions about their wellness, life outside class, etc.

Sleep patterns and wellness for students

Role of facilitator not lecturer, students working with each other.

10-15% of class time is lecture, remainder is students working/reflecting with each other

Large group shareout after pairshares.

Facilitation trick: Avoid large-group silence via small group warm up

Learning activity: Presentations to have students teach with and to peers

Experiential learning: Lecturing doesn’t provide build understanding of material, community building, or connection.

Active listening simulation as an example of experiential learning activity

Self-reflection and awareness through guided facilitation of strengths

Intentional pedagogy sometimes means needing to repeat yourself

Social identity education: Repeats often even with student discomfort to promote deeper learning

Student pushback to repeatedly discussing social identity

Deeper learning for social identity can mean applying the concepts to different relationships/roles/contexts of students’ lives.

I don’t spend time on things that aren’t important, showing the importance of social identity through repetition.

Hometown

First gen college experience, big deal to go to college for family

Trouble navigating structure of college as first gen student

Major changes due to lack of navigational skills for college environment

Family instilled value of education as a means for mobility

Undergrad mentors led to SA field career

Social justice emphasis in HESA grad program

Felt unprepared for college English courses

Motivation for SA career comes from a passion for education

Marketing and communication major influences SA career for skill of how to meet students where they are

Marketing and communications major mixing with student development theory to influence campus activities jobs

Career trajectory: Campus activities, institutional development/alumni, career education, student life and engagement

Moving around the country for SA career opportunities

Values-based philosophy: Relational leadership.

Reciprocal relationship between yourself, students, and colleagues.

Ethic of care to build reciprocal relationships

DEI philosophy is partly an individual level about access and belonging

DEI approach parts includes systemic and structural approach like policies

Authenticity in leadership, showing up with values and passion, bringing full self.

Growing from being mentored by others to being a mentor to others in supervision

Leadership and supervision in SA can mean creating culture for realtional leadership and collaborative learning

Self-reflection in supervision/leadership style as an SA pro

Course topic: Leadership course for fraternity and sorority life

Co-teaching in SA course

Organizational structure, connection between the SA office for student involvement leadership and minor for leadership studies

Course topics: Leadereship for social change and applied leadership course (for leadership minor)

Co-teaching in SA courses, capstone for leadership minor

Teaching while working full-time SA job

Course topic: Graduate courses for SAA program

Course topic: Career readiness

Course topic: First year seminar

Course topic: Complexities of identity

Critical pedagogy as teaching philosophy

Teaching philosophy is based in two concepts: Praxis and positionality

Positionality: Understanding both individual and systemic manifest power and flow into the teaching process

Freire’s work on banking model of education, role as facilitator

Co-creating knowledge together, anti-banking model of education

Self-graded student participation, example of co-creation and co-learning, shifting power dynamics of classroom between student and teacher

Identity as influence on teaching: Responsibility to name and address the influence of his dominant identities in classroom

Identities in teaching: Race, sexuality, and gender

Critical whiteness studies, self-reflexive development how he shows up in spaces

Inclusivity in classroom also means critical eye of what/who is included in syllabus

Creating inclusivity sometimes means stop talking as a person with dominant identities

Storytelling as teaching method

Theory to practice: Storytelling as a learning activity to embrace vulnerability and identity development theory to build self awareness and leadership development

Self-disclosure of hardship or marginalized identities from instructor to student
Stories of discrimination as launching pad for deeper meaning of own identities
Influence from HESA faculty in masters and doctoral degrees
Influence from critical theory and critical pedagogy in HESA master’s degree
Influence: Cultural pluralism readings to open mind as influence on teaching
Influence: Critical race theory and critical whiteness studies
Theory to practice: Critical theory prepared with tools to respond during 2016 election for student support on campus in conservative area
SA value for equity work, identity development, and ethical care.
Alignment between personal values and professional values in SA sustains working in the field
Tension of personal and professional values as questions challenge working conditions in SA
Development theory is now focused on identity development and intersectionality partly because students are coming with higher prior knowledge and higher expectations of SA pros
SA pros not always prepared for level of DEI
familiarity, activism, and questioning the students bring
Development theory as motivator to engage in critical reflection around identity work and intersectionality
Student feedback influencing change
Facilitator role, goal is to create an inclusive community
Learning activity: Start of semester reflection on best and worst class they’ve ever taken
Co-learning: Students have responsibility to help create their learning community
Co-learning: Student responsibility to engage and co-create
Teacher doesn’t have all the answers, students will also teach the teach and peers, written into syllabus
Deeper learning: Holding each other accountable for vulnerability and deeper learning
Difference between traditional teaching and facilitation
Traditional teaching characteristics: Stand in front of classroom, one-way delivery of content, regurgitate knowledge back
Transcational learning experience versus co-creation of learning
Role of facilitator is one of moderator for space
Structure of classroom: Sit in circle, move desks.
Physical location of instructor in classroom to change power dynamic
Not just recitation of knowledge, but interpretation and meaning-making with guided prompts
Lived experiences valued in classroom as knowledge
Lived experiences as knowledge relates to critical pedagogy style
Learning activity: Leadership theory compare/contrast through films with presentation and skits
Experiential learning: Skits to portray leadership theories to ground theory to practice
Flow of learning activities

Language and words of academic world have power for SA educators who aren’t taken seriously as an educator
Not being taken seriously pedagogically as an SA pro
Doing similar work in SA and academic affairs, but using different language
Pedagogy style is intentional and strategic
Backwards curricular planning, what do I want them to take away and work back
Pyramid of awareness, knowledge, and skills
SA provides unique curricular content for personal growth and development
Holistic pedagogy approach of SA fills a gap in HE
Experiential learning: Values engagement in pedagogy
Care and personal investment of instructor into course to create authentic inclusive spaces
Experiential learning: Cycle of self reflection to understand theories and skills into action
Value added: SA can help HE’s foster pedagogy away from traditional styles
Hometown: Small, rural
Growing up: Montana, small town, 30 students in graduating class.
Class background: Working class.
First gen experience: Relates to first-gen experience due to particular rural, Montana circumstances of father’s college education and lack of navigational capital
Rural high school lacked APs and college prep, on their own for college-going process
College decision: Big city from small town determination, big leap, Jesuit connection for family
Struggle to keep up with students from well-resourced high schools, writing skills
Adjustment to college struggle with social/cultural elements. SA leadership influence.
Jesuit retreat weekend in first year, recommended through residence hall.
Jesuit values: Discernment, finding oneself, finding community.
Retreat as first year student opened the door to coming out of shell. Found a sense of place.
Coming out at student retreat, led to more student leadership opportunities in queer identity
Dialogue program for social justice as peer-leader (DEEP)
NUFP experience that realted to LGBTQ identity and led to funnel into SA career
Career confusion led to SA mentors recommending job opening after undergrad for social justice coordinator in service learning
Service learning: Deep engagement with interlocking issues. Food insecurity.
Facilitation experience early in career with bystander interview violence program
Small campuses mirror small town life
Masters school decision revolving around assistantship and finances
Early career values: Thoughtful and meaningful community engagement. Reciprocal relationships when thinking about service with local communities and students. Food sovereignty, racial justice.
Praxis as value and practice in SA work
Innovation as discernment through a Jesuit approach
World-making: To envision a world that’s better through conversation, action, and community.
Queerness as an SA value to push back, dig deeper, and not reproduce inequity.
Course topic: Creating Inclusive Communities,
ResLife program for RAs
Co-teaching in SA courses
Provided curriculum, looking for more freedom and creativity for teaching
Course Topic: Living Well at College.
Course partnership with SA office. Health Office for wellness class.
Eight dimensions of wellness. Content and personal development for wellness.
Online course
Intergroup dialogue course on how to have conversations across difference
Co-teaching in SA courses
Course Topic: Gender and Education course
Fulfilling degree requirement with course
Graded versus pass/fail courses
Teaching philosophy is create spaces for full self engagement
Expand their development
"So, what?" Development for college and beyond
Identities influence teaching philosophy
"So, what?" relates to place-based context of rural upbringing and civic engagement
Critical lens to all teaching topics. Ex. in wellness class, images of white women doing yoga and expanding wellness ideas
Storytelling in teaching philosophy
Self-disclosure, tension with how much to share own stories with students
Self-disclosure and storytelling: non-binary and trans-femme identities
Identity: Whiteness as a position of power and privilege to push back on norms
Dominant versus marginalized identities influence on teaching
SA mentors influence teaching: First non-binary person met and role-model for speaking truth to power
Doctoral advisors as influence: Storytelling and theory
Tension and middle ground between theory and practical elements
Bell hooks as influence. Teaching to Transgress.
Sara Ahmed, queer phenomenology as influence. How to infuse emotion in learning space/classroom
Freire: Tension claiming the influence "I think shows up in my pedagogy, but I haven’t returned to him since"
Gloria Ansaldoa: Borderlands, liminality, place.
NUFP influence: You have a story and it matters, tell it. And, how to center marginalized voices in teaching.
STJ:
Moment of accountability/called out with compassion
Learned how to teach from facilitation which came from SA
Development theory influence: Self-authorship, MMDO.
Development models: Rejects linear and non-critical models
Development theory to help create new class
Student action leadership transformation theory for change around wellness
Jones and Abes book for critical theory in student development theory book
IEO model as influence
Media literacy in the classroom
Racially diverse representation in media choices for the classroom in context of white student majorities
Learning activities infuse "so, what" and "now, what", uses connection to k-12 or university level
Guest speakers from campus resources to study gener Struggle with how to get students out of the classroom
Multi-modality in classroom activities: Media, reflection, large gorup, small group, etc.
Teaching tactic: "how do you see gender in your life", self-reflexivity in content
Learning activity: Synthesizing activities of content
Ground rules: Regretted not doing it at first and then chose to always do it, SA informed
Teaching style comes from facilitation style in SA
Large group discussion for 65 minutes is not inviting everyone to conversation, multi-modal is better
Banking model, does not choose that style
Teacher does not hold all the knowledge, but still lectures sometimes
Spatial temporal experience (SPA), multiple ways for students to engage
Teaching tactic: Making bridges between classroom vocalizations and online written post assignments to disrupt power of certain forms of engagement
Wish facilitation was valued as teaching experience
Lack of doctoral credential created barrier to teach
Self-disclosure/teacher storytelling is important and not doing so is bad pedagogy
Public good: Every lesson must have a connection to outside world, tear down the ivory walls
Hometown: Chicago, south side, black area.
Early education: 98% black students, school closures in Chicago later on.
Pathway to higher education through magnet program rather than neighborhood school
Jazz music education, half of high school days.
Overcrowded elementary school.
Teacher intervening to recommend magnet program
Brochures for magnet school, "kids were all white". Conditions at school that motivated leaving.
Magnet program at a high school. Racially diverse program. Mostly, Black high school.
Middle and upper middle class at new school.
College prep services in high school, visits to Chicago schools and HBCUs
"Our mission is college" purpose of high school
FAFSA filing support, first-gen support for college access at school
Jazz education/performace career in high school, prep for pro-music industry
UIC audition/jazz festival, college acceptance story.
HESA program for masters
ResLife for first job out of grad school
Diversity of voices connects to co-creation of knowledge

Autonomy within co-created parameters in the classroom
Facilitation technique: Classroom agreements/norms
Intergroup Dialogue influence
Example of autonomy and co-creating within parameters is process for making group agreements/norms
Syllabus connects to group agreements
Instructor autonomy over syllabus and lesson planning
Evaluating student learning: Reframing class participation away from outloud voice to options like journal writing
Ableist conception of class participation as only externalized vocal contribution
Example of freedom within parameters: Journaling prompts very open-ended, but routine of journal entries established
Journals are given points/grades
Accessibility technique: Taking surprise out of what is happening in class next, weekly emails to students.
Critical media/multi-media content in course
Social media and other media as valuable source material for class content for identity studies
Instructor pulls from ongoing social media familiarity
Engagement for students also means not being boring, reason for media integration into course content
Learning activity: Critical media literacy. Pull an "artifact" from media (photos, teen vogue, influencers, etc.). Something you can’t look up in the school library.
Balance/tension between "structured and academic" and "free, creative, student-led/media" sources and activities

Human, student, leader.
Accessibility statement on syllabus goes beyond institutional minimum, recognizes barrier to disability accommodations.
Don’t need to get permission to excuse yourself for phone call or bathroom, adult respect means taking care of human needs.
Comments saying their pedagogy is "doing too much", feeling of isolation about their SA pedagogy in more academic spaces.
Discouraged to bring new ways, creativity to teaching because of formal traditions/institutional culture.
Half of teaching experience on zoom
Group work, intentional.
Jazz influencing group work, you can’t do good jazz alone.
Interactive and collaborative learning modalities help contribute to student as teacher and vice versa.
Disability related inclusion is big component of DEI aspect of their teaching
Eliminating accessibility related obstacles to participation in class
Community agreements, co-creation.
Might seem free for all, but it’s not.
Pride, not shame, for teaching style that may be viewed as soft/hippy-dippy
Buy-in and ownership from students of what’s done in class is intentional. Facilitator does pre-thinking, maintains boundaries by adding must-have agreements if students didn’t think of it.

Desire to have pedagogy understood as purposeful even if it has moments of intentional messiness while students are leaning.

ResLife SA background prepares for best and worst outcomes and to prepare for it, translates to teaching. Agility to pivot facilitation/teaching in the moment if not sparking student engagement

Desire for understanding that their syllabus is intentional even if unconventional at times

Changes to syllabus during the semester in response to the students and how the course progresses

Can look unprepared, but is actually responsive and iterative

Higher education may make students feel they’re not in control of their education, their goal is to empower students to take active role in their own education

Syllabus structure with flexibility builds student choice and empowerment with communication skills and planning

Students don’t get the greenlight to go find their own sources

Rubric style assignments can strip choice away from students

Hometown: Suburban midwest

Undergrad in midwest, midsize institution, public

Parents are first-generation immigrants from India. Single parent family after father moved back to India.

Situationally low-income

Family value for education as means of independence Indian community, value for higher education and especially medical field

Traumatic childhood events created interest to "make a difference” in the world

Abuse as child created value for community, family, and transformational love

Christian value for mission work mixed with passion as a survivor of abuse to make a difference in the world

Pressure from family and personal values led to interest in nursing that changed through gender studies course.

Women’s empowerment became strong passion over nursing, mixed with greek life involvement

Student involvement led to SA pro suggesting college wasn’t about finding yourself but instead about helping community and serving god

Systemic inequities in addition to direct service realization when working as surgical assistant

Therapy helped find own path for career and communicate the change to family

Liberation versus oppression (academic influenes of hooks, Freire, Audrey Lorde)

SA in undergrad wa outlet to be a leader informed by liberation

Grad assistantship in Social Justice Education, dialogue emphasis, free tuition was a draw

GA position to train undergrad peer dialogue facilitators

Dialogue instead of debate and discussion as foundation to dig into oppression

Dialogue program required for every first year student

Sought SA job to directly teach and advise about power, privilege, and oppression/identities. Applied for job for mixed advising and teaching.

Institutional manifestations of white supremacy in present and history (KKK recruitment on campus, former plantation land, etc) led to integration of DEI-related counseling skills in SA grad school work

Course topic: Diversity peer-dialogue facilitator

Courses topic: 3-semester long dialogue sequence

Course topic: 2-semester first year seminar course for holistic transition support

Course topics: First semester of FYS includes personal development, community development, communication, social identities and more.

Course topic: Second semester of FYS is how to understand complex systems at large for solutions at internalized, interpersonal, and systemic levels

Ubuntu, one word description of teaching philosophy (I am because we are)

Study abroad experience created authentic expression of ubuntu inspiring that core value for SA work

Support and challenge

Teaching philosophy to meet them where they’re at. Developmentally oriented.

Support and challenge, famous SA quote

Critical pedagogy influence (banking model and problem solving education, Freire)

bell hooks, Teaching to Transgress, influence.

Perry and Chickering (developmental theory) influence.

Development theories, great way to figure out where people are at.

Perry’s cognitive model applies to academic advising work in SA

Identities of eldest daughter of immigrant parents, low income, led to education work.

Identities with good and bad of life influence empowerment by education and SA to do the work

Identitis of low income, Indian, woman, survivor of sexual assault are forefront of decisions and life and teaching philosophy.

Tension of undergrad experience with volunteerism and study abroad mixed with authentic experience of relationship building and deep connection that informs SA work today

Culture clash between American individualist values and Indian/South African communal values created aspect of communal love balanced with self-love for SA teaching and working philosophy

Story of robbery in South Africa study abroad trip and the meaning of communal care

Undergrad SA mentors in greek life influence teaching philosophy through strength-building

NUFP program helped bridge family/childhood values into the field
Honesty and realness with students. Good, bad and ugly. Helps with meeting where they’re at for developmental support
Intimacy with students holistic lives, details, led to care reports and long hours
Burnout led to changing approach for maintaining close connection to students holistic details of life.
Self-disclosure, role modeling vulnerability.
Freedom for students to talk about whatever they want and finding ways to connect back to content
Academic advising and teaching paired together, mixture of instruction and advising makes unique inside and outside classroom relationship and support
Coaching students out of their shells in the classroom by having outside the classroom relationships/context
Co-teaching/co-facilitator support for triggers in classroom
Classroom ritual: Always starts with a community builder
Learning activity: Warm up, comfort zones around the room to explore students’ personal comfort levels with dialogue/debate/discussion
Physicacy and movement in classroom
Scaffolding technique within learning activity
Comfort levels play a role in dialogue participation, developmental approach to the content goal.
Scaffolding, layers, DEI aspects of dialogue process and product
Pair share and large group techniques
Self-reflexivity and placing material into context of real world and their lives
Little teachable moments in lesson plan build bigger picture, connects full circle to understanding social identities/oppression
Concentric circles technique
Concentric circles allows instructor to assess group dynamics among students while furthering dialogue process and deepening content understanding
Concentric circles building relationships and comradery among students
Adaptability and agility with multiple modes of student engagement in lesson plan comes from SA background
Pair share vs large group reflects different styles of students, introverts and extroverts
Experiential learning, using multiple modes of participation (journaling, pair share, large group) mirrors internalized, inerpersonal, and systemic levels of oppression.
Student participation modalities corresponding to levels of oppression.
Awake and excited to be there, mix up engagement in lesson plan, get moving.
Paying attention to students and group to adjust teaching/lesson plan in the moment
Teaching for liberation is still possible while also prepping them for "real world" SA-led courses can help prep students for other courses (likely banking model) to look at education in different way for innovation and outside the box problem solvling

SA pedagogy can help students be more prepared for the complex thinking and solution finding needed in college-level work
SA pedagogies can be bridge between academic affairs and SA to show more than one way to learn
Hometown: New york city
Growing up: Neighborhoods a mixture of Black, Jewish, Latin American immigrants, Caribbean.
Spanish to English language shift in the house
Home ownership
Elementary and middle school tracking for "academic capacity".
Parental higher ed background: Military and 2-year college
Worked full-time as a commuter student
Food insecurity
Transfer student to 4-year university
Pioneering student of color (Latino) representation in undergrad RA staff
Student involvement in undergrad
Finding self in school material, Black Studies, diaspora.
First person to give SA job as RD, Black Woman mentor
Master’s degree: Developmental and educational psychology
RD bonding with undergrad men of color group
Storytelling as vehicle for education, health promotion administrator role-modeled.
Professor inviting RD into classroom to guest teach
Power dynamics between administrator and faculty, living-learning communities as RD
Classroom is off-limits.
Currency of academic credit as compensation for full commitment to RA preperation/training
Course topics: Black Studies department: Rap and Spoken Work, Black and Latino Leadership courses
Course topic: Centering the Lives of Black Women and Girls
Course topics: Building Inclusive Communities and Storytelling courses, connected to course development but didn’t teach
Rules of administrators teaching a course at small private lib arts school: Several guidelines and eligibility req’s
Rationale for classroom vs other co-curricular vehicle for educating undergrads, "a particulair container" Teaching philosophy: Building community in that space, ways of knowing (epistemologies) and knowing each other.
Students own narratives are wothy of intellectual curiosity
Not felt seen for identities (child of immigrants, person of color) leads to whole person teaching philosophy
Co-responsibility as component of co-learning Instructor will learn as much from students as they will from instructor
Families, backgrounds, personal storytelling, mothers/grandmothers, knowledge creation in classroom.
Instructor curiosity to learn knowledge from student’s families/backgrounds
Drawn to identity-based courses/curricula development where storytelling is natural fit
Co-build space where sharing is feasible
Course topic: Practicing Restorative Justice
Experiential education of RP circles integrated with co-creating container for vulnerability and sharing identity
Content-rich vs community building/process oriented coursework
Influence from Black Studies professors
Influence: Negative experience of professor creating self-doubt as undergrad with disbelief that student wrote a paper
Influence/inspiration from faculty of color while working as administrator for his usage of rap and spoken word in English course
Influence: growing from intellectual capacity to critique from faculty of color colleagues/friends
Academic and SA Partnership to do Participatory Action Research with the FGLI support program
Faculty of color, inspired to center narratives that needed to be centered.
Mom as influence, critical first teacher of love.
Hometown: New York city
Family valued education
Courses topic: First year experience course
Course is about transition into college through exploration of identity and community
Understanding themselves in relation to others. Small communities to societies.
Liberation in communities to dismantle power inequity in students’ communities wherever they go
Improvement through self-reflection, co-conspiratorship, action to lead to change around you.
Content needs to be integrated into the context of the students’ lives. Not content for objective sake, but integrated into the self and peer experience around you.
Facilitator rather than lecturer approach
Instructor is not authority. Learn from students.
Facilitation technique: Questions-based approach
Role of facilitator is to tie student comments back to content or other speaking points in the classroom
Student conduct job was challenging environment to try and educate within punitive structure
Student development theory, org theory, administration assessment in HESA masters program
Case management work in Dean of Students area after student conduct
Disability identity influences teaching practices to increase accessibility.
Engage students in their own learning process on the path to deeper understanding
Imposter syndrome as an instructor due to learning disability
White racial identity demands the instructor be more careful to create inclusive space for students of color
Mom as influence
Supervision style in job
Public figure influence: Michelle Obama, Reach Higher Initiative.
bell hooks influence: Creating a welcoming and safe space for students
NASPA and ACPA involvement
ACPA support during COVID
First Year Experience conference, John Gardner influence
Learning how to increase student engagement through peer-learning with colleagues in professional associations
SA field emphasis on student retention, thriving, and belonging as influence with question about how to assess those things
Teaching philosophy goals are not attainable goals exactly but rather ideal goals due to lack of definition and metric for assessment
Thriving encompasses sense of belonging: Issues a student faces doesn’t outweigh the rest of experience
Psychological safety factor is social connection where you have “someone” on campus
Multi-modal learning activities means accessibility
Changing up activities to boost and maintain student engagement
Multi-modal facilitation technique decreases lecturer style and boosts facilitator style
Time in classroom and choosing how to manage content/activities over time intentionally
Tying up the connections for students as facilitator, exposing/reminding the purpose of the class exploration that day.
Strategizing how transparent to be with students about purpose and direction of class session given varying factors
We all need “the why”, learned to be more consistent with explaining the purpose
Engagement needs to be seen, not heard. Silent engagement opportunities.
Instructor leans more quiet to allow group to unpack and dialogue
Physical location of instructor: Circulates around room SA vs non-SA instructors of First Year Experience course, easier for HESA trained instructors to connect with understanding about material and students
Dialogue style in FYE classroom due to trauma informed practices
SA background allows FYE instructors to engage with material and students compared to non-SA instructors
Pedagogy is intentional, not thrown together like it may look from outside.
Pedagogy is evolving and changing from year to year.
Happy to not be teaching SA course now to not have to follow someone else’s instructions/curriculum
Challenge: Purpose of the course is not the same for institutional, departmental, and instructor perspective.
Why do you want me to do this? Plug-and-play scripted FYE courses.
Values as instructor for organic, intentional conversation run up against course developers’ expectations.
Person influence of instructor’s pedagogy isn’t valued in structure of course built for so many instructors and students
SA specialized skill is facilitating young college students to talk, engage, build connections, but that isn’t valued in the course expectation
Perception is that course developers want SA pros to facilitate only in case something goes wrong, not proactively to build conversation among students
Mass FYE course curriculum encourages moving forward through lecture and content delivery, only have SA pros in case conversation occurs.
Critique on course structure for FYE as one size does not fit all
Busy admins find copy/paste efficiencies to build SA-led FYE courses
Plug and play curricula for efficiency
Course is a side-gig for everyone from instructors to developers, problems ensue.
Hopes for dedicated full-time pro’s to design, lead, and teach SA courses like FYE
Comfort with modifying the pre-determined curriculum
Curriculum modification to meet course goal when curriculum isn’t built well to meet it, example for in-class work time for semester-long project
Modifying pre-packaged curriculum example with DEI
Deeper learning, taking curriculum and using facilitation to go deeper
Deeper learning means skill building for navigating the DEI conversations with others not just knowing content about definitions
Multi-leveled facilitation: Content (surface level), explaining the facilitator technique (transparency and deeper learning), invited further dialogue from others (skill building and dialogue promotion).
Experiential learning is bringing students into your facilitation techniques and transparency to build their skills to engage
Problem-solving education, here’s a hard thing to do and let’s unpack that together
TRANsparency with students about instructor
Disagreement with curriculum
Building trust with students, power equalizing
Frustration with outdated lesson plans in standardized SA curriculum, wellness.
SA instructor need to have lesson be relevant to students’ lived experiences, wellness resource referrals and wellness education
Admin self-awareness that the FYE course structure/design is not up to high standard, not meeting student relevane, and not meeting SA pedagogy level
Structural level of FYE course not tapping intoinstructor expertise and living out the knowledge of the field’s research
Disappointment in not having SA facilitation expertise utilized for mass-produced FYE course.
Course topic: Diversity peer educator internship course
Financial access in course: decision to reorganize required books/materials to be overall cheaper
Small, but intentional decisions for best facilitation method of activities (disperse a link to the citizenship quiz or screen share and large group facilitation)
Flow and order of class activities, cold open/warm up into small groups for definition building
Validation technique, storytelling
Teaching activity: Groups to build collective definitions of terms
Building common ground by crafting definition together for shared understanding
Lesson plan structure
Anti-banking model: Deeper learning means understanding not recitation
Critical consciousness: These concepts are not in a vacuum, they relate to what is happening outside of the classroom right now in the world
I don’t need to give you what you get in all your other classes. I’m not a lecturer, we’re doing something different in here.
Relevance to outside world, lesson plan to engage them in civic society
Urgency for SA pedagogy to be relevant to students and the outside world is fueled by public institution environment
SA pedagogy is fueled by wanting to be a part of the public good contribution to society.
Importance of critical pedagogy at public institution for students at difficult crossroads with financial burdens
Balance between time/energy as admin and teacher
Micro vs macro impact as teacher for 30 students vs program admin for all 600 students in the course as a program manager
Participating in this study has spurred desire to make evaluations for new approaches to the first year course Learning activity: Gallup strengths-based activity
Strengthsfinder activity points out strengths that are not tangible product-oriented skills, but process oriented like relationship building
Activity that focuses on transferability of application.
What you do here can be applied to all else.
Building confidence for students, growing your strengths as a technique.
Reflection of relational skills to apply to team building demands they face in the classroom and beyond
Not a lecture about what strengths are, but facilitator role to foster reflection
Group project in the classroom to complete task quickly within 75 minute session
Markers, flip chart, supplies
Lesson plan oriented toward the academic speciality of that college with the SA-oriented strengthsfinding lesson
Simulation activity simulates pressure of working with team under pressure environment, experiential education.
Experiential/EQ activity: Simulate the feeling of these leadership strengths with peers rather than thinking or talking about them
Fun is important as they are first years while preparing curriculum. Rinse and repeat.
Risk of being complacent year to year with expectations. Staying relevant. Not being up to date with the students needs, issues.

Administrator mind is strong at seeing structural student engagement/enjoyment with the course. You get what you put into the course. Mixture of the skills/learning on into other academic courses.

Lack of continuity. purpose/outcomes and the academics beyond those disconnect between the SA at times. 0

Time limitations, hard to dive deeply in 75 minutes. Challenge is limitations put upon the structure Classroom space options are limited. Time limitations, hard to dive deeply in 75 minutes. 0-credit (but required course) is a hard balance. Missing teeth for students to really take seriously. student buy-in and engagement at times. 0-credit, Friday afternoon. Disconnect between the SA-led courses purpose/outcomes and the academics beyond those courses. Lack of continuity.

Opportunity to bridge the gap between SA and faculty so demonstrate what SA-course does and how to carry the skills/learning on into other academic courses. You get what you put into the course. Mixture of student engagement/enjoyment with the course. Administrator mind is strong at seeing structural issues. Not being up to date with the students needs, expectations. Staying relevant.

Risk of being complacent year to year with curriculum. Rinse and repeat. Fun is an important aspect of class Fun is important as they are first years while preparing them for big careers and academics later.

If it’s not fun, students aren’t going to want to go. Fun is a legitimate vehicle for delivering important deeper lessons Fun is still important even if it’s required course in curriculum. EQ in pedagogy. EQ as backdrop of the course goals, balancing fun and challenge. EQ as vehicle for holistic dimensions of wellness lessons.

Pivoting to lens of EQ for more nuanced conversation from the dimensions of wellness lessons. Debriefing the world around them. How do they react emotionally to things thrown at you? Awareness of traditional lesson-planning style about lecture and content, but chooses to do fun, experiential, and EQ in dialogue with peers. Showing vs telling.

SA course sets the foundation for social impact expected as the pillar of the major/program. How to use their business degree to do good, the SA course opens conversation for students to build skills for public good and strengthen their passion for social responsibility. Great responsibility as an SA with access to a classroom space with students to deliver high quality lessons that resonate with students. Credible in the classroom space, SA as instructors.

Curricular words to signal shared responsibility. Curricular words to signal shared responsibility between SA and Academic affairs. Slowing down, zooming out to resist SA admin skill of quickly operationalizing tasks. Resisting operational urgency from working SA jobs when in the classroom. Pro of SA jobs is efficiency and operations. Con: Not enough slowness for reflective intellectual thought. Tension of go, go mentality and the slow intentionality of strategically scaffolding a curriculum.

Mobilize hundreds of student leaders to be intentionality of strategically scaffolding a curriculum. Educational operations. Con: Not enough slowness for reflective intellectual thought. Tension of go, go mentality and the slow intentionality of strategically scaffolding a curriculum.

Difference between program/training-oriented goals of an SA course vs those that are not tied to a programmatic mission. How much free exploration is available in the constraints of the course. Depth of facilitation/pedagogy is better as a full-time leadership minor faculty vs the SA instructor with full time SA job. While deeper now, the style and method of pedagogy is same as full-time faculty vs SA full time. Capacity limited as full-time SA to give what is needed to course development and preparation of facilitation.

Benefit of SA’s as instructors is knowing students around campus in/outside classroom contexts. Choice for full-time faculty how much to engage with campus life and student relationships outside classroom. SA job gave more context as an instructor to teach leadership courses vs being full-time faculty. Territorial tension between SA and academic affairs, hope to see closer collaboration.
Perception from faculty changed while using curricular/pedagogical language. Frustration with perception of SA from faculty that SA can’t do what they do.

Exclusion from teaching

Suprise during faculty training session by teaching and learning center. Classroom skills were basic level and some faculty seemed to not have thought about the topics before.

Faculty training for teaching caused SA pro (newly full time faculty) to realize he knew his stuff in pedagogy.

Faculty teaching training for DEI was elementary level (use a checklist) and didn’t value individual identity, storytelling, empowerment, etc.

Suggested to DEI faculty training to improve. Positionalality of instructor impacts student experience and classroom environment.

SA’s know how to facilitate critical dialogue but not given the credibility for that in the classroom.

Film studies for leadership development

Socialized to understand leadership

Timeline mapping for leadership theory over time

Videos in lesson planning

Check-in at start of every class session anchored in relationship building in classroom

Free-write warm-up activity reflecting on perception of followership theory

Scaffold hanging classroom activites: Free-write to video watching

Video of followership through building dance momentum. Silly, entertaining, relateble to students to jog ideas about the material.

Multimedia material always in lesson plan.

Conceptual trajectory of lesson plan: Move from abstract to reflection to activity.

Practice/doing action in classroom is important

Experiential learning activity: Group dynamics model group skits

Sectioning model off into smaller pieces per small group of students

Experience the emotion of that stage of the model and demonstrate applied understanding

Theory to practice activities highlight the purpose, the “so what” of lesson

SA influence of theory to practice in classroom activities

What/So What/Now What framework for classroom activities promotes reflection for classroom application and beyond into their future

What/So What/Now What framework is the throughline for all classroom activities and assignments in and out of the classroom

2-page writing assignment to reflect on the what/so what/now what

Circle setup of chairs helps facilitate dialogue among students

Physical location of instructor: Sit among the circle with students to relieve some power dynamic

Move around the space of the classroom

Facilitate deeper learning by asking "why questions" continuously to students


Natural part of being from SA background to get students to think critically and self-reflexively

Self-reflexivity: Facilitation to bring out students stories and lived experience as part of their practice and knowledge. How they make meaning is based on their identities.

SA who gravitated toward development and learning vs. logistic and operations

Facilitation is being a student development specialist

Reciprocal dynamic of knowledge is shared and co-created

Empowerment through creating knowledge for themselves

Open-ended questions and facilitated conversation to create accessible space for students to see their own knowledge

Set the tone at beginning of semester about shared responsibility for knowledge creation

Get what you put in to this course

Fun helps facilitate reflection

Trust needs to be built through community building to engage authentically to co-create knowledge

Measurable and specific student learning outcomes in syllabus

Ontological sense of being around leadership in addition to the goals of being knowledgable and skilled at leadership theory

Relational development and EQ development for leadership skills

Not just about them, but about how are you uplifting others

Apply knowledge and skills to other courses and their future life

Self-grading participation grade through reflective engagement paper

Self-graded participation grade contributes to co-creation of knowledge together in course

Class activity: MLK scholars seminar studied the SCLC online archives

"Lecturelette", mini-lecture to start learning activity

Media analysis activity with students

Media analysis protocol: DIA (Describe, Interpet, Analyze)

Relate content to today and students’ surroundings even if material is historical

Co-teaching SA pro’s play to each other’s strengths

SA value to collaborate to get a job done

Tension between faculty lecturer role encouraged to be independent vs SA teaching expected to collaborate with others

Culture shock as faculty lecturer that there was no interest or concern for what they were doing with students

“You’re doing too much, you don’t have to go above and beyond”. No modifications needed to course delivery if student has covid

Students have been schooled their whole lives and not ready for SA pedagogy style
Students unprepared for co-creation of knowledge. Unschooling, come ready to be taught not to teach as active participant of creating knowledge. Hard to require students’ perception of ownership of knowledge in the classroom. Students struggle with the amount of choice they are being given by this pedagogy style. Scared of messing up and not doing assignment "correctly". Students want the exact x, y, and z to fulfill instructor’s expectations on assignment. Is this freedom and choice in the classroom real? Is the instructor joking?

Analysis note: SA educators struggle with students not ready for alternative pedagogies. Limited access to teach in the classroom at small, private, “old school” traditional perceptions of keepers of knowledge. Loopholes to get into classroom, faculty members inviting SA pros to be an instructor in course with the faculty’s name on the record. Keeper of knowledge as someone with terminal degree. Large university, SA pro reaching a course is written into job description. Not only allowed, but expectation of role. Academic department vs SA program providing legitimacy. Legitimacy sought after for SA program by including a course. In pursuit of relevance, seeking legitimacy. Media (music, social media, videos) purpose is to make sense of the world around them and what they’re consuming.

Discontent as critical consciousness to find truth. Dialogic pedagogy is to borrow hot topics stage to make decisions about what they consume around them. The “So what” has to extend beyond their lives in the classroom. SA educator gets to be influenced and learn from colleagues all across up, down, and around your role. Trauma-informed approach: Example of colleague he learns from in SA field that influences his pedagogy. Influenced by SA colleagues like religious/spiritual life/contemplative practices and student conduct. Influence from colleagues that informs how to keep the container of the classroom physically and emotionally.

Being present when SA admin has a million other things going on. Course topics: Elder in your life to bring into classroom deserving of acknowledgement of being knowledge. Getting choked up, emotions in the classroom when presenting the elder you interviewed for this assignment. Elder activity: Reassuring student and family member that we value you, your family, and the voice for this assignment. Trust has to be built in the classroom for students to be vulnerable.

Elders who have made them in their life are worthy of intellectual curiosity. Reteaching what leadership looks like, not one way. Doesn’t have to be what MLK did. Teaching the class he took as an undergrad, motivation to change the curriculum. Leadership in understanding their own spheres of influence and those who have influenced them. Fractal leadership, adrienne maree brown. Afro-surrealism: Influences learning activities. How to center marginalized voices. Telling stories about their elders, they also had to tell stories about themselves. Afro-surrealism: Amplify particular voices and foster empathy and understanding. Storytelling allows for cross-difference communalities. Check-in question ritual: I need you to be present here for the next couple hours. Check-in ritual for centering in the space. Meditation, breathing. High support for high risk (emotionally) learning activity: Pre-meetings about elder interviews prior to student presentation. Somatic experience: How did this interview feel. Are they comfortable and ready to share/vulnerability. One-on-one’s, looking for emotional specificity about their feelings to check for preparation to share with others. Improved activity by adding in one-on-one check ins with student noting the students were guarded when presenting, not prepared emotionally. Consent for emotional vulnerability about students’ stories. Included in the process of one-on-one meetings with students prior to sharing elder project in class.

Nonviolent Communication: What were exact feelings? Were any needs met? “Making time” for students is part of praxis. Names in classroom: Shared responsibility, meaningfulness of hearing your own name from instructor and peer students. Space, place and agency. Space, place, and agency of hearing one’s own name. Transparency with facilitation technique to students, here’s why I’m emphasizing learning names. Names in classroom: Community/relationship building proactively for supporting conflict/accountability when needed. Container building: Value of names, co-responsibility. Agreements/group norms: Frequent, natural part of SA work outside and inside classroom. Novel practices SA’s might have hard time seeing because it’s so normal. Takeaway of elder project: They are living history worth of archiving. They have appreciation of people in their life. Leave with a curiosity about those they appreciate in their life. Leave with curiosity for others you come across in your life. Future skills, have curiosity for others they come across.

Don’t underestimate the people in your life who matter, especially for marginalized folks.
Black feminist thought to develop leaders:
- Responsible for space, place, and people
- Comfort and capacity to sit in conversation (bell hooks, June Jordan, mother, grandmother)
- Black and Latino Leadership: To be a leader, you need to value yourself. Instill a sense of worthiness.
- Congruence between values, influences, practices.
- Circle of praxis.

Challenge: Need more time and capacity as full-time administrator to devote to lesson-planning
- Full-time teaching allows deeper engagement for instructor, SA’s don’t always have it when they teach
- Time/capacity limitation: Would have needed significantly more time if wanted to improve teaching/syllabus/lesson plans
- Professors don’t usually take a course on how to teach, SA skills in how to hold space help.

Faculty are the keepers of the curriculum. institutional barriers.
- Relationship building with faculty to overcome institutional barriers that would prevent an SA admin from teaching in classroom
- Co-teacher of class only, not instructor of record as SA admin at this institution.
- Faculty would need to be willing to co-teach with you.
- No compensation SA admin teaching a class
- New policy for SA’s teach in classroom due to continued interest and advocacy
- Requirements for SA’s to teach: Terminal degree, adopted by an academic department, can’t do 2 consecutive semesters.
- Students are missing out. SA’s are missing out. Schools are missing out. Structural barriers to SA teaching
- Classroom is a unique and special place to build community, distinct place to utilize SA skills, knowledge, and values.
- Faculty could benefit from understanding how this SA education structures a classroom
- Jesuit purpose: When your gifts meet the world’s needs. Not fulfilled when not in the classroom, as well.
- Many faculty have had to learn how to teach, their own brilliance isn’t enough.
- Imposter syndrome: But, SA’s are prepared to teach better compared to junior faculty who are only content experts.
- Participant happy for space to reflect on their pedagogy in this study
- More training for teaching in HESA masters program vs doctoral program
- Book choice for teaching gender and education course, “Dude, You’re a Fag”.
- Mixture of participation, creativity, and experiential lesson plan design.
- Spice it up, rotate activities in classroom
- Mini-lecture to frame book/study, move into mapping activity
- Self-reflexivity, bring the content of book/study into their own memories/experiences

Draw the gender map of your high school. Creativity, mixed with self-reflexivity of content. Show don’t tell.
- Role-model engagement of activity, instructor sharing their own gender map of high school
- Visual aid to help students understand assignment
- Solo activity to pair share to large group share-out
- Assess their recall of book chapters through mapping the book’s high school in addition to their own high school
- Emotional/reflective/experiential debriefing in par share
- Contingent on time: Ending activities to wrap it up for the day. Bring back to material
- Creative medium to assist thinking about large social concepts
- Struggle from students to engage in non-traditional/creative activity
- Scaffolding to prepare students for creative/non-traditional activities
- Drawing examples to represent gender in mapping assignment
- Personal connection to material for meaning-making
- SA tradition to role-model activity
- Students not understanding non-traditional assignment at first
- Co-creation of knowledge means instructor also does the activity students are assigned to do
- Blocked and doubted as teacher as an SA admin
- Barriers to teach for SA’s, why would you teach?
- Barriers within the field of SJE/SA, need to be “in the club” to teach IGD IGR.
- Devaluation of co-curricular education
- Pedagogy developed from needing to create active learning space in limited amount of time
- PhD credential, skepticism from faculty about what they’re being trained on DEI from an SA educator
- Faculty wondering why they’re being asked to self-reflect and do personal meaning-making, reflection of the difference in their pedagogies to SA
- Resistance from students about critical pedagogy because they are mostly trained for banking model up to that point
- Politics/policies at state/national level may influence negative emotions on DEI in college SA courses
- Co-curricular workshop education will never have the same legitimacy as classroom instruction
- Misconception about the time/energy/intention put into facilitation for co-curricular workshops
- Lack of preparation for faculty to teach
- Unfair perception of integrity of SA teaching vs faculty teaching
- Biggest difference between classroom and workshop is syllabus vs lesson planning
- Imposter syndrome, self-doubt. Do I belong in the classroom?
- Dialogue is strength of facilitation to bring to classroom
- Learning outcomes as SA strength for classroom
- Source materials can be outside the box, not peer-review articles all the time
- Storytelling and meaning making as SA strength for classroom
Physical space, change around traditions and norms of power in seating and placement
Physical space and moving to modulate energy levels
Large group discussions are less popular in recent years, moving and being dynamic with space helps
Agile, flexible with lesson plans to respond to the moment with students and their surroundings
Individual reflections
What/So What/Now What
Diverse representation of voices in classroom: Texts, videos, guest speakers
NUFP Influence: Where I Am From activity
Pedagogy of the Oppressed, anti-banking model
bell hooks: Transgressive pedagogy
Engaged pedagogy: Theory to practice, empower students, engage through personal meaning
Sentipensante, co-creation of knowledge
Critical Student Development: Growing means questioning. Self, others, surroundings.
Liberation needs to be a component to imagine and create, not just critique
Trans-feminism, self-disclosure in classroom to inspire imagination for liberation
Transfeminism praxis: Desire, Refusal, World making, Underworlding
Underworlding: Trans networks of support for trans communities not-visible publicly on purpose
Avoided discussing transfeminism ideas because its origins in safe-zone facilitation not teaching
Outcome for students: Critical stand about their social realities
Willingness to ask why about power and hegemony
Outcome: Desire for deeper understanding about their socialization process
Outcome: Teach others outside classroom with peers, families, communities
Story about student with guy friends who said gender and education course would be brainwashing
Outcome: Make influence in their own spheres
Inspire hope and free will to make change for students in their life
Analysis note: Takeaway about outcomes from their SA pedagogy
AKSA: Awareness, Knowledge, Skills and Action framework from facilitation now in teaching
Facilitation informed by staff training in SA
SA trainings are hands on, conversation, and reflection based
Lesson plan in DEI theatre troupe, DEI skills to then put on scenes for the stage on campus
Dialogue hot topic method
Resotrative practices to manage conflict with students about hot topic
Trust with students
Instructor allowing to have his mind changed based on every students’ voice on hot topic
Experiential learning experience through conflict in classroom
Senior roles in SA focus more on product than process, feels like there’s less time for reflection than there used to be.

Tension of efficiency and developmental slowness and reflection, SA task oriented job vs SA educator
Easier to be more process than product when there is a rich environment with the students in the classroom, if students don’t want to be there it is more efficiency-oriented
Analysis note: Good example of blended SA program and SA course
Process vs product, Hard to measure the shared learning in the process where you can get richer experiences with students
Energy and interest in subject from instructor influences the classroom, vice versa with students to instructor
Not all topics can be that deeply engaging and classroom can fall flat
Influenced by reflective, deep thinking undergrad experience
SA skillset to meet students on pragmatic, social, transitional level can be transformative for students.
SA’s DEIB experience is beneficial for classroom
Staff training experience beneficial
Wishes SA educators could go as deep with students as faculty in teaching opportunities
Faculty lacking skills to understand students outside direct classroom context
Imposter syndrome
Banking model doesn’t feel good, not fulfilling
Co-creation mindset embedded into supervisory style, now in classroom, too.
Developmental value of co-creation of knowledge, social justice theatre class example
Grad school HESA experience of accountable and developmentally oriented challenges inspires the same for students in SA courses
Development as a part of co-creation
Crying, emotional, lessons through DEI in developmental stages in grad school.
Frereian foundation of shared learning is basis for his SA pedagogy
hooks, Engaged Pedagogy. People be authentic and humand share their stories.
Development is ongoing for everyone, always.
Teachers, admin, students alike. Core part of his SA pedagogy.
Three components of SA pedagogy: Freire shared learning/co-creation, hooks’ Engaged Pedagogy of humane sharing of identities, and development is ongoing for everyone always.
Spirituality of liberation, identity, and empathy in hooks’ Engaged Pedagogy
Education means leaving being a better human, if not it has failed you
Pushback from others that education is not about becoming a better human
Buddhism, Pema Chodron, start changing the world by changing your own mind.
Parenting reflections. If your kid is having behavioral problems, one solution is for parent to start going to therapy to heal themselves
Takeaway of impact of SA pedagogy for self benefits and society
Ideal pedagogy is developmental for the individual and has impact with those that person interacts with in the world at large.
APPENDIX F
MEANING UNITS BY CODES
Meaning Units by Codes (n = 118)
- Banking model of education
  - Banking model of education
  - Instructor not authority/expert
    - Dialogue not lecture
    - Power
    - Self-disclosure/identity of instructor
    - Transparency of facilitation
- Multiple forms of knowledge
  - Multiple forms of knowledge - code family
    - Family
    - Media - knowledge
    - Mothers
    - Relational learning - knowledge creation
    - Shared responsibility - knowledge creation
    - Storytelling
- Facilitator not Teacher
  - Container
    - Accessibility - Container
    - Consent
    - Container
    - Dialogue - Container
    - Energy levels of classroom
    - Interpersonal skills - Container
    - Love
    - Mobility and physical space of classroom
    - Responsive/iterative/agile
    - Ritual
    - Shared responsibility - Container
    - Trust
- Multi-modal
  - Large group
  - Multi-modal
  - Pair-share
  - Participation methods
  - Solo-participation/activity
- Co-teaching
- Course structure - Facilitation
- Experiential learning - Facilitation
- Facilitator not teacher
- Full circle
- Fun
- Limit setting
- Media - facilitation
- Philosophy
- Process-oriented
- Questions
- Scaffold
- Show don’t tell
- Student engagement - Facilitation
- Freire/hooks
  - Freire/hooks
- Co-creation of knowledge
- Development
  - Critical Development
  - Deeper Learning
  - Development theory/models
  - Dimensions of wellness
  - Experiential learning - Development
  - Interpersonal skills - Development
  - Relational learning - Development
  - Theory to Practice
- What/So What/Now What & Self/Others/Society
- Beyond the Classroom
  - Career - Beyond the Classroom
  - Interpersonal skills - Beyond the Classroom
  - Relational learning - Beyond the Classroom
  - SOS - Beyond the Classroom
  - Transferable skills
- In the Classroom
  - Accessibility(disability)
  - Agile/Responsive - Problem posing
  - DEI in practice/context
  - Empowerment/Counter-narratives of marginalized identity
  - First-gen
  - Giving back/paying forward
  - Identity - SOS In the Classroom
  - Navigational wellness/capital
  - SES/First-gen status
- Self/Others/Society
- What/So What/Now What
- Self-reflexivity
- Faculty perceptions - bad
- Faculty perceptions - good
- Imposter syndrome
- Student resistance/challenges
- Student success w/ SA pedagogy
- Benefits of SA admin role
- Drawn to identity-based course topics
○ Fun - SA Benefit
○ Logistics/Goals/Outcomes
○ Mentorship
○ Outside the classroom connections
○ Partnership between SA courses and SA programs
○ Professional associations
○ SA Educator Label
○ SA Training/Workshop Experience
○ Student engagement - SA Benefit
○ Supervisory style influence
○ Course structure - threat
○ Efficiency threatens reflection/process
○ Standardized SA curricula
○ Threats of SA admin role
○ Threats to pedagogy
○ Time/Capacity
○ Faculty learning from SA pedagogy
○ Partnership between Academic Affairs and SA
○ Pedagogy is intentional, not anarchistic
○ SA pedagogy benefitting institution/teaching mission
○ Structural exclusion from teaching
○ Terminal degree
○ College
○ Course topics
○ Family
○ Graduate Education
○ Gratitude for participation
○ Influences
○ K-12 Education