AMERICAN INDIANS IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION: ADDRESSING ISSUES OF RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND INCLUSION

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Dedication Page

I dedicate this dissertation to my late grandparents and fellow teachers, Ray and Helen Smalling, and my amazing mentors, Dr. Anne Tellett and Dr. Priscilla Day. Their presence in my life shaped so much of who I am and I try every day to live and work in a way that honors their legacies.

Agent Starling greatly appreciates the assistance, guidance, encouragement and patience of her chair, David B. Miller. Thank you for graciously offering to take on a project way outside the norm and helping me see it through, with lots of good humor along the way.

I also wish to thank my committee, Dr. Farkas, Dr. Tracy and Dr. Day, for their contributions throughout the process. I feel very lucky to have the collective wisdom of such remarkable women and scholars working with me on this project.

I offer a very special thank you to Helen Menke for moral support, laughs, empathy, practical assistance and generally for being one of the most wonderful, kind and generous human beings I have ever met. Many many many students have you to thank for the doctorates, and I count myself among them.

My father, Bob Smalling, actually read and edited this entire manuscript, without my asking, offering great support and comic relief in the process at a time when I needed it the most- a pattern he has repeated throughout my life. That last run-on sentence was for you, pops, you are the tops.

My beloved husband, David Ullman has endured multiple meltdowns, tears, tantrums and the like for five years now...and married me anyway. Thank you for
you support, encouragement, outrage, humor and generally being the best buddy ever.

Finally, I cannot offer enough gratitude to the participants in this study. I was deeply honored and humbled you chose to share your stories with me. I hope I have done them justice and can use them to promote social justice for American Indian communities.
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This dissertation was supported by funding from the Arol Shack Dissertation Award at the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences.
American Indians and Social Work Education: Addressing Issues of Recruitment, Retention and Inclusion

Abstract

by

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American Indians endure significant disparities in related to poverty, health, education and family preservation. Social work has not managed to fully address these disparities as part of its commitment to social justice (Baskin, 2006). We have also failed to recruit and retain larger numbers of American Indians into the field (Fire, 2006; Cross et al., 2009). Creating an inclusive space for American Indian individuals, epistemologies and values in social work will start with inclusion of American Indians in the social work profession. To promote this inclusion, we need to know what factors facilitate and inhibit American Indian students from entering and completing social work programs. Further, we need to understand the experience of American Indian faculty to ensure successful recruitment and retention of such faculty in our programs and to address any exclusionary practices.

The study used qualitative methods to look in depth at the experiences and viewpoints of American Indian faculty in social work academia to create a more holistic, representative picture of the field. The study examined the narrative
histories of these faculty members as they earned their higher degrees, attained employment and engaged in their past and current work in the academy. Special attention was given to how culture played a role in these experiences. Further, this included exploration of the barriers and facilitators for (1) degree completion, (2) integration into the academy and (3) attaining professional success.

Narrative methods were used to examine the experiences of faculty within their specific academic and personal contexts and across cases to determine patterns and potential points of intervention. Results indicate structural, cultural, interpersonal barriers participants had to overcome in obtaining their degrees and navigating their faculty positions. Often, these stemmed from university structures not oriented to the cultural needs of American Indian faculty and students. Conversely, several facilitators also emerged promoting degree completion and success in academic settings including mentoring, inclusion of American Indian content and programs working to “grow their own” future American Indian faculty members. These findings will guide the profession in both American Indian student and faculty recruitment and retention in the future.
Chapter 1: Background and Rationale

Problem Statement

In the 2000 United States Census, 1.5% of the population or 4.5 million people identified as either fully or partially American Indian. Despite this relatively small portion of the population, American Indians suffer a disproportional set of challenges. Centuries of policies directed at the elimination of first American Indian people and then their cultural and sovereign status resulted in generations suffering from trauma and lack of economic opportunity. The modern effects of these policies include a higher proportion of children in foster care (Hand, 2006; Hicks, 2009), much higher than average rates of unemployment and poverty (DeVoe, Darling-Churchill, & Snyder, 2008), poor educational outcomes and significant health disparities (Cross et al., 2009). The social work profession prioritizes addressing inequities such as these as a primary function of the profession. However, to date, social work has not successfully integrated American Indian content and people into the profession or prioritized addressing these significant needs (Gray, Yellowbird & Coates, 2003; Harris, 2009; Haug, 2001; Midgely, 2008; Weaver, 2000).

Recently, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) commissioned a study on the status of American Indians in social work. The resulting preliminary report suggests several need areas for promoting inclusion of American Indians in the profession including curriculum development, increasing cultural competency and a significant focus on the recruitment, retention and support of American Indian students and faculty. Specifically, the authors suggest, “the need in social work education is two-fold: (1) there is a need for all social work students, regardless of
racial or ethnic identification, to have the knowledge and skills to work competently with Native Americans and (2) there is a need to improve the pipeline for Native American students and faculty into social work” (Cross et al., 2009, p.5).

This study will build on this preliminary research regarding the recruitment and retention of American Indian faculty and students into social work education. The study will use qualitative methods to examine in depth the experiences and viewpoints of American Indian faculty in social work academia to create a more holistic, representative picture of the field. Further, the study will explore the narrative histories of these faculty members as they earned their higher degrees, attained employment and their past and current work in the academy with special attention to cultural issues. This will include exploration of the barriers and facilitators for (1) degree completion, (2) integration into the academy and (3) attaining professional advancement and success. By exploring both faculties’ experiences as students and as faculty members, the study will address both student and faculty recruitment and retention. This will include their perceptions of strengths and need areas for inclusion of American Indian content and individuals in the profession. These data will assist the profession in both student and faculty recruitment and retention in the future.

American Indians hold a unique position in the United States. As the country’s first inhabitants, they still maintain sovereign nation status within the country’s borders. This status includes rights to self governance and to specific benefits owed to them from treaty agreements. Despite this sovereignty, the United States government has often failed to recognize those rights and honor those
treaties (Iverson, 1998). Instead, the American government has a long history of attempted cultural destruction and forced assimilation of American Indians (Weaver, 1998). During early colonization, estimates suggest up to 95% of the indigenous population died as a result of war and disease (Iverson, 1998). After ceasing genocidal policy, the government attempted to fully and forcefully assimilate American Indians into the dominant United State’s culture. This included ignoring treaties and attempting to parcel out or acquire Indian land separating tribal groups and maintaining control of resource rich tribal areas (Cross, 2006). Indian children were forced en masse to attend residential boarding schools. These schools prohibited the practice of traditional spirituality, use of the language and any practicing of traditional culture. Further, they broke-up American Indian families forcing generations to be raised outside of their family units (Mannes, 1995). These policies resulted in both significant continuing economic disparities and significant family and mental health issues among American Indians (Devoe et al., 2008).

American Indians also participate and complete higher education at a much lower rate than other cultural groups. According to the 2000 Census, only 11% of American Indians hold bachelors degrees compared to 24% of the total United States population. Other studies report only 8.6% of American Indians over 25 hold a bachelors degree (Cross et al., 2009). However, 44% have attended some college courses (DeVoe et al., 2008). Though American Indian students have increased their rates of entering colleges or universities, few successfully matriculate through baccalaureate programs. Estimates suggests 75%-93% of American Indian students
that start in post-secondary education do not finish (Larimore & McClellan, 2005) with 70% leaving in their first semester (Taylor, 2005). On average, American Indian students that do complete their bachelor’s degree start and stop attending college an average of seven times. Further, these students report a variety of barriers to completing their degrees including financial problems, lack of child care, lack of mentors and cultural issues. Many report the overall university culture at odds with their traditional cultural beliefs. Further, traditional theories of methods for promoting student retention fail to meet the unique cultural needs of American Indian students. For example, they do not address methods for assisting students in maintaining connection to their tribal communities and American Indian identities (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). American Indians participate in social work education at similar rates to their participation in higher education as a whole. They constitute approximately 1% of all baccalaureate and master’s students and 1.5% of doctoral students (DeVoe et al., 2008).

Social work has a complicated history with the indigenous population in the United States. The profession emphasizes in its code of ethics the importance of pursuing social justice, particularly for underserved and underrepresented populations. Social work also purports a focus on effective cross-cultural practice at all system levels as suggested in its code of ethics (National Association of Social Workers, 1999). However, historically, the profession has not met these goals in regard to American Indians (Gray, Yellowbird & Coates, 2003; Harris, 2009; Haug, 2001; Midgely, 2008, Weaver, 2000). As indicated, American Indians endure significant disparities in the experience of poverty, health, educational failure and
family preservation. Social work has not managed to address these specific issues as part of its commitment to social justice and service to the underprivileged (Baskin, 2006). They have also failed to recruit and retain larger numbers of American Indians into the field (Fire, 2006; Cross et al., 2009). Those American Indians who are involved in the profession underscore the need for more American Indian social workers to work in American Indian communities (Ives et al., 2007; Voss, Lunderman, White Hat, Sr., Lundermand, & Bates, 2005).

In general, social work has failed to fully support tribal sovereignty, historically facilitated the colonization/forced assimilation of American Indian people and failed recognize the innate Eurocentric bias in its curriculum (Coates, Gray & Hetherington, 2008; Gair et al., 2005; Voss et al., 2005). For example, in practice, social workers have been complicit in the excessive removal of Indian children from their homes and placement of those children with families outside their culture (Weaver, 2000). Social work theory tends to put primacy on the individual and autonomy-values that may exclude or contradict community focused indigenous worldviews (Gair et al., 2005). Multiple authors (e.g. Gair et al., 2005; Midgley, 2008) suggest that more indigenous people might seek accreditation as social workers if the professional standards of practice included indigenous helping customs. Social work research rarely has enough American Indian representatives to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of treatment approaches with these populations or to generally include them in research (Gloria & Robinson, 2001). Further, social work academics tend to marginalize indigenous epistemologies focused on more qualitative ways of knowing (Day, 2009; Voss et al., 2005). The
Council on Social Work Education recognizes these disparities and commissioned an analysis of the state of the field in regard to American Indian recruitment, retention and inclusion in 2009 and continues to support efforts at increasing overall inclusion.

Creating an inclusive space for American Indian individuals, epistemologies and values in social work must start with inclusion of American Indians in the social work profession. This should begin with increasing both student and faculty representation in social work education. To facilitate this inclusion, we need to know what factors facilitate and inhibit American Indian students from entering and completing social work programs. Further, we need to understand the experience of American Indian faculty in the profession to ensure successful recruitment and retention of such faculty in our programs and to address any exclusionary practices.

Little is known about the experience of American Indian faculty in higher education and even less known about their experiences in social work education. The CSWE study found a total of 31 American Indian faculty in social work education in 1979. Thirty years later, there are only 41 full time American Indian faculty. Research suggests American Indian students identify the need for American Indian faculty mentors to assist them in navigating academia while maintaining their cultural identities and bonds (Voss et al., 2005; Weaver, 2000). Social work education must facilitate the inclusion of more American Indian faculty to the profession to, in turn, recruit and retain more American Indian students.

Overall, research on American Indians in academia is lacking and insufficient due to small sample sizes, limited generalizability due to the diversity within
American Indian culture and reliability concerns (Gloria & Robinson, 2001). Though there is a dearth of research on the specific experiences of American Indian faculty, there is a significant body of research on minority scholars in general that may inform the current study. Minority scholars and women tend to be less satisfied with their jobs than their white male counterparts (Seifert & Umbach, 2008). They tend to engage in less valued forms of scholarship including use of more qualitative methods (Stein, 1996; Viets et al., 2009) and report higher levels of stress with the tenure and promotion process (Seifert & Umbach, 2008). For example, many choose to do qualitative and/or action oriented research. This type of research requires longer time commitments to build the requisite relationships with communities and often includes a focus on more qualitative methods. However, these research methods also tend to be more culturally congruent as the communities under study collaborate in the data collection, analysis and dissemination process. In addition to the time issues involved in this research, it also tends to be less valued in the tenure and promotion process (Stein, 1996; Viets et al., 2009). Time management also proves more of an issue for minority and women scholars with multiple life demands coupled with an increased need to provide mentorship to minority students affecting their ability to engage in more traditionally valued academic activities (Viets et al., 2009). We need to know more about how these issues specifically apply to American Indian faculty and American Indian faculty in social work departments. Further, we need to understand any unique needs of American Indian faculty.
The current study seeks to fill in some of these significant gaps in knowledge regarding American Indians in social work education. This study seeks to uncover the facilitators and barriers affecting recruitment and retention of American Indian students and faculty in social work education. Further, it will seek faculty recommendations for promoting inclusion of American Indians into social work education including strengths and current barriers.

**Aims and questions**

This study will explore the following research aims and questions:

Aim 1: To explore what facilitated success for American Indian social work faculty in obtaining their required degrees.

Research questions for Aim 1:

How did American Indian faculty experience (and find success) obtaining the required professional degrees for faculty appointments?

Aim 2: To explore the experience of American Indian faculty in academia overall and in social work academia specifically.

How do American Indian Social Work faculty navigate (i.e. integrate, experience) their professional role in social work academia?

How do American Indian faculty experience the hiring, tenure and promotion process?

What issues unique to their cultural identities do American Indian faculty experience in their professional roles?

Aim 3: To explore intervention points for increasing inclusion of American Indian students and faculty into the social work profession
What specific facilitators promoted success for American Indian social work faculty in their academic experiences?

What specific barriers hindered American Indian social work faculty in their academic experience?
Chapter 2- Literature Review

American Indians in the United States- an overview

Census takers use the following definition for American Indian/Alaskan Native, “people having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.” There are an estimated 4.5 million American Indians in the United States, 1.5% of the total population. One percent reports American Indian as their sole ethnicity. The American Indian population is significantly younger than the population as a whole, median age 29 compared to 35. One third of American Indians live on reservation lands. The government recognizes 562 tribes with an additional 33 with recognition pending and 245 unrecognized tribes maintaining their identity despite lack of federal recognition (Gonzalez, 2008). It is important to note these tribal groups and their individual members each have unique histories, culture, levels of adaptation to the dominant culture and needs (Cross et al., 2009). Further, the language referring to this group may also include “Native American,” “First Nations” (language typically used in Canada) and Indigenous people- all referring to the peoples populating the Americas prior to colonization by Western Europeans (Fire, 2006). The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) voted the term “American Indian” as the preferred general term for indigenous people in the United States. The term American Indian will be used in this study unless specifying a more specific group (e.g. ‘Alaskan Native’, or a particular tribe) or citing the specific language of a research study under review.
**Sovereign Nation status**

American Indians hold a unique position from other groups in the United States due to their sovereign nation status. As they were the nation’s first inhabitants and thus original stewards of the land, they hold the right to govern fifty-eight million acres of land they still own due to treaty rights (Wilkinsin, 2006). Sovereignty has multiple meanings, the most basic suggesting, “Sovereignty is separateness” (Utter, 2001, p. 264) emphasizing the distinct nation status of tribal areas, their right to determine their own cultural norms and to resist assimilation to the dominant cultural norms of the United States. Further, “sovereignty also means the inherent right or power of self-government” (Utter, 2001, p. 264). In addition to determining laws and establishing service/infrastructure on tribal lands, this right extends to tribal hunting, fishing, water and religious rights outside of reservation boundaries (Wilkinson, 2006). Specific to social services, this includes the right to determine the placement needs of both on and off reservation American Indian children involved in child welfare (Mannes, 1995). It is imperative social workers understand the unique issues accompanying this sovereign nation status, particular as it pertains to social service and social justice issues.

**Historical overview: The history of American Indians post European contact**

The legacy of European contact affects every aspect of American Indian life, especially culture and family (Mannes, 1995). Any understanding of the need for the integration of American Indian students and faculty into social work education must be preceded by a brief review of the history of American Indians and colonization. Typically, such a review divides the history into five periods: 1) pre
contact with Europeans, 2) treaty making, 3) removal, 4) termination and 5) self-determination (Cross, 2006). The pre-contact period ended at the time the first colonizers arrived and is beyond the scope of this study. The treaty making, removal and termination periods represent various attempts at eliminating the distinct American Indian nations through various methods ranging from genocide to forced assimilation. Though a useful heuristic, the five stages characterization does not draw enough attention to the policies of extermination that ran concurrently with treaty making and removal. Further, the eras and their accompanying policy orientations overlap (Weaver, 1998).

Originally, the policy of the United States government toward Indian nations was one of extermination (Weaver, 1998). From the point of initial contact around 1500 to 1900, most estimate 95-99% of the Indigenous population was wiped out. Even the most conservative estimates suggest two thirds of the America’s indigenous population was eliminated due to disease and genocide (Iverson, 1998).

During the time of treaty making (1400-1871), the United States government entered into a series of treaties with various tribes creating trust relationships with them. These agreements secured certain land ownership, monetary rewards and services rights for Indian people in exchange for portions of their land (Cross, 2006). However, many of these treaties were broken and the government continues to fail to honor them fully today. The government stopped making treaties with American Indian people in 1871 (Iverson, 1998).

Though treaty making officially ended in 1871, the government started shifting the policy from treaty making to removal by the 1830's (Iverson, 1998).
During this time, the government uprooted the tribes and moved them to less desirable reservation lands (areas with limited potential for agriculture or economic growth) regardless of the content of previously signed treaties. This allowed for westward United States expansion but left tribal communities on unfamiliar land with little to no opportunity or skills for adaptation (Cross, 2006). Many American Indians died during this period including the loss of entire tribes of people due to harsh conditions during removal and disease (Iverson, 1998).

The termination period started in the 1890’s and proved a more covert attempt at doing away with the “Indian problem.” During this period, the key intent of federal policy was to eradicate the “Indianness” of Indian people and force them to assimilate with mainstream America (Iverson, 1998). The government continued to disregard treaties and tried to sever its ties with Indian tribal governments (Cross, 2006). The 1819 Civilization Fund Act exemplifies this value in policy practice and is particularly relevant to the current study. The intent of this act was to eliminate American Indian cultural groups and fully integrate American Indian people into the dominate culture. The catch phrase of the time suggested the need to, “kill the Indian, save the man.” The Civilization Fund Act provided residential education for American Indian youth with the direct intent of “civilizing” them through strict education rooted in dominant cultural norms (Mannes, 1995). This started the era of the boarding schools where Indian children were banned from practicing traditional spirituality or speaking the language, forced to dress and act according to the dominant culture and kept away from their families and communities for long periods of time (Weaver, 1998). Many children were forcibly
removed or sent to the schools due to extreme coercion on the part of religious and community leaders (Iverson, 1998). At its peak in the 1970’s, roughly 60,000 American Indian children were enrolled in the boarding schools (Colmant, 2000). For many communities, families and individuals, the boarding school experience resulted in loss of culture, language and identity (Voss et al., 2005).

Overall, the educational policies and practices in the United States have both overtly and covertly added to the marginalization and forced assimilation of the American Indian people. In addition to the overt policy of the boarding schools, later education policy focused on a, “one size fits all” approach to higher education assuming the dominant pedagogy, curriculum and the general culture of institutions was sufficient for all. Studies suggest this may prove alienating for several American Indian students who cannot reconcile their worldviews with that of college and university culture (Voss et al., 2005). The specific implications of these policies and subsequent attempts to alter them for better inclusion are discussed below.

In addition to the policy regarding education, the government passed legislation (e.g. the Dawes Act of 1887) that attempted to further dismantle tribal groups through land reallocation and requiring them to develop the United States’ system of government. Failing to adopt such a system resulted in lost recognition from the government (and in turn loss of land rights and services) for over 100 tribes (Cross, 2006). Later policies during the termination period continue to embody the national value promoting assimilation and ignoring the sovereignty of Indian nations established in the treaties. Public Law 280 allowed for state government to intervene on reservations without permission for civil and criminal
matters and/or to restore lawlessness. California, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oregon and Wisconsin were mandated to take jurisdiction over the tribes in their areas. Historian John Wunder described PL-280 as, “the most successful legal attack on Indian rights and sovereignty since the adoption of the constitution.” (Iverson, 1998, p. 126). American Indians were also legally prohibited from practicing their traditional spirituality until the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 was passed (Iverson, 1998).

The 1958 Indian Adoption Project, created through a partnership between the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Child Welfare League of America, sought to place American Indian children whose parents could not provide a “suitable” home in transracial adoptive homes (Mannes, 1995). As a result, many American Indian children were permanently removed from their homes and sent to live with White families several states away. Recognizing the harm in this approach, in 1970, the Social and Rehabilitative Services Agency (SRS) (part of the Children’s Bureau) directed state agencies to abide by tribal rulings in child welfare agencies and to allow reservation residents access to welfare. However, the mandate was largely ignored for a multitude of reasons including a lack of respect for tribal courts and funding. States could not tax the tribes and therefore did not wish to spend money providing them with social services (Mannes, 1995). These factors coupled with cultural bias, conflicts between American Indian and non-Indian social and legal systems (Garner, 1993) and lack of understanding of American Indian culture, contributed to the differential removal of American Indian children from their homes (Cross, 2006). In 1978, 25-35% of all American Indian children were in out
of home care, most often in non-Indian homes. Today, American Indian children are still three times more likely to be removed from their homes than non-Indian children (Hicks, 2009). In addition to the history of child removal, mothers were often threatened with child removal if they did not consent to Indian Health Service mandated sterilization (Weaver, 2008).

In the late 1960’s, the policy directives finally shifted from a focus on termination to self-determination for American Indian tribes (Gross, 2003). The 1968 Indian Civil Rights Act guaranteed self determination as originally promised in the treaties (Garner, 1993). Tribes now had the right to develop economic opportunities on the reservations. Moreover, the government started to acknowledge the special needs and dire circumstances of Indian children. The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA, Pub.L. 95-608) of 1978 was a direct result of this policy shift and lawmakers’ recognition of and investment in the need to better honor treaties and support tribal communities. ICWA’s stated purpose was, “to establish standards for placement of Indian Children in foster care or adoptive homes, to prevent the break-up of Indian families” (Garner, 1993, p.50). Title I of the act confirms tribal rights to assume jurisdiction in child custody placement proceedings (exclusively including foster care, termination of parental rights, pre-adoptive placement and adoptive placement proceedings) for all Indian children including those living off the reservation (Basic, 2003; Mannes, 1995). It includes specific procedural mandates for tribal notification and the use of “active efforts” on the part of child welfare workers to promote reunification (Jones, 1995).
Despite these policy shifts, the negative, long term effects of pre-self-determination policies persist as evidenced by the health and welfare disparities American Indians still experience as described below. In addition, the federal government still intrudes on sovereignty rights of American Indians. The American Indian Probate Reform Act of 2004 (PL 108-374) requires all reservation dwelling American Indians to have wills. No other group has this requirement or degree of oversight from the government (Weaver, 2008).

**Disparities affecting American Indians**

Before looking specifically at American Indians in social work and social work education, it is important to note the direct and indirect consequences of our historical policies toward American Indians. These consequences have had multiple detrimental effects on Indian communities, families and children and explicate the need for social work to attend American Indian inclusion and unique needs. Clearly, early policy resulted in the genocide of millions of tribes and indigenous people (Weaver, 1998). Later, policies of removal and termination left American Indian communities with little to no economic opportunities on reservations and fragmented societies struggling to maintain their cultural identities (Garner, 1993). The social work code of ethics mandates special attention to marginalized populations. American Indians have significantly more challenges than other groups in the United States in areas of health, poverty, child welfare and education mandating special attention from the profession for this population (Devoe et al., 2008; Cross et al., 2009).
Equally detrimental to the overt economic consequences described below, the attempts at cultural genocide through assimilation policy have had dire consequences for the American Indian communities, families and children. Many authors (Garner, 1993; Iverson, 1998; Mankiller, 2004; Weaver, 1998; Weaver & Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1999) have described the effects of historical trauma American Indians have experienced resulting from disassociation with culture as a result of the ongoing systematic oppression and genocide and removal from the family system. Historical trauma includes, “the cumulative cultural wounding across generations as well as present-day effects on one’s current life circumstances” (Weaver & Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1999, p. 22). Basically, this history led to the systematic break-up of Indian families (Garner, 1993). Generations of Indian children were raised in institutions without parents or foster homes without cultural ties. Many were abused. Consequently, current generations struggle with parenting, rebuilding family networks and trying to break cycles of abuse started in the boarding schools (Weaver, 1998). Often, the coping strategies developed to deal with these issues may look dysfunctional outside of the specific historical context shaping them (Voss et al., 2005). Correspondingly, Indian children are still removed from their homes at a much higher rate than children from other cultural groups. While American Indians only make up about 1.5% of the total population, they constitute 2% of all children in out of home care (Hand, 2006). In addition to specific family issues, the trauma of the residential school system continues to create a barrier to American Indians in education (Fire, 2006). Many are leery of the educational system and associate it with abuse or loss of culture.
Social work education and social work professionals need to understand historical trauma and the accompanying coping skills to better meet American Indian clients, community and student needs (Weaver, 1998).

Many tribal communities continue to have significant economic consequences including extremely high rates of unemployment and poverty despite some improvements with introduction of Indian gaming, hotels, parks and other sources of revenue on the reservation (Iverson, 1998). In general, a higher percentage of American Indians/Alaskan Natives are unemployed - 12%, as compared with other racial/ethnic groups (African Americans, 8%; Hispanics, 6%; Asian/Pacific Islanders, 3%; Whites 4%). (DeVoe et al., 2008). Further, those who are employed are more likely to be in the service industry, hold fewer management positions than the total U.S. population and earn less overall (Cross et al., 2009). Similarly, a higher percentage of American Indians/Alaskan Natives live in poverty - 27% compared to 13% of total population. (DeVoe et al., 2008).

American Indians also suffer significant health and mental health disparities. These include higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, infant mortality and stroke (Cross et al., 2009). According to the last census, 32.1% of American Indians lack health insurance (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006) despite treaty rights guaranteeing health care for many (Iverson, 1998). The population also suffers from increased rates of mental health issues including depression and suicide and significant issues with alcoholism. Consequently, Indian children have increased rates of fetal alcohol syndrome. Due in large part to both the historical trauma of the boarding schools and other oppression and combat related trauma, American Indians have high rates
of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other mental health issues (Cross et al., 2009).

Despite these high rates of mental health issues, American Indians have higher rates of unmet and untreated mental health needs. This is not due solely to lack of access but lack of perceived efficacy in available services. Therapy is often viewed as oppressive in that it fails to recognize the indigenous worldview. This problem is echoed throughout the social work profession and discussed in detail below. Only recently have indigenous models of mental health practice started to emerge in the literature (Hodge, Limb & Cross, 2009).

As an important additional note, the history of American Indian people presented here makes cultural preservation and even the survival of Indian people seem nearly impossible. Despite these challenges and overt attempts at destruction, American Indian communities have survived, maintained much of their culture and in many ways thrive today (Iverson, 1998; Mankiller, 2004). Though this study emphasizes some of the challenges and deficits of American Indian communities in regard to education and other issues, the author would be remiss if the survival and strengths of the Indian people were not mentioned and emphasized. American Indian communities still practice their traditional spirituality despite centuries of having to carry forward these traditions in secret due their illegality. Several tribes have successfully exercised their sovereignty with well established tribal governments. These governments have often facilitated the development of economic opportunities for their tribes, often despite relegation to reservation land lacking access to natural resources or economic infrastructures (Mankiller, 2004).
Social Work and American Indians: Historical and Current Issues

“While present-day century social work education would not consciously or overtly ascribe to Colonel Pratt’s ‘kill the Indian, save the man’ ideology, social work education is, nonetheless, situated within the broader educational institution historically embedded in the American experience. Within this broader educational context, vestiges and residues of the earlier civilizing pedagogy may be found in the profession’s most fundamental values” (Voss et al., 2005, p. 216).

Challenges to increased inclusion of American Indian faculty and students into social work academia along with increased American Indian content in practice models, theory and research requires transcendence of several issues. These include reconciling a history of mistrust from past colonialist practice, overcoming the practical logistics of reaching potential participants living on remote reservations, cultural distance and general racism (Ives et al., 2007). Hilary Weaver (1999) argues, “social workers must understand the atrocities of the indigenous holocaust in this country and the unresolved pain associated with it” (in Baskin, 2006, p. 221). Voss et al. (2005) suggest lack of participation of American Indians in the profession and higher education in general represents active resistance against continuing culturally genocidal pedagogy, curriculum and overall academic culture.

Multiple authors (Coates et al., 2008; Gair et al., 2005; Gray et al., 2008; Haug, 2001; Nimmagadda & Cowger, 1999) describe the contradiction of traditional social work values and those of indigenous communities. Eurocentric values of welfare - those rooted American middle class norms of European Americans like competition and individualism- frame the social work code of ethics and theory. This value base emphasizes the importance of autonomy, self-determination, universalism and professionalism (Weaver, 1999). However, these values may contradict with traditional American Indian values of interdependence and inclusion (Coates et al.,
Haug (2001) takes this a step further suggesting complete reliance on these Western knowledge systems adds to the ongoing colonization of indigenous peoples (the importance of decolonization theory and it applicability to the current study is discussed later in this chapter). This is evident in recent attempts to establish a standardized international definition of social work largely ignoring indigenous ways of knowing with a Western definition of the profession (Midgley, 2008). Overall, social work, “has not developed its knowledge or approaches in tandem with indigenous people” (Gray et al., 2008, p. 49).

Coates, Gray and Hetherington (2008) suggest, “Social work education and practice, in regards to indigenous groups, has struggled to develop and deliver social work services in an effective, acceptable and culturally relevant manner” (p.2). Largely this is due to solely attempting to adapt existing dominant, modernist Western paradigms rather than adding new paradigms incorporating indigenous ways of helping and healing (Coates, et al., 2008). Social work needs to add to rather than continually attempt to adapt knowledge base incorporating Indigenous ways of helping as equally valid. “People must be convinced that social workers support their just causes for land security, appropriate education and health and welfare services, self-representation, self-development, self-government and self-determination, and that they place the interests of Indigenous communities at the centre of their activities.” (Gray et al., 2008, p. 57). The extent to which the profession has succeeded in doing so remains in question.

Additionally, accreditation standards provide another stumbling block for inclusion of indigenous students and faculty into the field. Like social work values,
accreditation standards require adherence to several Eurocentric theory, practice and pedagogical norms (Midgley, 2008). Many tribal colleges prefer a generic human services degree to starting a social work program in order to avoid the value conflicts inherent in seeking accreditation (Gair et al., 2005; Voss et al., 2005).

Coates, Gray & Hetherington (2008) suggest, “Professionalizing trends define boundaries serving to keep out those who do not conform. For example, the emphasis on individualization and individual work, internal causality, dualism, rational determinism, as well as social work’s professional interest to increase its status in society, marginalize local and Indigenous knowledge” (p. 5). Further, for those American Indians that do complete their social work degrees, tribal welfare supervisors have suggested the need for retraining once back on the reservations to incorporate indigenous ways of helping. In some cases, supervisors indicate they do not want to hire trained social workers for fear of contradictions with indigenous values/practice traditions (Voss et al., 2005).

A recent review of social work text books revealed 80% had some sort of American Indian content included (Cross et al., 2009). However, little is known about the quality of that content to address specific issues including the relevant and critical history of oppression for this particular group. Yellowbird and Gray (2008) suggest, “Rarely do social work texts employ a ‘fierce critical interrogation’ (hooks, 1993) of the history and contemporary harm that social work has inflicted on the rights, sovereignty and well-being of indigenous people.” (p. 63). Finally, social work students indicate the American Indian content in their programs, while increasing overall, tended to be superficial and limited (Weaver, 2000).
Overall, social work students are, largely, if not exclusively, socialized into a Western knowledge system based on Eurocentric ways of knowing. This may be alienating and devaluing to many American Indians students (Weaver, 2008) and lead to dropping out or lack of participation in the profession. American Indian social work students indicate an overall perceived lack of cultural competence both within their social work programs and in their universities as a whole. They also suggest a feeling of disconnect between their home and the academy (Cross et al., 2009). Multiple authors suggest the importance of tailoring social work education—both the curriculum and pedagogy—to meet the needs of American Indian students (e.g. Ives et al., 2007; Weaver, 1999). “The significant differences inherent in culturally diverse groups, particularly native indigenous (Indian) students are not being adequately addressed in practical, reciprocal, and developmental terms for these students in their experiences with formal social work education” (Voss et al., 2005, p. 212). American Indian social work students must balance professionalism with community and reconcile the professions overall focus on the objective professional with the subjective community and culturally bound self (Voss et al., 2005).

For example, in a qualitative study of 14 Mohawk social work students and 22 Mohawk community members in Canada, Ives et al. (2007) indicated many identified needs for changes specific to social work education. These included the need for diverse (from a variety of tribes) indigenous faculty and increased Native content grounded in tradition, values and philosophy of local indigenous communities. The participants also preferred at least some of the curriculum be
delivered in home communities. Students also required significant support systems in place to succeed academically in these programs including child care, study and writing skills support and mechanisms for discussing challenges with other indigenous students.

In New Zealand, Gair et al., 2005 completed an action research project designed to address Eurocentricism in their curriculum. Their results suggest Maori students struggle with an education model centered on self-development and contradicting indigenous values leading to high attrition rates. Further, students would pursue licenses as social workers if they perceived the licensing requirements were more respectful of the indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing. They also suggest non-indigenous social work academics need to take responsibility for facilitating the needed changes but deferring to the knowledge/wisdom of indigenous people in the process.

Addressing these issues (e.g. including indigenous knowledge in the curriculum, increasing overall inclusion, addressing accreditation issues) requires an integrated approach including inclusion of tribal elders in curriculum development and pedagogy, community settings for practice (Ives et al., 2007). Some of the fundamental tenets of social work must be questioned for applicability and appropriateness to indigenous clients and settings. “Within this cultural context the very core social work values of client ‘self-determination’ and ‘confidentiality’...may be perceived as antithetical to traditional wisdom and knowledge, and perhaps unwittingly, subvert basic traditional Indian understandings of life which revolve around shamanism and tribalism...social work approaches that use pragmatic,
community-based, prevention-oriented, risk reduction strategies that are holistic and engage the extended family and community as the primary helping system and affirm and incorporate cultural values and tribal prerogatives in interventions” prove preferable (Voss et al., 2005, p. 217). Voss et al. (2005) further suggest five critical conditions for American Indian social work education. These include immediacy of contact between new and older American Indian social workers, education and curriculum rooted in the local tribal environment including inclusion of traditional wisdom, providing a forum for cultural expansion, a focus on preparation and provision of employment at the local level and establishment of control over federal monies directed to American Indian communities to promote development specific to American Indian needs. Fire (2006) further suggests an, “inside-out model of self-reflective transformation” that addresses barriers to accessing post-secondary education. Further, “Indigenization social work education needs to actively engage in this discovery process, not with a rigidly prescribed a priori set of standards, but with the capacity to transform its core knowledge, values, and skills within the tribal context in which it is to function. The process needs to be dynamic and interactive versus static and reactive” (Voss et al., 2005, p. 225). We do not know the extent of such conditions, adaptations and curriculum across social work education.

Shifting the overall ethnocentricity of the professions values, practice and research paradigms requires inclusion of new theory and ways of knowing. This must include indigenous models of helping. For example, theoretically, Person-in-Environment theory might be expanded to include interdependence (not just among
individuals but with nature, culture, the economy and place) (Coates, Gray & Hetherington, 2008). Applied to practice, an indigenous approach to mental health services would be relationally based, incorporate spirituality and integrate physical, emotional and cognitive processes with significant attention to the environment (Hodge et al., 2009). Further, the profession needs to acknowledge its own role in colonialism before mutual exchange of knowledge such as this can occur, “first acknowledging and compensating for the imbalance of power relationships between knowledge systems, geo-political regions, languages and social-work paradigms” (Haug, 2001, p.127). Overall, Weaver (2008) suggests the profession must shift from a history and theory base emphasizing doing “to” Indian people to one of doing “with” American Indians. This doing with would include efforts to resist federal paternalism and promote self-determination of American Indian communities, elements critical to decolonizing the profession as described below.

**Decolonizing Social Work**

As described above, colonialism and its effects dominate the historical and present realities of American Indian communities. Coates et al. (2008) suggest, “In the main, social work has acted as an agent of colonization, especially in transferring inappropriate mainstream theory and practice models to work with Indigenous groups” (p. 2). Western (Euro-centric) paradigms, based in the modernist tradition, define rules for what constitutes acceptable practice knowledge. Traditional ways of healing and addressing challenges were either ignored or discredited. “Through professional imperialism, modern institutional models of social care replaced the tremendous diversity of traditional models of social care” (Haug, 2001, p. 44). This
issue is highlighted in child welfare practice where mainstream theory and norms of child rearing are applied to indigenous families, adding to the disparate removal to out of home care (Coates, et al., 2008; Harris, 2009).

Faith (2008) suggests we need to shift to decolonizing practice, “decolonization, according to Yellow Bird (2006), ‘is the intelligent, calculated, and active resistance to the forces of colonialism that perpetuate the subjugation and/or exploitation of our minds, bodies, and lands, and it is engaged for the ultimate purpose of overturning the colonial structure and realizing Indigenous liberation’” (p. 245). “Decolonization is the stripping of that which detains us, holds us, and prevents us from negotiating our own destiny and allows us to transcend to a place of balance and peace” (Jaime & Rios, 2003, p. 38). For the American Indian individual, colonization fosters self-hatred and exposure to an “over-culture” that proves violent and destructive to traditional values and a sense of self. The “over-culture” suggests traditional culture is lesser and should be subsumed by dominant cultural norms. Higher education tends to replicate and intensify these effects separating the individual from their culture and forcing the over-culture (Day, 2009).

As an individual recognizes elements of their colonization, they must decide whether to acknowledge and accept this other definition of the self or to resist and redefine the self. If one opts for resistance, this resistance results in a self-reflexive collective practice recognizing, “…the transformation of the self, reconceptualization of identity, and political mobilization as necessary elements of the practice of decolonization” (Mohanty, 2003, p. 8 in Jaime & Rios, 2003). Dr. Marie Battiste, a
Mi'Kmaq educator and academic leader, talks about post colonialism as an approach to transformation, and offers this definition: “Postcolonial” is not a time after colonialism, but rather...it represents more an aspiration, a hope not yet achieved. It constructs a strategy...[it] is not only about the criticism and deconstruction of colonization and domination, but also about the reconstruction and transformation” (2004, in Fire, 2006, p. 1). The same applies to social work in its need to redefine the profession into a decolonized state. Applying Dr. Battiste’s definition, for social work, this would include both acknowledging past complicities in colonialism and active efforts at inclusion as suggested above. Overall, social work needs to work on true inclusion starting with increasing both the presence of American Indians in the profession along with understanding of potential intervention points for promoting decolonization.

**American Indians in Higher Education: Assessing the fit**

Higher education research supports the need for diversity on campuses and in curriculum. Former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’ Conner explained the benefits of such diversity in her opinion related to an affirmative action case indicating, “numerous studies show that student body diversity promotes learning outcomes, better prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and society, and better prepares them as professionals” (Grutter V. Bollinger et. al. in Hurtado, 2005, p.596). However, desegregation is not sufficient to achieve these goals (Engberg, 2004; Hurtado, 2005; Nagda & Zuniga, 2003). In fact, evidence suggests the era of desegregation since Brown vs. Board of Education has seen an increase in bias related incidents on college and university campuses (Engberg,
In order to reap the benefits of diverse campuses, the communities must include integration among cultural groups (Gurin & Nagda, 2006; Nagda & Zuniga, 2003). Such integration requires both retaining students of color and allowing them to feel integrated into the university system. Facilitators and barriers to such retention and inclusion of both students and faculty are discussed in their respective sections below.

American Indian matriculation has steadily increased over the last 30 years from 76,100 in 1976 (.7% of the total post-secondary population) to 181,000 (1.1% of the total post-secondary population) in 2006. However, only 8.6% of all American Indian adults over the age of 25 have a bachelor's degree, and only 4.5% hold a graduate degree (Devoe et al., 2008). Correspondingly, less than 1% of faculty in higher education are American Indian or Alaskan Natives. These low rates of graduation begin in high school (Turner, Gonzalez & Wood, 2008). In a 2006 survey, only 74.7% of American Indian students who were sophomores in 2002 had graduated from high school. This is over 15% lower than the rate for White students (91.1%) and considerably lower than all other included cultural groups (82.2% Black, and 80.9% Latino students) (Devoe et al., 2008). Another study suggests an overall American Indian high school dropout rate at 40%. Overall, 60% of all high school graduates go directly on to college. Only 40% of American Indian high school graduates go directly to college (Larimore & McClellen, 2005). The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (in Task Force, 2009) indicates, “As a group, Native American students are not afforded educational opportunities equal to other American students. They routinely face deteriorating school facilities, underpaid
teachers, weak curricula, discriminatory treatment, outdated learning tools, and cultural isolation” (p.13).

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU) have provided a remedy to many of these educational issues (Gonzalez, 2008). Research shows students who attend tribal colleges before attending a four year institution were four times more likely to matriculate than those who went directly to four year schools (Heavyrunner & Decelles, 2000). However, in 2009, only two of these schools have baccalaureate social work programs and only six have associate degrees in social work (Cross et al., 2009). Since the task force report, the Oglala Tribal College as also received accreditation for a four year social work program. This is part in due to accreditation standards contradicting indigenous values (e.g. emphasis on individualization, western knowledge requirements marginalizing local and Indigenous knowledge) (Gair et al., 2005; Voss et al., 2005). Further, focusing on TCU’s exclusively as a solution negates the issues of students who move on to other (predominantly white) institutions for their advanced degrees and the need for inclusion at those institutions to benefit all students and the institutions themselves.

Dissonance for American Indian students at the university level began with the foundations of most university’s here in the United States. The educational environment of higher education is rooted in a, “one size fits all” mentality based on white, Eurocentric paradigms (Voss et al., 2005). Official policy of early university systems advocated for creating, “schools that were dedicated to installing political and cultural values that centered on Protestantism, republicanism, and capitalism” (Kaestle, 1989, p.127 in Taylor, 2005). Numerous studies indicate the United
States educational system has historically instituted numerous discriminatory and oppressive policies, many of which continue today (Gonzalez, 2008; Taylor, 2005; Voss et al., 2005). For example, the inclusion of American Indians into the education system had the sole stated purpose of total assimilation (Voss et al., 2005).

Overall, higher education in the United States denied or subverted other cultural perspectives thus undermining students’ identities, supported a colonizing curriculum and failed to honor tribal sovereignty. Further, higher education is grounded largely in empiricism with limited attention and respect given to postmodern approaches or ontoloie like critical realism. The epistemological focus on interpersonal objectivity with the researcher separate from the subject alienates some American Indian students who support a more holistic view of the world. In other words, traditional American Indian students might not reconcile the logic of not including the inherent subjectivity of the researcher in the research process included in the dominating positivist perspective. Further, providing proof for linear causality rather than seeing issues holistically in patterns of circular causality may cause further dissonance. Students are expected to conform rather than receive education and support for individual development addressing unique cultural needs and perspectives (Voss et al., 2005). Further, often times the university environment also supports a spirit of competition rather the traditional cooperation of indigenous communities (Taylor, 2005).

American Indian students’ motivations for attending college may also differ than their non-Indian counterparts and thus require different retention and pedagogical strategies. Many report altruistic employment goals focused on going
back to and serving their home communities (Garrod & Larrimore, 1997; Taylor, 2005). Specifically, American Indian social work students are more likely to hold values in line with social work's traditional mission (i.e. not seeking private practice therapy positions rather working at all systems levels to promote change, promote social justice, etc.) than their White counterparts. Further, American Indian students more strongly endorse the need for societal change over individual adaptation and were more interested in serving disadvantaged populations (Limb et al., 2003). Overall, American Indian students see a lack of holistic curriculum in higher education tying together issues of the mind and the heart, the body and the spirit (Garrod & Larrimore, 1997). Several modern policies also provide barriers including the importance placed on standardization (Taylor, 2005).

Several research studies reinforce the significance of these challenges/barriers and how lack of attention to these issues affects persistence in higher education (e.g. Fire, 2006; Voss et al., 2005). For example, Weaver (2000) surveyed 63 BSW and MSW American Indian students from seven social work programs using a mixed methods questionnaire regarding their experiences and opinions of inclusion of American Indian content in their social work programs. Respondents indicated an overall struggle transitioning from their holistic, spiritual communities to the hierarchy of academia including a feeling they needed to subsume their cultural identities to fit into the academic community. "One respondent stated that, 'in the small groups I try to assimilate further by being more verbal as that is important it seems and also lengthy eye contact is something I continue to work on.' Findings document the intensity of cultural shock and
dislocation experienced by Native-American students during their transition from leaving home and attending classes in a foreign university environment, far from their homeland (reservation)” (p. 423). Further, respondents identified the need for more meaningful (less superficial) inclusion of American Indian content in the curriculum. In addition to structural barriers at the University level, American Indian students also face individual issues, many of which are a direct result of the oppression issues described above. This may include racism, gender discrimination, self doubt, economic issues and domestic difficulties (Taylor, 2005).

**American Indians and Social Work Education**

The historical and current reality in higher education as a whole is of particular salience to social work education. “This overtly racist ideology set the brutal historical context of Indian education policy, the legacy of which frames the present challenges facing contemporary social work educators interested in addressing the systemic failure in post-secondary performance measures for many American-Indian students today” (Voss et al., 2005, p. 215). According to the CSWE Task Force report (2009), while matriculation of American Indian students from higher education as a whole has increased, rates of participation in social work programs has remained stagnant. Only 1% of BSW students, less than 1% of masters students and 1.6% doctoral students were American Indian. Further, the numbers of American Indian faculty have only increased from 0.7% (32 faculty members) of total faculty in 1977 to 1.3% (41 faculty members) in 2007. These faculty tend to be regionally clustered in the Great Lakes area (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin), California, Utah, New York, Washington
and Wisconsin with no American Indian faculty in New England or the Mid Atlantic. Preliminary data suggests the number may now be up to 48 full time faculty but this does not represent an increase in the overall percentage of representation. The task force underscores the problematic nature of these low numbers as, “it means there is a low pool for social work programs to recruit, it can lead to feelings of isolation for faculty members, and leads students to see a lack of representation on faculty” (p. 24).

The Task Force (Cross et al., 2009) identifies several significant barriers to American Indian faculty success including:

- Importance of continued service to the tribal community (divided responsibilities)
- Isolation
- Cultural conflicts – lack of understanding by institution
- Stereotypes and discrimination
- Lack of mentorship
- Lack of other American Indian/Native American faculty
- Additional service demands made of faculty (e.g., guest speaking, diversity committees)
- Lack of institutional support and acceptance of Native American research topics and methods
- Importance of Native American faculty members mentoring Native American students
- Lack of support of Native American curriculum

(p. 23-24)

The task force has identified several barriers to further recruitment and retention of American Indian students into social work education including discrimination, cultural difference, need for American Indian faculty mentors, proper readiness and preparation and assistance functioning in the white culture dominated higher education and social work systems. They further suggest nine action steps to alleviate these barriers. They include:
retrieving and retaining Native American faculty and students,
(2) promoting equal value of alternative research methodologies,
(3) finding student financial assistance,
(4) infusing Native American content in social work curriculum,
(5) building cultural competency,
(6) addressing discrimination,
(7) improving field placements,
(8) supporting of American Indian and Native American studies programs, and
(9) collaborating with Tribal Colleges and Universities. (p. 5)

Overall, they indicate all social work students need increased knowledge and skills
working with American Indian populations and a need to improve the pipeline for
recruiting American Indian students and faculty into social work education. For
faculty, they recommend addressing discrimination, improved administrative
understanding of cultural differences, addressing tenure qualification issues and
improving the overall pipeline.

The current study will address the former of these recommendations with
inquiries directed to faculty about the state of the field. The study seeks to
determine further pathways for addressing the latter of these goals by
understanding what has facilitated those American Indian faculty in social work
education to reach their positions and what they perceive as the continued barriers
to more faculty and students joining their ranks.

**Recruitment and Retention of American Indian students**

“Wright (1985, 1990, 1991) viewed the experiences of today’s Native American college students as a continuation of the struggle of Native American people to succeed in education on their own terms—achieving mastery and maintaining a strong cultural identity while resisting assimilation” (in Larimore & McClellan, 2005, p. 21).

Recruitment efforts for American Indian students alone are not enough to
ensure retention of students. Special admission programs and retooled financial aid
packages may assist in recruitment, yet they do not ensure issues prohibiting student success once in the college or university setting are adequately addressed (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). The most recent research suggests a slight over-representation of American Indian students entering colleges and universities (Jackson, 2003) though they continue to leave college at much higher rates than their peers as described above. Many times, institutions focus too much on initial recruitment rather than balancing the need for diversity with the need for success once in the university setting. Conversely, some create such strict admissions criteria they have low inclusion but high graduation rates. If they fail to reconcile this issue, they will end up with high entrance rates of students of color and low graduation rates or vice versa (Richardson & Skinner, 2000).

Historically, lack of successful recruitment and retention of American Indian students was attributed to a lack of value placed on education by indigenous communities or lack of assimilation skills on the part of students (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). This thinking places the blame on the individuals and communities rather than flaws in the system to meet these student’s needs. These theories have been discounted in current research and by clear evidence those students attending a TCU have much higher retention rates than those in predominantly White universities suggesting context plays significant role in retention (Gonzalez, 2008).

Current research and theory rejects much of this theory and focuses instead on cultural discontinuity- oppositional cultural values in home and university communities of American Indian students- which proves the most common and
broad explanation for academic non-persistence among American Indian students (Gonzalez; 2008; Tate & Schwartz, 1993; Taylor, 2005; Weaver, 2000). Pottinger (1990) specifically describes a cultural incongruity model whereby students suffer dissonance between their home culture and that of the university environment resulting in non-persistence. “The need to balance personal and environmental values and expectations for academic behavior can result in greater cultural incongruity and an increased tendency to make nonpersistence decisions.” (Gloria & Robinson, 2001, p.91). Students are unable to reconcile their traditional values with that of their educational institutions (for those attending predominantly white universities), wish not to assimilate giving up their cultures and cannot manage the discontinuity successfully. Research (e.g. Fire, 2006; Voss et al., 2005; Weaver, 2000) supports this as a common issue for many American Indian students but does not paint the full picture of the barriers facing American Indian students across areas of their academic life.

Jackson (2003) provides a useful heuristic for organizing these barriers according to sociocultural, academic and personal factors. Sociocultural factors include those issues related to overall campus environment and relationship issues, for example the feeling white campuses prove, “hostile towards them, [and have a] lack of American Indian cultural accommodations on campus, family encouragement, and faculty interactions” (Jackson, 2003, p. 549). Other factors related to the sociocultural area identified throughout the literature include social isolation (Larimore & McClellen, 2005), poor adjustment to the university environment (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008; Jackson, 2003; Voss et al., 2005), lack of
faculty support (e.g. faculty not understanding their educational needs or familial responsibilities) (Tate & Schwartz, 1993), family issues (Hanna, 2005; Jackson, 2003; Voss et al., 2005) and dealing with prejudice and/or racism (Jackson; Larimore & McClellen, 2005). Racism included verbal harassment on primary white campuses (Larimore & McClellen, 2005). Several studies have reported a possible connection between the lack of institutional support systems or the lack of satisfaction with available systems with a weakening of educational goals and commitments for Native American students (Gonzalez, 2008; Jackson, 2003; Larimore & McClellen, 2005; Weaver, 2000). Academic factors include lack of academic skill preparation (Jackson, 2003; Larimore & McClellen, 2005; Voss et al., 2005) and adequate academic counseling (Jackson, 2003). Personal issues include general issues around confidence and related areas (Hanna, 2005; Jackson, 2003; Voss et al., 2005), lack of understanding of own personal goals (Jackson, 2003; Larimore & McClellen, 2005), single parenthood (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008; Hanna, 2005), being a non-traditional student (Tate & Schwartz, 1993) and financial problems (Jackson, 2003; Larimore & McClellen, 2005; Voss et al., 2005).

Of course, some students with cultural incongruity issues and other barriers do well and manage to survive the academic environment (Gloria & Robinson, 2001). Research indicates when several of the persistence factors identified below are present across the three domains for American Indian students, persistence is improved. Providing pre-college preparation, institutions committed to inclusion and addressing the holistic needs of American Indian students, provision of American Indian student centers, family support and faculty involvement are all
related to increased retention (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). Further, high rates of self-esteem/positive sense of self (self-efficacy assists students in navigating the potentially discriminatory university environment) and comfort in the university setting increase retention (Gloria & Robinson, 2001). When examined more closely, social support from faculty members has the strongest relationship with persistence (Gloria & Robinson, 2001).

Jackson et al. (2003) completed 15 qualitative interviews with American Indian students to assess what factors led them to persist in higher education. Support from faculty and family (sociocultural factor), developing personal assertiveness (personal factor) and coping with racism and paradoxical cultural situations (sociocultural factor) emerged as key factors in persistence. Students also specifically singled out faculty warmth as a key factor in persistence. Clearly, mentoring proves key as echoed in the faculty literature described below. In addition, students identified the need for pre-college institutional support through programs like Upward Bound and continued institutional support once at the University (academic factors).

Guillory and Wolverton (2008) specifically asked both students and administrators/faculty about the barriers and facilitators to AI student persistence. Several of their findings echo themes above. This study merits particular attention due to the lack of consensus between the students and faculty/administrators. Institutional representatives identified adequate financial support and academic support programs as persistence facilitators. Similarly, they identified lack of financial support as a barrier along with lack of preparation and American Indian
culture not properly valuing education. Students identified facilitators included family as motivation (being able to help family post matriculation), giving back to tribal community, getting community support, on campus social support including AI student centers and inclusion from other non-Indian students.

Family also proved a barrier for some students along with single parenthood, lack of preparation and financial issues. Clearly, the institutions did not recognize the need for inclusion, space for culture and family support in their assessment - the sociocultural factors. Instead they maintained a focus on personal and academic factors absolving them from responsibility. Heavyrunner and Decelles (2000) also emphasize this lack of institutional recognition of the needs of American Indian students beyond financial and academic issues. They address this in their Family Education Model for American Indian student retention described below.

**American Indian Faculty in Social Work and the Academy**

There is a significant disparity between the number of minority student and the proportion of faculty of color (Clark, 2006). As stated, faculty of color are underrepresented in general in academia (Clark, 2006), and particularly so in the tenured and higher professor rankings (Espinoza –Herold & Gonzalez, 2007).

Specifically, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac (2007-2008 in Turner et al., 2008) only 17% of full time faculty are faculty of color, and .5% are American Indian. At the full professor ranking, only 12% are faculty of color and .3% American Indian. Female faculty of color fair even worse with less than 3% of the full professor ranked faculty members, and only .1% American Indian women.
American Indians are the least likely to achieve tenure of any ethnic group (Tippeconic Fox, 2008).

Despite the lack of representation, there is also a consensus faculty of color are assets to the academic environment as they, “enrich a higher education institution’s intellectual, moral, and civic development in addition to exposing college students to a wider range of scholarly perspectives and life experiences” (Espinoza –Herold & Gonzalez, 2007, p.314). Students interacting with diverse peers and faculty increases students’ critical thinking skills and writing ability (Carter, 2008). Faculty of color further contribute to the success of a diverse student body, promote recruitment of diverse students and promote engagement in innovative scholarship (Turner et al., 2008). Specifically, in a survey of 13,499 faculty at 134 colleges and universities, Umbach (2006) found faculty of color interact more frequently with students of color, use a broader range of teaching techniques and are linked to increase use of more effective educational practices. Further, faculty of color are more likely to address pressing needs for their respective cultural communities such as the significant health disparities experienced by certain cultural groups (e.g. African Americans and American Indians) (Viets et al., 2009). Specifically, American Indian faculty prove critical to progress in academia as they encourage the process and content of the indigenization of curriculum (Voss et al., 2005). Further, they provide assistance to non-Indian faculty in tailoring pedagogy and advising to meet the needs of indigenous students (Tippeconic Fox, 2005). Unfortunately, research suggests the
climate of academia not always conducive to the recruitment and retention of faculty of color.

Several studies have found faculty members outside the traditional faculty norms (non-White, female, those with a disability, first generation faculty) were less satisfied with their jobs overall and perceived less equitable treatment (e.g. Aguirre, 2000; Seifert & Umbach, 2008; Turner, 2002). Multiple issues lead to this overall dissatisfaction. Many women faculty juggling multiple life roles (mother, partner, scholar) with added mentoring stress for female faculty of color (Aguirre, 2000; Jaime & Rios, 2003; Turner, 2002). Faculty of color and female faculty also report more stress in the tenure process and less confidence in their job security. They saw male faculty getting more “plumb” teaching assignments. Overall, faculty dissatisfaction was less rooted in financial considerations and more associated with campus climate, having authority over one’s work and perceived inequitable treatment (Seifert & Umbach, 2008).

This lack of satisfaction is rooted in several challenges facing faculty of color in academia. Structural barriers include limited time to devote to research due to heavy teaching loads (Viets et al., 2009), heavy institutional demands like appointments to multiple committees and racism at the institutional level (Stein, 1996; Viets et al., 2009) including perceived bias in the tenure and promotion process (Fenelon, 2005; Stein, 1996; Tippeconic Fox, 2008). Interestingly, 67% of non-minority faculty see no bias in the tenure and promotion process while 78% of minority faculty perceive widespread barriers (Stein, 1996). These differing perceptions regarding the presence of bias may present an additional barrier.
Faculty of color and women also tend to engage in less traditional (and thus undervalued) forms of research (non-traditional methodologies more in line with their cultural orientations) (Stein, 1996; Viets et al., 2009) and research specific to their cultural groups that institutions rarely fund (Fenelon, 2005; Viets et al., 2009). Faculty of color also note the need to demonstrate their ability to “get along” or assimilate into the dominant culture of academia (Clark, 2006). Specifically, American Indian scholarship criticizing the status quo of institutionalized racism face possible discounting as their work may threaten the preferred image of academia held by administrators and funders (Fenelon, 2005). Frequently, faculty of color struggle to meet the responsibilities allotted them by their institutions and the needs of their ethnic communities (Viets et al., 2009). Day (2009) recounts being specifically coached that her academic success was contingent upon setting aside her community work as it is not a valued form of research for promotion or quality publication. Often times these pressures and workload issues lead to negative outcomes including marginalization, feelings of apathy and general disengagement (Allen, 2007). In fact, these well-documented and considerable barriers to success in academia often result in faculty of color choosing to leave for non-academic positions (Edwards et al., 2007; Viets et al., 2009).

Due to the lack of congruence with the dominant culture and norms of higher education institutions, like students of color, faculty of color must locate themselves along a continuum of assimilation to pluralism. They may choose to assimilate, relinquishing their distinctive identities for the majority, or opt for pluralism where they emphasize the aspects of their own cultural heritage while adapting to the
dominant system—effectively learning to exist in the dominant university culture without sacrificing their own identities (Allen, 2007). As stated, many do not wish to assimilate and fail to successfully manage the cultural pluralism and instead opt to leave the academy.

Research on specific faculty groups and social work academia further illuminates the potential challenges facing faculty of color. African American women faculty in social work report feelings of isolation and alienation, increased stress and have lower tenure and promotion rates than their white counterparts. Further, they perceive many of their white counterparts failing to embody the social work mission in regard to diverse populations (Edwards, Bryant & Clark, 2007). Black women may be forced to overtly or covertly compromise their identity to deal with expectations of White colleagues (Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001).

American Indian faculty are at particular risk for not finding congruence between their goals for their work and that of their institutions (Tippeconic Fox, 2008). They also have to battle perceptions of their inferiority and being hired solely based on their minority status (Stein, 1996). American Indian faculty also face a lack of support for their research efforts involving American Indian issues (Fenelon, 2003; Stein, 1996; Tippeconic Fox, 2005). This includes having to assimilate and publish in mainstream journals, subordinating their American Indian related research or the position from which they address taking a more colonial approach (Russell, 2003 in Harris, 2006). They often have the extra burden of developing curriculum and new courses with special challenges developing pedagogy that best shares their perspective with students (Tippeconic Fox, 2005).
In his qualitative study with faculty of color, Clark (2006) assessed faculty perceptions of recruitment and retention issues in each participant’s lived experiences of getting positions and attaining success in the academy. Many of the participants suggested a lack of follow through on institutions’ diversity initiatives. Further, they perceived a strong need to networking to attain positions as the more traditional job attainment methods (e.g. simply finding a posting and applying) proved unsuccessful. Several related stories of less qualified white applicants being hired instead of them and not even getting an interview despite perceived qualification or over-qualification for the desired positions. They underscore feeling the most comfortable in academia when they have others from their backgrounds to network and work among. Some indicate a consistent lack of respect from their white colleagues. Respondents suggest the hiring system overall proves fundamentally flawed. They did not feel they have a voice when serving on the hiring committees used to select candidates or establish hiring criteria. Further, they suggest rigid hiring criteria discredit many applicants of color.

Tippeconic Fox (2008) completed a qualitative study asking ten American Indian women faculty to reflect on the joys and challenges of their positions. The joys included the opportunity to pursue interests (ideas) and to follow intellectual passions, the ability to engage in research, teaching, and service in areas they are passionate about, to have intellectual pursuits and exchanges with colleagues, enjoy writing and publishing, develop classes- particularly with AI content, flexibility of jobs, networking with colleagues and in some cases the supportive climate. It was the consensus of all respondents teaching is a joy but also incredibly demanding of
their time. Other challenges included lack of mentors, negative departmental climate and the need to play politics for tenure, isolation (lack of understanding), lack of colleagues to assist in developing ideas, limiting service and balancing professional and personal lives (work, community and family).

Similarly, Harris (2009) interviewed American Indian women social work faculty in Canada about their experiences as students and faculty members. Respondents reported multiple institutional challenges (e.g. racism, rigid policy implementation), issues with non-Indian students and issues with internalized colonization. These multiple negative experiences resulted in loneliness and feelings of not belonging. Many coped by leaving, seeking safety and/or simply silencing themselves. Again, positive relationships with teachers, advisors and student/faculty peers proved crucial to persistence. The findings demonstrate further research of the experiences of American Indian female faculty is needed to underscore the advantages of this career path and to address the challenges voiced by the respondents. Such information may further inform recruitment and retention efforts.

Jaime and Rios (2003) examined the experiences of an American Indian faculty member and student in negotiating the potential cultural isolation of academia. Their participants (one AI student, one faculty member) find significant relief from the cultural dissonance with the academic setting from the presence of the each other- each providing the other support. This adds to the evidence of needing to create a critical mass of indigenous faculty and students in the academic
setting to foster connection and ultimately retention and success for American Indian students and faculty.

In their literature review and synthesis of the last 20 years of scholarship on barriers and successes of faculty of color in Academia, Turner et al. (2008) found promoting mentoring programs paramount in all examined contexts. Mentoring has a significant amount of empirical support as a method for integrating and supporting faculty of color into the academy improving rates of publication, grant submissions, student evaluations and socialization (Espinoza –Herold & Gonzalez, 2007; Turner et al., 2008; Viets et al., 2009). Faculty mentors for junior faculty serve a variety of functions including role modeling coping strategies and resiliency around cultural issues, facilitating productivity, networking and networking specifically to enhance collective power of cultural groups and establishing an empathic connection (Espinoza –Herold & Gonzalez, 2007). These roles are in line with relational cultural theory and its role in explaining and fostering retention as described below. In his 1996 survey, Stein found only half of American Indian faculty reported having a mentor. Hanna (2005) analyzed specific sources of support for American Indian women in doctoral education and found academic, professional, emotional and social support key for doctoral students. This underscores the need for more American Indian faculty and positions specific to American Indians in the academy.

Hurtado et al. (in Harris, 2009) emphasize the need for comprehensive and long-term strategies for promoting healthy academic climates for faculty and students of color. Several factors have been identified as key to the recruitment and
retention and success of faculty of color in academia. These factors are listed in table one.
Table 1. *Key recruitment and retention factors for success of faculty of color in academia*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Key Recruitment and Retention Factors</th>
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<td>Start student development for higher education early in the education process (Clark, 2006), specifically for minority students to enter doctoral education (Edwards et al., 2007)</td>
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<td>Diversify how faculty are judged for tenure and promotion/restructure the tenure and promotion system (Diversity Innovations 2005 in Edwards et al., 2007; Turner et al., 2008)</td>
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<td>Institutionalize diversity/inclusion goals across settings and at all system levels (Diversity Innovations 2005 in Edwards et al., 2007; Turner et al., 2008)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training for administrators (Turner et al., 2008) including educating high level policy and decision makers about the need and value diverse faculty (Diversity Innovations 2005 in Edwards et al., 2007)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encouraging relationships at the institutional level with diverse communities (Diversity Innovations 2005 in Edwards et al., 2007; Turner et al., 2008)</td>
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<td>Reduce pay inequities (Turner et al., 2008)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research support for diverse faculty including honoring their areas of interest and methodologies (Diversity Innovations 2005 in Edwards et al., 2007; Fenelon, 2003; Stein, 1996; Turner et al., 2008)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dispel myths surrounding hiring and address any hiring inequities (Diversity Innovations 2005 in Edwards et al., 2007; Stein, 1996)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitor progress and ensure accountability (Diversity Innovations 2005 in Edwards et al., 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate mentoring (Edwards et al., 2007; Espinoza –Herold &amp; Gonzalez, 2007; Turner et al., 2008; Viets et al., 2009)</td>
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Threats to implementing these strategies include the potential of institutions subordinating their efforts due to structural demands and pressure from external sources (e.g., trustees unhappy with research elucidating issues of structural racism) (Fenelon, 2005). Further, as with the student retention methods, Harris (2006) suggests none of these strategies adequately emphasizes the faculty role in these efforts or to the overall campus culture dominating Western European values.

Turner et al. (2008) concluded at the end of their synthesis of 20 years of retention research there is a lack of ethnicity specific work indicating specific needs for specific cultural populations. This is particularly true of American Indians who are often excluded from the existing research due to their small numbers of inclusion in academia (Tippeconic Fox, 2008). We do not know if these strategies are appropriate or relevant specifically to the needs of indigenous faculty and research with this population is further limited due to identification issues surrounding blood quantum, tribal enrollment registry issues, and using situational self-identification and/or being multi-minority (Hanna, 2005).

Further, these strategies do not include the complexity of issues facing American Indian scholars and students or apply to social work programming specifically. Fire (2006) makes specific suggestions to social work programs including self-reflection of programs at the institutional level assessing power dynamics and partnerships with indigenous individuals and communities, addressing barriers such as financial and preparation concerns for students, providing culturally appropriate support, tying curriculum and pedagogy to indigenous ways of knowing, designating faculty positions to American Indian
faculty, and support research and development opportunities for American Indian scholars. He underscores the need to interview current and former social work faculty and students to assess how well institutions are meeting their goals, missions and visions around indigenous inclusion. Harris (2009) emphasizes the purpose of her research as assisting schools of social work create a healthy space for indigenous students and faculty in social work. She suggests doing so requires looking at issues of power, place, process and philosophy of social work programs. This study will further elucidate which have been relevant to social work academics and those they perceive as potentially beneficial along with new ideas specific to the needs of AI students and faculty.

**Models to promote retention**

The current study uses narrative methodology to understand faculty experiences obtaining the required degrees and serving as faculty members in social work academia. As described in detail in chapter three, interview schedules in narrative research used open-ended questions to frame the discussion but limit probing and structure in the questioning to allow participants to direct which elements of their experience are most salient to the research questions. That said, preexisting theories and models of student and faculty retention along with the colonization theory described above did provide broad structure to the construction of the interview schedule as described further in chapter three. Further, application of previous theories/model related to retention frame the analysis and interpretation of the data. These theories/models are described below.
The study will assess the applicability of the Tinto (1993) model of student retention and Guiffrida’s (2006) cultural adaptations to the model American Indian faculty’s experiences attaining their degrees. Further, it will assess if components of Model of Institutional Adaptation to Student Diversity (MIASD) (Richardson & Skinner, 1990) and the Family Education Model (FEM) (Heavyrunner & Decelles, 2002) exist in the academic experiences of faculty and their ability to help inform specific programming for American Indian students. Further, elements of Relational Cultural theory and Decolonization will be explored in conjunction with the faculties’ narratives for the applicability to exploring the successes and barriers/challenges for faculty in academia, specifically social work academia. Decolonization theory will also inform analysis of faculty’s experiences and perceptions of social work’s progress in accommodating American Indian perspectives, needs, ways of knowing and heading into the field (a necessity explicated in the discussion of social work and American Indians above).

Several authors suggest models for improving student retention beyond traditional recruitment strategies (e.g. Gloria & Robinson, 2001; Guillory & Wolverton, 2008; Heavyrunner & Decelles, 2000; Tinto; 1993). Braxton and Hirschy (2009) suggest retention proves an ill-structured program in need of a multi-theoretical approach addressing economic, psychological, organizational and sociological aspects of the problem. Harris (2009) suggests none of the current theory or retention strategies adequately address faculty involvement in retention or improving the campus climate. Further, these strategies rarely address the overall dominant cultural values underscoring all aspects of the university.
The Tinto Model (1993) is the most common of these retention models and seeks to explain student persistence across all cultural groups using an interactionalist perspective. The Tinto model suggests the degree of fit between the student’s cultural values, pre-entry attributes, goals and commitment to their education with the values of the university environment determines student retention. Students continually test and adjust these pre-intentions through interactions with fellow students, faculty and structure of the university. Withdrawal from the university often follows continuous alienation rather than assimilation in these interactions. In the case of American Indian students, this often means trying to reconcile their traditional values, unique goals for their educations and learning styles with that of Western, Eurocentric University system in the United States. “Tinto (1993) asserted that students enter an institution with certain background characteristics (i.e., family background, skills, abilities, and prior schooling) that have shaped their levels of commitment for completing their degrees... According to Tinto, the more that students are academically and/or socially integrated into the university, the greater their commitment to completing their degrees.” (Guiffrida, 2006, 452).

This model has mild empirical support for overall explaining persistence in higher education (Braxton & Hirschy, 2005; Guiffrida, 2006). However, it has come under scrutiny for its applicability across cultural groups. The work on which Tinto based his assertions (Ven Gennep, 1960) suggests all college students go through a three stage process of separation, transition and incorporation before they become integrated into university life (Taylor, 2005). This work was intended to describe a
transition/developmental process within a single culture- not adapting from one into another (Guiffrida, 2006). It thus assumes a goal of assimilation rather than allowing for a position of bicultural integration where students do not have to subvert their culture to the dominant culture of the university. They can be part of both and successful at the university all at once (Guiffrida, 2006). The model does not, “take into account unique family, political status, tribal affiliation, language, tribal customs and traditions, and tribal community factors” (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008, p. 61) of American Indian students. “Not only does [Tinto] not address the diversity present in American Indian society or the cultural incongruence that is frequently found within tribal groups, he does not investigate or acknowledge those differences between urban Indian populations and reservation populations, varying socioeconomic status between individual Indian students, or the differences between tradition aged and over the traditional aged or male and female students. Tinto fails to address the embedded contradictions, different shapes and internal negotiations that are inherent to all living and viable societies” (Taylor, 2005, p. 83).

Some have adapted the Tinto model to better accommodate the experience of minority students including additional cross-cultural perspectives and psychological dimensions (Guiffrida, 2006). Guiffrida suggests including a dimension assessing students’ specific motivations for attending school and how those motivations affect their retention. He specifically suggests, “Tinto’s theory will be advanced by recognizing the degree to which (a) student motivational orientation impacts college and pre-college commitment toward academic success and persistence; (b) student motivational orientation is impacted by collectivist or individualist cultural
norms; and (c) both home social systems (i.e., teachers, parents, friends, etc.) and at college social systems (i.e., peers, faculty, staff) shape and fulfill students’ salient needs” (Guiffrida, 2006, p. 460). He also suggests replacing the term integration with connection as this language does not suggest a need to subvert one's own culture in the process. He concludes, “The proposed changes, therefore, allow the theory to not only recognize the impact of motivational orientation on academic goal commitment, but to also acknowledge that cultural norms and home and university social systems (past and present) can have significant effects on student motivation and subsequent academic performance and persistence decisions” (p. 460).

The Model of Institutional Adaptation to Student Diversity (MIASD) developed by Richardson and Skinner (1990) shifted the focus off student characteristics leading to success to more organizational variables affecting retention. Their model suggests three key stages in successful retention of students of color. First, the reactive stage begins when institutions have an event or criticism drawing attention to the lack of diversity on their campuses resulting in outside pressure to improve. In this phase, they tend to try and “band-aid” the problem with sole focus on recruitment strategies. This phase is necessary for getting students in the door, but to maintain success organizations must shift to retention strategies. In the strategic stage institutions create services to assist diverse students in adapting to the university environment including outreach, academic support and transition management services. The final stage, adaptation, sees a more holistic organizational effort to promote inclusion including overall
assessment of the institution, learning assistance and examination of curriculum in regards to diversity. This may also include faculty member involvement in curriculum and pedagogical adaptations.

The MIASD provided a needed shift placing the onus for change on the institution rather than the student but has been criticized for leaving the student voice and needs out of the process and not attending to specific cultural needs of groups like American Indians (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). The Family Education Model (FEM) (rooted in education and social work) seeks to address the specific needs of American Indian students in Higher Education (Heavyrunner & Decelles, 2002). “This intervention-based model suggests that replicating the extended family structure within the college culture enhances an American Indian student’s sense of belonging and consequently leads to higher retention rates among American Indians. Establishing and maintaining a sense of “family,” both at home and at college, fortifies American Indians’ academic persistence and reduces feelings of resentment that family members feel toward students because they spend time away from home. The family specialist is a unique model feature.” (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). Guillory and Wolverton suggest their data and that of other retention studies on American Indians underscores the need for replicating the family structure as suggested in the FEM within the college environment will increase a sense of belonging and thus retention rates.

Heavyrunner and Decelles (2002) suggest the several key components to American Indian student retention as part of their family education model. They emphasize the need to honor and include families and tribal communities in the
education process. This includes, when possible, embedding programming like retention services in the community to serve students and their families. Schools also need to affirm students’ and their families cultural identities while providing support for functioning in a multicultural society. These methods foster empowerment both for American Indian students and their communities. It allows American Indian students (and American Indians in general) to access cultural, political and personal power and access to resources and control over those resources. They suggest implementing these strategies using caseworkers familiar with the principles of empowerment. The FEM also supports theories of cultural resilience with its focus on strengths and cultural immersion but lacks an empirical base demonstrating the efficacy of the model. Consequently, we do not know the extent to which these factors relate to student and faculty identified facilitators to success in current social work education across institutions and contexts. The current study will assess both the extent of such factors in social work faculty members’ experiences of academia and their perceived saliency to improving retention in social work academia.

Clearly, a key component of student retention is contact integration of students with American Indian faculty (Jackson, 2003; Larimore & McClellan, 2005; Tippeconic Fox, 2005). This underscores the importance of increasing not only the retention of American Indian students but increasing the number of American Indian faculty in the academy and specifically social work education.

Relational cultural theory helps explain both the challenges and potential methods for facilitating inclusion of faculty of color in academia. The theory
underscores the importance of relationship in the psychological well-being of individuals and in providing opportunities for growth (Miller & Stiver, 1997). Growth fostering relationships include respect, mutual empathy and authenticity leading to genuine connection (Walker, 2004). Edwards et al. (2007) suggest this theory built around the therapeutic relationship should extend to the academic environment including collegial relationship, the institutional relationship with faculty and in social work departments. Applying the theory specifically to African American faculty, they suggest growth fostering relationships in academia would include mutual empathy, mutual engagement and mutual empowerment. “Mutual empathy involves the ability of non-minority colleagues to understand, appreciate and affirm the fullness of the impact of the insults, relentless microaggressions and the disrespect projected by challenges to the authority, and expertise and position of minority faculty within the academic setting” (p. 41). White privilege may block white colleagues from fully offering such empathy and must be addressed in academic settings. Failure to encounter these three relational precursors may result in disconnection and increased anxiety for faculty of color.

**Summary**

This study seeks to uncover the facilitators and barriers for retention of American Indian students and faculty along with assessing current needs and strengths for inclusion of American Indian knowledge, communities and individuals into the field of social work. The study will use qualitative methods to look in depth at the experiences and viewpoints of American Indian faculty in social work academia to create a more holistic, representative picture of the state of the field,
and incorporate that data with existing theory regarding student and faculty recruitment and retention in social work education to ultimately make recommendations for next steps.

Specifically, faculty will recount their own educational histories describing the overall experience and their ultimate ability to complete higher degrees. Further, they will recount the process of obtaining academic positions, the tenure and promotion process (where applicable) and their general experiences in academia with particular attention to cultural issues. Analysis of these narratives will look at structural, cultural and interpersonal and personal barriers and facilitators to faculty success and successful connection in the academy and specifically social work programs. Again, these facilitators and barriers will be compared to current theory and research in regard to faculty retention and to expand those theories and models to specifically meet American Indian faculty needs. Further, the study will incorporate the findings along with faculty recommendations to identity potential critical intervention points for increasing recruitment and retention.
Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

This study is a descriptive, non-random, critical qualitative investigation of the process by which American Indian faculty achieved the requisite degrees for their positions and their experiences in social work academia with special attention to how culture affects these experiences. The study recruited participants through convenience and snowball sampling and consisted of one in person or phone interview per participant. Data were analyzed using narrative analysis methods. The protocol was reviewed and approved by the Case Western Reserve University Internal Review Board.

Guiding philosophy for the methodology

This study uses critical realism to ground its methodology, data collection and analysis methods. The ontology of critical realism suggests there is a reality independent of our thoughts differentiated into three levels. Houston (2001) describes these levels as the (1) empirical level of experienced events (e.g. faculty’s perceptions of their experiences), (2) actual level of all events (e.g. the “real” world of what actually happens in academic settings) and the (3) causal level of personal and social mechanisms generating events (e.g. personal strong sense of self efficacy at the individual level and social racism in the academic setting at the institutional level contributing to the experience of the faculty members). All of these levels exist in open systems (with complimentary and countervailing causal mechanisms) inhibiting our ability to predict outcomes and instead allowing us only to seek tendencies. We cannot fully know the intransitive world- the true nature of things-
only our transitive view of the world that reflects the contextual nature of our experience.

Critical realism acknowledges the existence of such a reality in which issues like racism and colonization become real due to their real effects on people's lives. However, this is not a universal reality where all things affect and mean the same things to all people at all times. Science is laden with the everyday concepts and dependent on them for inquiry. These everyday concepts and their ascribed meaning are socially constructed and may vary by culture and context (Danermark, Eckstrom, Jakobsen & Karlsson, 2002). Characteristics of individual identity and differences of place and understanding of key concepts (e.g. racism and colonialism) affect our experience of the world. For example, the concept of colonization may mean something different to each faculty member according to their lived experience and current contextual setting. Their view of social work and its degree of decolonization (or need to decolonize further) will also depend on both the personal identity and environmental contexts from which they view the profession. Human practice is dependent on systems of meaning or signification and we must acknowledge the time, space, concept dependence of structures (Steinmetz, 2004). This does not mean the competing meanings and conceptualizations are incorrect. They instead represent differing ways of living in the objective reality of the world. The scientist must integrate these everyday concepts into a more sophisticated theoretical form explaining the mechanisms producing events (Danermark et al., 2002). Unlike positivism, critical realism negates universality, as there is variability of social/causal structure across time and space (Steinmetz, 2004).
Houston (2001) posits the merits of critical realism in the social work profession. Using a critical realist philosophy promotes social work research validity by exposing the causes, processes and outcomes of oppression and social exclusion and in turn allowing for a focus on emancipation. In addition, it allows for human agency in effecting change. Perhaps most importantly, it marks a return to a depth in social work that acknowledges and seeks to alter the impact of the “real world.”

While quantitative methods are important to understanding retention, recruitment and inclusion issues, these methods fail to go beyond what is observable about American Indian inclusion in social work education. They do not fully address the related structural and functional characteristics of the social work educational system affecting holistic inclusion. Social work education may have functional properties (e.g. a push to increase the professional status of the profession by creating a uniform knowledge base that excludes indigenous knowledge and ways of healing) reinforcing the system of oppression and privilege and structural properties (e.g. tenure requirements factoring quantitative research and undervaluing community work) that reinforce the social order of colonization. Allen (2007) (speaking specifically to nursing education) suggests developing an adequate approach to multiculturalism requires abandoning the notion that education is neutral when in reality it is a thoroughly white and class based process. He explains in education, “we both reproduce racialized relationships among our students and between students and ourselves and, presumably, prepare clinicians for a ‘multicultural’ world.” (Allen, 2007, p. 65). Further, these functions and
structures, their strength and transparency, are contextually and historically bound. The discussion of faculty member’s experience will attend to their particular historical and contextual circumstances.

Quantitative research keeps the issue entirely at the level of the empirical events (observable events identified by the researcher) ignoring the root causal mechanisms (e.g. racism or colonialism in social work programs/academia) producing any challenges to inclusion. Further, such approaches fail to explore the impact of possibly countervailing contexts (class, gender, sexuality) in combination with American Indian identity affecting the experience of American Indian faculty. Clearly, being an American Indian faculty member, both as a social identity and structurally bound reality, operates in an open system. The dominant philosophy (positivism) and methods of inquiry (deductive and quantitatively based) in social work assume a closed system inhibiting the profession’s ability to explore the experience of American Indian students and faculty in a way that includes the structural mechanisms (e.g. colonization, racism) producing any lack of inclusion or experiences of inequality. To transcend this roadblock, we must explore an alternative philosophical basis (critical realism) and methods of inquiry (qualitative critical research) that allow for investigating the experiences of American Indian faculty in social work academia in an open system.

**Approach to the study**

It was important, as a White researcher, I not speak for American Indian communities through my research, rather to provide a research platform from which their voices may be heard (Gair et al., 2005), particularly in regard to their
education (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). My role as a White researcher was to partner with the American Indian community and scholars in the research process, continually seeking insight, collaboration and feedback in each stage of the research process. As a non-American Indian researcher, it was imperative to use a feedback loop in which American Indian participants offered insight to both the structure and conclusions of the study.

In the formative phase, an American Indian faculty member served on the dissertation committee and informed the questionnaire and overall methods. During data collection, at the end of each interview, the researcher sought feedback about the interview content and process from the participants making additional word adjustments as needed. For example, the researcher changed the wording of a question around how one’s American Indian cultural perspective affected their experience in school. The question presupposed a connection to that aspect of identity that may be or have been present for a particular participant at that time in their lives. Finally, in the data analysis phase, the researcher used member checking to ensure the conclusions reached are in line with the perceptions of participants. The member checking process is detailed in the data analysis section below (Larimore & McClellen, 2005).

Guillory and Wolverton (2008) state, “In reality, Native Americans are the experts at being Native American, and thus it is imperative that their voices be heard when creating policy that can directly or indirectly affect their educational lives” (p. 63). This suggests quantitative, researcher determined survey questions are insufficient for ensuring American Indian voices are heard in the research
process. Qualitative research methods allow for American Indian faculty to tell their stories holistically focusing on the issues and concerns they feel are most salient to both their experience and forward motion on inclusion of American Indians in social work in general. Ives et al. (2007) further explain the importance of not categorizing the experiences of American Indians out of context, thus the need for a qualitative approach explicating their perceptions and experiences in their individual contextual circumstances. Finally, social work needs to incorporate greater use of qualitative methods of research (e.g. semi-structured interviews, ethnography, narrative analysis) to better incorporate the oral traditions of American Indians (Voss et al., 2005).

For the current study, critical research and narrative method provide a culturally appropriate methodology to promote both inclusion and change in the status quo. The critical approach allows incorporation of critical theory in the research process whereby criticisms of the status quo is hoped to stimulate discussion around unquestioned assumptions (Haug, 2001; Strier, 2006). Research into the experience of American Indian faculty in social work education must look both at the structural components supporting/inhibiting successful integration of culture and profession and the differential effects on identity, sense of job satisfaction, inclusion of American Indian social work faculty according to the context. These structural components includes issues like the requirements for tenure, course load, committee membership obligations and other structural issues emerging in this study’s outcomes. Adequately examining the issue requires in-depth investigation of the experience of American Indian faculty in the open system
of their faculty positions. This is best accomplished using ethnographic interviewing (Carspecken, 1996). More specifically, extending beyond traditional ethnographic description of the status quo to consider, “what could be in order to uncover the ‘symbolic power’ of existing ideas and structures that operate to constrain peoples’ awareness of alternatives” (Hand, 2006, p. 31). Using ethnographic interviewing to explore American Indian faculty’s experience would not only describe how they navigate and experience their culture as part of the academic system but rather a look at the constitutive powers and interconnections limiting the integration of that experience in all aspects of the social work field (Hart, 2001). Hart further describes such a study as, “…illuminating processes of constitution and interconnection. A processual and relational understanding refuses to take as given discrete objects, identities, places and events; instead it attends to how they are produced and changed in practice in relation to one another. From this perspective, articulation can be seen both as a method for ‘advancing to the concrete’, and as a means for envisaging feasible alternatives and alliances” (Hart, 2004, p. 98). Such a study of American Indian faculty in social work education would not only demonstrate the structures limiting and enabling integration of American Indian culture into social work but how those structures might be challenged or changed.

Narrative research includes, “an extended story about a significant aspect of one’s life” (Chase, 2008, p.59). Narrative research, like critical theory, “should not only reflect ‘reality’ but also challenge taken-for-granted beliefs, assertions and assumptions, including those made by revered social theorists.” (Fraser, 2004, p.
Narrative researchers retain an awareness of social conditions as they consider how culture and social structures surface in the stories participants and researchers tell (Fraser, 2004). Further, the use of narrative methods of data collection and data analysis further addresses the need to partner with participants in the research process without over-privileging the voice or perspective of the researcher. Such research allows the social work researcher to honor the values of the profession in the research process by recognizing the impact of human interaction and relationship (in this case, between researcher and participant) (Riessman & Quinney, 2008).

While critical theory grounded this study theoretically and ethnographic interviewing grounds the data collection process, the narrative method further dictates the construction of the interview schedule, behavior of the interviewer in the interview process and the data analysis. Narrative inquiry has become an umbrella term covering a wide variety of both research intents and analytic strategies. Chase (2008) describes five major types of narrative inquiry- each with a unique definition of the narrative and its purpose in research. The current study most closely matches the sociological approach she describes whereby the researcher uses in-depth interviewing on an aspect of the participants life (in the current study, obtaining higher education degrees and life in academia) and how the participants, “make sense of personal experience in relation to culturally and historically specific discourses. These include possibilities for self and reality construction that are intelligible within the narrator’s community, local setting, organizational and social memberships, and cultural and historical location...While
acknowledging that every instance of narrative is particular, researchers use this lens to attend to similarities and differences across narratives.” (Chase, 2008, p. 65). This version of narrative research looks in-depth at the individual case with attention the unique patterns and experiences of an individual based on their unique contextual circumstances. It assumes the teller of these stories is the expert and there is meaning in their unique story’s nuances (Johnston, 2005). Data analysis further looks for narrative linkages between particulars of one’s life and the constraints of the environment. (Chase, 2008) Finally, comparisons across cases are conducted looking for commonalities and differences in the patterns (Fraser, 2008). The hope is that these interpretive strategies reveal the stranglehold of oppressive metanarratives, they help to open up possibilities for social change (Chase, 2008). The actual data analysis process leading to all these levels of analysis is detailed below.

**Design**

The study included semi-structured interviews with American Indian faculty. The interviews asked about the process by which they achieved the requisite degrees for their positions (addressing issues of recruitment and retention at the all three levels of higher education). It further examined their experiences in social work academia with special attention to the hiring, tenure and promotion process (addressing issues of recruitment and retention of faculty in the academy) along with any unique cultural issues. In preparing for constructing the interview schedule and actually conducting these narrative interviews, I have researcheded the socio-historical contexts that may affect participants lives (Fraser, 2004) as detailed
with in the historical discussions in chapter two. Though the interview schedule is semi-structured around the major areas of inquiry, I had the freedom to follow paths of discussion not specific to a particular question to allow for emergent ideas (Patton, 1990). In narrative research, broad questions are used to elicit the story as the teller chooses to tell it without an overly prescribed structure. Such interviewing technique recognizes how a story is told is as important as what is told and puts primacy on the focus of the interviewee. This is not to say the interview does not pertain to the research questions at hand, it simply recognizes the meta-narrative is more important than the minutia of addressing particular issues/areas or elements of existing theories (Fraser, 2004).

Generally, the interview schedule and actual interviews focused on broad questions asking faculty to describe their experiences obtaining each of the requisite degrees, obtaining jobs, seeking or acquiring tenure and promotion and general experiences as faculty members. However, several theories framed the more specific questioning/probing of participants. It should be noted, however, these questions were not always asked as, per the nature of narrative inquiry, I allowed the participants to direct the more specific content of the interviews.

Specifically, the interview schedule included potential questions referencing the theories of student retention including the Tinto Model (Tinto, 1993) and cultural adaptations to the Tinto model (Guiffrida, 2006) (e.g. questions about fit between their own cultural perspectives and those of their institutions, adjustment to university culture), the Model of Institutional Adaptation to Student Diversity (MIASD) (Richardson & Skinner, 1990) (e.g. questions related to how the overall
university culture did or did not facilitate participants’ inclusion) and the Family Education Model (FEM) (Heavyrunner & Decelles, 2002) (e.g. questions about the presence of structural and interpersonal supports specific to faculty’s cultural needs). The preliminary task force findings also framed questions around current retention efforts (or lack their of) and their role in participants’ experiences (e.g. questions around the ability to maintain connections to tribe, specific instances of discrimination encountered, mentoring, presence of American Indian content/faculty in programs, institutional support for American Indian research).

Questions around barriers and facilitators for learners were organized into three categories (a) sociocultural factors, (b) academic factors and (c) personal factors (Jackson, 2003). Similarly, for participants’ experiences in academia, emphasis was placed on structural, cultural, interpersonal and personal factors affecting the quality of their integration, tenure and promotion and satisfaction with their academic settings. The study drew on relational cultural theory to frame the experiences of American Indian faculty in the academic environment (e.g. asking about relationships with other faculty). Again, though these theories provide some structure to the questioning of participants and interviews, the interview schedules were also open-ended allowing participants to construct the narrative and its focus and to allow for patterns to emerge not indentified in previous theory or research.

Each participant participated in one, approximately one and a half to two hour interview. Follow-up member checking interviews were conducted with two participants to clarify issues and allow the researcher to member check conclusions. Preliminary data analysis conclusions were also presented to the American Indian
Educators group at the annual conference of the Council on Social Work Education for additional critical feedback and member checking from the American Indian community (this process is detailed below). The data created an overall description of the current status of American Indian student and faculty recruitment, retention and overall inclusion in social work education. In accordance with the critical and narrative research approach, it provided data around potential paths for change (Chase, 2008; Fraser, 2004; Riessman & Quinney, 2005).

**Sampling**

This study used a convenience sample (Padgett, 2008) of faculty members at schools of social work in the United States who self-identified as American Indian, Alaskan Native or another designation for the peoples living in the Americas prior to Western European colonization. This included those with two or more self-identified ethnic identities and those who solely identified as American Indian. Faculty members included any full time faculty members (or former faculty members) appointed as instructors or assistant, associate or full professors in a social work program whether or not these positions include a tenure track. For those not tenure tracked, the questionnaire had an alternate protocol to assess their positions and experiences. The appointments had to be specifically designated social work programs but those programs did not need to be accredited through the Council on Social Work Education. Such faculty members were indentified using key informant and snowball sampling methodology (Padgett, 2008). Recruitment started with an e-mail sent to all members of the CSWE American Indian educators listserve (this did not include specific faculty addresses just went out to each on the
list anonymously). Those interested in participating contacted the researcher directly to set up an interview time and date. Faculty also passed the information along to other faculty they knew qualified and might be interested who also contacted the researcher for more information. Once participants agreed to participate, the researcher arranged a time for either a phone interview or an in-person interviews for participants in reasonable driving distance. Phone participants were e-mailed the requisite informed consent forms and provided verbal consent via the phone prior to the interview. The information on the forms was reviewed with participants at the time of the interview. Sampling continued until the researcher in consultation with her faculty advisors determined the data has reached saturation of patterns for each of the relevant research questions (Padgett, 2008). In this case, data collection ended with nine participants.

Data Collection

Four interviews were conducted in person and five interviews were conducted via the telephone. The interviews lasted from one-two hours depending on the detail offered by participants. The interview addressed the faculty member’s experience getting their requisite degrees and faculty experiences in social work academia including the tenure and promotion process and their general inclusion in academia. It also included any recommendations of faculty to promote inclusion.

Such interviews, while focused in topic, allowed for narrators to go where they saw the narrative going. As interviewer, I had to recognize this is the point of narrative rather than trying to “keep the participant on course” or maintain structure as, “areas where participants defy the prescribed structure are often ripe
with meaning.” (Chase, 2008, p. 70). I did not ensure we covered each of the detailed questions but rather used the interview schedule as a guide for the conversation. I sent the interview schedule to participants prior to the interview so they could think about the topics and their own narratives in these regards. Though I did use follow-up questions and probes to maintain an overall focus, I did not interrupt their narratives at any time due to the interviewee seemingly straying from the issues at hand (Chase, 2008).

As described below, data analysis commenced after the first interview. Member checking interviews and the CSWE presentation provided a platform for discussing possible findings as they emerged in the analysis with participants as a form of member checking (Bogden & Bicklan, 1992). The researcher ensured reliability of data collection by using the semi-structured interview schedule, identifying potential bias and using note-taking as described below to document and address any methodological issues (Patton, 1990). All interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed for data analysis.

**Interview Schedule**

The interview schedule can be found in Appendix A. This schedule was pilot tested twice with fellow researchers not included in the final study participants to ensure clarity, length and flow of the questions. No significant changes were made to the instrument following the pilot testing beyond adjusting the wording of questions for clarity. The interview schedule was also reviewed by a fellow American Indian researcher and committee member for cultural appropriateness of questions.
Data Analysis Plan

The narrative interviews were recorded, transcribed, and transferred to Atlas.ti (Muhr, 1993), a software specifically designed for qualitative data management and analysis. All names and specific academic locations were deleted from the transcripts to ensure confidentiality of participants.

Narrative analysis begins with an in-depth look at individual cases with particular focus on narrative linkages between particulars of ones life and the constraints of the environment (Chase, 2008). Narrative research analyzes the full account of a single participant instead of fragmenting the narratives into thematic categories looking for themes across cases as in grounded theory (Riessman & Quinney, 2008). Narrative approaches look for tacit meanings in the structure of speech with special attention to the context of the conversation further described below (Padgett, 2008). Riessman and Quinney (2008) further caution against slipping into data reduction (in the mode of positivist science) in narrative analysis and underscore the importance of attending to language, the effects of the research relationship and macro level issues. The outcomes of a narrative study in this regard are a co-construction between the researcher and participant. The same social and historical contexts studied to prepare for the interview process are included in the analysis of the data (Riessman & Quinney, 2008). It should be noted that some narrative research does not do comparison among cases suggesting individual cases must speak alone for their unique contexts (Ayres, Kavanaugh & Knafl, 2004). However, others advocate for following deep within case analysis with between case examinations looking for notable commonalities and differences.
(Ayres et al., 2004; Fraser, 2004). Adding this between case analysis also further informs the challenges to the status quo suggested in the data.

Researchers in narrative research also must choose the position from which they will analyze the relevant data. In some cases, they simply organize and reports the data without depth interpretations of their own included- simply reflecting back participants accounts. In the current study, I will use an authoritative voice where I include my interpretations of the data (Chase, 2008). However, it is important to indicate this will not replace the voice of participants rather combine their words with their interpreted meaning and implications.

Even studies with relatively few participants are liable to produce many more stories than can be possibly analyzed in any one article, report or thesis (see Eisikovits et al., 1998). This study is no exception. Due to this issue, only data (narratives) relating to the overall research questions (those addressing the overall point of the narrative regarding obtaining one’s educational credentials, obtaining employment, the tenure and promotion process, overall experience in academia and potential points for future intervention) were analyzed.

Data analysis in the current study follows the steps to narrative analysis outlined by Fraser (2004). She suggests narrative analysis should not solely include within case comparisons as suggested by other narrative researchers but a multi stage method involving 1) in-depth within case analysis and 2) between case analysis looking for similarities and differences among cases. I selected this method as it is most inline with the ontology of critical realism allowing the researcher to examine potential underlying mechanisms leading to the events described. Further,
it allows for critical analysis of these mechanisms for points of potential intervention to affect social change. Fraser's framework also includes assessing the narratives according to the structural, cultural, interpersonal and intrapersonal elements. These factors allow for clearly comparing the experiences of these participants with the previous research findings and theories and for further explicating intervention points. Due to the acknowledgement of the role of researcher in making the interpretations of the data according to her own contexts, the following description of the data analysis process will be described in the first person.

I began data analysis by listening to the interviews and journaling initial impressions including any emotions perceived, notes on how the narrative unfolds and a general sense from each interview. This commenced with the first interview and continued throughout the data collection process. In the second phase, the interviews were actually transcribed. In this case, the transcriptions included description of non word behavior in addition to the exact words of participants and the researcher (e.g. laughter, utterances like, “hmmm”). Transcription began after the fifth interview was completed and then ran concurrent with data collection.

In the third phase, I analyzed individual transcripts in depth. This included looking at the main points of particular stories in the narrative (e.g. the overall point of the narrative regarding obtaining one’s educational credentials, obtaining employment, the tenure and promotion process and overall experience in academia along with recommendations for change). I accomplished this by linking all quotations regarding each overall narrative to a single memo for that narrative in
Atlas.ti. I then described/summarized the overall points of the narrative in the text of each memo. This allowed me to also review the entire narrative for each area by reading the linked quotations/extended segments of text as a whole and further memoing on their meaning. This analysis also looked at the meaning of words, how they are chosen and emphasized and the implications of this language on the overall meaning of the narrative. Further, I looked for any contradictions that emerged in the narrative examining the potential meaning of those contradictions. These conclusions were summarized for each interview overall and for each narrative arc. During this phase, I also described the narrative as a whole and any particular issues regarding the interaction with me as a researcher that affect either the meaning of the overall narrative or the research process.

After this level of analysis, I moved on to stage four, scanning across different domains of experience. In this case, I took the stories and their main points and characterized them according to their intrapersonal, interpersonal, cultural and structural aspects. The intrapersonal looks at the thoughts, feelings and general self-talk of the participant as they relate to the overall narrative. In this analysis, I extend this to personal circumstance (e.g. financial problems, health issues, lack of academic preparation) that, while potentially having structural components, have specific relevance to the individual’s experience and ability to accomplish their academic goals and do not fit in one of the other relevant categories. The interpersonal literally looks at instances of interactions with other people and their implications.
The cultural looks for evidence of cultural conventions - both those that are part of the dominant discourses and unique to the cultural contexts of individual participants. Finally, the structural aspects look for any claims made about or references to systems, policies or more broad models of social organization. Fraser suggests these areas will undoubtedly overlap and the separation of stories into these domains is more of a tool for establishing the implications of the narratives then a clean and clear dissection of the stories into these categories. Further, meaning derives not only from which of these domains is represented in particular stories but also from which are notably absent. To accomplish this, quotations or narrative segments of text were identified as fitting into one of the above four categories with further specification of the patterns that emerged regarding those four areas. This was done by assigning codes in Atlas.ti to each emerging pattern for each of the four areas including any case specific contextual issues. Though similar to thematic analysis, the initial run of this process only coded patterns within each case using long (typically a paragraph or more) segments of text rather then coding all the interviews using a single codebook applying codes across cases without attention to context in each case.

The fifth phase links the personal with the political. Here we see the application of critical theory in the data analysis process as well as using previous theory and discourses to both interpret the data and challenge those theories and discourses. In this phase, I looked at the overall meaning ascribed to the narratives in the respective domains of experience and compared them to the existing theories on the process of obtaining the requisite degrees for American Indians and faculty of
color’s experiences in academia (e.g. relational theory, colonization theory). The relation of these narratives to theory is discussed in detail in the fifth and sixth chapters. I paid special attention in this stage to discuss my interpretations with one of the participants and member of my committee to determine their relevance/appropriateness and seeking areas needing revision. I also examined the recommendations (if any) participants made for facilitating inclusion in social work academia summarizing those with attention to each participant’s context. The results from the analysis process described to this point (the within case analysis), except for the relation of the results to existing theory, are described in chapter four.

Only after this process was completed with the first seven interviews did I move on to phase six, looking for commonalities and differences across participants. First, I compared the coding of experiences according to the intrapersonal, interpersonal, cultural and structural aspects looking for both commonalities and differences among the experiences of the faculty members. I then looked at how those commonalities and differences might suggest points of intervention. To accomplish this, I refined the codebook taking out the notations indicating which case each pattern applied to and combining like patterns into single codes. Therefore, each code was prefaced as being an intrapersonal (P), interpersonal (I), cultural (C) or structural (S) issue and if it pertained to the degree (D) or experiences in academia (F) or both (no notation). I further separated out codes according to barriers (B) and facilitators (no secondary designation). For example, the presence of American Indian content, a cultural facilitator for participants in the degree seeking process, was coded as, “C-D-AI content in program.” I went back to all the
narratives recoding each for further evidence of these patterns among all cases and coding them using the master codebook of patterns adding new patterns that emerged in the recoding process. This resulted in a codebook of 198 coded patterns (see appendix B, master codebook). I then summarized the most salient patterns across cases both in the tables and descriptively in chapter five.

I further looked for emergent patterns across transcripts in the overall plots of the narratives or points of difference. Further, I examined how the contexts of particular participants may have affected the differences among the plots and stories foregrounded by different participants. For example, how the narrative of a participant who spent their entire career at a program with a focus on serving American Indian populations differs from that of a participant who worked at institutions lacking interest or understanding of diverse population’s needs and/or actively engaged in cultural conflict. Further, I paid attention in this phase to any stories that undercut the original assumptions of the research (e.g. a narrative where a participant’s American Indian identity had no impact on their experience) and their implications. Finally, I combined the summary recommendations of all participants into a single document. I then coded this for patterns using Atlas.ti. These patterns are also described in the final section of chapter five.

In the final phase, the analysis is summarized in written form with special attention to how and if the analysis answers the original research questions. Further, I looked at how and if the analysis maintained respect for the participants. I, in collaboration with my committee members, analyzed the interpretations in my analysis to determine if I had not either understated or overstated my claims.
Overall, there was a high level of congruence in the committee members’ and researcher’s interpretations. However, differences were discussed among the group until consensus was reached. For example, we discussed how to manage the issue of adaptation to dominant cultural norms and to what extent we could draw conclusions on this issue based on the data we had. One member further emphasized the limitations of a single interview offering a snapshot of the histories of these faculty and making sure to limit conclusions about their overall experiences accordingly.

**Validity**

Hammersly (1992) suggests validity in qualitative research is determined by how accurately the data represents the phenomena it is intended to describe, explain or theorize about. Member checking with participants assisted in ensuring accurate representation of the data (Padgett, 2008). In this case, member checking included reconnecting with two participants individually to discuss findings. Further, I presented the preliminary data to the American Indian educators meeting at the Council on Social Work Education conference. Six of the nine research participants were present at this meeting. I created an outline of the preliminary data and distributed it at the meeting. I then presented the findings and opened the conclusions for discussion. They then provided valuable feedback and insight indicating the congruence of the reported conclusions with their experiences, offering additional information and making recommendations for adjustments, particularly to make the conclusions more culturally appropriate. For instance, I originally indicated that level of assimilation to dominant cultural norms facilitated
inclusion. The attendees suggested adjusting the language from assimilation to adaptation as it does not suggest subverting one’s cultural values to the dominant culture. Hammersley further suggests the second criteria for rigor in qualitative research is relevance- the topic must be of value to society. The current study is grounded in critical theory with a focus on producing suggested changes to the status quo.

Riessman (1993) further suggests the importance of correspondence, persuasiveness, coherence and pragmatic nature of qualitative research helps ensure the validity and reliability of its outcomes. Correspondence is similar to Hammersley’s concept of representation described above suggesting the data analysis must correspond with the narratives supplied by participants. Further, outcomes must be persuasive in their arguments linking the findings to data elements and existing or suggested explanatory theories and be clear (coherent) to those reading the findings. Again, the use of extensive member checking along with immersion in both the data and the relevant literature over a period of time helps ensure the correspondence, coherence and persuasiveness of outcomes. Similar to Hammersley’s relevance criteria, Riessman suggests it must be pragmatic informing a needed gap in practice knowledge. Again, keeping with the purpose of critical research, the results will be used to make specific recommendations to changes for recruitment, retention and inclusion of American Indian faculty and students in social work education ensuring the pragmatism and relevance of the research.
Chapter Four- Within Case Findings

Participant Overview

Nine American Indian faculty completed 1.5-2.5 hour initial interviews with five completing follow-up interviews or participating in the CSWE preliminary presentation of data for clarification and member checking. As there is a very small population of American Indian social work faculty in the country, demographic description is kept to a minimum to protect the confidentiality of participants. Of the nine participants, four were tenured faculty and all had also received promotion. Four were in tenure track positions. The final participant was in a non-tenure tracked instructor/administrator position. Seven of the participants had doctoral level degrees, two held masters degrees only. One faculty member was retired at the time of the interview; the others were serving in social work schools in five different states throughout the Midwest and northeast. Work experience of participants included schools across the country and Canada. Six participants were female, three male. However, gender is masked in this analysis to further ensure confidentiality.

Five participants completed their bachelor degrees without taking a break while four had at least one break (going at least one full semester or quarter without taking classes) with one participant taking five breaks and 11 years to complete the degree. All but three participant completed their undergraduate degree at a single institution. All but one participant took a break to work between their bachelor and masters degrees. Four completed their masters degrees without a break. Five
choose or had to take a break(s) during their masters programming with one participant finishing an incomplete and the program 10 years after starting. All participants completed their masters degree at a single institution. For those with doctoral degrees, all completed these degrees while working full or part time in academic settings in a variety of capacities. One participant attended two doctoral institutions, the rest a single institution. All participants held masters degrees from social work schools while doctoral degrees included both social work and education related programs.

I present the results according to each participant in chapter four followed by the results of the across participant analysis in chapter five. For each participant, the overall narrative is summarized including descriptions of how the story is told. Then, I describe the narrative for each relevant area of interest- obtaining one’s educational credentials, obtaining employment, the tenure and promotion process and overall experience in academia- with attention to implications of language used, any contradictions present along with the intrapersonal, interpersonal, cultural and structural patterns for each. When applicable, the tenure process is interwoven with the experiences in academia narrative as, during analysis, it became clear that either achieving tenure was unremarkable (for those that had it) or a huge part of the academic experience (for those who did not and were on tenure tracks). Finally, the participants recommendations for change are summarized.

One participant notes when she/he collects stories from tribal elders to build curriculum they are naturally diluted in her/his retelling. The same is exponentially true in my retellings here as I not only report the information shared in a highly
abbreviated fashion but also offer my interpretations. These may include interpretations affected by my own worldview and the general purpose of the study.

**Participant #1**

**Overall narrative and impressions.**

The first participant’s overall narrative is one of optimism, accomplishment, resistance and possibility. She describes challenges throughout the process of obtaining the degree and working in academia, but each challenge resolves in either a concrete positive outcome or statement of optimism regarding the potential for future change. This is true for both the personal narrative, her own process obtaining her degree and personal experiences and the structural narrative where She comments on how the system of academia and social work academia operates in regard to American Indian communities. This is not to say this participant did not experience challenges including direct conflict between her personal values (particularly those rooted in One’s American Indian identity) and those of academia. The participant identifies several throughout the narrative. However, she does not express any negative personal effects from these experiences and does demonstrate repeated pathways for resolving such conflicts in ways that both honored her identity and met the needs of her academic institutions. Further, these resolutions always put the needs of American Indian communities above both her needs (e.g. to publish) and those of her academic institution. She maintains a focus on the legacies of her work for American Indian communities, students and her program. Examples of these overall patterns are detailed further below.
We see more relevant information in how the first participant tells her story and development over the course of her academic career. When she is discussing a barrier or her own educational story, she consistently speaks in the first person singular, “I got married, and I started having kids, and started and stopped out, primarily for work and for family. And I think I did that about five different times, so it took me, I think eleven years to get my undergraduate degree, because I had those things that I did for - for family and for economic circumstances.” However, when she is relating a success or achievements of her career, she switches to the first person plural (e.g. uses “we”) “We - well we have an advisory committee with membership from probably at least five of the seven reservations. So, we have now had a long-term relationship with the tribes and because of that, then we have been able to end up with contracts. We've been now approached from the [grant funder]. And they funded us last year to do some stuff. They are funding us this year to do some stuff. And they may be funding us to do - look at ICWA compliance in five different states...So those are the kind of things that over time you develop relationships and a reputation and then people seek you out. And I always said, ‘I want a foundation to come to me.’ and say, ‘What can we fund for you?’ And we have that now and I just think that’s cool.” It is not often clear who the others are in the we (e.g. fellow faculty, the American Indian community) but the implication is that these accomplishments are not hers alone, but the result of collaboration. Though she describes a sense of personal pride at many of these accomplishments/legacies, she largely shares the ability to create them with the collective as evidenced in her language choices.
Obtaining the requisite degrees

Participant one was encouraged and supported in pursuing higher education starting in high school despite, like all but two of the participants, being the first generation in her family to do so. This includes engagement in college preparatory programs like Upward Bound. She indicates she would have progressed through her bachelor’s faster had she been offered to take college classes her senior year in high school. As it was, she felt she blew off that year and may have been able to complete her bachelor’s degree more quickly. Once she began her bachelor’s degree, she also started a family and had other life priorities take precedence over completing her degree, thus her stopping and starting the process five times over 11 years as detailed in the quote above.

Her undergraduate degree was not in social work, however, she recognized much of the work she had engaged in post her bachelor’s degree was social work related. This coupled with the fact there was a social work masters program available at the school her husband was attending, and that program had American Indian content, led to her pursuing a masters degree in social work. She describes this as a natural progression and largely a decision of convenience, “Quite honestly, I went into social work because it’s what was available and I had been doing social work-like kinds of things. I was working - I had worked in chemical dependency. I had worked as a therapist for a private counseling agency in [local town]. I had worked for a sexual assault program as an advocate and a community educator. So, the kinds of things that I was doing were kind of social work-related, but, quite honestly, it was the degree that was available to me and I didn’t want to get a degree in - I didn’t want to
get a Master’s in Education and, so, it really had to do with accessibility and availability.” A few years after completing this degree, she was invited to apply for a tenure track position back at her masters program by another American Indian faculty member. At the time, she had no interest in teaching and very little awareness of what a faculty position would entail. She accepted the job with no expectation she would obtain her PhD though she did choose to do so.

After gaining her academic appointment, she recognized having her doctorate would help increase her legitimacy in certain academic endeavors like seeking grant funding. Around that time, a part time onsite program began at her university. Like her masters degree, her desire/need met up with the convenience level of an available program and she started to work on her degree, “And so, I didn’t feel like I was treated differently after a while within the department so much, but I was treated differently in terms of writing grants or seeking external funding. Those kinds of things, people just made the assumption I had my Doctorate. When people would say, ‘Where’s your Doctorate from?’ or ‘What’s your Doctorate in?’ and I would say, ‘Well I have a Master’s.’ To other people on campus, they would just kind of look at you like, well, you’re not really one of us. So, after a few years, even though I could have gotten tenure without my Doctorate, it became clear to me that that probably would be a good idea. The university, at that time, also was developing a Doctorate program on campus. And so, again, it made it accessible to me. And so, I decided to apply to the program and I got accepted and my colleagues were very supportive of that. I think they would have liked me, even if that program weren’t here, they would have liked me to have a Doctorate and so it just ended up making a lot of sense for me
to do that.” Due to the presence of American Indian faculty and her ability to mold her doctoral experience to meet her learning needs and interests at the time, she describes an overall positive PhD experience. This included social support (e.g., partner also pursuing a doctoral degree), fellow faculty support and mentoring among the doctoral faculty that was culturally relevant. Finally, she was able to obtain a fellowship to buy out her teaching at the time and complete her dissertation.

Throughout her degree arc, this participant describes opportunity, convenience, support and desire coming together to facilitate her process. She had issues/challenges (e.g. a faculty member making discriminatory comments during her masters program) but each ends in a satisfactory resolution despite some frustration with the processes (e.g. the faculty member was removed).

Intrapersonally, she presents as self reliant and able to seek out her own mentors as needed, including those with culturally relevant knowledge, and feeling confident in her ability to complete her PhD. She reports feeling validated by the American Indian content presented during her masters program. She seems to carry this resolve forward in her ability to maintain her cultural values and apply them across her education and work in academia (as described below).

Interpersonally, she was able to meet one of the American Indian faculty prior to entering her doctoral program thus facilitating her comfort in starting the program. She also received financial assistance from a dean and consistent social support from family throughout her education and fellow faculty during her pursuing her doctoral degree.
Culturally, she had her first connection to her culture through her education. Prior to that, though she does not express great dissatisfaction, she did not have cultural content or connection in her education process. In her masters program, she both had content specific to her own cultural background as an American Indian and American Indian student colleagues. Further, social work, with its systems approach to addressing problems, also matched her cultural understanding of the world and issues. Structurally, she identifies several areas facilitating her education including the inclusion of American Indian content in her masters and doctoral degrees, accessibility of her programs to her geographic location (and in turn that of her family) and having American Indian faculty role models available along with financial support.

**Getting the academic position(s).**

The narrative describing obtaining her academic position is short and singular. Her master alma mater sought her out and asked her to apply for a tenure tracked position though she did not have her doctorate. She expressed feeling honored by this offer intrapersonally and seeing it as an opportunity to give back to the program and her community, "Well, after I graduated, I didn’t really think about teaching. I went back and worked for my tribe…And somewhere there in my second year, one of the professors…who had originally recruited me into the Master's program, got a hold of me and said, 'We have a tenure track line available. Would you be interested?'...they had done another search to look for a Ph.D. person and were not able to recruit anybody and, so, they got permission to hire somebody with an M.S.W., because it's the [practice focused position]. And, so, she was just recruiting people to
apply for that position. So, I thought about it and decided that I’d give that a shot and see if - I was, of course, honored to be able to do that and I felt some gratitude for being able to get my Master’s. I felt like it was a great program. And so, I - if they hadn’t approached me, I probably would not have done that. I had - I had taught a course - an undergrad course ...as an adjunct and so I may have ended up teaching there at some point, but it wasn’t something that I aspired to do. I was recruited. And so I applied and I got the job.” Again, she took the position with the understanding she would not have to obtain her doctoral degree.

**Experiences in academia (including tenure and promotion discussion).**

Her experiences in academia start off with slightly more struggles than her educational story, though, like her educational story, end with success and a general sense of achievement personally, for the community and for the profession as a whole. As discussed above, she takes her position without having her doctoral degree and only a few years after leaving her masters program as a student. As a result, she was unaware of how to negotiate a faculty position (e.g. salary, release time) and struggled managing the relationships with former teachers now as colleagues. She describes having to assert herself as a full faculty member and demand equal status in committee work and other aspects of departmental functioning, “So when I came, of course, I was now a - I had left as a student, a couple years later came back as a faculty. I think, initially, that was a hardship for a couple of the faculty. I also found out that my teaching load was somewhat different - that I wasn’t initially advising students and I wasn’t initially able to sit on graduate
committees. And I met with faculty and I said you hired me to be a faculty here and I want to have all the rights and responsibilities that every other faculty person has. But I really did not want to be treated, within my department like a different kind of entity. I mean, to me, I either was a tenure track person or I wasn’t. And so, I started advising people and I ended up on graduate committees. And, in the first year or two, I would occasionally need to say to some of the senior faculty, I need you to support me. I am - I’m your colleague now. Kind of like, you’ve got to get over the fact that I was a student. Now we actually are equals and I need you to treat me that way. And so I think, just with being able to say that kind of stuff, that I really felt like people came to see me as a contributing, valuable member of the department.” She also later realized her initial salary and contract was much lesser than that of other faculty and demanded recompense from the dean (which was successful to some extent financially).

Despite these early challenges, the rest of her narrative around her experiences in academia is told from a position of success and achievement personally, in community and in the academy. She describes the challenges of the academic systems and its at times rigid demands for specific teaching, publication and service. She relates advice around setting aside her work with and in American Indian communities for more publishable and less time consuming efforts that would better facilitate completing the prescribed goals of academia. However, she details rejecting this notion from the beginning and instead finding ways to meld the two worlds and meet both her personal needs for community connection and work, the needs of American Indian communities and the requirements of the university.
This includes publishing her work in a way that speaks to general American Indian community issues without sharing the information from any particular tribal group (noting such information belongs to the tribe and should be shared by them as they see fit). It also includes being willing to fight the academic system to honor the cultural needs of her community (e.g. paying elders for sharing their wisdom and time). “One of the things that I made a decision very early (and people told me not to do this) is that I was going to retain my cultural identity and my relationship with my cultural community and I had people say to me: ‘You’re not going to be successful if you do that,’ ‘Don’t get involved with the community,’ ‘It takes too much time,’ ‘You can get back to that later.’ And I just couldn’t do that. And so, everything I’ve done has been consistent with my cultural beliefs and that has worked.”

This narrative does not paint an overly positive description of an academic experience unmarked by conflict of stressors. She makes clear that there is a lot of negotiation, having to play the game at times in order to get the work done she wants and a constant overload of work to be done. However, she suggests these things are balanced (and, with good self care, balanceable) by maintaining personal values and focusing on outcomes. She notes multiple challenges to her program and its American Indian focus but rejects them as failing to recognize the social justice focus of such programming. She speaks a lot to her specific accomplishments (using the collective language described above) and how she feels she, in work with others, has positioned her program and the profession to move forward, particularly in regard to inclusion and support of American Indian communities.
To review, intrapersonally she negotiates academia with a strong intrapersonal resolve to maintain her identity and values. She is willing to address challenges interpersonally (e.g. rejecting the suggestion she not do community work, demanding equal status from fellow faculty) but does so in a way that maintains relationships. She also negotiates structural barriers to the advantage of the tribal communities she works with, her program and her own needs as a faculty member as described above. Though she details areas where academia conflicts with her culture and that of the tribal groups she works with, she also demonstrates the ability to transcend these issues to the benefit of all (e.g. tribal groups get valuable research they can use as they see fit, bringing in grant money to the university).

**Specific recommendations**

She notes several specific areas ripe for increasing inclusion of American Indians in social work education. These include increasing content in all social work programs with attention to the unique position of American Indian communities as our country’s indigenous population and the disparities affecting American Indian people. She strongly suggests a need to “grow your own” social work academics by recruiting and nurturing local American Indian social workers and students into the field and on to doctoral work. This should include full financial support. Though this recruitment and training would happen locally, it should include pathways for making national connections among all American Indian faculty. This includes further investment and follow through on the part of CSWE with their diversity initiatives. She makes clear that though they create a time and space for American
Indian faculty to meet at their national meeting, there is no mechanism for them to share the content of their meetings with the board and the meeting often conflicts with other important national groups. Further, she recommends CSWE have a staff member, perhaps one associated with accreditation, on the staff to bring presence and awareness about American Indians to the organization.

**Participant #2**

**Overall Narrative and Impressions**

The second participant is early in her academic career and demonstrates several anxieties and issues common to those close to applying for tenure. In addition, she reports additional stressors unique to her cultural position and the nature of her faculty appointment. She consistently demonstrates how she has transcended roadblocks in her academic career but also makes clear the process came with significant struggles affecting her intrapersonally. Though her personal narrative includes conflict and some only partially resolved contradictions in her academic life (e.g. improved, though still lacking, full support from fellow faculty), her overall view of the profession and its compatibility with American Indian values and ability to meet American Indian student and community needs remains positive.

This narrative, while semi chronological according to stages in her education and career, focuses less on the traditional markers of degree completion, getting the job, applying for tenure and more on key stories and examples that illustrate the most intrapersonally and interpersonally significant moments in the process. The language tends toward the dichotomy of the American Indian people and communities worldview and that of the dominant culture, with special attention to
how this dichotomy affected her educational experiences and her work in academia. Further, the narrative is rife with contradictions- being excited and terrified to take on an academic position, enjoying teaching content specific to her culture while facing challenging reviews by dominant culture students resistance to this alternate viewpoint and/or recognizing their own privilege.

**Obtaining the requisite degrees**

The second participant was encouraged by her family all along to attend college as they had. She went straight from high school to a small undergraduate program out of state. She knew about the program as they had visited her preparatory school and could afford it, as her tribe would cover all her tuition regardless of her choice of schools at the time. She studied business and notes a generally unremarkable undergraduate experience save the absence of American Indian content. She had a good support network of friends (though not ones that shared her cultural background) and finished in four years.

After completing her degree, she went back to work for her tribe doing work she began to identify as related to social work in many aspects, "my first like real job, as they say, working with the [specific name] Tribe. My dad told me - cause he was working there as well - that the [specific name] Tribe was hiring a business development specialist to put together business plans for individuals in tribes. And so, I thought, well, why not? And so, I applied and got in. And it was interesting because the work I did really evolved around being self-sufficient. It was always about taking care of the family and having family members working together in some type of business entity. So, I always thought my work was very social work-oriented anyway."
She also found out about a masters of social work program but initially she could only attend if she was willing to travel over 100 miles to the program and it did not fit her work schedule. However, she later transferred to another job with the Tribe in the same area as the program with evening classes more convenient to her work schedule. Most saliently, the program had an American Indian focus and did not require a standardized test, "You have to get the GRE, or the SAT, and all those standardized tests. I have never done well on them. So, I know, that with social work it was not a requirement. And so, that was one piece that I took serious. I don’t have to take that test. I could just apply on my merits and get in.” These structural and cultural components together led to her applying and she found the program an excellent fit. She describes feeling validated for the first time in her educational experience for her values and cultural perspective. Further, this was the first time she got extremely positive feedback from faculty (she still has some of the papers with such feedback). Though she does not note any particular mentors during this time, she emphasizes the presence of American Indian faculty as validating her values and history, "I don’t know if I would say anyone was a mentor, but I think it was just the support that faculty, in general, gave - particularly American Indian faculty - because I had not ever experienced that before. So, just having them in the classroom and telling me about my history, where I came from, what that means, makes an impact.” Finally, culturally, she was able to connect her coursework and research in the program directly to her work and community.
Getting the academic job(s)

Two years after graduating from her masters program, the participant started doing trainings as part of her job and liked the experience. She decided to contact her program and ask about the opportunity to adjunct teach. The program had been involved in a search for an American Indian faculty member and suggested she apply for that position rather than simply pursue adjunct teaching. She did so and got the job. However, she expressed a lot of intrapersonal self-doubt in addition to pride as she made the decision to start the job, “And I was kind of like, you mean I can actually teach? Are you for real? Because I've never taught a class in my life. And I didn’t think it was a possibility. And you have all those self-doubts...I don’t have a Ph.D. I don’t have a lot of things that a lot of people that are teachers. I've never been encouraged to teach or to look beyond - beyond what I was doing. And so, that kind of opened my eyes to, well, I guess, maybe I can do that... They happened to have an opening for a tenure position because [faculty member name] retired. And so then that’s when - they had - apparently they had been doing a search for a while and they had found somebody, but it wasn’t working out and so they kind of re-opened the position. So that’s kind of when I found about it - when I inquired about this adjunct spot and they said, ‘Well, we do have this other opening if you’re interested.’ Cause they wanted an American Indian. That’s what they specified. So I thought, ok, well, let’s try it... And so, but I was excited...I needed more of a challenge.”

Experiences in academia (including tenure and promotion discussion)

The second participant’s narrative around her experiences in academia includes several challenges, particularly early in her career. She started the position
with no concept of how to teach, prepare a course or publish. She relates feeling isolated and clueless, especially leaving a job in her community working with friends and family, “And everyone in my family was excited and it was exciting. But on the flipside, getting here was very lonely and it was very sad. And I cried many times in this office. Cause I kind of felt isolated. And not just from other people in this program or in the university, but from my own community.” When she sought guidance, she often got only generic advice like, “make sure you write” and she remembers thinking, “How do I write? Really. How do I write? Because, I mean, I write poetry or stories and stuff like that, and even that I’m not that great at. But really, how do you write?...I mean, what does that mean? What does that look like?” She had similar feelings trying to teach for the first time, “And even though I went through the program as a student, I didn't have anyone telling me how to teach or how to grade or how to do this or how to do that. And even though they have an [instructional development] person here for helping you teach, it just - it didn’t seem like that was the person that should be helping me or mentoring me or instructing me. It wasn’t quite - I had not developed anything to have somebody teach me. I was kind of here by myself trying to figure out, ok, what’s does this - what am I trying to do?... So I had a syllabus. Big deal. Well, I wasn’t going to go to her and say, ‘Here’s my syllabus. How do I do this?'”

She reports only having one solid interpersonal connection with fellow faculty in her first years and no mentoring. She also relates getting negative or cryptic evaluations from students and not knowing how to use those to better her teaching. This includes relating a particularly hurtful story where the department
sought feedback from students and, due to challenges in her and one other faculty
member’s course at the time, the students focused on giving highly negative
feedback to her. This feedback was then put in her mailbox with no explanation
beyond knowing it had been shared with the rest of the faculty. She found this
embarrassing and was angry both at how it was collected/distributed among faculty
and the lack of useful assistance in processing the information.

Structurally, there was no system to educate her about the tenure process.
This includes lack of knowledge about why the process was important, - the benefits
or receiving tenure and/or the consequences for not doing so. Further, she did not
understand the publishing requirements or how to get started on the process of
building a publishing/research agenda. Intrapersonally, she feared the writing
process and her ability to complete this requirement. She overcame this hurdle by
willing herself just to start writing and with the help of the dean and mentor as
described below.

Eventually, she learned from another new faculty member she could request
a mentor to assist her in her tenure and general academic process. This mentor has
assisted her in developing her publishing plan and getting started in her writing as
well as providing valuable feedback. She has received additional support from the
dean including materials on how to write academically and consistent supportive
check-ins on her progress. With this assistance, she started writing with more ease
and feels she quickly reached a high level of productivity. She has had trouble
publishing at times and relates this to the challenge of publishing American Indian
specific content. However, she also notes she has been able to match her work in
the community and American Indian specific research interests with her tenure requirements without much struggle. She is currently working on the final article she feels she needs to achieve tenure- her first quantitative research article- which she did describe as a hoop to jump through but feels she can do so maintaining her values and American Indian perspective. Though tedious, she thinks it is important to receive tenure and be a role model to other American Indian students/faculty,

“And it’s something I take seriously. Just not - just doing it for the sake of doing it. I think that it’s important for me to be a tenure track, because as a native person, maybe other people can do this - be a role model. So, the process is tedious, but it’s not impossible.”

Finally, she describes enjoying teaching content specific to her culture. She describes how in many ways her knowledge does not lend to traditional academic leadership or perspective, e.g. having been the head of a large bureaucratic organization. Rather, she teaches from direct experiences in American Indian communities both professionally and personally. This knowledge and method of teaching is in line with her traditional values. However, she sees it challenging the values of her non native students and resulting in more negative student reviews at times than those of her peers, “when you’re hiring people of color. We don’t - we come from the actual working fields. We don’t come from - I was Executive Director of the YMCA - we don’t come from these high-level worlds where we have book clubs and wine parties. That’s not our world. Our world is we come from the trenches... some of us may have had issues with child protection or drug abuse and alcohol - I mean, those were where our world is...some of us may have experienced some of the ugliness of that
world. So, to come here and say, ‘Okay. Now you have to come here and teach what you know.’ That’s - I’m going to tell you some pretty ugly personal stories that happened to my family because that’s what I know. And I think students should know that, but that’s totally different from you coming from the YMCA and saying, ‘Oh, this is what I know about children at risk.’ It’s so different. It’s so very different and it’s frustrating. So, part of that’s that teaching piece, and if you - and the interesting part of it too is - I don’t know if you’ve done research on it, but when students grade faculty of color, we don’t always get the best grades, especially...if we’re teaching diversity. They’re saying, ‘Oh, that teacher has a chip on their shoulder. That teacher’s got…’ And our scores go down... it’s like, how do I balance that when I get these - I don’t think I like her. Well, is that because I’m native and I’m teaching you and history that you’ve never heard about in your life and now you feel uncomfortable?” This contradiction remains unresolved. She additionally notes that the structure and culture of the university is less respectful of her due to her lack of a doctoral degree. She thus does not disclose this information freely.

To summarize, several structural issues prove barriers to participant two’s experiences in academia including no clear explanation or early support for the tenure process and a requirement she do quantitative research. Structurally and interpersonally, she perceives discrimination based on not having her PhD. Further, teaching cultural content, particularly relevant to the American Indian worldview and her own experience, proves challenging and results in loss of positive reviews from students at times. However, she was able to use intrapersonal perseverance and assertiveness to request the assistance she needed in starting her publishing
agenda. Further, she had key interpersonal relationships (with the dean and her mentor) that facilitated this process. She also reports being able to do work relevant to her culture.

**Specific recommendations:**

Participant #2 makes multiple recommendations across the domains of experience. She notes that funding sources are depleting for American Indians students in general and this is complicated by per capita payments from the tribe counting as income and compromising students’ who receive them being able to qualify for financial aid. She underscores the need for American Indian faculty for American Indian students to relate to, “I would think you would have to have American Indian faculty, because we just think differently. We think and live and our philosophy is different.” Part of that being able to happen must include getting positive stories of social work out to the American Indian community. This she feels could start as early as high school. Further, as a profession, we need to encourage and help facilitate tribally specific child welfare codes and practices. She has not, to this point, seen any of the professional social work programs being entirely effective in translating cultural knowledge/skills to community needs. In her own work, she is concerned even when we do teach the content the translation to practice is not happening in the community (e.g. teaches ICWA, not sure students able to apply the policy in practice effectively).

Ultimately, as a faculty member, she sees her particular department as supporting American Indian faculty but a need for better work at the university system as a whole. This includes honest dialogues and ending microaggressions
from staff who do not understand or hold significant biases. She relates a story of students being followed in campus stores by clerks and accused of stealing and personally be treated like she is a student due to her appearance not matching that of traditional faculty. Further, “So, in order to create a safe environment for natives, it has to be safe for everybody. And I think there’s - there’s, how should I say this - there’s times when that doesn’t happen. And even if it is a minor incident, it doesn’t have to be a full-blown Facebook incident. But even if it’s a minor thing, it has an impact. Even in the classroom, if students are not called on - I mean, I’ve heard this too at a local community college where if a native student raises their hand, they’re not even - they’re not even picked. So it’s those even little things that native students pick up on. It’s having a teacher explain to you an assignment. I mean, that’s a basic one and students aren’t even getting that from teachers, so now their perception is they don’t care. And so, you have all that - that comes into play. And that’s a systemic thing.”

Participant #3

**Overall Narrative and Impressions**

Participant three’s overall narrative has distinct cultural conflict throughout. She describes struggles to reconcile her American Indian worldview and values with that of academia and its dominant cultural norms (described in detail below). She sees value in a lifetime’s worth of conflict, but the fatigue from those fights is evident as she debates retirement and looks back on her career. This participant does not see recruiting more American Indian students into social work education specifically as a worthy goal but rather emphasizes a need to recruit into higher education in general. This narrative is also less about achieving the milestones of
completion (finishing a degree, getting tenure) but rather the notable moments of significant conflict and their resolution (or lack thereof) that overall characterize her experiences in academia. The language is rife with conflict and dichotomy - facing the challenges of dominant culture institutions and individuals yet maintaining her own cultural identity, values and connections.

**Obtaining the requisite degrees**

While in high school, the counselor asked the third participant if her family could afford college, she said no, and immediately was put in general education to become a secretary or the like, “And then in high school, I was called down to the counselor’s office, and I remember his name was [specific name]. He asked me one question: ‘Can your family afford to send you to college?’ I said, ‘No.’ And he sent me back to my class - my homeroom and I was trapped into what was termed ‘general education,’ which was just basic math, learning how to type, basically learning to be a secretary, I guess. So, by the time you get to college, then you’ve missed out on all of the college prep courses and that type of writing and skill development.” She became a secretary when she graduated and did not consider college. Neither of her parents finished high school and she had little knowledge of what college was or why she would want to go. However, she grew bored in her job and her brother had started college. He encouraged her to start taking classes and she did so. She explains at this point in the narrative that there are two dominant values in her culture - living for the moment and living for the seventh generation (considering how choices we make now will impact many future generations). She describes moving between these in her life and at the time she started her bachelor's level work she was living
for the moment. With that in mind, she was not focused on the endgame (graduating) and struggled with having to take requirements for graduation that did not resonate with her personal interest or values. Further, she did not understand the language and customs of academia- e.g. syllabuses, majors, minors. She describes feeling culturally isolated, “It was difficult being one of the few native students there because you don’t see yourself reflected. There were no native professors at that time that I was aware of to take courses from.” Complicating these structural and cultural struggles, her mother did not support or understand her desire to attend an institution with buildings and structure so reminiscent of the boarding schools of her youth.

While in her undergraduate program, she frequently found herself having to speak for all of the Native community at both the structural/organizational (in classes, on lecture panels) and interpersonal level (with her classmates). She did not like being in this position, “And, oftentimes, I’d be called to be on a panel for the College of Business to talk about what it was like to be American Indian...maybe once in a while, there’d be two students. And it was hard. It was like being put on stage to explain, who and what you are and then the professor would try to relate that to business because [undergraduate institution] has a strong College of Business and I thought, ‘Why don’t you have business students doing this instead of me’?” Further, she found her fellow students often did not believe her descriptions of her Native ways and isolated or ignored her as a result, “people would talk to me about [being an] Indian and what I do and that kind of thing and turn to the next person - boyfriends or children or whatever, but they only talked to me in class - like the person next to me
classmate, about being Indian. And so, I just felt representative of that all of the time. And then, half of the time, I would tell some truths, and they wouldn’t believe me, so - or they wouldn’t want to believe it or something. So, it just added [more to my] quietness. You know, why even bother? They aren’t going to believe me anyway. Why even bother? So, I kind of introverted it through the undergraduate program.” She also notes both students and faculty made, “uncalled for remarks” she did not appreciate.

Originally, she planned to major in theatre but started to recognize this would not likely result in a job. She recognizes several of the activities she engaged in for her community were very like social work, “but then I thought, ‘Hmmm. What am I going to do for a job when I get out?’ And by then, I was working more just volunteering with the tribal communities and, of course, I always danced, so that was part of my tribal community as well. And giving elders rides to different things, like funerals, doctor’s appointments. So, I thought, ‘Well that’s sort of social work, right?’ [laughing] So, I kind of turned that way.” She completed her degree in social work and then was diagnosed with cancer. After her treatment, she wanted to pursue medical social work so she decided to get a masters degree with a certificate in gerontology. This process was at a larger, more diverse institution. Though they did not have any American Indian faculty or content, she felt the diverse student population in general and the Jewish faculty in particular understood the history of American Indian people and their experiences. She also feels she found her academic footing in this program and received her first significant positive feedback from faculty- including advice to pursue her PhD, “So I studied really, really, really
hard the first semester and I got a 4.0, so I could breathe... And then I wrote a paper on fetal alcohol syndrome and on the back of it - I mean, I just really got into it - and on the back of it, the professor wrote a lot of positive notes and then added, 'You're the type of person we would like to have in a Ph.D. program.' So that kind of stuck and she was great.” Like her masters degree, pursuing her PhD was a means to obtain a particular job- working as an administrator in an academic setting. She does not discuss this process in detail. She notes she worked her way through it and completed it in just less than four years with little note of particular facilitators or barriers in the process beyond receiving a grant to fund her dissertation.

In summary, several interpersonal barriers created struggles in obtaining her bachelors and masters degrees. This included her high school counselor’s discouragement, followed by a lack of support from her mother and poor treatment from her peers and some faculty. Later in her academic career, however, an interpersonal relationship with an advisor encourages her academic ability, plants the seed to get her PhD and provided tangible financial support. Culturally, she has a lot of conflict as described with her academic environment but did see cultural congruence with social work and her work in her tribal community. Structurally, the overall culture was at odds with her worldview. However, at the end of her time as a student a dissertation grant assisted her in finishing her degree.

**Getting the academic job(s)**

She applied for her first academic position based on the location of the school (in the southwest where she was interested in living and she knew to have a large American Indian community). She was offered the job contingent upon finishing her
dissertation, which she did with great haste. The position was offered with several promises around valuing her work with the American Indian population and her own cultural identity. After two years, it became clear this was not the case (see discussion below) and she decided to move back closer to her tribal community. She made an inquiry at a local school and was asked to apply for a position she was subsequently offered. After serving in that position through the tenure acquisition process, she wanted a bigger school with more opportunities and challenges. Again, she casually inquired at a school meeting those requirements still close her home community. She was encouraged to apply for and subsequently received a position in the program where she remains employed today. These actual hiring processes are remarkable in their lack of struggle or conflict- in all three cases she applied for a single job at the time and got an offer. She does note, however, around the time she was applying for the final position she was asked to speak on a panel at the school. Once there, she noted a lot of social work faculty in the audience and realized this was, unbeknownst to her, to be a “job talk” for the pending position.

Experiences in academia (including tenure and promotion discussion)

Her early experience in academia, the two years she spent at school in the southwest, proved a significant struggle across domains of experience. She describes the environment as very cold and lacking collegiality. She relates one interpersonal interaction where she tried to socialize with another faculty member. They agreed to go the movies. The colleague arrived just before the movie started and left immediately after with no social interaction. She says she had similar experiences just passing through the halls where no one spoke to anyone else. At
first, she has a similar reception from local tribes who seemed to question why she was there and not working with her home community. She indicates this relationship softened quickly and she made significant inroads working with those local communities. She also related being able to work well with American Indian students who often would only open up when talking to her, “but that’s one thing I did enjoy at [first school she worked]. And probably - I taught grad and undergrad - there were probably 13 to 17 undergrads that were native students and then 4 to 7 graduates. And I liked that. I welcome that in a classroom. I talk about my tribe and what they believe and then other tribes around here that I know, and then the Indian students who talk about their tribe - voluntarily - I always said that...voluntarily. You do not have to answer any questions. They do not have to talk. It’s up to you. But I noticed as I walked - I’m a walker - I walked up and down the aisles, if I got close to a native student, they’d talk. Then I’d move on and then they’re quiet again. If I move around, get close to them, it’s almost like support, then they’d say something - they’d contribute. But that was fun working with students who were native in class and hearing about their tribal differences... that was - that was one saving grace of [her first academic position].” Overall, the culture clash of going from her home community where you must speak to everyone or be considered rude was a huge and troubling difference from this isolating academic environment, “And, we got there and it was like honey, you’re on your own...It was just pretty isolating. And there was no - like here there’s age difference - there were people, there’s the elders, and the little kids, and I’m an auntie and all of those roles stripped.”
In addition to the isolation, she did not understand the politics of this new environment and could not easily reconcile them with her cultural values. She relates voting in a meeting the way she felt the American Indian community would want her to vote. However, this meant voting against the position of her dean. She was chastised for not supporting the dean who hired her over the needs of her community, “You just want me here to represent physically, not represent [American Indian people]...So, that was frustrating. So - isolated, lose all your roles with your tribe, this tribe's down here questioning you, trying to have a relationship with other workers or other faculty and it's just like - yeah, I'll meet you at the theater and then leave, ok - I mean, it was just so cold. I thought that was really cold. And that wasn’t the only time. It just seemed like probably the first time, so I remember it. And the meetings, there was - I mean, it was a rough place to be a that time. I mean, a lot of people were against the Dean. And, one time, I voted the way I thought the Indian people would want me to vote for some - I don’t know what it was. And two people come in - shut my door, come into my office, shut the door, and come up to me. I'm sitting in the chair and they’re standing up. And they're in my office with my door closed. Didn’t ask me or anything. And said, ‘How come you voted against the Dean? How could you vote against the Dean? She’s the one that brought you here.’ And I thought - I said I thought I was supposed to vote the way the native people would want me to vote. ‘Well, you voted against the Dean, and she’s the one that brought you here.’ It’s that kind of environment. So, it was pretty frustrating and isolating.” She was not assigned a faculty mentor to help her in any of these areas and eventually decided to return to her home state.
Once there, she still experienced similar isolation at times but feels she better navigated the academic position. She indicates her experiences were, “95% positive” in her final position back in her home state. However, her stories of this time in her career are still largely conflict ridden with multiple instances of culture clash, confronting racism, isolation and struggles to advocate for tribal communities and American Indian students, “It’s been 95% positive. There’s still that...isolation and individual and I think that comes with the whole professorship, because everybody’s working on their own info and research and everything. And then you have to be in class and, of course, you don’t know anybody there, they’re not in class when you’re in class and they’re in class when you’re not in class and you don’t really get to see them in passing that much. So it is, to me, an isolated experience coming from a native community, where everybody talks to everybody and you must talk to everybody, otherwise you’re going to be ousted in some way. So, I had a hard time learning that at both - all of the schools - that you just walk by somebody and you don’t speak to them and ask them how they are... I thought - and when they do that to me, I think, ‘How rude.’ And it’s like, well now I’m doing it back to them. How rude. I mean, if you walk in that tribal center and you don’t speak to every person that comes along on both sides - I don’t care if you’re late for a meeting - you talk to them until you get there. And it’s sort of the stereotype of native people or minorities are always late. No, we operate different. And, you can just hear them in the hall if you miss one. ‘Did she say hi to you? She didn’t say hi to me. I wonder what’s going on. I wonder what’s going on.’ And that gets into family. Well, maybe I insulted her brother. It’s just [makes annoyed noise]. So you’ve got to speak to everyone. And then just walk down
the hall and pass somebody that you like and know and everything and not say a word.

It’s like, this is weird, but it seems the norm. So I’m not used to that. I’ll never probably be used to that.”

That said, she also relates several instances of success in these regards. For example, she fought for field placements on the reservation and then further fought for an American Indian student to be given the position over a white student. She describes an overall process of playing the game to build political and social capitol in academia and then selecting when it is most beneficial to spend that capitol to reach her goals. She notes there have been several times that her capitol was quite low but worth the price she paid, “But, it’s been good. There’s been some things that I’ve had to confront and, again, when I talk about people who are just becoming tenured or entering the tenured strain, it’s real important to know how much political capital you have and how to spend it and not to spend it all at once. And I had to spend some. [laughing] And I got kind of in rough shape a couple times with my capital being very low, but I’d do it again because it was the right thing to do.” She also notes she now stays largely quiet in meetings feeling her input is not often valued and major decisions have often already been made prior to such meetings. She laments some of her best recommendations, e.g. partnering with tribal colleges, have gone ignored.

She has little to say about getting tenured except that it was easy. She has not received further promotion but feels this was due to her ongoing health issues. She does not intend to pursue full professorship, though she feels she would get it, as she instead intends to retire and pursue other passions.
The conflicts throughout this narrative center on maintaining her own cultural values along with addressing and prioritizing the needs of American Indian students and communities. Interpersonally, she is challenged by peers for not voting in the best interest of the dean but rather her community. She is also isolated by fellow faculty and, early in career, not offered a mentor to help her negotiate the politics and structure of academia. Structurally, she notes challenging those practices she sees as racist or not in the best interests of tribes or American Indian students (not letting a field placement for an American Indian student on the reservation be taken away to go to a white student). However, these conflicts and advocacy efforts come with an intrapersonal toll (fatigue). Though she does not relate them directly to these conflicts, she has several health issues further complicating her experience.

**Specific recommendations**

She makes clear that her personal primary goal is to recruit more American Indian students into college rather than social work in particular as she wants to best meet the needs of students and their home communities. She fears some students may default to social work as it is the only major where they have seen other American Indian students have success. She does feel social work needs more American Indian faculty to attract students but recognizes the, “chicken and the egg” nature of this need. She suggests partnering with tribal colleges is the best way to resolve this dilemma.
Participant #4

Overall Narrative and Impression

The fourth participant is a non-tenured track instructor/administrator with an MSW as his terminal degree. This interview had an entirely different tone than the other interviews with the participant sticking most closely to the chronological order of events and a noticeable absence of conflict in the majority of the narrative. Further, the interaction was very conversational with more interjections from the researcher as I fed into the tone of humor and lightness set by the participant. This is not to say the participant did not take the interview seriously, report barriers or offer critical analysis. All were included in detail but offered with consistent good humor the participant directly acknowledged as part of his cultural identity that he has used throughout his academic endeavors and career. He notes in the interview an ease in moving in and out of a variety of cultural settings, an intrapersonal factor likely contributing to the nature of his story and his overall characterization of his experiences.

Obtaining the requisite degrees

Participant four was encouraged to attend college during high school and did take college preparatory classes. He began his undergraduate work immediately out of high school- in large part to avoid the draft. However, once the draft ended he opted to stop attending school due to financial issues and started working. He continued this pattern and stopped and started his bachelor’s degree multiple times. Later in the interview, he spoke to the fact lots of American Indian students will stop their educations for other immediate needs. At one point he returns to school out of
necessity— he had been long laid off during a bad economy. He attended three institutions during his bachelor’s degree. At the second one, he made it to the point he only had two more courses to take in order to graduate. However, that semester, the school cancelled both and informed him he would need to stay another year waiting to take those classes and completing his degree. This made him angry and he started looking for another option. He selected a third school as it had both a bilingual teaching program and large sober American Indian community. He was new to his own sobriety and struggling to find friends who also embraced sobriety. However, starting over at the new school meant taking additional courses to complete the requirements of the new institution. While doing so, he was offered a job directing another program on campus. He stopped attending again for that position but did eventually finish by taking classes here and there while working. He notes that during his undergraduate work at his first and second institutions he never met with an advisor much less had a mentor (he admits signing his own advising forms). At the third institution, he was called to his advisor’s office who assumed he was a freshman and wanted to tell him he should not be taking advanced coursework,

“Participant: Really. And so, I came to her office and she opened my folder and this little sheet of paper comes like a leaf and that’s all she had on me. She said, ‘Are you a new student or a freshman?’ she said. ‘Because you just took three courses that are for the upper classmen.’

Interviewer: Wow, someone was actually paying attention.
Participant: Yeah, so typical Indian humor, I said, 'You know, yes, this is my first ever time in college. I figured I'd take the three toughest courses, if I did ok, then everything else would be a piece of cake.'

Interviewer: [laughing]

Participant: While you’re chuckling at it, she was dead serious. ‘You - you can’t do that.’ I said, ‘I’m kidding.’ I said, ‘These are the only courses I need.’ I told her I transferred. I was thinking, my goodness, it was like trying to tell a joke to a totem pole. [laughing]”

Though his attempt to use humor in the interaction failed, he notes feeling impressed she had bothered to try and provide assistance. While reviewing his undergraduate transcript, one of his faculty advisors noted he had taken as many credits as an average person takes in completing their bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees.

While working as the director of the campus program, he started thinking about a masters degree and set about finding an option that met his interests in administrative work but also proved a rigorous program. Social work provided the closest and most convenient match to his interests. He indicates once he started the program, he liked how social work’s core values and concepts matched his own and his interests. Further, he had access to American Indian faculty, mentors and colleagues, which he enjoyed. Again, the need to satisfy those paying his paycheck resulted in several delays and incompletes in acquiring his masters. He also switched jobs to become the dean of a tribal college 150 miles away from his masters program further delaying his completion. Prior to finishing his MSW
degree, he was offered a job at his MSW program. Once there, they wanted him to start teaching but insist he first finish his masters degree. He did so more than 10 years after starting, including turning in a paper 10 years later to clear up an incomplete. He notes that he needed a program that was willing to be flexible with him, allow him to take breaks as financially and personally necessary. He has not pursued a PhD due to his need to work and feeling a PhD would be better for someone younger in their career who has more time to pay it forward.

In summary, participant four obtained his degrees over an extended period of time due to a combination of intrapersonal and structural barriers and facilitators. Interpersonally, his financial issues play a huge roll in his stopping and starting his degrees. He also notes a generally strong set of academic skills facilitating the process. Further, he notes being able to move comfortably among cultures making the transition to academic life easier. Structurally, lack of available advisement coupled with a problematic class schedule in his second undergraduate program proves a significant barrier to completing his degree. The flexible structure of his masters program and high level of interpersonal mentoring and support allowed him to complete his masters program successfully after an extended break from the program.

**Getting the academic jobs**

Prior to completing his bachelor’s degree, participant four held various jobs in academia. He indicated for all but one of these jobs (the dean job at the tribal college) someone directly asked him to apply. Once in his final position at his masters of social work program, they asked him to complete his degree so he could
become an instructor in the program. It should be noted that these positions include working directly with the American Indian community as part of his role. The process of obtaining all these academic postings and his current job are remarkable in their lack of struggle—again, he is often asked to apply for these positions without seeking them out himself.

**Experiences in academia**

As noted, participant four’s work has been largely tied to the American Indian community. In his current position, he was hired to do curriculum development for American Indian content in addition to teaching. This includes making direct connections to local tribal communities collecting data and developing curriculum according to their practices. He makes clear this is important as it gets authentic information about American Indian communities into the classroom, “But if you really want the authentic, true history and the most accurate history, then you go right to that culture and speak to the people. That’s the opportunity that I’ve had. Cause sometimes, even when [fellow faculty member] and I see something, that may come over the Internet and say, well, we have no idea who this person is that wrote it. It may be that same person who burned to death four people in the sweat lodge. It sounds good, but is that really authentic? I always want to make sure people are aware that there are some charlatans out there.” He also notes that information he gathers is filtered through his lens and thus always somewhat altered, “Because - and I tell them - I said, ‘What you’re telling me, I’m going to tell to the students. It’s not just going to be first-hand, it’s going to be somewhat diluted. And probably more of [my] side than your side, cause I’m telling the story.’ And I’d lose
some things in the translation, but hopefully I can get the gist of it - what I want to say. Cause there's some real powerful stories that I've heard over the years and I've also had the ability - or not the ability - but the opportunity to work with an elders counsel (twelve American Indian elders) and we would meet for a day and a half, talking about the kinships, the stories, the strengths, the culture, the language, and just let them go on and on and on. I'd take as many notes as I can.” He indicates he enjoys getting to take this information directly into the courses he teaches.

He also recognizes the general seriousness of academia including lots of meetings and the general grind it can be. He feels his humor helps break that up not only for him but for his colleagues and students, “And then, when I came here, we'd go to our faculty meetings or a meeting, and I could break it up. I could break it up by telling a joke or saying something that put everybody else at ease and it's kind of like coming to a point saying it's fine to enjoy this... [laughing] This doesn’t have to be just a grind.”

This narrative notes a high level of cultural congruence between the participants’ worldview and the structure of the position and program in which he works. Further, he is able to match his intrapersonal desire to produce sound information about American Indian communities for students, social workers and educators with his job requirements. He does not note much in the way of barriers-including a lack of barriers in teaching new, often challenging information about American Indian history and culture to non-Indian students. Instead, he notes intrapersonal satisfaction from doing so. He also notes his cultural and
intrapersonal use of humor facilitating both his interactions with faculty and students.

**Specific recommendations**

Like participant three, participant four does not believe the goal should be specifically getting American Indian students into social work education but into education in general, particularly graduate degree programs. He wants to make sure students have information about all potential programs and can pick those that best meet the needs of their communities and/or their own needs. That said, he also advocates direct recruitment in American Indian communities where the message about social work demonstrates the positives rather than any negative perceptions. Further, he suggests offering dual degrees in areas like public health. He also thinks programs should “grow their own” encouraging students to go on for doctoral degrees or help support them through doctoral degrees (he uses the example of another employee of his program currently working on her doctorate at the school) but be willing to let them go to other institutions and pay the process forward. As a profession, he feels social work needs to recognize and support rather than undermine the natural care communities among American Indian people. Finally, he suggests their needs to be some degree of flexibility in meeting American Indian student needs (e.g. time off for family issues, ceremonies) while not sacrificing the rigor of programs.
Participant #5

**Overall Narrative and Impressions**

Participant five clearly indicates not liking dichotomous language separating one dominant identity and its accompanying worldview, with the others (e.g. white versus American Indian or other cultural identities). However, much of her experience is juxtaposed with language underscoring how the reality of these dichotomies in her academic institutions has affected her life. She consistently refers back to the curriculum of, “dead white men” or similar references that blocks her from learning about or truly exploring her learning/profession beyond that prescribed context of the dominant discourse. For her education through her masters degree, she was enveloped by this perspective unable to experience or even see her own identity, “Well, again, there was nothing in that program that supported American Indian identity. There was nothing about American Indian people. It’s like that whole - it was like that part of me was a ghost. It just wasn’t - there was nothing in the curriculum, which is what drives me today to look at social work curriculum and indigenous content, because there was nothing.” Only after her undergraduate and masters degrees and with the help of her husband and community was she able to transcend this paradigm (though it was still rooted in the dominant discourse) in her doctoral work. As seen in the quote, she talks about her identity as a ghost identity to that point and then later asserts her identity through tenacity and determination.
Obtaining the requisite degrees

Her parents told participant five, though neither of them had attended college, that she could do so after high school. She had grown up in the girl scouts and wanted to be a Girl Scout director- college was a means to an end. She attended a highly religious private school as it was close to her parents and she could live at home while attending. Her first notation about this time is that one of her faculty members stole her work, though she does not expound on this issue. Though this was the civil rights era, she indicates there was no American Indian content in her bachelors program. She had the impression from both her pre college and college schooling that American Indians were dead and gone, “And I think that it was the location was in a place where there were no reservations or reserves and so I remember the complete absence of any discussion about American Indian issues. It was during Civil Rights, so there was a lot of discussion about African Americans and some of the inequities and - but nothing about Wounded Knees (the earlier version or the later version of what happened there). There was nothing about Civil Rights, except focusing on African Americans. So, as far as that program and the material they presented, American Indian people were dead. They were gone. They were removed.” She was somewhat aware of her own American Identity and pieced together bits and pieces of what that meant, but none of that information came from school. She describes undergraduate education at the time as focused less on profession and more on becoming a well-rounded person. However, for her personally, she remembers her bachelor’s degree as a time for learning about dead white men from a highly Christian perspective- the dominant culture. Rather than
developing her own identity, she gained the foundation for understanding colonialism.

After her bachelor’s degree, she worked as a probation officer learning in detail how much criminal behavior was tied to mental health. She decided to pursue a masters in social work to learn more about this and potentially be able to serve this population. Her father was not supportive of this fearing she would educate herself out of employment, her mother was concerned due to her learning disabilities she could not handle a graduate program. Around this same time, her brother committed suicide. She felt strongly this was due to not having understood/experienced his identity and his mental health issues. This further underscored her choice of masters programs.

She started her masters program several states away from home working full time to afford school and living expenses (though her parents helped with tuition). She indicates several barriers during this time related to her work and class schedule along with having to move multiple times. Like her undergraduate program, she had no American Indian content in her masters program. She characterizes the curriculum as having a dominant culture bias. However, she indicates not processing this much at the time as she was largely in survival mode. Only later in life does she process this and her inability at the time to fully recognize and live her American Indian identity both personally and professionally, “I was not putting that together at all. There was nothing in any of the mental health stuff. There was nothing in any of the social work stuff. There was no discussion about identity. There was no discussion about diversity. It was definitely white, Anglo-Saxon,
Protestant - well, actually, no, it was actually beyond that. It really was not even - those things were not - religion, spirituality wasn’t even talked about. There was nothing about it whatsoever.

Interviewer: And how did that feel for you and your understanding your own identity?

Participant: I was so busy working full-time and going to school full-time that it all just - I didn’t have time to really process things. It really hasn’t been until after that.

Interviewer: After the fact?

Participant: After the fact. Yeah. Because you know - you know when you’re in school and you’re trying to do a whole bunch of things and you just don’t have time to really digest it all. It’s really after that and when you start - it’s when I started working with clients and working with diverse people and having diverse co-workers - that’s when I really started putting it all together.”

Thirty years passed between getting her masters degree and finishing her doctoral work. During that time, she moved out west with her husband and learned more about her own identity. She was also exposed to programs with high amounts of American Indian content and wanted the opportunity to teach from this point of view. However, financially, it made more sense for her family if her husband pursued his doctorate first. She then started an EdD program feeling that this better suited her interest and would support her through her struggles with research content. However, she was working full time in a university position and they were unwilling to adjust their schedule for her courses. Further, she had some struggles with her statistics course and ultimately dropped out of her first doctoral program
so she could continue to support her family. Then, her husband received a position at a Canadian school to help “indigenize” their curriculum. She was also offered a job as his partner. That program also had an EdD program and were in need of a student with some coursework complete to fill a spot vacated by another student. As a matter of financial and general convenience, she started her doctoral work a second time in that program. Again, she indicates there was no fit between her American Indian culture and worldview and that of her program- it had no American Indian content and all the theories/research were of the, “dead white men.”

Despite this programmatic characteristic, she notes she was at a very different place with her own identity development at this point. She is able to assert her learning needs and research interests including doing a dissertation focused on an American Indian issue. She notes several struggles as a result of this choice including having to change advisors, seeing the only indigenous faculty leave due to isolation, having advisors without any clue about her topic and generally feeling like, “a square peg in a round hole.” However, she did complete the degree with this topic and indicates she was quite proud of being able to do so.

Culturally, academia further isolated this participant from her own identity due to a curriculum that ignored the existence of American Indian people. Intrapersonally, once she had done the work to understand and internalize this identity in her own, she uses this new understanding to facilitate completion of a culturally relevant dissertation. However, the structural barriers of her PhD program (lack of American Indian content, lack of a consistent American Indian
mentor) make this process difficult. It is through her intrapersonal characteristics (tenacity, determination) that she is able to transcend these barriers and obtain the degree.

**Getting the academic jobs**

Prior to completing her doctorate, participant five’s mother got ill and needed care. She decided to try and find a job back closer to home so she could care for her. She contacted a colleague she had long known who happened to be starting a BSW program at the school where she was head of the department. She encouraged participant five to apply for the position there; she did so and was hired before completing her degree (which she did subsequently complete). Note here that obtaining the academic position has no significant barriers and is facilitated by an existing interpersonal relationship.

**Experiences in academia (including the tenure and promotion process)**

Participant five indicates she had some pre-faculty academic jobs where she was taken advantage of (given more/extra work compared to others without adequate compensation). She has just started her current position and is focused on publishing due to her tenure track position. She is publishing in her interest area (a focus on American Indians). However, she indicates that due to her work obligations she is unable to reconnect to her tribal community to the degree she would like, ”But I’m back home and I’m back home where I can go to my ceremonies and I can go become involved again. And I’m not really quite ready for that, because if I don’t get published, I’m screwed.” She also indicates she is not able to teach the courses most interesting to her and most related to her research area (e.g. the
diversity course) though she is able to infuse American Indian content throughout her classes.

Participant five is early in her academic career but already affected by structural issues affecting her cultural needs (the academic requirements of her time precluding full participation in her community). She is able to do research/writing in a manner congruent with her culture and values. However, due to the structure of her program, she is not able to move that information fully into her teaching, as she would like.

**Direct recommendations**

Participant five suggests an overall increase in quality American Indian content throughout social work programs. She thinks this will contribute to the overall need for consciousness raising, “There’s no content. There’s no content. There’s no consciousness raising. There’s no - I mean, I haven’t analyzed all of the - and my guess is, well actually I know, that it’s different out West and I’m sure it’s probably different in Oklahoma where there’s more of an American Indian presence, but in a lot of programs, you just don’t - you just don’t get it.” She also suggests American Indian faculty often end up isolated and need allies and links to other American Indian faculty. She describes a situation at former program she worked for where, “they really found that they could not have just one American Indian faculty member because that person was isolated. They were - they were not supported. It was easy for people to just blow them off. Other faculty in Canada have written about this, where you have discussion about (or you try to have discussion about) indigenous
content and you just get blown off.” She also believes American Indian students need support understanding their own indigenous identities.

Participant #6

**Overall Narrative and Impressions**

Participant six’s interview was over two hours long. In part, this is due to covering the scope of a full career to the point of retirement. It also includes the highest number of academic positions held. Further, the stories of each position have certain unique qualities requiring a full narrative for each detailing the reason for his hiring, the work he did while there and culminating in the reason for his departure. Though each story is unique, there is a common narrative arc to each. Typically, he is recruited into his academic position due to his extensive skill set to accomplish specific tasks (e.g. licensure, creating a new program), accomplishes these though with a high degree of interpersonal and structural conflict and then is either forced out or chooses to leave due to these conflicts. In most cases, the participant transgresses the structural barriers to both his assigned tasks and personal goals for his work. However, the interpersonal conflicts and barriers tend to result in his departure. These patterns are detailed more in the experiences in academia section below.

The other overall theme is consistent cultural conflict where his dedication to multiculturalism often contradicts the positions of his institutions and many of his peers and supervisors. This conflict typically does not relate to his own identity or to American Indians specifically (with the exception of addressing a mascot issue in one of his positions). The conflict typically includes a diversity of cultural identities
(e.g. African American, LGBT) a particular institution is choosing to disenfranchise or not properly support. He notes consistently teaching from a majority/minority culture perspective and building programs based on the importance of multiculturalism. This was not a position often supported by his employers, “because I was born raised bi-cultural, the whole idea of bi-culturality and different realities has always been just how it is for me, so when I taught these classes, I would teach them from a majority and minority cultural point of view. And I would talk, when I taught about substance abuse, I would talk about it from the point of view of practitioners, science, users, street people, sellers, the whole parts of it that I - all the ways that I knew of it and that raised some eyebrows quite frankly.”

Due to the issues described above, the language throughout the dialogue is that of conflict. Repeatedly, he uses the phrase, “tangled with” to describe his interactions with people or persons with whom he shared divergent views. In each academic setting in which he was either student, faculty member or consultant there exists a story of conflict. Though many of these stories come with accompanying tales of great accomplishment, they also result in loss of jobs and intrapersonal stress. He often describes a variety of health issues complicating his already complex professional life. Though he does not directly link these to the stressors of his employment, he does make clear his employers were not supportive of his needs (e.g. time off) as a result of his serious health issues.

The other overall theme important to this narrative is a strong commitment to generalist social work practice. He describes choosing the profession due to a professor explaining it with a strong emphasis on the issue, “I took a class from him
and he explained this type of social work that I could live with - kind of a systems perspective, truly generalist, informed by values, scientific basis.” This participant consistently underscores the initial appeal of social work was its community based, holistic method of addressing problems. He also talks about the accompanying commitment to multiculturalism. When he tangles with people as described above, it is often due to a philosophical difference with the other person(s) due to one of these issues (e.g. not wanting to time record as instructed by a clinical social worker or failing to follow the state related cultural norms of one of his employers).

It is particularly artificial to separate out the narrative arcs on obtaining the requisite degrees, getting academic jobs and experiences in academia as these three areas overlap consistently in this overall narrative (as has been the case for other participants, but not to this extent). Further, unlike other participants, one leads to the other in a repetitive pattern. They are separated here for consistency in data analysis but several issues overlap and bear repeating in subsequent sections to underscore the relevant importance to each area described.

**Obtaining the requisite degrees**

Participant six started college right out of high school on a scholarship but indicates a nonspecific cultural clash led to him dropping out and joining what he describes as the hippy culture of the time. After a while, elements of this lifestyle become untenable. He shifts to what he hopes will be a more “normal” life including getting married and having a child. However, he runs into financial problems and has issues with chemical use. He seeks assistance from vocational rehabilitation to determine his career and school options. They give him aptitude tests and the like
and suggest he return to school for the helping professions. They also offer financial support to do so. He returns to school in his Middle America home state in an attempt to be what he describes as normal, “I really, really, really wanted to be normal, whatever the hell that is. And we had troubles and I did fairly well in the construction business and started a company and then I ran into a developer who cleaned me out. And we had a child. And I began to drink and things really went bad and then I ripped my parents - my mother had found religion and I had a chat with this pastor and he said, I think you ought to be checked out. And I said, yeah I think so. And so he sent me to Voc Rehab and they had me do a bunch of tests and they offered me a college scholarship. And we’re talking about books and tuition and some living allowance and I said that’s fine, but I’m not sure I know what I want to do. So I did some of the aptitude stuff and whatnot and they suggested that perhaps in the helping professions, the ministry or something, so I decided I would go back - I did like Psychology and Soc when I was doing college before and I went back and my wife and I kind of continued to struggle. Had a small child. 1, by about - I think about a dozen points - I would have gotten a 3.3 [GPA] but I got a 2.3 [GPA]. I had to do a whole lot of adjusting and figuring out how to study. She and I separated briefly. Came back together again. She got pregnant. Had our baby. I started working full-time, going to school full-time, while she worked part-time. I ended up the last three - I think, three or four semesters, I was on the Dean’s list. I discovered social work in the middle of all that. And so I ended up getting a BGS degree in Soc-Psych and Social Work.”

While in school, he indicates he discovers social work from the generalist perspective as described above. He makes clear this was appealing to him due to
the generalist values of social work overall, particularly the direct work in
communities. Prior to learning this view of social work, he had a bad impression of
the profession due to his interactions with social workers as a sick child. He
underscores this telling stories of his own work in the local community while
obtaining his degrees and a famous story of his university colleagues who started
community programming for those with disabilities. He revisits the importance of
the generalist model to his affinity for the profession throughout the narrative. His
undergraduate program offers him both a spot in the masters program as soon as he
finished his undergraduate degree and work to support him and his family while he
completed the degree. They also ask him to start teaching and this begins his
academic career, detailed further below. When he completes his masters degree,
they again ask him to stay on to complete his doctoral work and he does so.

Structurally, the program supported his education by providing tangible
support in the way of job opportunities. This was important as he was raising a
family while attending school and ultimately becomes a single parent for a time. It
also provided him with cultural support as the diversity of views and commitment
to community based social work matched his own values. He tells lengthy stories
about the diverse faculty at his institution at the time he was obtaining his degrees
and their position on the cutting edge of practice and philosophy at the time. The
only conflict involved in his actual degree obtaining process comes at the end as he
is taking his oral exams. A professor with a different philosophical perspective then
he had attempted to challenge him and subvert the process. He indicated he had no
respect for this man due to his lack of intellect. Another faculty member intervened
and ended the exam (allowing him to pass) before the process deteriorated, “And even actually I did well on my written comps and during my oral comps, [faculty member] (that was the guy’s name), asked me a stupid question and I looked at him and inside I growled and I started to answer and [chair], who was my mentor and the chair (the head of the department), he said, ‘Well, I think that Dr. [Participant #7], he hasn’t got it yet, but I believe he will have. Does anyone else have any kind of questions? I think this meeting is over with.’ [laughing]

Interviewer: [laughing]

Participant: And [faculty member] just looked at him and I had the shortest oral comp in ever because it would have turned into a fight. And I just can’t hardly deal with that stuff - never have been able to. And so I get in trouble for that. But that’s just kind of what happened. I’m better now than I used to be. So that’s the mentors. I did have people who were supporting and understanding. I did.”

In the case described above, a mentor intervenes on his behalf to avoid a conflict and potential thwarting during his dissertation defense. He describes any mentoring type relationships throughout his narratives in this regard. These were not people who provided him academic support or the like; instead they were allies who helped him manage conflict effectively. He notes this is particularly true when he tangled with highly clinical folks who did not reflect and/or agree with his staunchly generalist view of the social work profession. For example, one woman insisted he complete a process recording as part of his work/training. He did not see the value of the exercise for his type of practice or learning needs and refused. One of his mentors intervenes and suggests instead he and she process record their
discussion of having to do the process recording, “And the seminar leader wanted me
to do all this and then she discovered that I was a single parent and then she wanted to
help me with my single parenting, called therapy and I said, ‘No, I’m not going to do
that either.’ And she threatened to throw me out of the school. And so we went round
and round about that and she tried to make [Mentor] make me do a process recording.
[laughing]

Interviewer: [laughing]

Participant: I said, ‘you give me something that makes sense to process record
and I will do that.’ And she said, ‘Okay. I want you to leave this room, because if you
do not, I’m probably going to have to punch you.’ [laughing]

Interviewer: [laughing]

Participant: And she said, ‘When I’m done being mad, I’m going to have you
come back in and then I want you to process record what happens with our meeting.’ I
said, ‘Now that’s interesting. What are we going to do with it?’ She said, ‘You and I are
going to talk about it.’ And I said, ‘Are you going to show this to [seminar leader] - the
woman who is trying to fire me?’ And she says, ‘Not on your life.’ [laughing]

Interviewer: [laughing]

Participant: So that’s what we did and so she told [seminar leader] that I did
a process recording. So then [seminar leader] couldn’t fire me for that reason.”

Getting the academic job

As described above, participant six starts teaching while obtaining his
masters degree per an offer from his masters institution. They further offer him a
position as a full time instructor while obtaining his doctoral degree. However, they
did not initially offer him a tenure track while simultaneously offering tenure tracks to two other women he saw as less qualified, “She made me full-time as an instructor. She hired some of my former students at assistant professor rank - two women who were higher paid than me with less experience. I threw a hissy fit. She and I tangled. I went and sought out an attorney and I reported back to her the attorney and I got promoted and got put on tenure track.” Due to a conflict during the tenure process described below, he decides to seek employment elsewhere. He goes through the traditional hiring process and takes a job directing a small BSW program. He does not go into detail about this position but ultimately describes the department as “divided” and starts looking for other work. His next employer finds out he is on the market and asks him to interview at CSWE, “I just started looking. I already started looking and I happened onto these people from [specific University] who heard that I was looking and they interviewed me there at CSWE after some workshops I did or something and they invited me out and made me an offer.” He gets a job with the expectation he will help them get accreditation for a new masters program and generally build the program infrastructure. He does so, along with other successes described below, but again elects to leave/is pushed out (also described below). He applies for two further positions and chooses them among multiple offers due to their locations. Generally, he recalls the hiring processes themselves as unremarkable.

**Experiences in academia**

In his first full time faculty position, participant six leaves the position just before they are to vote on his tenure. He knew going into the process that the
director of the program and one faculty member intended to vote against him—the
director for interpersonal conflict reasons, the faculty member due to his Marxist
beliefs. He indicates he would have gotten tenure despite these holdouts. However,
he found the process and their positions insulting and elects to find another position
instead of seeing the process through, “Well, I went up for tenure and that got to be
really unpleasant. She voted against me, as did one other faculty member who is a
Marxist and his reason for voting against me was because morality wasn’t a variable
from his point of view. Yeah. And there were some other issues.

Interviewer:  [laughing]

Participant: Yeah.

Interviewer: I don’t think you need to let your own philosophical
underpinnings determine the value of someone else’s tenure application. A fascinating
new one. I don’t think I’ve heard that one before.

Participant: Well, that happens. Not very often, but it does happen with
ideologues like some Marxists. He’s the first that I ran into like that, but in my career
not the only one. So, we talked about it. I quit. I left. I found a different job.

Interviewer: So did you get tenure or no?

Participant: I would have if I had stayed.

Interviewer: Okay.

Participant: But the process was insulting to me.”

He then starts his position at the small BSW program but leaves there due to a
generally divided culture among the faculty.
During this time, he was asked to join a major national social work organization. He describes great success in working with the organization on its diversity initiatives including getting diverse groups of representatives to work together. However, he also describes getting into unspecified conflicts with others ultimately resulting in him being removed from his position, “he appointed me as head of that commission and I wasn’t so awful sure about that. And he said, ‘I have your back and here’s what you’re supposed to do.’ And I said, ‘Well, what’s it been doing?’ And he said, ‘Not much.’ So there were four of us - five of us, including me - who really didn’t do much and didn’t meet and really didn’t really trust each other. And really had trouble talking to each other. So, I figured out a way for us to meet more frequently. I figured out a way to double the size of the commission. I figured out a way to get people on the commission who I knew would talk and who represented what they were suppose to represent. We did some surveys which were pretty darned interesting and we ended up talking to each other... That all went pretty good. We had some people - some attrition, of course, but most of the folks, when joined by the new people, and we started talking to each other and listening to each other and thinking it was okay to disagree, because we should. We didn’t live in the same realities. I live in a different reality than you do... But when we started to work together and understand each other, we began to do some things and it was like synergy again. Well, what happened was, I had offended some of the leaders in the [particular cultural] group - the big [particular cultural] group - and when one of their folks became President, he got a lot of pressure from them to get rid of me.

Interviewer:  Uh-huh.
Participant: And so they got rid of me. And that was okay. He was kind of - it was kind of embarrassing how he got rid of me and I felt sorry for him, cause he really didn’t know what he was doing and he was getting pressure from other people - [particular cultural] people - who were on my side to not do that. And so I just said, ‘Okay, this is fine. Bye.’ [laughing]... But, anyway, so that’s how it’s played. But we did a pretty good job. I mean, there was some - we did some good stuff. We fought some battles and won some of them. There were some changes and some things and policies and some new innovations here and there, that some of which lasted a little while. So, I felt pretty good about that. I learned a lot during the process, again, about diversity, because these folks were - in the end, these were people who were pretty senior who really did, in fact, represent who they were supposed to represent and we were supposed to do these things for a national organization. So that was that. I did that.”

Like his departure from his first and second academic position, his fighting for change and effective multiculturalism results in conflict and loss of position.

His next position is at a larger university and the story of this position dominates the discourse of his time in academia. He was hired for his specific skills in building programs. He successfully achieves those goals as indicated by a variety of indicators- tripling funding, adding an accredited program and diversifying the faculty, “we did get accredited. We built that MSW program. We built another MSW program that was a distance education program, which was a lot fun. We did it with soft money. We tripled our soft money. We brought in faculty. We went from eight faculty to seventeen faculty in about three-four years.”
However, at the same time, per the request of the dean, he served on a committee to address whether or not the school should keep the American Indian mascot it used to represent its sports teams. Participant six was opposed due what he describes as a procedural issue of blatant racism, “Well, when people tell you don’t call - excuse me, but I’m going to use - don’t call me a prairie nigger, I find that offensive and you go ahead and call them a prairie nigger, that is a procedural error. That is disrespectful. If people say, you never had permission to use our name and you’re using it, would you stop it please? And you keep on using it. That’s a procedural issue and it’s racist and it’s disrespectful and it’s dumb. If you don’t want - if you want people to like you, you do not call them names. Okay?” He describes an incident of being spit on for this position and an overall negative, hostile culture as a result, “I got spit on. During the process, there people whose houses got defaced. I mean, there was just nasty stuff going on. The Department of Justice had people undercover on campus. Oh my. And so that was going on. I am, just by my presence, in teaching diversity and my standards and stuff, I became controversial." Simultaneously, a new dean started talking about needing to eliminate outsiders from their school (meaning those not born and bread in the state). Conflict had also risen within the department based partially on this insider outsider mentality. Due to the racism, conflict and his health issues from living in this particular area he decides to leave, “So you take the racism, the craziness …and so I just said I’m out of here. I’m out of here. I’m gone. And so I looked around and I ended up going to [different school] as the Dean.” However, it should be noted that despite these issues he was able to achieve tenure at this school without incident.
Participant six works at two more schools before his career ends. The first is a director position where they again hire him due to his specific program building skill set. However, this was a Christian conservative school with a president who idolized Hitler as an historical figure. They tangled over comments the participant made to a reporter regarding supporting LGBT individuals as part of the social work accreditation process. He loses his directorship and is ultimately terminated for not fulfilling his scholarship responsibilities. He attributes this to his advocacy for LGBT students coupled with having had to take disability leave due to illness. He hires a lawyer and is able to stay on for a year while getting another job, “And while I’m recov - so I have surgery and while I’m recovering from the surgery, I get a letter from the university saying that I’d been removed as Director because I was incapable of that - of being the Director, so I was removed from that position - not temporarily, permanently, because I was incapable of performing the functions of Director.

Interviewer: Meaning you weren’t homophobic.

Participant: Ahhh. And then I was told that I was - my contract was terminated, because I had not met the conditions of the scholarship things, but my faculty committee, because of a variety of issues, including some I’ve just informed you about, said that was okay because I really shouldn’t be held to that, but the university did anyway. I got - to make a long story short - I got a hold of an attorney. I basically threatened to sue them. They kept me on. Gave me money and I had a year to look for someplace else and I ended up at [new school].”

He takes one more job in a similar academic setting (despite offers from other, less conservative schools) to stay close to his grandchildren. However, this
position has similar conflicts related to cultural issues. In one case he worked for four years to start a black student association. In another he tries to start an LGBT student group. In his final position, he describes being bullied by a racist dean who he stands up to and typically could get to back down, “He was a really, really, really nasty guy, but I told him when I interviewed with him that I would treat him straight and any time he’d give me any trouble or in any way threaten the accreditation of the program, I would be straight out front with him and I always was. And he got racist on me a couple of times and I said to him, ‘Okay, that’s offensive, do you want to fight now or do you want to fight later?’ And he looked at me and he said, ‘Hmmm, never.’ And changed the subject.” However, he is ultimately fired for being, “intimidating.” I asked him to tell me what he thought that means, and ultimately he sees it as a combination of having to high of standards for his students, taking an antiracist and antihomophobic position and due to him just doing his job like a social worker, “Interviewer: when I heard you say intimidating, immediately what I think they meant was that you were way too anti-racist, way too anti-homophobic...

Participant: I am.

Interviewer: ...and were working way too hard to try to embody social work values where you were. And none of that was going to play.

Participant: That’s true. That’s true. I mean, somebody came in to me, which happened from time to time with some situations and this happened way back when I was in [first school], because we had a faculty member who was pretty racist and he didn’t think he was, but he was and he was tenured and he was the head of our graduate program at the time. And somebody came - one of my advisees presented a
situation - I handled it appropriately and asked the student to manage it and whatever, but if I had to take on [faculty member], I did take on [faculty member], because that’s what my profession requires. And if people want to call that intimidating, they can.” He ends this narrative saying, “And so the deal- that’s ended my career. That’s the story of me.”

Specific recommendations

Overall, participant six indicates we have to actually commit to embracing diversity as a profession going beyond race to a truly inclusive view, “Then there’s whole issues around gender and then there’s issues around - really big issues around social class and poverty. That’s probably, I think, one of the bigger ones. And then you’d layer this and then any given person can be any combination of those and any kind of group can be any given combination of those and then that makes for certain uniqueness, but there are patterns to that and we ought to know what the patterns are and then ought to be able to know how to sort out the uniqueness within those patterns and we can do that. We can do that. And good practitioners can do that.” He sees getting back to social work’s generalist roots as the most productive way to accomplish this goal, “And let’s not lose our values. Let’s not lose why we’re doing this place. We have people that we’re supposed to work with who are usually in pretty big trouble and that trouble has to do with the social environment… that they’re involved with. So, we need to teach that. And we need to study that. And we need to be smart about that and if that means we have to tough it with our larger environments, let’s do so.

Interviewer:  Spoken like a true generalist.
Participant: Oh yeah. I mean, that’s how I was prepared and that’s what I taught. And that’s what I think social work is. And I think it’s still practiced. I know it is. And a lot of times, places and situations get fixed by people who have those kinds of characteristics, but there’s just not enough of us and there’s certain kinds of things that are happening in our society that work against that and those should be resisted.”

This would include building allies, facilitating understanding of multicultural identities and being vigilant about subtle racism. One of the missing pieces he sees in achieving inclusivity is a recognition of intersectionality among multicultural identities. He feels an overall focus on inclusivity and generalist practice will naturally create a more inclusive space for American Indians but cautions academia also has to maintain high academic standards in the process.

Participant #7

Overall Narrative Arc

Participant seven had no ties to her American Indian community as a child and grew-up with two academic parents. She indicates in her narrative that she feels her grandparents going through the boarding schools and being cut off from her culture leads to her increased adaptation in the dominant culture in the present. She attributes her ability to navigate the dominant cultural norms of academia to this degree of adaptation to dominant culture developed through her youth, “I think for me the compromises are fewer than they would be for many other people because I was raised with both my parents being academics. Because my family had been away from the reservation for a couple of generations. So, it wasn’t like academia moved me away from this well-connected community that was already a part of my life... Because
that just wasn’t the case. I think in many ways the sacrifices that had been made in previous generations where my grandparents went to boarding school and they really bought into the methods that education is the way to go, and so they gave up cultural pieces at that point for education and to position my mom to succeed and to position me to succeed. I think I benefited from their sacrifices more than me being in a position of having to make these immediate sacrifices myself...now of course it left a void. It left holes. But the foundation that I approached academia from positioned me better than many people coming from active cultural communities.

However, this does not mean she did and does not experience cultural and structural conflict in her schooling and academic position. This adaptation simply provides her with tools to manage the dominant culture encroachments on her indigenous values and identity. She experiences many of the same barriers as other participants in obtaining her degrees and in academia with additional structural barriers imposed by the political culture of the state she teaches in. Further, she also demonstrates some unique methods of transgressing the dominant cultural norms to not only meet her needs but those of her students and peers.

Like other participants, she sees an overall potential congruence between social work and her cultural perspective due the fundamental ideals of the profession. She does not see the profession as continually living up to those ideals in including American Indian people and content in the profession. She is able to tailor her personal experience in social work academia to her needs, however, she sees the overall structure surrounding her both in academia and in the profession as needing significant work on inclusivity.
Obtaining the requisite degrees

Participant seven went straight to college as that was the norm and expectation of her family. She attended a progressive institution with both a strong focus on multiculturalism and service learning. She indicates feeling very comfortable in this program as she was able to focus on multiculturalism as part of her studies along with obtaining her social work degree, “Well, just really the philosophy of the school had a very strong social justice focus. It was the very first school in the country to admit woman without forcing them to go into home economics. They could choose any major that they wanted. It was the first school in the country to admit people of color on the same footing with white people. So, it was a very strong social justice sort of background and I thought that was quite positive.” The program also included American Indian content. She knew from a younger age she wanted to help people and social work would be a pathway for doing so, thus her college major was a given before she began.

She elected to pursue her masters degree straight out of her undergraduate. Her masters experience proved the opposite of her undergraduate- highly isolating and underscored by the absence of American Indian content or a focus on diversity, “It was a much more alienating experience. I moved to [big city]. I went to [high level university]. It wasn’t a very friendly environment. It wasn’t a very supportive environment. Yeah, that was not a good process. I mean, it was productive. I got my degree, which got me a good job, but it wasn’t a very positive experience.” This was emphasized on her first day in the program, “Like my very first day there. They had the big orientation before classes even started and they collected a lot of demographic
information on the incoming class. The orientation was almost like this sort of pep rally where they're saying, 'Yeah, we're all going to be social workers. We're going to change the world and we come from such diverse backgrounds and let's look at our incoming class. We have “X” number of men. We have “X” number of women. We have a lot of international students.’ And they went through the demographics and when I had filled out the demographic form, there wasn’t a box to check for Native American or American Indian, so I ended up checking “Other,” because I didn’t really fit anywhere else and that very first day the Dean really kind of poked fun at me. ‘Oh and there’s one other, one person who just doesn’t even know what she is,’ and…that very first day set the tone for everything. There was just no acceptance of diversity like I’d had at my previous institution. It was just very alienating. Very institutional.” She describes the rest of her program as an exercise of just getting in and back out as quickly as possible. Post her masters degree, she leaves the area of the country she was living in needing a change and happens upon a job teaching social work (described below).

While there, her masters academic institution seeks her out and encourages her to pursue her PhD at their school. This includes promising she will be able to do her coursework in a year and return to her job while she finished the dissertation process. After she took the leave from her job and made arrangements to travel back across the country for the program, the administrators informed her she may not be able to do the work in the year as promised. At that point she was committed and without a job for the year so she had to go. Once there, she was unable to complete the coursework in a year due to a single class. This meant she had to
spend a semester commuting across the country every couple weeks to take the class. As described below, just prior to her anticipated dissertation completion, she took a position at another university. The day she was to defend her dissertation, her chair, whom she had never met, indicated she would not pass her and she needed to include more Eurocentric theory into her work. She does so, but has to delay her defense several months and cancel a party her current faculty intended to throw her for finishing, “So I did all of my stuff with my advisor. I had a second reader. I finished my dissertation. I moved to [town with new position]. And then I was waiting. I had my defense date scheduled for December of [year starting position] and I was calling this person who was appointed to chair my committee who I had never, ever met - never taken a class from, never had any contact with and couldn’t even get a phone call returned and then finally I got my call returned and the person said, ‘I’m not going to let you finish.’ I just didn’t even know what to say. I had this new job, which keeping the job was contingent upon having my Doctorate in hand, which I didn’t. I had my train ticket booked to go... for my defense. A party had been scheduled for my return to celebrate my successful defense and here this woman that I never met is telling me that she’s not - that there’s no chance, no way, no how, is she going to let me successfully defend. And she told me she wanted me to re-analyze my data.” Overall, she describes the PhD experiences as traumatizing, “They sure made it tough for me. It was a horrible experience, but I came out with that degree.” “I’m totally traumatized reliving it here.”

Though she personally was getting connected to her culture during her higher education experience, she does not see her academic experiences as
facilitating that process. She did receive an offer from a fellow faculty member to work on some American Indian research during her PhD as he had noticed her turquoise jewelry during a class. While the opportunity was helpful, she did not see this individual as a mentor or particularly helpful beyond the concrete support of research experience as he was largely unavailable to her for consultation. However, she indicates she did have good peer support among her diverse peers.

Of note, during this time, she happens to meet one of the leaders of a national social work education at a meeting he invites her to join a prominent commission. She does so, recognizing this was a great opportunity for her to have prior to having her doctoral degree including increasing her opportunities to network, “What an opportunity for meeting senior people in the field. Cause usually these [national organization] appointments are not Doctoral students, but I was a Doctoral student. Most of them are fairly high-powered faculty from across the country.” In fact, this position helps facilitate her obtaining employment in a tenure track position as described below.

**Getting academic jobs**

In her first academic position, participant seven was not looking for a job in academia. She just happened upon the job while trying to relocate. She describes it as them needing a teacher immediately and her needing a job. She stays in that position until completing the majority of her doctoral work. While working on the commission for the national social work organization, one of the deans on the commission asks her to come interview at his school. She does so as a courtesy. However, once there, she liked the program and the strong American Indian
community both in the area and on the university faculty at the time, "one of people that was on the committee with me was [name], who happened to be the Dean at [school she ends up working at]. So I served on this committee with him. It was a 3-year appointment and I don't remember if it was the first year - probably the second year that I served on them, he started talking to me about considering employment opportunities at [his school] and I was so sick of [large city where she obtained her PhD]. I hated the [region of the country where she obtained her PhD]. I hated cities. I had no intention of coming to [city where current position is], but as a courtesy to this Dean who was serving on this... committee with me, I agreed to come out here and interview and I kind of liked the way it looked and I liked that there was a strong native community here. So I ended up taking the job in [current city] because I was on that...committee and I ended up on the ...committee just because I happened to fall into a conversation with the head of [national committee] when I was just picking up my name badge for the conference. So things really kind of lined up very nicely there and that's how I ended up in [current city] and I've been here since."

**Experiences in academia (including tenure and promotion discussion)**

Participant seven enjoyed teaching with just her masters degree at her first position. However, she indicates realizing the climate was changing and having a masters degree may not be sufficient for maintaining an academic position. She pursues her doctorate and feels doing so allows her to get her tenure track position at her current university. She indicates her experience there has had positives and negatives but also a significant shift in campus climate regarding American Indians resulting in a much more negative current reality.
Participant seven indicates she is able to integrate her cultural perspective into both her teaching and her research. She also likes when her job is flexible enough to meet both her cultural needs with her tribe and her intrapersonal needs with her family, “Overall, it’s fairly positive. While it’s always a struggle to balance the requirements of academia with the rest of life, whether it’s cultural responsibilities or family responsibilities, I like the flexibility of the job. I like that I don’t teach in the summer. So for years, I was able to go back for sun dance in June cause I wasn’t teaching. Yeah, I like the flexibility to be with my kids in the summer. I like the academic freedom that pretty much I can teach what I want to as long as it’s from a solid perspective.” This includes being able to do research with the American Indian community and provide research that meets their needs, using methods they are comfortable with, “And I have been able to do research that needs to be done. So when I first moved to [current town], I got to know the native community. I let them know that these are my skill sets - if there’s something that needs to be done that I can help with, let me know. And they were actually, after a couple years, started approaching me to do research projects. So I didn’t come with a pre-conceived agenda of these are studies I’m going to do, but I waited to be approached and then I could do research that was meaningful, that was community-driven, that was really community inspired, cause they asked for it.”

This has been predominantly qualitative work as it is a better cultural fit. However, she does feel that her qualitative research is undervalued by her fellow faculty and program. She has achieved tenure and promotion despite this perception, “Some of my research is quantitative, but I also do more qualitative. A lot
of my writing has been theory development...and that is valued enough that I have got

tenure and that I was promoted to full professor. It has been valued enough that I've
been able to get funding for my research. I don’t think it’s valued quite as much as if it
was a strict quantitative agenda, but it's been enough.

She indicates isolating from the rest of the faculty and overall university
culture. Originally, her school produced a high number of American Indian scholars
across disciplines. However, recent political shifts in her state have resulting in a
progressive isolation and marginalization of both American Indian faculty and
students. The initial infrastructure of American Indian scholars and focus in the
school has been dismantled. As a result, she continues her work but without
integration and support from her academic institution.

Personally, her ability to achieve promotion means she can, “slip away” for
her ceremonies. However, she indicates the overall academic calendar is at odds
with her community’s calendar for spiritual events. Despite her status, she does not
feel she can actually ask for, demand or expect time off for these days unlike those
from other spiritual backgrounds for whom the academic calendar naturally meets
their needs, “And you can’t exactly just miss the first day of class. We’re on a lunar
calendar for our ceremonies out here, so you never know exactly - you can’t plan at the
time you’re putting together your syllabus, cause you don’t know when it’s going to be.
So it’s not a good fit at all. And I feel like whatever compromise I make, I’m
shortchanging both academia and the cultural piece, but at least - at least as a senior
person here, I feel that I can slip away occasionally for things.” She sees this as
evidence of covert structural discrimination, “not overt hostility or discrimination, it’s
more institutionalized privilege of the dominant society and academia being based on that sort of calendar.” She sees these structural issues extended beyond the academic calendar to the structure of academia in general, “I would just echo that, again, that stuff was very institutionalized. There are rigid expectations and if you’re willing to follow those rules and you don’t have things pulling in other directions, then you’re okay with them. But those demands for success are very much grounded in Western expectations in ways of looking at things.”

Participant seven does not identify any hierarchical mentoring relationships helping her through her time in academia. However, she was part of a peer mentoring writing group for women as a young faculty she identified as very helpful in her early career. She went on to lead this group and participated in it for many years before other obligations precluded her continued involvement.

Specific recommendations

Participant seven underscores the importance of addressing pipeline issues in any recruitment and retention issues. This includes understanding some American Indian students may not come in with the same level of skill due to the quality of education they received prior to college. In addition, students need tangible supports, connections to their communities and flexibility in their academic schedules in the case of needing to prioritize family or community issues, events or needs. Faculty and schools also must understand the great range of differences among students degrees of connection to their American Indian identities and/or communities. Finally, students and faculty need role models, “Connecting with others, especially if there is that role model, somebody that you can look at and say,
'Wow. I really can succeed in this sort of endeavor.' So, ideally that would be somebody who’s like a professor that could help native students. If not at a more senior level, then more of the peer mentoring. That could be other native students or, in my case, just other students from different cultures who are supportive. But I think it’s really that connection to others, regardless of whoever that is. I think, also, sometimes the concrete [support] can be really, really important. I was somewhat unusual in that I just went straight through my program. I didn’t have to worry about a spouse. I didn’t have to worry about kids. But that’s not the case for many Native people.”

**Participant #8**

**Overall narrative and impressions**

Participant eight faced significant cultural and structural barriers both in his educational systems and the larger community throughout his narrative. Prior to attending college, he received little to no academic support in his primary and secondary education ultimately graduating with a less than .1 grade point average from high school. This resulted in intrapersonally feeling unprepared and ineligible for higher education- a mindset he maintained even after starting and thriving in higher education. In addition to the cultural and structural barriers ever present in his educational process, participant eight expresses significant negative views of both education and social work, often family and culturally rooted, he needed to overcome. He notes being surrounded by the systems of oppression in his larger community and sometimes within the academy causing further struggles and barriers. Unlike his primary and secondary education, the key to his persistence
and success in postsecondary schooling comes from interpersonal relationships with advisors/mentors constantly willing to offer encouragement and tangible support.

The narrative thus becomes a series of conflicts and contradictions across all system levels. He persists and does exceedingly well academically despite an internalized belief he did not possess the necessary skills. He ends up pursuing social work education despite a negative view of social work rooted in the experiences of his American Indian family members. He seeks a PhD focusing on American Indian research despite barriers to accessing this community and systemic barriers in the dissertation process. Often interpersonal relationships of some kind intervenes to mediate between his barriers and forward progress.

**Obtaining the requisite degrees**

Participant eight recounts his negative early academic experiences shaping his later experiences, particularly due to the lack of confidence and basic skills resulting from those experiences. His earliest academic memory set the tone for what was to come for him in his primary and secondary education. “I was a victim of untapped potential at a young age, and I can remember - I mean if you want to go back into primary school, I mean my first day of kindergarten - the very first day they did what do you want to be when you grow up...All the boys whose fathers were farmers were going to be farmers, and all the boys who lived in town were going to be President of the United States, because they didn’t know what their fathers did, and I didn’t know what my father did. So I kind of, so I’m going to be President of the United States. And they said - the instructor said well no you can’t do that, it’s because your
dad’s an Indian. And it’s like - oh. And then they said you should think of something along the lines of the manual trades... At four. And of course I had no idea what that means - the manual trades. So I could see some of that scripting that kind of went on, I mean literally from day one, literally from class one. That sort of thing happened, based on the ethnicity of my father.”

This experience provides a perfect exemplar of the rest of his primary and secondary education. He indicates he did very poorly in school, developed an alcohol problem and feels he graduated only so his school could get rid of him, “I guess my decision to go into college - well and it also happened that I had developed alcohol problems very early, which contributed to the very low high school GPA, and I'm really sure I only got out of high school because they wanted to get me out of high school. So, yeah I went to the Army, but when I quit drinking - I quit drinking fairly young at 26 - and I think I was more ready to do college.” No one else in his family had attended college except for one brother who dropped out after a year. He indicates generally feeling like a second class citizen as are result of his schooling and coming up experiences, a intrapersonal feeling he has struggled to shake throughout his academic career.

Once out of the army, he had GI benefits to help pay for college. He felt a sense of urgency with them about to run out and decides to give community college a try. To his surprise, he passed his first semester with ease getting ample support for his academic deficits and affirmations for his strengths. He transferred to a local religious university. This school had recently ended a lawsuit with a local tribe in which they had agreed to fund students from that tribe to attend the school (the
school had been built on their land). He did not qualify for this scholarship but did get additional funding as a resident of the county in which the school was located. He also notes the lawsuit created a heightened awareness on campus of American Indian issues. While at the school, he learned more about the history of his tribe due to the educated faculty (one of whom had helped mount the lawsuit against the school). He focused on human services thinking he would work in the addiction area serving others with some of his past struggles. He also indicates further validation of his academic ability and cultural heritage in this program. However, he did not feel confident enough to pursue a masters degree despite his 3.5 GPA, "I think that lawsuit process had educated enough of the faculty about the social justice issues related to Native Americans that they were very much wanting to grab a hold of me and socialize me as somebody who was - who could succeed in really any area I wanted to and that my background was an asset, not a liability, which was kind of ahead of where I think a lot of society was in the mid-80’s. I mean certainly way ahead of the way it was when I was in the 60’s, but so it always kind of felt like it something that was ahead of the curve, and they were really like a good kind of door opener as a possibility. But, I think I still had so many kind of internal issues around being second class that - I mean it really took a lot of effort. I probably wouldn’t - I went straight from there into my MSW program.”

Participant eight did have a mentor who saw his potential for graduate education. This mentor, a man from the minority recruitment task force, repeatedly and persistently, encouraged him to apply for a masters in social work program. Participant eight thought of social work as the profession of baby snatchers as one
of his cousins had to be hidden to avoid being taken away. However, this mentor explained to him a different view of social work. “And so he kept telling me to do that and explaining - he kept talking more about social work. And well my first response was, ‘why the fuck do I want to become a social worker?’ I wanted to work with people - that’s why I went into human services, and I thought I would go into like drug and alcohol counseling or something like that. But I could remember my aunt up at [RESERVATION NAME] and my aunt and uncle - my cousin is like a kid that they hid, he was a neighborhood kid that they were coming to get, and so they were hiding him. They had 12, so one more isn’t going to hurt hiding, and so even though my cousin - well he wasn’t really my cousin blood wise - he was adopted into the family - knew that his mother was just at the street and had alcohol problems and would visit her all the time. He was living with my aunt and uncle.

Interviewer: So they wouldn’t snatch him?

Participant: So they wouldn’t snatch him, so he wouldn’t be gone, so he wouldn’t be lost...so I didn’t have an idea that this was necessarily a good profession to be thinking of from a Native American point of view or really from any point of view - I don’t remember the few interactions I think that we probably would have had with social workers or social work type were at some point of crisis, and so I don’t ever remember a time where I felt they were doing anything for us. I think one time my grandmother needed to get on food stamps or something like that, and there was some kind of cognizance that that’s also something social workers did, but I didn’t see myself wanting to be somebody that was pushing the pencil making sure somebody got their food stamps. So he was pretty active in telling me what social workers were doing, and
this was around the time there had been - there was like six Native Americans
murdered in [SPECIFIC TOWN] in a few year period, and this was kind of right in the
middle of that time. So there wasn’t six yet, but there’d been some, and so there was a
lot of racial tension going on in [SPECIFIC TOWN], and so he was talking about people
that the school of social work had been involved with some of these public protests
about police mistreatment of Native Americans and issues around the [SPECIFIC
TOWN] police going on to the [SCHOOL NAME] campus which is - it has reservation
status, because it’s federal property and it’s there for an Indian purpose, and they
shouldn’t be doing that because it’s against the law. So he was starting to like see this
other picture of what social workers can be doing, and so but it finally took him - just
kind of grabbed me almost by the lapels - because they finally - he's said, ‘what’s -
what’s holding you up?’ He said, ‘if you really want to - you've started behind because
of alcohol problems and this poor education in high school - this would really help you
to get kind of more economically on a peer level where you should be had you been
allowed to develop.’ He makes sense here.”

Due to this mentors persistence, he starts a masters program in social work
in hopes he will be able to make more money in a community mental health setting.
He indicates his family supported these efforts but never understood what he was
doing. However, he does feel his attendance encouraged another brother to attend
and complete school. He notes that he had two more distant family members that
attended college and inspired him. However, his father told him not to attend
college, particularly the one he attended for undergrad, due to its history with
American Indian people. In general, he notes mixed messages from his family in regard to education.

Once in his masters program, he received a minority fellowship for financial support. He receives additional financial support from another faculty member who nominates him for funding through CSWE’s minority fellowship program. He also gets interpersonal support from a faculty member who connects him with five or six other American Indian students. Though he receives tangible financial structural support and cultural connection through his peers, he notes there was no American Indian content in his masters program. He compensates for this by doing his assignments focusing on his community. However, he also finds a dearth of adequate research in many cases. This lack of research plants the seed in him to perhaps pursue a PhD to fill that gap. However, he intended to put this off due to family obligations and work instead at a community mental health center long term, “Well, I’d already decided when I got my MSW, I laid out plans - when my daughter’s done with high school, I think I’ll go back and get a Ph.D. Because I was still pissed off about not being able to find an article about Native American sexuality and so that was my plan. I’d already kind of had this intention to get a Ph.D. It came a little sooner than I had anticipated.”

He finished his masters with ease and still higher grades than his undergraduate. He then takes a job working at community mental health center as planned. However, he gets in trouble there for smudging, “[I] got called into the office about burning of sage and it’s like, well, I do that for my spiritual practice - just to help meditate, to clear my mind between seeing people who have been sexually
abused since they were children...And they just had a cow and said you can’t do that. And I thought, well I’ve seen this scenario happen to this person and this person and this person. So my next response was to call Washington and to say what are my rights? Well these are your rights. I said, well I want to exercise them. I want to file a complaint, which they just escalated and it ended up in a lawsuit, so at some point after about a year of working for a place that I’m in a federal lawsuit against, I just decided I just have to be out of here.” He is offered a position back in academia doing community organizing at the university where his father had specifically warned against him attending. Since he was already working there, he also elects to start his PhD work. In this position, he is able to work with and for the American Indian community and start his research agenda working with the local tribal group. He also works creating culturally congruent field placements for the American Indian students in social work. However, he also realizes as he drives around his town that he is still surrounded by the system that oppressed him and his people,

“Some of the content, it’s just - this whole idea of so much of trauma treatment has to do with revisiting the trauma and so there was like this double-edged sword being in this community organizing at [SCHOOL NAME]. Remember, at one point, I’m doing some paper for some class around something, probably colonization or something - I don’t remember what it is at this point....and I’ve got in my mind the things that the church has done. Things that Indian health services has done. Things that the Bureau of Indian Affairs has done. And, of course, [SCHOOL NAME] is a Bureau of Indian Affairs cesspool - nest - as a college. And I remember I went down to get a cup of coffee one day - one morning and I was coming back and I was just thinking about all of this
stuff and I just started seeing things differently. It was like I’m waiting for the red light to change. I’m waiting and there’s the [community organization linked] to the American Indian Center right there. I have to drive past that to get to [SCHOOL NAME]. I like, oh God, they’re just everywhere. I said, well I’ll just go around the other way. I’m not going to drive past there. I’m going to do good exposure treatment and I’m going to avoid it. [laughing]...So I was like, ok, I’ll go around this way. And I was like, well shit, if I go around that way, I’m by the Indian Health Services...Well I can cut back by this other place. It’s like, no, that’s going to take me by the Lutherans and the Baptists and then there’s the Latter Day Saints. It’s like I can’t get on campus without going past one of these institutions of historical colonization and ongoing colonization in my mind. Or I can go around and come in the back way, which takes me by the Specific County Toxic Waste Pick-Up. [laughing] So there’s just this level of irony... But it’s a great structural representation of really what’s going on inside of me and what’s being - and it’s not like it wasn’t there already, but the educational process kind of brought all that to kind of the forefront”

He also faces the departure of his American Indian faculty mentor in the program and the death of his primary research participants for this dissertation. He describes a time of despair in all these regards and a brief hiatus from progressing with his PhD, “I was going to do a very targeted, qualitative research on some people who were very old...about collaboration between tribal groups and people in higher education. The people I wanted to talk to - two out of three of them had passed away from the time I had started writing my qualifying paper and so it kind of just took the wind out of - although I probably could have still done it [but it was] still spirit
crushing and some was just being overwhelmed with the rest of my life and that I was still in that lawsuit and it seemed that would always be something that would be hanging and coming up to do something or other. So, I went about 18 months - I was never disenrolled or anything like that, but I got some sort of a warning from the registrar’s office because I hadn’t been enrolled in a course for a certain amount of time."

However, due to his experiences with the lawsuit and exposure to the American Indian church, he decides to shift dissertation topics and look at specific spiritual practices in the American Indian church. He was able to find alternate academic leadership and financial assistance to complete his extensive qualitative dissertation. However, he also identifies difficulties living and working in his American Indian community, “it’s another double-edged sword - there’s crap out there about doing research about Native Americans. That it’s very antsy. It almost seems like it would be easier for a non-Indian to do it because, at the end of the day, they don’t have to live there.” He emphasizes the need of having American Indian communities dictate the data, have access to it and not abuse researcher access and use of the data. Participant eight indicates he continued to struggle with traditional academic writing in his dissertation though his academic institution encouraged use of an outside editor for support. This, along with further grant funding from CSWE, allowed him to finish his dissertation.

**Getting academic jobs**

Participant eight sought an opportunity to increase his teaching experience after completing his dissertation. With assistance from a prior relationship, he gets
a visiting professor position at a school near his home. This then turns into an offer for a full time faculty position on the tenure track. He got offered the job in a non traditional manner and from what he knows at the expense of potentially higher qualified non-minority candidates. He feels there may be some resentment in this regard. However, his university has a history of failing to tenure and retain faculty of color. He feels his hiring is an appropriate response to that condition, “To the point where they’ve done some self-studies, whether they want to or not around that topic. And I’m absolutely certain part of they wanted to do to snap me up was a fully-qualified minority candidate...Which I think leaves some people with some sour grapes because there may have been some more qualified non-minority candidates applying. I don’t know. But I’m certainly fine with that. I fine with the way the laws are written around.”

**Experiences in academia (including tenure and promotion discussion)**

Participant eight started in academia prior to getting his PhD working with American Indian students to get them into field placements. He notes using experiential activities to help students understand the scope and activities of the social work profession and engage them in the field. "It had a little theater - community theater thing going on down there and so we collaborated with them because once they saw the content of this play, about sexual abuse and boarding school, and said, 'This is going to agitate some people. What should we do?’ I said, 'Well, we have all our budding social worker students over there so we’ll come and facilitate some sort of a processing session.' So, having all of these kinds of things or
these community-based practiced, I think was very attractive to getting students into social work.”

Interviewer:  Sure.

Participant:  Cause they saw that they could do things that were meaningful in their context, not just sitting behind a desk doing benefits or doing individual counseling or something like that. So...

Interviewer:  Imagine social work like that.

Participant:  Yeah. Imagine social work like that. So having my job there was I think an important part of me keeping in the program.” This process facilitated inclusion, but also exposed a lot of the colonialism in the profession to the participant- requiring repeated challenges of the administration.

“Participant:  There was stuff that they were still referencing that was completely in another era...And so it’s like, oh wow, there’s such a level of this institutional memory that would be just simply that if it wasn’t for the fact that this is a colonization focused institutional memory. So as, in my opinion, as people started to become more empowered, we were less popular with some of the administrators, but I think we became very...

Interviewer:  Popular.

Participant:  ...popular with the students......

“Interviewer:  But being willing to also listen to what they want.

Participant:  Being willing to listen to what they want.

Interviewer:  Yeah.
Participant: And to invest in them. And then you're going to get this pipeline. And I think finding ways - I mean, I busted my chops, extended a lot of social capital to (that's the buzz word, I guess they call it now) create field placements that were relevant. And it was really hard to do. I mean, there were a lot of places that wanted the Native American students, but they didn't as much want to have this Native American emphasis.”

Once in academia, he reports generally positive experiences as he has several fellow American Indian faculty to work/partner with in his research and scholarship. He feels he is off to a good start integrating into the department including taking up a position as head of curriculum. He still struggles some with academic writing, particularly what he perceives as cultural difference in the way information should be written, “That has some collegial stuff going. I've been submitting stuff here and there and running into just some problems with, again, some of it is my poverty of training. Some of that basic being able to write in an English, Euro-centric voice, which I really think I'm not being convinced it needs to be that. They need to be able to understand it and that my way of writing doesn’t work very well in an academic audience.” He also perceives some dilemma in whether to do the more culturally appropriate qualitative research, “And, again, I think that’s another barrier, because I really find the Native American academics to be very much more attractive to qualitative methods because it's more congruent and there's so much unquantified experience out there that is unquantifiable that you have to experience it and then write about it in a qualitative way.” He is not clear on the tenure process and expresses some anxiety in this regard. However, he also notes
he is very comfortable living in or near poverty conditions and still has his welding helmet and skills as a back-up career,

“Interviewer: Do you have anxiety about this tenure process?

Participant: I guess I do at times. At other times, I don’t. I have - I’m practically out of debt. I’m actually out of debt. I have some people I owe money to. I have enough retirement savings and that kind of stuff. And I partially have an attitude. The benefit to being raised in abject poverty is that the thought of being marginally poor doesn’t scare me. Scares the hell out of my wife. But I say, I’ve got - I still have welding. I symbolically have my welding helmet...and my 22 rifle. I don’t have a problem eating squirrels and rabbits - I said I’m not worried. There’s lots of squirrels all over our neighborhood.”

Specific recommendations

Participant eight reinforces the importance of partnering with tribal colleges using the financial resources of the non-tribal institution. He also notes the importance of all researchers interested in working with American Indian populations not doing their research and then leaving without addressing the needs of the tribe or American Indian population they set out to serve. Further, as there are so few American Indian faculty and researchers, there need to be clearer pathways for national connections. These connections would also facilitate sharing best practice curriculum for sharing American Indian content. He indicates a strong need for content across all aspects of social work education (as noted in his earlier comment about being encouraged to place American Indian students in agencies/social work education but those institutions not being able to adapt to the
needs of American Indian students and clients) and feels national connections coupled with doing training and field placements in the American Indian community will facilitate this process. Finally, he thinks field coordinators serving students placed in tribal areas must be well versed in the issues of colonialism and racism still present in some social work theory/practice to assist students in processing and transcending those issues.

**Participant #9**

**Overall narrative and impressions**

Participant nine was a first generation college student with no role models at all for attending college or even seeing it as a possibility. Due to her American Indian identity, she is treated as incapable academically in her secondary and early post-secondary career and specifically discouraged from attending college. Further, once in college, the lack of American Indian content and understanding of the experience/culture of American Indian people provided frequent barriers to her progress. However, participant nine’s overall narrative arc is one of resistance and cultural resilience despite these frequent challenges. This pattern starts in her secondary education and carries through her academic job.

Family and community support and responsibility also play heavily throughout the narrative. Her family, despite a complete lack of understanding about college or what it takes to obtain higher education, supported her with tangible (rides, meals prepared) and emotional support (constant letters when she was away at school). However, obligations to her family also created stressors when family needs conflicted with the school obligations. The same is true for her
connections to her tribal community. Though she values these and the opportunity to maintain them in her academic life, they are also time consuming and sometimes conflicting with her academic obligations. Further, she struggles to reconcile the culture and needs of her academic institutions with the needs of her tribal community. This pattern of struggling to find balance also carries through all parts of her narrative.

**Obtaining the requisite degrees**

Participant nine’s mother insisted she attend a private catholic high school as she had done. To afford this, she worked for local nuns cleaning. One of these nuns told her repeatedly she should consider going to college. Despite a lack of understanding or previous college attendees in her family, she went to her high school guidance counselor and asked to be enrolled in college preparatory classes. He refused due to her American Indian identity and put her in trade classes like sewing. She and her mother challenged him and other school administrators and demanded she be placed in college prep classes. After these challenges, she is able to take the courses. She also took the ACT despite being told she could not and should not go to college. Due to general fear of leaving home and lack of understanding of the college process, she only applies at the local community college. She describes this as a significant challenge as she had no one at school or home who could help her fill out the forms or understood the application/registration process. However, she was accepted.

She spent the first semester of college doing four jobs and taking a full course load. She described significant struggles in understanding the general culture of
college. In spite of this, she was successful academically. She recalled mistreatment from fellow students who thought her incapable due to her American Indian identity. This discrimination lead to her to apply to a different school out of state where no one would know she came from the reservation. She did so and was accepted. Her mother advised she try and pass for white to make her time there easier.

She began her second institution feeling like she would have her first real opportunity to shine as a student without the assumptions of being from the reservation following her. However, she did find it painful to hide her American Indian Identity as her mother had instructed, "Well, because people didn’t know where I was from, so they didn’t naturally assume, that I was either stupid or that there wasn’t any kind of pre-conceived, or poor, or all of the kinds of things that they would - so I felt like I really, really could shine there....but I do remember my mother when I left saying, ‘if you can pass, pass’ and then it took her several years to - it wasn’t okay then and that was in the 60's, early 70’s. And I remember her in later years starting to send me books about our culture and stuff and saying it’s okay now, it’s okay to be Indian now. Like it’s okay now, you don’t have to hide out.

Interviewer: How did it feel when you [had to hide your identity]?

Participant: It’s really hard in your head."

She had no American Indian faculty or content to assist her in maintaining a connection. She also struggled with the new culture both of the university and the general community. She relates attending her first non-American Indian funeral and being completely shocked by the process, “but it’s totally different when you get off
the res and you see another culture, because some of the things you don’t know how to act. Like the first funeral I went, I just couldn’t believe what was happening and the way they did it. I almost started laughing - really - I almost started laughing. I thought oh my God, because it was winter time, and they had put the body in like - I thought it was a garage - it was in a big, giant cemetery, and they - and then that’s it. You stand there in the garage and you have this ceremony and then that’s it. And I’m like well aren’t we going to graveside, aren’t we going to - and I just was like whoa - this is. That’s when I started seeing that I had come from a different culture.” She did sometimes talk to friends or in classes about being from the reservation but their negative reactions resulted in her largely staying quiet. She explains they would say things like, “Oh, you don’t look Indian and then total stupid questions. So then you don’t say anything. It’s like Indian 101. Like, and they would start like a friend - like a black friend would not have a problem with it, but it was more white people that would say stuff that makes you hurt your feelings.”

Despite these struggles, she still felt committed to her American Indian heritage and identity. This was supported via the constant support from home via letters from her mother and grandmother she would post on her wall. Her mother also sent her materials related to her American Indian heritage. Further, she continued to work to support herself financially, she did not have a dining card for eating after her first year and money was a struggle. However, she was able to create relationships with the employees in the dining hall who let her eat for free. She also worked at the library so she had access to many books without having to
buy them. With these adaptive strategies, she graduated with her bachelor’s degree in four years.

Participant nine then goes to work for a child welfare agency. Her agency encouraged her to get her masters degree and also offered to pay for it. Again, her masters program lacked American Indian content or fellow American Indian students. However, it was a diverse program and she was able to get support both emotionally and tangibly from the local American Indian Center. She returns to her child welfare practice after obtaining her masters degree working particularly with families of color as she was notably more successful than others in this regard. She relates this to her cultural background. She later did work in the schools and was struck by the significant disparities for kids of color. She applies for what she thinks is a clinical PhD program to better serve the needs of these kids. However, she ended up in a research program. After two months in the program, she decides it is too rigorous to also work full time. She applies for financial assistance and graduate assistantship and is able to quit her job to pursue her PhD full time.

Again, her PhD program lacked American Indian content. Further, when she attempted to do one of her first papers on American Indian gambling, she was told she could not do so and should write about American Indians and alcoholism. She wrote the gambling paper anyway, “I went in - and this was terrible - I went in, told them I wanted to look at gambling, and they were like well why do you want to do that? You need to do a paper on alcohol.

Interviewer: Oh, no!
Participant: Yes. And guess what? I did a paper on gambling, and they - I didn’t pass. I had to redo it over Christmas.”

Despite the program’s resistance, she always did her papers and assignments around American Indians to build her knowledge of her own culture, “I was like a bull. I just was going to do it no matter what. I did, and here’s the thing - I would - nobody would work with me, because nobody knew the subject. They didn’t know anything. Okay? I mean all my papers and everything - and this is something that I didn’t tell you - all through school when I had to do a paper, it was either on Indian Health Welfare Act, Indian Reorganization Act, the Dawes Act...because I didn’t know any of that. I didn’t get any of that. So I did all of my stuff - policy class I did stuff on that. I did everything I could to find out more about my culture, to find out more about laws and policies related to my culture. That’s how I focused all my papers all through undergraduate and graduate whatever. Yeah. I’m proud of myself that I did that.”

She did have support from a diverse and equally social justice focused group of peers. She repeatedly emphasizes the power they had as a group to buck the system of her PhD program. Many of them, herself included, did primary data collection in their cultural communities. She indicated struggling to find a chair to support her dissertation research in her home community. Though she did not have someone who understood her culture, she did find a chair that deferred to her indigenous knowledge of how the research needed to be conducted. She also struggled having to be the cultural broker between her tribal community and her doctoral university. However, she feels these struggles were much worse in her first
and current academic posting. She completes her degree with her home community based dissertation emphasizing how her like-minded cohort was key to the process.

**Getting academic jobs**

Participant nine indicates being courted by several top universities once she completed her degree. She was instructed by her advisor to go on all interviews. She describes her first interview as terrible and finding the process completely culturally incongruent. At another university, she was offered a position by the same faculty member who refused to let her do her paper on American Indians and gambling, “*But - and she offered me a job on the spot - but she had - was the one, along with her colleagues - who said why do write a paper on Indians and gambling....And I remembered that. I hold a grudge.*” Ultimately, she accepts an offer at a school who engaged in a culturally congruent recruitment and interview process, “*the job at [CURRENT UNIVERSITY STATE] - one of the reasons I came here is because they have the - the search committee has a Native Hawaiian guy on it, and he told them how it should be done. In other words, they didn’t take me to dinner, they had a party at someone’s house. My sister - they put me up in a hotel, and I had my sister come, and they even invited her to - I mean the only reason I was like - they did it Native appropriate. It’s because he said if you want to get her, this is how you have to do it. Yeah, I really am grateful that that committee - they haven’t had one that good I don’t think since that - that was really new that there are certain ways you recruit people.*”

**Experiences in academia (including tenure and promotion discussion)**

Once in this academic posting, participant nine describes significant structural and cultural struggles getting the university to understand what it takes
to build relationships with the tribe and then conduct research. This includes fighting to get IRB approval and keep tribal funding with the tribe. Despite these challenges, she has been able to secure sizable research grants for her home tribal community through her association with the university, “But tell me how its been here? It’s been hard. It’s been hard, because I’ve been in the process of trying to work with - I get money and then I’ve go to work through our IRB and I have to do training and tell them and really get - and they just are really entrenched. Our [Research Office], and our Office of Vice President for Research - they’re just really still kind of feeling that with Indians, they have to tell us what to do. They got mad that - they get made because I bring the grants through the Indian Center. I don’t bring them through [current university] - oh they get so mad. Then they don’t get all their indrights...Oh they hate it. I’m getting better. I’m giving more and more, giving them - throwing them a bone. But they just hate it. So they give me some hard times, and I’ve had some stuff said to me that - so I’m really - at this point, on Friday, I’m meeting with an omnibus person, because I’ve got two huge..grants right now, and I have to do a lot of IRB applications, because I’m doing them in phases - Phase 1, 2, 3, 4 - because one involves suicide. So, I’m thinking oh my God, I just cannot continue the kind of lack of communication, the lack of knowledge, the kind of like patriarchal - oh, you know we can’t trust the Indian Center to oversee their money. They have our Indian health service center there. They have millions of dollars in health funding. We know how to deal with the money. So all of those kinds of things I’m continuously fighting, and I’ve really - if I was 30, I would not do this. I wouldn’t do this. I would not stay at academia in a research one institution. No way.” Though she sees great financial benefit for
the tribe in her working at this high level university, she does not feel she would stay in the position. Even for her, she finds maintaining her community connections and completing the requirements of her academic position difficult, “It impacts - I’m trying to learn to get a balance, because I have to have time to write and that’s what I’m struggling with right now and I thought they were going to say they were doing too much service, but they were not, because I put that in my annual review that I want to do service. The other thing I put in there is that when I do work on publications, I do work with the Native students....And then they don’t care. They really - after putting what I’m realizing, they really don’t care as long as you’re bringing in money. They’re like, let her go do what she wants to do. But the service part - yeah. It makes for long days. It makes for - I’m not going to give up the service part. I’m not going to give up that we have a talking circle tonight and honoring the elders Thursday night - I can’t give up - tomorrow we have a suicide conference at the center. I’m part of bringing all of those there and I try to have a presence there. I can’t give it up to write an article tomorrow...You know what I mean. I can’t - I like being around my community. I like being around my kids. I like being around elders. I like to go there and have fry bread and wild rice soup. So, it makes my - I work seven days a week - put it that way. You have to work even harder to prove yourself in a sense, because you still can’t give up your community service because that’s really the way - that’s the way of the Native community. I tell young people that work with me ...I say, if you want to do some work at the Indian Center, you’ve got to come and volunteer first...So, it just makes it - it’s a little bit harder, because you’re balancing the academic stuff that you have to do and you’re doing community service, but it’s also my research
- at the same time, all of it isn’t. The events that I go to are just so that the community sees me and also so I get something. I get a lot of comfort from going to those activities and events. So, it’s a lot of work, but at the same time, I think this is true of a lot of faculty that come from a marginalized group.”

Further, she is overburdened by trying to mentor the American Indian students at the university across disciplines in addition to her departmental obligations. She does not feel the university has the structure in place to meet the cultural and other needs of American Indian students. She also feels burdened by having to explain the American Indian perspective to people but sees this as an important responsibility, “Do you know Ada Deer? Have you heard of her?

Interviewer: Yes, of course.

Participant: At one meeting, she was there, and I’m pretty sure she’s retired now, she had said to one of the young persons who was complaining about having to be the one to go to all classes and explain to people about Indians, and she said - she stood up and she said just be happy they’re asking, because in my day, they weren’t asking...So she put that on us and said do it, and I do. I do. I’m - I feel that is my responsibility to get the word out.” Similarly, she struggles in teaching the rich, non-American Indian students from her American Indian perspective. She struggles to balance service as needed by university and service to the American Indian community making for long days. Despite these struggles, she feels confident in her tenure prospects and feels she gets away with things as long as she is bringing in money. She has also been able to write things into her contract that facilitate her employing American Indian students and taking the time necessary to work in her
community. Further, she has been able to leverage offers from other universities to get further funding and support for her research agenda and community efforts.

**Specific recommendations**

Participant nine emphasizes the need for allies to do work with the American Indian community and to emphasize the importance of the American Indian community. She used the example of this study suggesting the voice of a non-American Indian researcher underscoring the importance of recruitment and inclusion is important to future progress, "for you doing this, one of the big things I'm going to tell you is that, the best thing you can do for us is get the word out. Publish from this." Further, she suggests we need a mandate for the inclusion of American Indian content from CSWE. As she is overburdened by serving as mentor for American Indian students, she emphasizes getting more American Indians into the academia by taking the university to the reservation and providing opportunities there to work toward degrees.

**Summary**

These cases have several points of convergence and divergence in the narratives. Similar structural, cultural, interpersonal and personal barriers and facilitators show up across cases. However, the outcomes of these issues differs according to the personal characteristics of the participant, the context in which they were learning and working and their level of adaptation to dominant cultural norms. These between case factors are discussed in detail in chapter five and their implications in chapter six.
Chapter Five: Between Case Analysis

The between case analysis includes looking at overall patterns among the cases, similarities and differences in the structural, cultural, interpersonal and intrapersonal barriers and facilitators among cases and how those differed depending on the contexts of participants. In this case, context includes the structural realities of their academic institutions, differences in where participants were in their careers and the intrapersonal contexts of participants (e.g. other salient parts of their identities, personality differences, personal coping mechanisms).

In this section, I start describing overall similarities and differences in the narratives for each area of focus (obtaining the requisite degrees and experiences in academia including hiring, tenure and promotion) according to the structural, cultural, interpersonal and intrapersonal factors. These divisions are artificial as each domain affects the individual participant’s experience of the other domains. Further, many components overlap (e.g. the lack of American Indian content in programs is both a cultural and structural issue). In these cases, I either select the most salient area to list them but talk about their implications beyond the singular demarcation of their coding or list them twice if they have distinctly different implications in each category. In chapter six, I discuss how the contexts of participants affects the experience of these factors and their overall experiences as students and faculty in academia. I also indicate how these factors relate to existing research and theory. To further facilitate development of intervention points, I summarize the patterns among the recommendations for increasing inclusion.
offered by participants here. In chapter six, I also discuss how schools of social work and social work academics might need to differently address these issues according to their specific contexts.

Though it effectively strips away the important contextual factors for each case (e.g. does not capture the overall cultural environment at a particular participant’s institution), the structural, cultural, interpersonal and intrapersonal barriers and facilitators have been placed in tables according to each area of interest for easy reference. This includes dividing these issues as they relate to getting the requisite degrees and experiences in academia per the overarching research aims. This allows the reader to see how many participants experience each factor. However, the readers should not assess the relative importance of any given factor based on the number of participants mentioning it in their narratives. Qualitative research does not determine the importance of patterns simply according to repeated presence across cases rather than its, "Substantive significance’... the consistency of themes across and within study participants...when findings deepen understanding of extant knowledge about the object of inquiry (Floersch, Longhofer, Kranke & Townsend, 2010, p.3). Therefore, even factors limited to single participants are included in some cases due to either their consistency of pattern within a case or their relevance to the research questions. Indicating the presence of pattern across participants simply provides an organizational structure and a method for me as the researcher to see how certain structural issues are the same and different across particular cases with particular contexts. In many cases, the same factor may be a facilitator at some points in the narrative and absent or a
barrier in other parts of the narrative for single participants. For example, at some points faculty may report isolation and then connections with people later in their careers. Again, organizing by patterns means losing this contextual grounding and change over time. Finally, absence of a particular pattern does not indicate it does not apply to a particular case. It simply means it was not part of this particular telling of their stories at the time of their single interviews. There may also be meaning in the absence for a particular participant's stories and relative contexts.

**Across Case Analysis of Structural, Cultural, Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Barriers and Facilitators**

**Structural barriers and facilitators in obtaining the requisite degrees.**

Some participants felt an overall lack of preparation due to poor schooling prior to entering higher education. This results in intrapersonal barriers described below such as lack of ability to engage in academic writing despite the ability to think critically and master course content successfully. Two participants had significantly low undergraduate GPA's they associated with poor college preparation compromising one participant's choices in masters programs and another believing for a time any post-secondary education was beyond his reach. Another participant noted picking her masters program partially based on not having to take a standardized test that she feared she would do poorly on and would not accurately reflect her academic ability. Conversely, two participants did engage in college preparatory coursework (one after fighting her school to allow her to do so) and one attended programs like Upward Bound. These programs facilitated them to making the academic transition to post secondary education with greater
ease. Two others had a family history or focus on higher education also facilitating their transitions to higher education. This underscores previous research findings indicating the importance of proper college preparation (Jackson, 2003; Larimore & McClellen, 2005; Voss et al., 2005).

Many participants indicate they selected a program due to its accessibility or compatibility with their work schedules or life circumstances. Further, one participant expands this to importance of flexibility once he was in his program to accommodate the stops and starts his work schedule required in his degree process. In addition to accessibility and flexibility, participants identified the importance or presence of some sort of financial assistance. This included tuition waivers, grants and general financial aid. For one participant, the majority of her degrees were paid for with tribal funding. For two others, the grants they received were directed either at supporting minority scholars or to their work in the American Indian community. One’s employer paid for her master studies. Two participants worked their way through with graduate assistantship offered to them (without them asking) by faculty members. These practical and tangible supports transcend the common barriers identified in the literature for American Indian students including being a non-traditional student (Tate & Schwartz, 1993) and financial problems (Jackson, 2003; Larimore & McClellen, 2005; Voss et al., 2005).

In all cases, at some point in obtaining the requisite degrees or obtaining the academic jobs, participants were specifically invited to join their social work programs. In the cases of students invited to pursue higher degrees in social work, part of this recruitment includes a mentor/inviter as helping dispel any previously
held beliefs about the social work profession (e.g. social workers as baby snatchers). These invites are not always singular- sometimes it takes multiple invitations over time and persistence to help the participant understand the value and match of social work to his or her needs.

Many participants start their academic careers without a doctorate degree. For some, they continue in the position without it. For those pursuing the degree while working in academia, they find both structural facilitators and barriers to the process in their employing academic institution. Facilitators include grant funding allowing for release time, being given a year sabbatical (though unpaid) for doctoral work and allowing for schedule flexibility. Others experience barriers around inflexibility of both their work environments and PhD program class schedules. In one case, the participant finally pursued her PhD due to a convergence of these facilitators including convenience of the programs class schedule (weekends), grant funding buying out her time to work on her dissertation and overall support and flexibility from her program.

Despite their success in obtaining the requisite degrees, participants also encountered numerous structural barriers resulting in delayed graduation and intrapersonal stressors. Schools often failed to provide adequate advising, particularly advisement around American Indian research at the dissertation level. Further, many schools did not provide mentoring or American Indian mentors. The facilitators and barriers specifically related to mentoring and advising are described in the interpersonal section below.
In addition the personal nature of financial issues described in the intrapersonal section below, participants had several financially related structural barriers. One reported a complete lack of knowledge and information regarding financial aid provided by her institutions. Another reports economic issues both facilitating his return to school (after losing his job after the recession) and the lack of adequate financial opportunity while in school resulting in him quitting to go back to work. Another’s employer would not support or accommodate her school attendance. While some transcended the common financial problems stymieing American Indian students (Jackson, 2003; Larimore & McClellen, 2005; Voss et al., 2005), the students who did not suffered significant academic degree completion delays as a result. Table 2 summarizes the structural barriers and facilitators to degree completion denoting which factors were present for which participants.
### Structural Barriers to Getting the Required Degrees

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<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of employer support in pursuing higher degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of advising to facilitate AI research/dissertation</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preconceived perceptions of SW</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Academia isolates as an American Indian student</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stuck in general ed in high school/no college prep</td>
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<td>Need to work constantly trumps school</td>
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<td>No information on financial aid provided</td>
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<td>No assist from dissertation chair, cancels defense last minute</td>
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<td>No place on intake form for masters for American Indian</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPA limits choices</td>
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### Structural Facilitators

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<tr>
<td>Available and Accessible program, convenience</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexibility in programming and deadlines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate assistantships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Aid/Grants/Tuition</td>
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<tr>
<td>paid/support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tribal funding</td>
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<td>Program responded to discrimination issue</td>
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<td>Masters no standardized test</td>
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<td>Secondary support programs, e.g. Upward Bound</td>
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<tr>
<td>Starting college classes in undergrad or in college prep classes</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non academic employer supports masters</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liked rigor of program</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSW school offers job and to start graduate work</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>As faculty member, program supports/makes accommodations for PhD pursuits</td>
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</table>
Structural barriers and facilitators in experiences in academia

As stated above, all participants were asked to apply for at least one of their academic positions. Many invitations also came from people with whom participants had a preexisting relationship as described below in the interpersonal section. These invitations result in an overall sense of ease among participants in obtaining their relevant academic jobs. However, there are issues in being offered structural supports as part of the job offer that are not followed through on in the actual experiences in the position as described below.

Two participants report being sought out to fill a position designated for an American Indian faculty member by the program. Several were offered positions-both tenured and non-tenured- with only a masters degree. All but two participants, at minimum, had experience teaching prior to entering their full time academic position. As described above, three participants were able to complete their PhD while in faculty positions (two tenure tracked, one as an instructor), all with the support of their programs. However, these participants also note a degree of pressure to obtain their PhD credentials due to pressure from colleagues, a lack of funding opportunities without it or the overall political climate of social work education requiring the advanced degree. Participants also note, despite some of the requirements and structural barriers described below, there is a degree of flexibility in academia that allows for scheduling around cultural needs at times. It should be noted, however, both the participants who mentioned this hold full professor status and one emphasizes this status promotes being able to capitalize on that flexibility.
One participant describes in detail being able to match her cultural values and tribal community work/research with her academic job requirements despite challenges along the way. She sees this as facilitated by her national mentors/connections who also work in her substantive area. A second participant underscored the importance of such national connections.

Two faculty members emphasize not having a mentor to help them negotiate academia early in their careers. However, one of these participants was able to request a mentor and indicates a high level of positive assistance from this provision. Another did not have a top-down mentor as described but rather participated in and later led a peer mentoring group for women faculty. Details about outcomes of the mentoring relationship are covered in the interpersonal section below.

Participants underscore a variety of other structural barriers in their experiences in academia, particularly early in their careers and/or positions. These include lack of follow through in initial job promises (e.g. the level of position one participant was being hired into not being a dean but a directorship) and lack of fair compensation/being taken advantage of financially due to not knowing what the proper compensation should be. Another participant lacked any support for teaching or improving on teaching based on teaching evaluations.

There are several structural barriers surrounding participants who choose to research with and about American Indian communities and issues. Some experienced having their qualitative research with these communities undervalued compared to quantitative research of any kind. This is a common finding in the
research regarding faculty of color’s experiences trying to do research compatible with their cultural communities (qualitative) and having it undervalued by the university culture favoring quantitative research (Stein, 1996; Viets et al., 2009). Many also report struggles to figure out how to do research with American Indian communities without exploiting those communities (detailed more in the cultural section below). Participants also indicate it can be hard to publish papers focused on American Indian content.

Several participants report either historic or current issues with loneliness and isolation. For those early in their career or talking about times earlier in their careers, this isolation was forced upon them by unwelcoming colleagues. Later, participants indicated isolating themselves due to fatigue from fighting or self-protection from the greater academic environment. For one, her university went from being a leader in inclusivity of American Indian faculty and graduating American Indian students to losing that infrastructure due to discriminatory statewide policy issues affecting the academic system.

Some faculty identified issues of racism in their programs and institutions needing confrontation (e.g. mascot issue, allowing an American Indian student to maintain her position as an intern on the reservation rather than cede her position to a white student) along with issues of racism among the leadership. One felt she was in her first academic position solely to fill a diversity quota. They also note confronting these issues comes with consequences including the loss of political and social capitol (i.e. holding enough power to confront another subsequent issue) and loss of positions. Another participant underscores issues of microaggressions on
her campus including her students being followed around in the bookstore and her being treated differently for not looking like a traditional faculty member. Implications for how isolation and discrimination relates to relational cultural theory is discussed in chapter six.

Several participants describe discovering a cultural congruence in the profession and their work or work in their tribal communities that facilitates their transition to academia (described below). However, some participants also make clear in their narratives social work does not always live up to those ideals and values in regard to American Indian populations. They see a lack of content and the indigenous worldview among other cultural barriers described below as problematic to their own and other American Indian students and faculty's inclusion in the program. This issue is echoed in the literature (Coates et al., 2008; Gair et al., 2005; Gray et al., 2008; Haug, 2001; Nimmagadda & Cowger, 1999). However, both the participants narratives and recommendations offer points of intervention to address this issue and increase the integration of social work and social work values with American Indian values and communities.

The structural barriers here interestingly do not include several of the most relevant factors identified in the previous literature. None of the faculty here indicated having limited time to devote to research due to heavy teaching loads (Viets et al., 2009), heavy institutional demands like appointments to multiple committees, or perceived bias in the tenure and promotion process (Fenelon, 2005; Stein, 1996; Tippeconic Fox, 2008). However, they do describe encountering racism at the institutional level (Stein, 1996; Viets et al., 2009) and sometimes see
undervaluing of their research (Stein, 1996; Viets et al., 2009). However, those with
tenure were still able to do this research and meet the requirements of tenure and
those without tenure are still doing the majority of their publishing in American
Indian content areas. Table 3 summarizes the structural barriers and facilitators in
faculty experiences in academia denoting which factors were present for which
participants.
Table 3: Structural barriers and facilitators in faculty experiences of academia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural Barriers</th>
<th>Participant number</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taken advantage of with compensation</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hard to publish AI papers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Required to do quantitative for tenure</td>
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<td>Only fulfilling diversity quota in academic position (no voice)</td>
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<td>Have to confront racism results in loss of/ spending political capitol</td>
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<td>External funding struggles with no PhD</td>
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<td>University isolates and loses native/diverse faculty</td>
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<td>Antiracist/Antihomophobic efforts get faculty in trouble/fired</td>
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<td>Social work does not always live up to ideals/values in regard to American Indians</td>
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<td>Sense lack of quantitative means less valued</td>
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<td>Pressure to get PhD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Able to always put community needs first</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Able to complete PhD while in faculty position</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Able to make activity match mission of university</td>
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<td>Able to make system meet</td>
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<td>Peer mentoring program for women faculty</td>
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<td>Flexibility of academic position good/helpful</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Had national mentors/connections outside programming</td>
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<td>Employment due direct invitation to apply</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching before PhD</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor upon request in early career</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer mentoring for writing as young faculty, all women</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenure not a problem</td>
<td>X</td>
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Cultural barriers and facilitators in obtaining the requisite degrees.

Many participants describe a complete lack of American Indian content in one or all of their academic institutions. This contributes to an overall sense of isolation, disconnect and for some missed opportunities to understand one's own cultural identity. Some participants were also required in classes or other institutional events to speak for their cultural groups. One indicated discomfort in having to represent all Indian people and being often forced into this position. She and another participant also lacked the cultural knowledge necessary to navigate her undergraduate institution, e.g. knowing how to schedule classes, what majors and minors were, how to understand a syllabus. Another noted the complete absence of American Indian students in her bachelor's program while another was taught American Indians were dead and gone. Participants also lament the lack of American Indian faculty across their educational experiences to provide mentoring and role modeling.

Conversely, when participants did encounter American Indian content in their programs, they describe this content as self-affirming and increasing their inclusion. The Family Education model for student retention emphasizes the importance of affirming cultural identity for participants and providing pathways for maintaining community connection (Heavyrunner & Decelles, 2002). Clearly, those in programs with an American Indian focus echo this factor in their narratives. Three attended programs with an American Indian focus and underscored the affirming nature of such programming. One indicates this program allowed her to do her research directly in her community, facilitating her maintaining connections
to her community while in the program. Also, they found the presence of American Indian role models or mentors helpful in encouraging entry into programs, validating their experiences, providing substantive academic advisement and assistance (particularly with the dissertation) and generally providing a degree of comfort and belonging. Participants also note having other American Indian students in their programs as beneficial for general camaraderie and cultural sharing. For one participant, he chose a program based on the presence of fellow American Indian students, particularly those committed to sobriety.

Some participants felt their programs, while lacking American Indian content and/or faculty, had an overall commitment to diversity and social justice that facilitated their inclusion. Further, one noted the faculty at her school were able to relate the oppressive experiences of their ancestors to the American Indian experience in their approach, again, increasing the participants’ feelings of inclusion.

Four participants describe choosing social work as a course of study because the work they were already doing with their American Indian communities—either paid or volunteer—matched with the professional values of social work. However, some came to this realization with the help of a mentor who taught them their original conceptualization of social work (often quite negative) was wrong. For some, this congruence does not always hold in the practice of social work or social work academia. They identify more work needing to be done in decolonizing the profession and fully realizing the values of the profession to promote social justice in American Indian communities. For one participant, the colonialism she observed and experienced in her baccalaureate and masters work motivated her to pursue a
study investigating methods for decolonizing social work and other academic programs in her PhD. Another pursued his PhD to fill the general gaps he saw in the literature regarding American Indian communities. Potential pathways for further decolonization as suggested by these narratives are discussed in chapter six.

Several participants describe specific incidents of discrimination or similar issues related to either their own American Indian identity, their research with American Indian communities or toward American Indians in general. Research suggests such personal and institutional discrimination proves common in the university experience of American Indian students (Jackson; Larimore & McClellen, 2005). Two participants lacked adequate American Indian mentors/advisors to assist them in their American Indian focused dissertations. One had to cancel her dissertation defense the day before and rewrite her dissertation to incorporate culturally incongruent developmental theory. The same participant was publically ridiculed for checking, “other” when not offered an American Indian option on an intake form in her masters program.

Finally, for two participants, college attendance was a cultural norm for their family. They indicate feeling like not attending college was not an option. For five participants, they were the first generation to attend college. This results in a lack of general knowledge about the culture of higher education as described above and, for others, a lack of family support to attend. Table 4 summarizes the cultural barriers and facilitators to degree completion denoting which factors were present for which participants.
Table 4: Cultural barriers and facilitators to getting the required degrees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Barriers</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>No American Indian faculty/role models</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>No fellow American Indian students</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changes demanded for dissertation not culturally congruent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forced to speak for all of the AI community in class or special presentations</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not understanding culture of college (language, structure)</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having to take uninteresting classes with no American Indian content, culturally incongruent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preconceived negative thoughts on social work/social workers</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taught American Indians were dead and gone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing in academic, Eurocentric language</td>
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<td>First generation college*</td>
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<th>Cultural Facilitators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AI faculty/role models in program</td>
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<tr>
<td>AI students in program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social work matched (logical choice due to) work already doing professionally or with the community</td>
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<td>Contact with AI faculty facilitates entry</td>
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<tr>
<td>AI content in program</td>
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<tr>
<td>AI content reinforces own experience/worldview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program assists/facilitates connecting to own AI cultural identity</td>
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<td>Program perspective matched cultural prospective (AI specific</td>
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<td>program)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whole family went to college, expectation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Though lacking AI faculty, other diverse faculty understood AI</td>
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<td>School offers sober AI network</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program general commitment to diversity/social justice (not AI</td>
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<td>specific)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motivated by colonialism recognized in program to pursue further study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Able to do research for masters/dissertation in or with own cultural community</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compensates for lack of AI content by doing all projects on AI topics when possible</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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*Not all participants describe this as a barrier.*
Cultural barriers and facilitators in the experiences in academia.

Some participants describe overall hostile university climates for American Indian students and faculty due to issues like mascot disputes and anti-American Indian government policy affecting the university culture. They also note the overall culture is so rooted in western values/traditions it contradicts American Indian values/needs. For example, the academic calendar honors Christian holidays rather than the ceremonies of American Indian communities. Further, many describe the general culture as isolating and impersonal compared to the highly communal and relational nature of their tribal communities. Several participants describe struggling through their positions disconnecting them from their tribal communities due to distance and/or obligations of the faculty position.

Participant one describes the delicate process of meeting both tribal needs and those of her academic position, particularly the requirement to publish. She underscores the need to not exploit tribal communities must come first. She recalls being told not to do community work as it would take too much time and impede her tenure process. She, along with several other participants, has completed work in and with tribal communities anyway. She indicates, with some effort, an ability to reconcile the requirements of academia with work in tribal communities as does participant nine. Participant one offers specific examples of being able to change the culture of academia to meet the cultural needs of her community, e.g. getting them to pay elders for a variety of roles they play in research and education. This does not mean participants do not see cultural issues with the tenure process. One sees it as highly westernized in its expectations including prioritizing quantitative work.
Another sees it as a tedious hoop she is jumping through largely so she can be a role model as a faculty member to other American Indian students.

Several indicate the ability to either incorporate their American Indian perspective/content into courses or to teach courses specific to American Indians. All indicate satisfaction at being able to do so, particularly in being able to get accurate American Indian information out there. However, two note teaching such content to non-Indian students can be a challenge and result in lower ratings on evaluations. These findings both support and negate elements of existing research and theory in regard to American Indian’s faculty experience as discussed in chapter six. Table 5 summarizes the cultural barriers and facilitators in faculty experiences of academia denoting which factors were present for which participants.
### Table 5: Cultural barriers and facilitators in faculty experiences of academia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Barriers</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No community connection in early academic life/University job cuts off from community Loss of connections general</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall university culture hostile to American Indians</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall academia rooted in western culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impersonal culture of academia completely different from native community</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has to establish self with tribes in her area</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Needs of tribe more important than need to publish</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native humor flops with non native</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mascot issue</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-native specific but general cultural clash</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural calendar does not match academic calendar</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Western expectations for tenure and promotion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Different view on how money should be used in academia than others (service to people rather than a program)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dominant discourse says cannot do community work</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Completes tedious tenure to be role model in community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard to teach AI content to non-AI students</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social work a match to values but does not always live up to its ideals in regard to AI people or diverse populations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Facilitators</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Able to blend academia</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>requirements with cultural motivations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work/research tied directly to the community</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Able to teach AI specific courses</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humor breaks through uptight academia</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to get accurate American Indian information out there</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Being able to teach from cultural perspective</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paying elders possible</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social work values a good fit with cultural values</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>
Interpersonal barriers and facilitators in obtaining the requisite degrees.

There were several interpersonal facilitators repeated throughout multiple narratives. Participants indentify the overall importance of social support across the narratives including support from family, employers and their mentors both in the degree seeking process as described above and their time in academia. In all but one case, strong family support is mentioned as a key facilitator across the narratives.

Participants report significant assistance, support and encouragement from just the presence of American Indian role models. This includes having members of their families as college attendees or graduates (e.g. one’s participant’s brother being in school), fellow American Indian students (e.g. seeking out a school with a sober American Indian population of students) and among the faculty (e.g. the presence of role models allowed for participants to vision their own possibilities in joining social work academia). American Indian mentors also provide tangible (helped secure funding for a participant) and cultural support (validating participants’ cultural experiences).

Participants also identified significant non-Indian mentors as helping them both in their degree seeking process and as faculty (described below). These mentors provided a variety of functions including pragmatic support (nominating a student for financial assistance without being asked; providing good academic advising) to the emotional (just being willing to listen). In one case, a mentor inhibited an unsupportive faculty from torpedoing the oral defense of a participant’s dissertation. Participants report the value of mentors in general in getting them into
social work programs or continuing on from their masters work to a PhD (suggesting they start graduate work, sometimes multiple times). These suggestions include describing social work to the participant in a way the participant becomes comfortable and interested in the profession, particularly its ability to provide a cultural fit. One participant had a teacher who modeled such excellent teaching she became interested in teaching herself for the first time despite already being in a PhD program.

These mentors did not have to be within social work departments or even at the same schools. In fact, one participant underscores the helpfulness of having a national mentor. Participants also underscore the importance of, at some point in their higher education, getting positive feedback on their work for the first time. This encouraged them in their ability to handle academia. However, they also describe a lack of mentoring and role models at other points in their educations.

One participant had a counselor refuse her admission into college prep courses based on her being an American Indian. She and her mother challenged the school and forced them to let her take the classes. Another was not offered the opportunity to take college preparatory courses due to a single interaction with the school counselor who simply asked if she could afford college and she said no. This same participant was discouraged from attending by her mother due to the university’s likeness to the boarding schools her mother had attended. Though the participant does not suggest this as a barrier in stopping from her going, it does result in her mother not being able to fully support or understand her choice to attend. Once in school, the participant reports being isolated due to interactions
with peers. The peers only wanted to talk to her about her American Indian identity but would express disbelief about her culture/experiences and then ignore her as result. Three participants report specific discriminatory remarks from faculty and peers, including a dean, while getting their degrees. Four participants had interpersonal barriers in relation to their dissertation chairs or committee members where they did not or could understand/support their dissertation research. In one case, this resulted in a last minute delay of the defense. Five participants report poor advising as a barrier at some point in their education. In one case, the participant implicates lack of advisement as a major factor in him having to earn many more than the actually necessary credits to obtain his bachelors degree. Previous research finds lack of adequate academic counseling common for American Indian students (Jackson, 2003). Table 6 summarizes the interpersonal barriers and facilitators to degree completion denoting which factors were present for which participants. It also lists facilitators present across all narrative arcs.
Table 6: Interpersonal barriers and facilitators to obtaining the required degrees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Barriers</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>6</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counselor excludes from college prep based solely on money</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Counselor excludes from college prep due to being an American Indian</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of family support (e.g. Mom opposed to college, too like boarding school)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring (despite seeking support)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other students isolate her due to American Indian identity</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor advising</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct discrimination from faculty, staff and/or peers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Facilitators</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good teacher encourages her to teach</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructor suggests PhD at masters level</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invited/encouraged to start graduate work</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Receives first real positive feedback on academic work in graduate school</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor for tangible support</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor teaches about social work in positive way, engage participant in profession</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meets AI faculty before starting program facilitating entry</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Program offers network of sober AI friends</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty available for questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Across Narrative Interpersonal Facilitators</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>6</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong social support family</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong support network general</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support from employers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring, general</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors are those who listen</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors/advisor who work with rather than against him</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors protect from others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer mentoring</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>
Interpersonal barriers and facilitators in experiences in academia.

Participants indicate faculty mentors they had as young faculty assisted them in the transition to academia with concrete support (e.g. writing, creating a research agenda), were willing to intervene on their behalf or listen as needed. One participant sought out and noted the importance of having national mentors to work with in her substantive area. Further, relationships were key to job acquisition across participants. In most cases, for one or more of their positions, someone with whom they had a preexisting relationship offers them an interview for the position. Overall, faculty tend to see other faculty as supportive of their tenure processes, working with them rather than against them when they obtained tenure. Interestingly, those without tenure do not consistently make this point. One did indicate significant mentoring support in the tenure process from both her faculty mentor and the dean. However, she only received this support after asking for it directly and floundering for a time on her own.

Despite these generally positive interpersonal factors, four participants report specific conflict with fellow faculty members/academic leadership. These range from having to advocate to be treated as an equal to confronting racial remarks made by the president of the university. Many of these interpersonal conflicts center around cultural issues. In one case, the faculty member was chastised by peers for not voting with the dean instead of following the wishes of the tribal community. In addition to conflicts, two faculty report being isolated by their fellow faculty and the university in general. One of these faculty continues to feel resentment toward the other faculty for their failure to reach out. The other left
a position in part due to this continued isolation. Two of the participants indicated interpersonal barriers related to not having a PhD while in their faculty positions. One felt funders specifically questioned her on this and it thus affected her ability to get funding. Another felt generally discriminated against due to her non-PhD status and stopped disclosing this fact as a result. Participants often isolate and disengage due to cultural and relational issues. Table 7 summarizes the interpersonal barriers and facilitators in faculty experiences of academia denoting which factors were present for which participants.
Table 7: Interpersonal barriers and facilitators in faculty experiences of academia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Barriers</th>
<th>Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts with other faculty</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of overall respect due to lack of doctorate</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolated by university setting/other faculty</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resentment at lack of early reaching out/connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resentment with lack of support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chastised for voting with community rather than dean who hired her</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophical conflict</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism and bullying from president of the university</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Publically shamed around course issue with students</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Facilitators</th>
<th>Participant</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting invited to apply for a job through a pre-existing relationship</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean support in tenure/academic acclimation</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department support in endeavors, like tenure</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty mentor provides writing support to young faculty</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Having friends among faculty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing with other AI faculty prior to PhD</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National connections</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Intrapersonal barriers and facilitators in obtaining the requisite degrees

Participants offer very few intrapersonal facilitators or barriers to obtaining the requisite degree. As all have managed to achieve either a masters or doctoral level degree, it seems likely each has particular intrapersonal characteristics actually facilitating the process. However, few identified personal strengths as part of their narratives. This may be due to a cultural norm of not speaking in a self-aggrandizing manner combined with the lack of questions in the interview schedule asking specifically about personal strength areas. During the member checking process, participants confirmed it is not culturally appropriate for many American Indian people to brag about their personal strengths or accomplishments. Three participants did express confidence in their own academic abilities at some point in their narrative. Two expressed a modest degree of pride in having been able to complete culturally congruent dissertation/other assignments at universities not properly staffed to support such work or operating in opposition to it.

Two participants felt their own academic preparation for college was lacking. However, this lack of preparation is linked to structural issues in their high school institutions rather than academic ability shortcomings of their own. This is evidenced by their abilities to find academic success despite this lack of preparation. Another participant reports a learning disability, but, again, is able to transcend this in her education and work. Several participants do report financial stressors at times impeding their school attendance including mandating they work instead. Participants also report personal stressors like significant health issues and family problems impeding their academic progress at times. Table 8 summarizes the
intrapersonal barriers and facilitators to degree completion denoting which factors were present for which participants.
Table 8: *Intrapersonal barriers and facilitators to obtaining the required degrees*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intrapersonal Barriers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Felt behind in prep for college</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial problems</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introverts due to not being believed by other students</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Needs to focus in work instead of school</td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal stressors (health, family)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intrapersonal Facilitators</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling validated by AI content and approach</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in academic ability</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to do cultural work despite lack of support or direct opposition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Intrapersonal barriers and facilitators in experiences in academia

Some intrapersonal barriers did come up in regard to faculty experiences academia, but they tended to be case and career timing specific. For those early in their careers, one expressed a lack in confidence in one's ability to take on the academic job and two reported feelings of fear/stress at not being able to write enough for their tenure requirements. Both also reported struggles getting their papers containing American Indian specific content published, likely leading to this fear and stress.

Some participants directly report feeling lonely at the university and fatigue from fighting over cultural issues or trying to teach American Indian/oppression content. One indicates a personal failure regarding being able to assess potential job environments as a cultural fit for his needs. Two report significant health issues. Like those in previous research with American Indian students, many participants here report altruistic employment goals focused on going back to and serving their home communities (Garrod & Larrimore, 1997; Taylor, 2005). Faculty here indicate putting the needs and service to their communities before their own needs or those of their academic institutions.

However, in general, intrapersonal facilitators in the academic experience are generally those determined by me reading the overall arc of the narratives and how the participant manages their unique situations. In other words, participants did not typically declare themselves resilient, optimistic, willing to fight, isolating or fatigued, but these underlying causal issues seem implicit across the narratives. The reader is cautioned as here I make the leap from the empirical level of events as
described to my interpretation of the causal mechanisms (in this case, certain personal factors) that are part of causing these events. That noted, several participants remain optimistic (one, four, five, six and seven) about the potential for the profession to further follow its mission in regard to American Indians and their own potential role in that process. All demonstrate resilience throughout their educational experiences and academic careers as all encounter barriers and still manage to obtain the requisite degrees and hold academic positions. All who went up for tenure received it along with promotion. All also indicate at some point in their narratives a general tenacity and willingness to fight for their own cultural values and those of their communities. In some cases, the approach to this conflict differs as do the results. This may be due to intrapersonal factors of participants (beyond the scope of this study) or to contextual differences (discussed below).

The most salient finding across cases in regard to intrapersonal issues surrounds the degree of adaptation of the participant to the dominant culture. Adaptation refers to the ability to operate according to Eurocentric, dominant cultural norms when present in their academic settings. This term is different from “acculturation” which suggest faculty members subvert their traditional values. Those participants who report a higher level of adaptation, including early life experiences of immersion in the dominant culture, have an easier time adapting to academia as students and faculty members. Those without adaptation to academic and dominant culture norms seem to report more barriers. However, the adaptation does not appear to be linked to other intrapersonal characteristics. For example, one participant who makes a point of saying she was highly adapted to the
dominant culture due to her family of origin also reports isolating a lot in academia and generally avoiding connection with many of her fellow faculty despite general academic success. Table 9 summarizes the intrapersonal barriers and facilitators in faculty experiences of academia denoting which factors were present for which participants. It also includes the general intrapersonal barrier and facilitators across all parts of the narrative.
Table 9: Intrapersonal barriers and facilitators in faculty experiences of academia

### Intrapersonal Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue from fighting/teaching lived experience (particularly for AI or other anti-oppression issues)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of writing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal stressors (health, family)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lonely at university</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not able to assess potential work environment for cultural fit</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self doubt can teach, do prof job</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stressed by writing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear/stress of getting enough publications</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>

### Intrapersonal Facilitators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling honored/excited to be offered position</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride in creating tangible change for AI communities and students</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplishing leads to fearlessness</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes teaching and being able to get American Indian students to open up</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sense of personal pride at publishing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of humor</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### General Intrapersonal Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less adaptation to dominant culture norms and/or academic culture</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolating</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigued</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>

### General Intrapersonal Facilitators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obligation to give back</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuses to compromise own identity or community</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sought mentors</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>High degree of adaptation to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dominant culture norms and/or academic culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimistic</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilient</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to fight for cultural community/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>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mentoring the interviewer

Many of the interviewees demonstrated the commitment to mentoring the next generation as part of the interview process. Several offered advice on surviving academia directed specifically to me as a young academic about to enter the field. One participant advised, “It’s learning how to play the game. A lot of it is not personal and I think people can take things very personally. Academia can really be a wonderful place to work and you can have a lot of freedom and you can do a lot of cool stuff, but it can also eat you up. And so, you just - you have to learn about the academic culture and, at the same time, hopefully you’re not letting go of your own culture and your own beliefs. And I think that’s true for anybody. I mean, it’s going to be true for you. What do you believe? Can your core values and the way you view the world - can that be a fit with wherever you work? And I think you already know that in some places, it’s not going to be a fit.” Another advised, “I think that people like yourself who still in part of the game here, I would recommend you find other people like yourself and form - I guess it’s called networking now.”

Specific Recommendations

Faculty offered a variety of recommendations for increasing inclusion for both students and faculty. Participant specific recommendations are detailed in chapter four and summarized across participants here. Suggestions for how to implement these recommendations are offered in chapter six. To begin, we need address the pipeline issue ensuring adequate preparation for American Indian students for post-secondary education. Specifics of this process are beyond the scope of this paper, however, it is pertinent to note the importance participants put
on reframing American Indian’s perception of social workers starting even at the high school age. Social work programs can assist current and future students with additional support for any potential academic deficits they may have due to the lack of quality in their early education (e.g. writing support). Students also need full financial support and other tangible resources (particularly those with families and other life obligations). Programs need to provide flexibility to accommodate community needs and obligations and American Indian students such as attending ceremonies, funerals or caring for extended family. Students need American Indian faculty role models and mentors; faculty need connections to other American Indian faculty.

Faculty offer several recommendations to the social work profession in general including fully realizing its commitment to serving oppressed populations with American Indians through a variety of pathways. They suggest the profession return to its generalist roots and expanding its commitment to antioppressive practice with full understanding/teaching across the spectrum of diverse populations. More specifically to American Indians, social work programs need to increase quality American Indian content as discussed in detail in chapter six. Further, social work needs to partner with American Indian communities to develop tribally specific policy and practice guidelines to best serve family and community needs. Even where programs are teaching American Indian content, faculty need to ensure the knowledge translates to adapted practice in working with American Indian communities. Recruitment of American Indian students needs to happen in American Indian communities. Further, current faculty should focus on, “growing
their own” future faculty by encouraging American Indian students to pursue more advanced degrees.

Other structural recommendations include CSWE fully embracing its diversity initiative in regard to American Indians. This should include CSWE (along with specific social work programs) partnering with tribal colleges. Further, CSWE could designate a position, perhaps in accreditation, to an American Indian social worker to ensure American Indian issues stay a the forefront of CSWE efforts. They could also mandate American Indian content in accreditation standards.

Finally, it is important to underscore here that two faculty made clear the first priority is recruitment of students into higher education in general, not social work education specifically. Students may then choose the path of study that best meets their own and their communities’ needs. Along this line, universities as a whole need better work to increase inclusion including reducing microaggressions students experience and increasing the presences of diverse students and faculty. Table 10 summarizes faculty recommendations for increasing recruitment and retention of American Indian students and faculty.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations for Universities and Social Work Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit students into all courses of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve overall campus climate for inclusivity (e.g. reduce microaggressions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for academic deficits (e.g. writing assistance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of American Indian role models/fellow faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased and integrated American Indian content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Grow your own” future faculty (encouraging students to pursue higher degrees and faculty positions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for Allies in non-American Indian faculty who understand issues affecting American Indian students and faculty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommendations for the Social Work Profession**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Participant</strong></th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSWE partnering with tribal colleges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSWE designating position to an American Indian person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CSWE mandate for American Indian content in programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnering with tribal communities to develop policy, research and practice better tailored to American Indian community needs</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage research and practice supporting better American Indian student preparation at the primary and secondary level</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refocus on generalist roots and commitment to inclusivity</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create pathways for national connections among American Indian Faculty</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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Chapter Six: Discussion

Purpose of the Study

The aims of this study were to find what facilitated success for American Indian faculty in obtaining their required degrees, explore their overall experiences in academia as faculty and find intervention points for increasing inclusion of American Indian students and faculty in social work education. The research project was designed to explore in depth the unique context of each participant’s time in academia and how that context affected their individual experiences. Additionally, the interview questions sought to uncover common facilitators and barriers in each participant’s experiences as faculty and students. These facilitators and barriers coupled with participant recommendations further inform possible interventions for increased inclusion. By conducting qualitative interviews for data collection and narrative methods for analysis, I was able to partner with participants in the research process without over-privileging my voice or perspective. The study used the following research questions to address these aims:

1. How did American Indian faculty experience (and find success) obtaining the required professional degrees for faculty appointments?

2. How do American Indian Social Work faculty navigate (i.e. integrate, experience) their professional role in social work academia?

3. How do American Indian faculty experience the hiring, tenure and promotion process?
4. What issues unique to their cultural identities do American Indian faculty experience in their professional roles?

5. What specific facilitators promoted success for American Indian social work faculty in their academic experiences?

6. What specific barriers hindered American Indian social work faculty in their academic experience?

This discussion summarizes the overall experiences of participants in academia as both students and faculty. This includes how the experiences relate to previous research and theory. The discussion will begin by exploring how the contexts (e.g. academic environments, intrapersonal factors), particularly where they attended school and worked, affected their experiences as students and faculty members. I will then look at how their experiences as students relate to relevant student retention theory and research. As faculty members, I address how these faculty experience hiring, tenure and overall working in academia in relation to previous research and theory along with the new findings that emerged from this study. Special attention will be given to how participant’s cultural identity and worldview affected all these experiences. Further, I discuss the facilitators and barriers of their experiences and how they relate to specific intervention points. This will include integration of faculty recommendations into the potential points of intervention. Finally, limitations and directions for future research will be discussed.
Participants’ Experiences in Academia

Context issues associated with various academic settings

Context is everything for each of these participants. Most saliently, where they attend school or work greatly affects their experiences. The narrative analysis allows us to explore how the context shapes the experience of each faculty member including the interpersonal, cultural and structural issues embedded within each academic context. Participants in programs with an American Indian focus or strong commitment to diversity in general report fewer barriers and multiple facilitators supporting their inclusion. For example, participants in these contexts report having their cultural worldviews affirmed by the programs. They also describe having infrastructure in place to support their American Indian focused research. More specifically, one participant describes being offered grant money before she even puts together proposals to continue work in the American Indian community. Another notes that seeking a mentor results in not only extensive assistance from a faculty mentor but on-going checking-in and support from the dean.

Conversely, those working or attending in schools without such content or commitment to diversity (e.g. a Christian conservative school, a school with a mascot debate related to American Indians, and/or one embedded in a political climate hostile to American Indians) report barriers, including feelings of isolation, lack of general support and consistent conflict. Multiple participants speak of being isolated due to their cultural identity as students. The lack of cultural support/connection results in impeded academic progress. For example, participants five, seven and nine reported having inadequate
mentoring/advisement with their dissertation. Participant five also reported a lack of connection to identity having been taught her people were dead and gone rather than quite present and in many ways thriving. Lack of content and role modeling also creates a sense of subconscious disconnect from culture for some who do not realize this is lacking until they finally receive coursework with American Indian content. For example, when participant two has her first course with American Indian content taught by an American Indian faculty member she realizes her identity could be affirmed in her education and what she had been missing prior to that time.

As faculty, many participants’ describe marginalization or oppressive behavior from colleagues and/or their academic institutions in some or all of their academic contexts. For some, the lack of cultural support isolates them from their colleagues and institutions. For instance, participant three felt like she was simply filling a quota and ignored by other faculty in her first job or participant seven choosing to keep to herself at her current institution. Challenging oppression also creates conflict as with participant six dealing with the mascot issue or participant three trying to maintain a field placement for an American Indian student on the reservation and convince her school to partner with tribal colleges. In the extreme, for one participant here, dealing with marginalization and oppression results in loss of positions due to ongoing conflict around cultural issues. For participants five, six and seven, being in environments openly hostile to American Indian communities and individuals results in continued heightened structural challenges and intrapersonal stressors. Participant three chooses to leave a position after
consistent isolation coupled with peers and leadership challenging her culturally informed decisions.

This finding underscores how important the institutional structure/culture is in the experiences of these participants. For some, we see how the lack of cultural support impedes both obtaining the degree and full success and integration into academia as faculty. For others, cultural support and congruence results in fewer barriers, more facilitators and generally less intrapersonal stress in their overall stories. However, a context with a focus on American Indians is not an entirely protective factor as evidenced by some of the stressors (e.g. lack of mentoring early on in her career, challenges teaching American Indian content) encountered by participant number two.

The way these contexts are managed is further affected by the intrapersonal characteristics of each faculty member (e.g. level of confidence, health status). Some participants work against the interpersonal, structural and cultural barriers encountered in their educational settings using conflict or resistance tactics while others are able to work with fellow faculty and their overall institutions addressing challenges collaboratively. Regardless, most are successful in their system challenging efforts; but the intra-personal results seem to differ. Participants in this study all report some areas of success in their academic life. This includes being able to obtain tenure with American Indian focused research, obtaining culturally congruent field placements for students, securing grants for their tribal communities and in general finding ways to transcend several of the identified barriers. Some participants maintain a general optimism and vision for continued
change in the future. Others described being fatigued, stressed and have stress related health problems. For example, participant three notes feeling fatigued by the process and participant six has ongoing health concerns. They also report different personal consequences for their efforts to challenge the structural and cultural barriers as described above. In general, those in supportive contexts seem to have less negative intra-personal consequences then those in less supportive environments. However, further research is needed to determine the link between specific elements of the environmental context and intra-personal characteristics and outcomes.

The distribution of the factors for both getting the requisite degrees and for participants’ experiences in academia further underscores the need to focus on the academic environment. There are many more structural, cultural and interpersonal issues identified by participants- both as facilitators and barriers- than intra-personal ones. This suggests a focus on the needs of institutions to adapt to the needs of students/faculty rather than the onus only being on the individuals to adapt. Though adaptive individual factors affected outcomes for participants, these would be less necessary without the presence of the structural, cultural and interpersonal barriers identified by the participants. Further, participants seem to put more weight on the ability of these cultural, interpersonal and structural facilitators to herald success then personal characteristics, though, again, they might be culturally less likely to talk about their own strengths. In addition to structural contexts discussed here, all participants talk about the value of relationships at
some point (or several points) during their narratives. The importance and nature of relationships and mentoring is discussed in further detail below.

**Experiences as students and student retention**

Participants in this study underscore feeling marginalized in programs lacking content about American Indians. Further, many report negative consequences when they talked about their American Indian identity in school. Several participants note an overall ethnocentricism in the theory of social work further marginalizing them at times as students (e.g. no inclusion of indigenous ways of healing). This adds further reinforcement for the oft stated need to start de-colonizing social work theory and practice (Coates et al., 2008; Gair et al., 2005; Gray et al., 2008; Haug, 2001; Nimmagadda & Cowger, 1999). For the American Indian individual, colonization may foster self-hatred and exposure to an “over-culture” that proves violent and destructive to traditional values and a sense of self. For some participants, they note having to either hide their cultural identities or lacking information about their identity due to the colonized nature of the education they received.

Tinto’s original model of student retention suggested students who assimilate to the campus climate are more likely to stay in school. Guifridda (2006) challenged this model subverting this notion of assimilation to one of integration and connection whereby there is a symbiotic relationship of the student with an environment (peers, faculty, staff, overall university culture) willing to adapt and fulfill the student’s needs. These narratives suggest most of the academic environments encountered by these participants still favor those with the either
dominant culture values or a high level of adaptation to those values. Those schools with high perceived commitment to social justice/diversity or a specific commitment to American Indian communities prove exceptions with more inclusivity for diverse worldviews. Findings here suggest institutions need to do more to adapt to student needs, not the other way around. This is discussed further in the interventions section of the discussion.

Previous research also indicates when multiple persistence factors are present across domains (e.g. structural factors, interpersonal factors) for American Indian students, persistence is improved (Gloria & Robinson, 2001). In the current narratives, we see an abundance of these factors, as we would expect for those who were successful in obtaining the requisite degrees. Examples include the provision of pre-college preparation, institutions committed to inclusion and addressing the holistic needs of American Indian students, family support and faculty involvement—all of which have been related to increased retention (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). Further, high rates of self-esteem/positive sense of self (self-efficacy assists students in navigating the potentially discriminatory university environment) and comfort in the university setting increase retention (Gloria & Robinson, 2001) and emerge in some of the narratives here. For example, participant one notes having access to college preparatory programming and overall comfort in her academic settings. Further, she displays confidence in confronting marginalization from her peers when she started as tenure-track faculty without her PhD and they did not give her the full responsibilities of a tenured faculty. Social support from faculty members has the strongest relationship with persistence (Gloria & Robinson, 2001)
and we see the importance of both mentoring relationships and
relationship/connection in general for all participants. The presence of these
factors throughout participants’ narratives suggests the importance of multiple
supportive factors to negate the still existing barriers for American Indian students
in the academic environment.

The Model of Institutional Adaptation to Student Diversity (MIASD)
developed by Richardson and Skinner (1990) suggests three key stages in successful
retention of students of color progressing from band-aid strategies for recruitment
to a final stage of full inclusion. This final stage, termed adaptation, sees a more
holistic organizational effort to promote inclusion including overall assessment of
the institution, learning assistance and examination of curriculum in regards to
diversity. This should include faculty member involvement in curriculum and
pedagogical adaptations. The most successful programs described by these
participants included these adaptive strategies. Specific adaptive strategy
suggestions for social work programs and universities are discussed below.

**Experiences as faculty in relation to previous research and theory**

Current findings both underscore and add additional information to
pathways for addressing the key faculty barriers identified by the CSWE taskforce.

The taskforce indicated the following barriers to American Indian faculty inclusion:

- Importance of continued service to the tribal community (divided responsibilities)
- Isolation
- Cultural conflicts – lack of understanding by institution
- Stereotypes and discrimination
- Lack of mentorship
- Lack of other American Indian/Native American faculty
- Additional service demands made of faculty (e.g., guest speaking, diversity
  committees)
• Lack of institutional support and acceptance of Native American research topics and methods
• Importance of Native American faculty members mentoring Native American students
• Lack of support of Native American curriculum (Cross et al., 2009, p. 23-24)

Participants in the current study emphasize the importance of connection to community in their educational process, academic research, service and teaching. In the taskforce report, this is presented as forcing faculty into a position of divided responsibilities. Some faculty in this study indicate ways in which their service or connections to their communities had to be limited due to their academic positions—particularly those who have not yet achieved tenure. Further, all have had some instances of cultural conflicts. However, we also have examples of faculty who successfully blended the research with and service to American Indian communities with their university responsibilities. For example, one participant got her university to agree to pay elders for their contributions and another leverages her faculty position to secure grant funding for her tribe.

Previous research also indicates faculty of color having limited time to devote to research due to heavy teaching loads (Viets et al., 2009) and heavy institutional demands like appointments to multiple committees (Fenelon, 2005; Stein, 1996; Tippeconic Fox, 2008). Though they do discuss time management struggles in general, these participants do not emphasize these barriers in their academic experiences. However, further research is needed with American Indian faculty who have left the academy to see if these issues have contributed to their decisions to leave.
Previous research and the taskforce findings also suggest a general lack of support for American Indian faculty’s research efforts involving American Indian issues (Fenelon, 2003; Stein, 1996; Tippeconic Fox, 2005). For example, subordinating their American Indian related research or the position from which they address these issues by taking a more colonial approach so they might publish in mainstream journals (Russell, 2003 in Harris, 2006). In the case of these participants, all with American Indian related research agendas have continued to follow those agendas in their tenure track positions. For many, researching with the American Indian community has come with significant struggles including getting work published, managing relationships between the tribal communities and universities and general time management struggles- particularly for non-tenured faculty. For the tenured faculty, all who have come up for tenure have been able to attain it despite struggles related to their research agendas. Further, those in the tenure process have had some success publishing their American Indian focused work. Despite these successes, most participants do see a general undervaluing of their American Indian focused research. For example, participant seven notes her faculty seemed to dismiss her qualitative American Indian focused research as lesser than quantitative research in the tenure process. Like previous research with American Indian faculty (Tippeconic Fox, 2005), participants share the common challenge of developing pedagogy that best shares their American Indian perspective and content with students. These findings suggest the taskforce barriers related to maintaining connection to community (divided responsibilities), cultural conflicts and lack of institutional support (e.g. for American Indian research
agendas) resonate in these current faculty’s experiences. However, they also demonstrate several pathways for transcending these issues. These pathways suggest points of intervention discussed in detail below.

Participants also isolate and disengage due to relational issues. This echoes the findings regarding other faculty of color who report frequent isolation and alienation (Edwards, Bryant & Clark, 2007) and of American Indian faculty specifically (Cross et al., 2009; Harris, 2009; Tippeconic Fox, 2008). Previous research in relational cultural theory underscores the importance of relationship in the psychological well-being of individuals (Miller & Stiver, 1997) through respect, mutual empathy and authenticity leading to genuine connection (Walker, 2004). In the academic setting, this happens through collegial relationships and the institutional relationship with faculty (Edwards et al., 2007). Edwards et al. further found the importance of White faculty understanding the oppressive realities in the experiences of faculty of color. This would include providing support in actively resisting such conditions in academia through empathy and engagement. Faculty in the current study note the lack of mutual empathy, mutual engagement and mutual empowerment in some institutional settings among colleagues resulting in their feelings and/or choices to isolate. This includes some direct experiences of discrimination as suggested in the task force findings. Others note their institutional contexts support engagement and relationship (e.g. those with an American Indian focus). Mentoring also plays a key role as described below. In all cases, preexisting relationships proved crucial in participants’ decision making processes around what schools they attended and/or what faculty positions they
accepted. Pathways for fostering relationships for American Indian faculty are discussed in the interventions section.

**Additional culturally specific considerations**

Mentoring takes on a unique role for these participants in both their experiences as students and faculty. Mentors helped them manage cultural conflict and to maintain their cultural integrity. At times, those in the higher echelons of academia seek to exploit the presence of an American Indian student or faculty by using their mere presence as evidence of their inclusion. Even more exploitatively, faculty in the member checking process report having their names and affiliations used without their knowledge or consent in grant funding applications or other such efforts. Others indicate being forced to be a bridge to American Indian communities for their schools though they may not see the school as prepared to make those connections. As students, some were forced to speak for all American Indians. Mentors may help mediate these issues by sharing the wisdom of their own methods for addressing them, intervening or at minimum providing a sounding board to fellow faculty and students. Mentoring was identified as paramount in the successful adaptation of faculty of color into academia (Turner et al., 2008) and for American Indian faculty specifically as indicated by the taskforce. Having culturally similar mentors further facilitates this integration allowing participants opportunities to network and share ideas (Clark, 2006). Participants here underscore this need and the value of culturally congruent role modeling and mentoring. Voss et al. (2005) emphasizes the importance of presence not just for mentoring/role modeling but to represent active resistance to continued
colonization of the profession. Role models and mentors may also assist American Indian faculty and students in coping with issues of historical trauma.

Historical trauma cannot be ignored in addressing issues of recruitment and retention of American Indian students and faculty. In addition to specific family issues, the trauma of the residential school system continues to create a barrier to American Indians in education (Fire, 2006). Many are leery of the educational system and associate it with abuse or loss of culture. In one narrative, the boarding school experience affects one mother’s ability to support her daughter’s education due to relating higher education to the boarding school. Further, we hear echoes of historical trauma in the story of one participant’s ancestors being isolated from their culture in the generation before hers. This results in her being better adapted to the dominant culture norms of academia, but also a loss of her own culture early in her life. One participant sees the structural representation of the historical oppression of his people surrounding his university.

**Potential Interventions**

Each of the factors discussed above suggest more specific points of potential intervention to address the key barriers identified in the original taskforce report and additional issues emerging from the current study. I will discuss points of potential intervention for the social work profession in general, universities and social work programs and their leadership and for social work’s governing bodies. These intervention points include the need to assess the academic environment for readiness/current level of adaptation for welcoming American Indian students and faculty. Specific issues of readiness related to the current findings are discussed
below. For a general place to start regarding institutional readiness in regard to
cultural competence of organizations, the reader is directed to the Cross, Bazron,
authors provide an overall framework for organizational cultural competence as
well as potential intervention points. Beginning with such a framework will better
prepare institutions for the American Indian specific interventions described below.

**Intervention points for the social work profession**

When I started this study, the needs of my social work profession were my
priority. The participants convinced me to focus the needs of American Indian
communities first and of the profession second. From that perspective, recruitment,
particularly at the undergraduate and master's level, should include encouraging
participation among American Indian communities in higher education in general.
This means making sure potential students have knowledge of the breadth of
opportunities through education- including the benefits of alternate degrees. This
does not mean never mentioning social work. In fact, it might include strongly
reframing some of the stereotypes of social workers and the profession and making
the opportunities available through social work very clear- just not the only
opportunities presented.

Many participants entered social work when they recognized the work they
were doing for employment or in their communities is similar to social work values
and practice. Social work recruiters need to develop ways to share the realities of
what social work practice is beyond the stereotypes of “baby-snatchers.”
Furthermore, social work needs to live up to its values and ideals regarding social
justice, particularly in regard to American Indians. For example, social workers need increased awareness around American Indian policy, history, communities and families, intervention strategies specific to American Indian peoples’ needs and to generally act as allies to American Indian communities. All the participants in the study recognize a fundamental compatibility with social work’s core values (e.g. social justice, serving oppressed populations), the generalist model of practice and their own values and goals. However, they, like the literature (see Coates, Gray & Hetherington, 2008; Gair et al., 2005; Voss et al., 2005), see social work as failing to fulfill those values to the benefit of American Indians. For example, there are significant ongoing disparities for American Indian family involvement in child welfare (Hand, 2006; Hicks, 2009). Social work programs should be critically and continuously asking why and trying to make an impact regarding these disparities.

Schools of social work might consider committing to the same priority shift as I did in addressing inclusion of American Indians in higher education. As stated, research and recruitment agendas should focus first on getting more American Indians into higher education at higher rates in general. Social work researchers and practitioners might address the pipeline issue helping ensure adequate education for American Indian students from preschool through high school. For example, social work researchers might research and advocate for policy change regarding education in American Indian communities and/or those in public schools. Schools of social work in proximity to tribal communities and/or with populations of American Indian students in their communities might encourage field placements in the school settings working directly with American Indian youth
on their academic preparation and understanding of their higher education opportunities. Social work educators and practitioners might also advocate at the legislative level for more support for American Indian students and better American Indian content in schools.

**Intervention points for colleges, universities and social work programs**

Increasing recruitment into higher education as described above must happen in tandem with a high degree of effort to increase inclusion at the universities and colleges. In other words, these universities must also be working on increased curriculum inclusion (pathways for increased inclusion are described below) and support services specific to American Indian student and faculty needs in addition to recruitment. Participants here indicate the highest degree of connection to their academic institutions when their schools included American Indian content/students/faculty or a high degree of commitment to inclusion. For higher education in general and social work specifically, administrators and faculty must engage in honest self-assessment of their ability to support American Indian students and faculty before reaching out to these communities and individuals to join their campuses. Inviting someone into the program without providing the requisite structural and cultural support may result in isolation and trauma as experienced by some of the participants in this study.

Schools of social work need to actively work against colonization still present in academia by creating pathways for continued *connection* to community for faculty and students. This might include offering field placements in tribal social service agencies for students (as done by participants three and eight). Students and faculty
might be allowed time to attend ceremonies or similar community/spiritual events when they conflict with the traditional academic calendar. For faculty, adaptations might include position descriptions putting greater emphasis and time toward curriculum development, community work and mentoring.

Tamburro (2010) offers a systematic process for social work programs to assess the quantity and quality of their content in regard to American Indians. In general, content cannot be superficial (Weaver, 2008). It must include policy and larger structural issues uniquely related to American Indians (e.g. sovereignty, Indian Child Welfare Act) (Voss et al., 2005), practice frameworks for serving American Indian populations (e.g. Indigenous ways of healing) (Hodge et al., 2009) and the history of American Indian people (Voss et al., 2005). Further, all curriculum development must be done with American Indians at the helm (Weaver, 2008). Fostering national connections among American Indian social work faculty will also facilitate sharing of best practice pedagogy and integration of American Indian content. Pathways for such connections are discussed below.

The quality of education prior to entering college clearly differed among these participants and affected their experiences in academia. However, as these are all “success stories,” even those with the most abysmal secondary experience were able to obtain their requisite higher educational degrees. This underscores the importance of not judging potential students based solely on past academic records and the need to provide students with adequate academic support in post secondary education to fill any gaps. This might include offering oral interviews in addition to written application materials, providing academic or writing tutors and assigning
not only advisors to offer course of study advice but mentors to assist in all aspects of academic integration.

In addition to an increase in quality American Indian content, community opportunities and academic supports, schools might also establish pathways for students to integrate the needs of their communities in coursework. This may include allowing students to tailor assignments to their American Indian communities in particular (unlike participant nine who failed a paper for addressing her community needs versus looking at an issue her instructor suggested) or the needs of American Indian communities in general. Schools can also provide space and opportunities for American Indian students to network with other American Indian students and faculty within the social work program and with other American Indian students at the university.

A key finding from this study underscores the importance of relationships both in recruitment and retention of American Indian students and faculty. Repeatedly, participants report being asked to start an educational program or to apply for a particular faculty job by a person with whom they had some sort of pre-existing relationship. Schools of social work interested in increasing recruitment and retention need to attend to this, “grow your own” technique of reaching out to American Indian students and potential faculty members and asking them to be part of their programs. It could include reaching out to high schools and inviting promising American Indian high school students to campus to start fostering relationships prior to entry. This requires preexisting relationships both with American Indian students and communities.
This reaching out has to be done by individuals with a strong understanding of the needs and culture of the American Indian people with whom they intend to connect. They must be prepared for the engagement to be long term (as with participant eight’s recruiter asking multiple times and being willing to answer multiple questions) as needed to build trust and offer the proper amount of information and support needed for people and communities to understand the match between their needs and the resources available through the particular social work program. These social work programs could include American Indian content as described above and content relevant to the local tribal communities (where appropriate). Programs might begin this process by simply inviting American Indian speakers to campus. Further, recruitment and interviewing processes could be altered to be culturally relevant. For example, as happened with participant nine, schools might invite family members to the campus visits along with the applicant.

Though this research clearly indicates the power of relationship in recruitment, such a strategy also requires schools to pay equal if not more attention to maintaining those relationships with students and faculty in their programs. Some participants also describe being hired for their potential contributions as American Indian faculty but treated like only a necessary number rather than an actually valuable member of the academic community. In other words, they were to be seen but not heard, counted and then discounted. Schools interested in recruiting will need to demonstrate interest in retention by creating an environment conducive to the presence of American Indian faculty and students. This should include creating pathways for mentoring both for students and for junior faculty. At
best, this mentoring would include culturally congruent American Indian mentors who might assist in the transition to and challenges of academic culture. More specifically, American Indian faculty members may assist in processing issues of historical trauma. However, with limits in the number of available American Indian faculty, non-American Indian mentors with a high degree of cultural knowledge and understanding may also be of assistance in navigating academia with both tangible and emotional support.

Growth fostering relationships and inclusivity must also include university leadership. Leadership has the power to address the structural issues discussed here. Further, leadership can provide valuable interpersonal support and connection to American Indian faculty. For participant two, her confidence and sense of connection changed significantly when the dean fostered a relationship with her to mentor her through the tenure process. Again, this requires relationships in line with relational cultural theory focusing on empathy and empowerment fostered by academic leadership.

Schools might consider inclusion of tenure track positions for American Indian faculty with only a masters degree. However, for the participants here, starting or continuing to serve as a faculty member without a PhD or equivalent degree had consequences. If programs intend to include these positions, they need to include efforts to be fully inclusive of these faculty members not treating them as unworthy of tenure, promotion or leadership. Further, programs might include pathways for these faculty to obtain their PhD’s while serving as faculty members, e.g. providing release time, tuition waivers.
Mentors provide role models and assist junior faculty and students in the adaptation to academic culture and requirements. They provide assistance with how to maintain a culturally appropriate American Indian research agenda in the academic setting, dealing with oppression and share best practice pedagogy for teaching from an American Indian perspective. Mentors also provide an obvious initial route out of isolation experienced by young faculty. However, tenured faculty also report feeling or choosing isolation- often due to treatment from their fellow faculty and fellow faculty not understanding their community connections and research agendas. Non-American Indian faculty members must first work on their own knowledge and cultural competence to facilitate better inclusion of American Indian faculty. Even with significant improvement in this area, American Indian faculty need pathways and support for making connections across universities and fields of study with other American Indian faculty for both collaboration and peer mentoring opportunities.

**Intervention points for social work’s governing bodies**

Systemically, the Council on Social Work Education could institutionalize the need for American Indian content in programs. During the member checking process, participants suggest schools need a mandate to teach about the unique sovereign nation status of American Indians and the implications of that sovereignty for practice with this community at all system levels. At the American Indian educators meeting, participants suggested this could include adding such a mandate to the social work EPAS statements. In CSWE Educational Policy 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice- a specific mandate might be added indicating
schools teach about the unique status of American Indian people in the United States.

Limitations

This study only sampled faculty currently serving in full time faculty positions and one retiree. As stated, many faculty of color do not adapt to the culture of academia and instead opt to leave (Edwards et al., 2007; Viets et al., 2009). Faculty who choose to leave may have had a very different experience in obtaining the requisite degrees and experiences in academia than the faculty members here. Also, the sampling methods here do not allow for generalization to all American Indian social work faculty members or all colleges and universities.

This study draws on retrospective reports from faculty recalling their narratives at one point in time. Even with the depth of these single interviews, they only provide a cross sectional snapshot of their overall experiences. Participants’ views on academia and their experiences likely shift over time and are framed here by the political and social conditions at the time of their interview in their particular contexts. There may also be unexplored differences according to key historical events that happened in the lifespan of the participants (cohort effects) and the particular culture of academia when they started their educational and work experiences. Further, due to the nature of narrative research, the focus remains on the areas the participants choose to focus on in the interview process. Therefore, not all interviews covered the same substantive areas. I also did not ask in depth questions about participants’ perceptions of their personal strengths and weaknesses. This, coupled with the potential cultural norm of not talking too much
about one’s own strengths and successes, may have resulted in a lack of data in the intra-personal area.

The current analysis also does not explore in depth how other aspects of identity further shape or influence these participants’ experiences in academia in detail. For example, how the experience of female faculty differs from that of male faculty or how participants raised embedded in their indigenous communities experiences differ from those who were not. Though I do discuss issues related to level of adaptation to the dominant culture, this study does not address level of acculturation to faculty’s American Indian identities. Additionally, faculty serving at research intensive universities may have substantially different experiences than those serving in more teaching focused positions. Indicating in detail the type of university setting at which each participant worked may have compromised their confidentiality and was thus not looked at as a unit of analysis. The outcomes for individuals proves a complex mix of context and intrapersonal skills, past cultural experiences, level of adaptation, ability to adapt but maintain one’s own values and other salient parts of the open systems in which they completed their degrees and worked in academia. Due to this issue, we cannot determine from the current study how each of these faculty would have fared had they been in different educational contexts.

Member checking and partial additional analysis by an American Indian researcher provided a degree of validity testing in the conclusions of this study. Much of the data analysis, however, was completed by a non American Indian analyst. This limits the reliability and validity of the analysis and its conclusions.
Future research

These data offer the foundation for further survey research of larger groups of American Indian students and faculty to test the saliency of identified facilitators and barriers across populations. For students, this might include looking across student populations including all American Indian students in higher education, tribal college students, bachelors level students, graduate students and social work students across levels of education. Further, this work might include comparing both students coming from American Indian communities compared to those living in urban areas to assess unique needs. Surveys of this nature might seek out American Indian faculty across areas in academia to increase sample size and allow for potential differences in particular programs to emerge (e.g. an engineering program compared to a school of social work).

As it is often a more culturally congruent approach, there are multiple opportunities for qualitative studies to expand the research in this area. Colloquial evidence suggests many faculty leave social work academia for other specialties or jobs outside the academy. The current study should be replicated with this population to explore differences in those faculty’s experiences compared to those currently serving in social work faculty positions. Future research might also conduct similar interviews with faculty across disciplines to facilitate recommendations for increasing inclusion in academia as a whole. Also, future research should look at how specific environmental and contextual factors are related to specific intrapersonal faculty issues, e.g. stress, job satisfaction, sense of belonging.
Future research might focus more on the multiple aspects of identity that affect the experiences of individuals in his or her particular contexts. For example, one might look at how gender, sexuality and ethnic identity intersect in shaping faculty experiences. Further, this research might assess needs relevant to these intersections and the unique aspects of identity.

Much research has focused on the problems with the academic experiences of many American Indian students at the primary and secondary school level. More research needs to be conducted assessing effective intervention strategies for meeting the educational needs of American Indian youth. This should not only include interventions with schools but those mobilizing community and family strengths to support students through the educational process.

As stated, much of the change suggested here requires the efforts and support of leadership. Future research should also look at the attitudes, knowledge and needs of deans and directors of social work programs. The Council on Social Work Education and other social work leadership/governing organizations could support this and other research addressing the needs of American Indian communities- including self-evaluation. Such research might suggest interventions specific to this population that would allow them to better serve and advocate for the needs of American Indian people. Further research is needed in how to create and encourage empathic, mutual and empowering relationships among American Indian faculty, their institutions and fellow faculty to increase retention.
Conclusion

Clearly, with the importance of role modeling, mentors, curriculum development and partnerships with tribal communities and colleges and more American Indian specific research emerging there is a need for increased numbers of American Indians in social work education. American Indian faculty will play key leadership roles in creating strategic partnerships, directing curriculum change, setting research agendas, recruitment of American Indian students and identifying context specific intervention points at their academic institutions for increasing inclusion. Further, there is potential strength, comfort and observable decolonization in having fellow American Indian faculty members in social work education. Participants here demonstrate how they personally transcend perceived colonization and do find success (to varying degrees) and a place for American Indians in social work education. Their stories offer pathways for extending this inclusion to other students and faculty. Finally, strength in numbers may move some current faculty from surviving in isolation to thriving in connection.

Though increased numbers of American Indian faculty proves key to increasing overall inclusion of American Indians in social work, efforts to increase inclusion should not only be the mandate of American Indian faculty. Increasing the number of American Indians in social work education requires efforts across systems including universities, colleges, social work programs, academic leadership and social work’s governing bodies described in the intervention section. Non-American Indian faculty also need to increase their awareness, knowledge and skills for supporting American Indian students, fellow faculty and communities. We
must serve as allies in the change process necessary to increase inclusion. We must
engage in honest personal and organizational assessment about our readiness to
engage American Indian students, faculty and communities and determine first
steps for moving forward based on that assessment. This includes recognizing
personal and organizational biases, practices and norms that may marginalize
current or potential American Indian faculty and students.

Social work education increasing inclusion of American Indian students and
faculty, adjusting curriculum to include quality American Indian content such as
indigenous ways of helping and healing and encouraging research into best
practices for American Indian communities should ultimately lead to better services
for American Indian families and communities. Hopefully, such progress will result
in reduction in the multiple disparities affecting American Indian communities and
increased mobilization of these communities’ strengths. Finally, these efforts will
result in social work better meeting its mandate for promoting social justice with
American Indian people and communities.
Appendix A: Interview Schedule

For the following questions, please check any responses that apply to you. If you prefer not to answer, please check prefer not to answer.

1. Current academic position:
   __Full time instructor/adjunct faculty
   __Assistant professor
   __Associate professor
   __Professor
   __Other (please specify)______________
   __Prefer not to answer.

2. Gender identification:
   __Female
   __Transgendered
   __Male
   __Other (specify if desired) ____________
   __Prefer not to answer.

3. Please check all that apply to your identity adding specifics if desired.
   __American Indian/Alaskan Native/First Nations.
     Specification__________________________________________
   __African American
     Specification__________________________________________
   __Asian American
     Specification__________________________________________
   __White
     Specification__________________________________________
   __Latino/Latina
4. Please numerically indicate how many different institutions you attended as part of completing your undergraduate education for each type of school. For example, if you only attended one, four year tribal college you will place a 1 next to that school and a zero for all others.

- Four Year Tribal College
- Four Year Public University or College
- Four Year Private University or College
- Two Year Tribal College
- Two Year Community College
- Other (specify)
- Prefer not to answer

Total number of undergraduate institutions attended

5. Please numerically indicate how many different institutions you attended as part of completing your masters education for each type of school. For example, if you only attended one, public university you will place a 1 next to that school and a zero for the others.

- Public University
- Private University
- Other (specify)
- Prefer not to answer

Total number of masters level institutions attended

6. Please numerically indicate how many different institutions you attended as part of completing your doctoral education for each type of school. For example, if you only attended one, public university you will place a 1 next to that school and a zero for the others.

- Public University
- Private University
- Other (specify)
- Prefer not to answer

Total number of doctoral level institutions attended

7. How many times did you start and stop your undergraduate degree before completion? In other words, how many times did a quarter or semester or more of time pass between taking classes while completing your undergraduate degree?

- Times
8. How many times did you start and stop your masters degree before completion? In other words, how many times did a quarter or semester or more of time pass between taking classes while completing your masters degree? 
   ___Times

9. How many times did you start and stop your doctoral degree before completion? In other words, how many times did a quarter or semester or more of time pass between taking classes while completing your doctoral degree? 
   ___Times

Educational History and Experiences

Introductory script:
Before we begin, I want to be sure to use your preferred language in this interview. In my work, I refer to the indigenous population in the United States as American Indians deferring to the language preferred by the National Congress of American Indians. Do you have another term you prefer I use throughout this interview? If so, I will defer to that language when needed.

We are going to begin by discussing your own experiences in higher education.

1. Tell me about the process of obtaining your bachelor's degree. 
   Probes: Do you remember how you decided/were motivated to do so? Did you start and stop the process? Why? Did you transfer among institutions? Why? What specific struggles/barriers stand out? What specific facilitators/assists stand out?

2. Tell me about the process of obtaining your masters degree. 
   Probes: Do you remember how you decided/were motivated to do so? Did you start and stop the process? Why? Did you transfer among institutions? Why? What specific struggles/barriers stand out? What specific facilitators/assists stand out?

3. Tell me about the process of obtaining your doctoral degree. 
   Probes: Do you remember how you decided/were motivated to do so? Did you start and stop the process? Why? Did you transfer among institutions? Why? What specific struggles/barriers stand out? What specific facilitators/assists stand out?

4. If not already addressed, at what point did you decide to pursue social work education? Describe the process of choosing social work as a profession.
5. As you pursued your higher education, did you feel you were able to maintain connection to your home community? Your family? How were you connected? Disconnected? What are some examples of maintaining/not maintaining connection?

6. How would you describe the fit between your values and those of your educational environments? For example, you might value spending time in your community, with your family, during times of crisis (deaths, sickness, etc) What are some examples of fit, lack of fit?

7. What types of support do you recall your academic institutions offering that were particularly helpful? Not helpful? Examples? Then probe for specific examples around why they were helpful. Once general response received, asks specifics around:
   - Academic supports?
   - Cultural supports?
   - Resources (e.g. financial aid, daycare, time off from class for family issues)?

8. Describe your overall support system as you pursued your higher education degrees. 
   Probe for academic, professional, emotional and social support.
   - Strengths in your support system?
   - Deficits in your support system?

9. Please describe any mentoring relationships you had while pursuing your higher education degrees. Do you have specific mentors that come to mind? What stands out about your mentor? How were they helpful? Not helpful? 
   - What roles did your mentor(s) play in your education?

10. Overall, suggest three best potential facilitators for promoting American Indian students pursuing higher education. Social work education in particular?

11. Overall, suggest three biggest current barriers you see for American Indian students pursuing higher education. Social work education in particular?

**Experiences in Social Work Academia**


13. Describe your experience as a social work faculty member. Potential probes: What is most rewarding? Biggest challenges?

14. Have you had a faculty mentor(s) since becoming a faculty member?
If yes, describe the mentoring relationship. What assistance did they provide? What key pieces of advice did your mentor offer? What helped the most? Anything lacking? How did you acquire this/these mentor(s)?

If no, do you feel a mentor would have or would be helpful to you? Why or why not?

15. Think about your relationships with other faculty members in your department. In general, how would you describe these relationships? Will you describe a particular relationship example or two?
   How would you describe the respect between you and your faculty colleagues?
   Do you feel like other faculty members understand your cultural perspectives and/or identity? If so, how so? If no, how do you feel this affects you or your professional role?

16. How would you describe the fit between your cultural identity/worldview and that of your current academic setting? An example of an area of good fit? Example of a conflict area?

17. Do you use your cultural knowledge in teaching? In research? If yes, please describe the ways you are able to do so/provide examples.

18. Does your research agenda include yours or other specific cultural groups? How does your institution support that research? How does your setting hinder your research? Examples?

19. Have you had any cultural conflicts in your current academic setting? If yes, please describe and include if this has affected your job security at the university.

20. In what ways do you fulfill any service requirements of your position? Examples?
   Probes: service to the university?
   Community?
   Specific tribal community services?

21. Drawing on specific examples from above, how do you perceive each level of service is valued by the university?

22. Describe any mentoring you do with students.
   How do you enter these relationships?
   What types of students do you typically mentor?
   How, if at all, is your mentoring time counted toward your job requirements?
   Will you describe an example of a mentoring relationship?
23. What courses do you currently teach? What courses have you taught in the past?

24. Have you been part of curriculum development? If yes, what areas?

25. What personal factors facilitate your academic career/fulfilling your faculty responsibilities?

26. What personal factors inhibited your academic career/fulfilling your faculty responsibilities?

**Tenure and promotion questions:**

Are you currently on a tenure track? If no, proceed here. If yes, skip to question 29.

**For those in non-tenured position:**

27. What lead you to accept a non-tenured position?

28. Would you pursue a tenured position if available to you? Why or why not?

Skip to question 33.

**For those in tenured or tenure track positions:**

29. How would you describe the fit between your academic activities and the tenure qualifications at your school? Example(s)?

30. How would you describe the fit between your academic activities and the promotion requirements at your school? Example(s)?

Are you tenured? If no, continue here. If yes, skip to question 32.

**For those not yet tenured in a tenure track position:**

31. Describe your thoughts (concerns) about the tenure process. Probe for specifics about publication, teaching and service.

**For those with tenure:**

32. Describe your experience achieving tenure.

33. How would you describe your department or program’s understanding of the cultural needs of American Indian faculty? Examples?
34. Please describe any efforts on the part of your institution to increase inclusion of American Indian students and faculty.
   Strengths of these efforts?
   Weaknesses of these efforts?

35. Have you experienced any particular incidents or ongoing issues of discrimination based on your cultural identity? If so, describe.

36. Do you participate in any professional social work organizations (e.g. SSWR, CSWE)? Why or why not?

37. What are the biggest barriers to improving retention of American Indian faculty into social work education?

38. What recommendations do you have for better inclusion of American Indian faculty in social work education?

**State of the Profession (If time)**

39. In general, in what ways do you feel social work is inclusive of American Indians? Areas for improvement? How about social work organizations like NASW, SSWR or CSWE- ways they are inclusive or could increase inclusion?

40. In what ways do you feel social work students in your program are prepared to work with American Indian clients?

41. In what ways do you feel social work students in your program are not prepared to work with American Indian clients?

42. Is there anything else you would like to add? Any specific issues regarding your cultural background and experiences in social work academia?

43. Do you have any comments or feedback on this interview? Areas you would alter/add?
Appendix B- Master Code List

C-D-ability to tie SW specifically to community for self and students keeps interest
C-D-able to research in/ about community for masters
C-D-AI content in program
C-D-AI content validates personal experience
C-D-AI faculty in program/role models
C-D-AI students in program
C-D-Culturally isolated until academic experiences connect her back to AI culture
C-D-Does all work on AI content regardless of objections
C-D-non AI faculty understood/taught AI experience
C-D-Program strong diversity/social justice focus
C-D-Recognizing colonialism/lack of AI research drives further study
C-D-School offers sober AI network
C-D-social work matched with current work/community work
C-D-Stays connected to culture via community org
C-D-Support for AI dissertation
C-D-Whole family went to college, expectation
C-F-Able to teach specific AI content/courses
C-F-Being able to teach from cultural perspective
C-F-Example of making cultural fit for work in academe
C-F-fellow AI faculty
C-F-Focused on getting accurate AI info out there
C-F-Humor breaks through uptight academia
C-F-Paying elders possible
C-F-prefers tenure track goes to the young
C-F-Work/research tied directly to the community
C-Social Work validates culture with systems approach
C-Social work values a good fit
CB-D-changes demanded of dissertation/writing do not jive with AI population
CB-D-first gen college
CB-D-Hard to live and research in own AI community
CB-D-Having to speak for all AI
CB-D-Having to take uninteresting classes not Indian way
CB-D-No native content
CB-D-No native faculty/role models
CB-D-No native students
CB-D-Not understanding culture of college (language, structure)
CB-D-Not understanding non AI culture
CB-D-Preconceived or negative thoughts on SW
CB-D-Taught AI dead and gone
CB-F-Completes tedious tenure to be role model in community
CB-F-Cultural calender does not match academic calendar
CB-F-Different view on money than others (service to people)
CB-F-Dominant discourse says cannot do community work
CB-F-Hard to teach Non-AI students AI content/perspective
CB-F-Has to establish self with tribes in new area  
CB-F-Mascot issue  
CB-F-Needs of tribe more important than need to publish  
CB-F-non-native specific but general cultural clash  
CB-F-Western expectations for tenure and promotion  
CB-Having to give up culture or community at different points  
CB-Loss of connections to home tribe  
CB-Native humor flops with non native  
CB-Overall hostile university culture for AI  
CB-Overall Western culture of academe  
CB-SW does not always live up to ideals  
I-D-Actual positive feedback on academics in school  
I-D-AI mentor  
I-D-AI student friends  
I-D-Dean/mentors help with financial aid  
I-D-Family member says go to college/provides role model  
I-D-Good advising  
I-D-Good teacher encourages her to teach  
I-D-High school counselor encourages college  
I-D-Instructor suggests PhD at masters level  
I-D-Invited to start graduate program  
I-D-Mentor for tangible support  
I-D-Mentor teaches SW and engages  
I-D-Met AI faculty prior to entering masters program  
I-D-Needs to make sober AI friends  
I-D-Nun encourages school  
I-D-strong diverse peer support in PhD  
I-F-Dean support in tenure/academic acclimation  
I-F-Department support in endeavors, like tenure  
I-F-Faculty mentor provides writing support to young faculty  
I-F-having buddies  
I-F-Job through relationship  
I-Mentoring general  
I-Mentors are those who listen  
I-mentors protect from others  
I-Mentors who work with rather than against him  
I-Peer mentoring/support  
I-Strong social support family  
I-Strong support network general  
I-Support from employers  
IB-D-Counselor excludes college prep based soley on $/AI identity  
IB-D-Dad not supportive of local college  
IB-D-Fearful of college  
IB-D-Lack of family support  
IB-D-Lack of mentoring when sought out
IB-D-Mom opposed to college, too like boarding school
IB-D-Other students isolate her as do not believe/understand Indian culture
IB-D-Poor advising
IB-D-Direct discrimination faculty, staff and peers
IB-F-Bullying from president
IB-F-Chastised for voting with community rather than dean
IB-F-Conflicts with fellow faculty
IB-F-Direct discrimination leadership
IB-F-Isolated by university setting/other faculty
IB-F-Lack of overall respect due to lack of doctorate
IB-F-Perceived sabotage
IB-F-Resentment at lack of early reaching out/connection
IB-F-Resentment with lack of support
Mentoring the researcher
P-Ability to do cultural work despite lack of support
P-D-Confidence in academic ability
P-F-accomplishing leads to fearlessness
P-F-Excitement at opportunity
P-F-Feeling honored to be offered position
P-F-Likes teaching and getting AI students to open up
P-F-Pride in creating tangible change for AI communities and students
P-F-sense of personal pride at publishing
P-F-Use of humor
P-High degree of adaptation to dominant culture
P-Obligation to give back
P-Refuses to compromise own identity or community
P-Sought mentors
P-Willing/compelled to conflict
PB-D-Felt behind in prep for college
PB-D-financial
PB-D-Internalize second class status
PB-D-Introverts due to not being believed by other students
PB-D-Learning disability
PB-D-needs to focus on work
PB-D-Negative attitudes/experiences with social work
PB-D-personal stressors (e.g. family)
PB-F-Fatigue from fighting/teaching what lived
PB-F-Fear of writing
PB-F-Health issues
PB-F-Keeps quiet a lot/isolates
PB-F-Lonely at University
PB-F-Not able to assess environment for fit
PB-F-Self doubt can teach, do prof job
PB-F-Stressed by writing
PB-F-Terrified about getting enough pubs
PB-Low degree of adaptation to dominant culture
PB
Very little insight early into own identity
PD-B
Depression at surrounded by systems of oppression
S-D
Available and Accessible program, convenience
S-D
Available faculty for questions
S-D
Community College accepts low GPA
S-D
Financial Aid/Grants/Tuition paid/support
S-D
Flexibility
S-D
Graduate assistantships
S-D
Liked rigor of program
S-D
Masters no standardized test
S-D
Non academic employer supports masters
S-D
Not denying due to low GPA, sees skill
S-D
Program responded to discrimination issue
S-D
Secondary support programs, e.g. Upward Bound
S-D
Starting college classes in undergrad
S-D
Tribal funding
S-F
Able to always put community needs first
S-F
Able to do/finish PhD in faculty position
S-F
Able to make activity match mission of university
S-F
Able to make system meet cultural needs
S-F
Flexibility of academia good/helpful
S-F
Mentor upon request in early career
S-F
National connections
S-F
Offered job (asked to come work somewhere)
S-F
Offered to teach with only masters
S-F
Peer mentoring for writing as young faculty, all women
S-F
Program seeks out AI applicant
S-F
Program supports PhD pursuits
S-F
Teaching before position
S-F
Tenure not a problem
S-F
Writing with other AI faculty prior to PhD
S-Need to recruit to all higher ed
SB-D
Alienating program
SB-D
Financial Issues
SB-D
Financial trouble/having to work
SB-D
GPA limits choices
SB-D
Lack of advising that facilitates AI research
SB-D
Lack of AI mentor for dissertation work
SB-D
Lack of financial aid knowledge
SB-D
No place on intake form for masters for AI
SB-D
Stuck in general ed in high school/no college prep
SB-D
Surrounded in area by structures of oppression
SB-F
Anti racist Antihomophobic gets in trouble
SB-F
External funding struggles with no PhD
SB-F
First job just an AI #
SB-F
Hard to publish AI
SB-F-Have to confront according to political capitol
SB-F-Have to do quan for tenure
SB-F-Having to confront racism
SB-F-Isolation in academia life
SB-F-Job demands negate connection to community, either or
SB-F-Lack of support for teaching
SB-F-Leadership discriminatory
SB-F-Managing the need to publish with needs of tribes
SB-F-microaggression
SB-F-No mentor first job or until ask for one
SB-F-Pressure to get PhD
SB-F-publishing enough
SB-F-sense lack of quantitative means less valued
SB-F-Taken advantage of by system in early career
SB-F-University isolates and loses native faculty
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