INTERSECTING IDENTITIES OF PROVISIONAL COLLEGE STUDENTS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF LIVED EXPERIENCES

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Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

Undergraduate college students with identified pre-college risk are admitted into a large four-year, public research university in the Mid-West, placed into a 'provisional' category and called "provisional students." Provisional students are challenged to endure potential risk factors above and beyond the risks they bring to college. The purpose of this study was to use students' voices to capture the lived experiences of provisional college students, explore the intersection of their identities in the ability to persist, and examine what they say about how the campus environment influences their identities. This qualitative study investigated the experiences of six provisional students. Data was collected from four sources, including in-depth interviews, a journaling exercise, field observations, and the researcher's own heuristic inquiry. The data were analyzed and nine themes emerged. The themes' summation concluded that academic status mattered, relationships mattered, and race mattered. Study findings offer implications for institutional policy and practice that may serve useful to administrators, advisors, and instructors at higher education institutions.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my two biggest fans; the love of my life, Jay and my dearest sweet daughter, Angela! Both have never faltered in their love and support for me in all of my life's escapades. To the six students who participated in this study, thank you for leading the way.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

CHAPTER I

> "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle, because we do not live single-issue lives." — Audre Lorde, *The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house*

INTRODUCTION

In response to the civil rights movement and the "War on Poverty," the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 and subsequent re-authorizations have redefined the role of the federal government and the structure of federal student financial aid in efforts to support the extension of higher education (The Pell Institute, 2016, p. 99). The HEA did not refer to higher education as a right, but the law did recognize that certain groups of underrepresented students are at a "disadvantage" and do not have equal opportunities to higher education. Subsequently, those who were regarded as "disadvantaged" were measured by family income, parent education, disability status, English Language Learner status, migrant status, and minority status (The Pell Institute, 2016, p. 99). Reflected on the civil rights concerns, the mission of the U. S. Department of Education was to "ensure equal access and foster excellence in education" (The Pell Institute, 2016, p. 9). Concomitant with the growing perspective, the current mission of the U. S. Department of Education is to "promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access" (p. 9). As a result, the changing laws and attitudes became apparent in the impressive rise in the number of diverse student populations enrolled in colleges and universities. For example, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), in fall 2017,

approximately 20.4 million students are expected to attend colleges and universities in the United States, constituting an increase of about 5.1 million since fall 2000 (National Center for Education, 2017). The percentage of American college students who are Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, and American Indian/Alaska Native has increased. From 1976 to 2014, the percentage of Hispanic students rose from 4 to 17 percent, Asian/Pacific Islander students rose from 2 to 7 percent, Black students from 10 to 14 percent, American Indian/Alaska Native students rose from 0.7 to 0.8 percent. During the same period, the percentage of White students fell from 84 to 58 percent (National Center for Education, 2017). Further, according to the NCES, during the 2011-2012 academic year, 34 percent of undergraduate students were the first in their families to go to college.

In-line with HEA's label "disadvantaged," terms like "ethnic minority" "academically disadvantaged" "high risk students" "first-generation," "underrepresented" and "at-risk" are used to identify student populations deemed at-risk for non-degree completion. Indeed, there is a significant body of literature that identifies risk factors that can impede students' ability to complete a college degree. Risk factors are "existing constructs that have the potential to create roadblocks or impediments to academic success" (Morales, 2010, p. 165). For example, Heisserer and Parette (2002) have identified several groups of students who are considered to be at-risk of non-completion: ethnic minority, academically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, of low socioeconomic status, and probationary students. Further, Collier and Morgan (2008) state that first-generation college students should also be considered as "high risk of withdrawing from the tertiary study; with the term 'first-generation' referring to college

students for whom neither parent has completed a four year higher education course" (p. 426). However, risk factors are highly idiosyncratic, hence early studies of risk focused on one risk factor rather than a web of risk factors that may include a sequence of challenges rather than a single experience or event (Garmezy & Masten, 1985; Rolf et al., 1990).

This ideology focuses on the identification of students' deficiencies and the need to develop programs and services to compensate (e.g., intervention programs, first year experiences, academic support services) (Iverson, 2007). For example, disadvantaged is magnified in intervention programs as illustrated by this data quote: "Close the gap in educational achievement, by bringing retention and graduation rates for students of color in-line with those of the student body as a whole" (Jennings & Lynn, 2013, p. 594). Similarly, another report observed that Black and Hispanic students have lower graduation rates than do White students and recommends the development of "a plan to reduce the disparity in graduation rates between majority and minority students" (Jennings & Lynn, 2013, p. 594). The majority, represented as the norm—White, male, and/or middle class—serves to signal the ways in which people of color are outsiders, as shown in the following quote: "a significant disparity in graduation rates persists between Black and White student" (Jennings & Lynn, 2013, p. 595). Stigmatizing students as less than fully qualified in the labels that we bestow upon them can result in demoralization and feelings of stereotype threat if they perceive that others have low opinions of their abilities (Charles, Fischer, Mooney, & Massey, 2009). Stereotype threat is defined as:

> … a social-psychological predicament that can arise from widely known negative stereotypes about one's group … the existence of such a stereotype means that anything one does or any of one's features that conform to it make the stereotypes

> more plausible as a self-characterization in the eyes of others, and perhaps even in one's own eyes. (Steele & Aronson, 1995, p. 797)

Labels placed on students can produce barriers that perhaps surpass the concerns of associated risk factors. For example, research on a minority status imparts an additional burden of stress on minority students and could warrant increased risk for negative outcomes beyond that which are attributed to stresses of being a college student (Saldana, 1994). Minority students' subjective sense of integration into campus life can likely be gleaned from the extent to which stress is derived from student's minority status, interpersonal relationships and the student services that mediate their college experiences, and their subsequent subjective sense of integration (Jones et al., 2002). The stigma that first-generation students typically "attend lower quality high schools than continuing-generation students" (Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, & Johnson, 2012, p. 1179) may influence their ability to persist. Further, first-generation students are often uncertain about the "right way to act as college students" and thus begin to question whether they belong and can be successful in a college setting (Johnson, Richeston, & Finkel, 2011, p. 839). Finally, higher education institutions that serve underprepared students across institutional types use language, policy, and practice to marginalize them further by intervening in support; students arrive on campus and are singled out for special treatment in ways that typically imply a need for remediation (Charles et al., 2009).

Discourse enables us to give meaning to the world and act to transform it; "through language [written and spoken words], we actively construct our experience" (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1995, p. 35). Discourse refers to "the way in which language or, more broadly, bodies of knowledge . . . define the terrain and consequently complicate attempts at change" (Bacchi, 1999, p. 40). Language then, is not simply descriptive or a

reflection of the world; it "doesn't just mirror reality; it actively shapes the way we perceive and underhand it" (Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003, p. 14). Thus, the discursive practices set forth in educational policy "has a profound influence on the ways that individuals act and think" (Mills, 1997, p. 62). Furthermore, students' identities are shaped through discourse—"the place where our sense of ourselves . . . is *constructed*" (Weedon, 1997, p. 21). This discourse situates students' perceived deficiencies as vulnerable, at-risk, and dependent on the university and its' programs to compensate for these deficiencies. This discursive framing of diverse student populations fails to critically examine the "systemic factors that perpetuate deficit thinking and reproduce educational inequities" (Garcia & Guerra, 2004, p. 155).

While there are risk factors found that contribute to students ability to persist in college, the 'at-risk' label was created as a way to identify students with associated risk factors in efforts to illuminate the reasons for high attrition (Swadener & Lubeck, 1995). During this process, defined conditions were acknowledged as aspects of identity (e.g., race/ethnicity, social class, academic preparation, etc…) that tend to produce risks. Gradually, educators and policy makers developed a set of characteristics that place students 'at-risk' of school failure (Swadener & Lubeck, 1995). The term at-risk has thus become a buzzword much like "diversity, choice, or privatization, and, like these conditions, the assumptions that underlie its usage have gone largely unexamined" (Swadener & Lubeck, 1995, p. 1). The term "at-risk students" implicitly reinforces the belief that failure and risk reside within the students rather than in the relationships between the students and the colleges and universities, or in the colleges and universities themselves (Agada, 2001). Further, the aspect of labeling students "is not only self-

defeatist on the part of the educational system but sets in placing a self-fulfilling prophecy that ensures eventual failure" (Agada, 2001, p. 82).

At the university under investigation, students that have identified risk factors based on criteria of risk are put into a 'provisional' category and called "provisional students." Admitted provisional students participate in a prescribed intervention program comprised of signed contracts, progress reports, and specialized advising. Despite these interventions, the six-year graduation rate for provisional students ranges from only 8.1% to 13.95% (Institutional Research, 2017). Each state defines the criteria of risk in regards to undergraduate college students. According to the Department of Higher Education (2017), the state of Ohio has four defining characteristics of risk. Included in this definition are students who enter college after the age of twenty-two; whose families' estimated family contribution is less than $2,190 in any of the five years before degree attainment; who has less than a 17 ACT in either math or English. Further, if no ACT data is available, students who are required to complete any developmental coursework before beginning college courses; and students who reported their race being African-American, American Indian, or Hispanic (Department of Higher Education, 2017). For this study, I looked at provisional students at a public research university in the state of Ohio that have completed two semesters of coursework. Although this is the only criteria used for assessment of provisional admission, Table 1 provides other provisional students' demographic data retrieved from the university's department of institutional research. First-generation was not added because as a voluntary disclosure to FAFSA, it was not reported for all students. Further, students' EFC of less than $2,190 in any of the years prior to degree attainment indicated Pell eligibility.

Table 1

Provisional Student Demographics

Year admitted	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Students Enrolled	884	726	566	524	434
Pell Eligible	39	37	22	16	22
Amer. Indian/Alaska Native	2	1	4	1	3
Asian	15	20	5	6	6
Black/African American	330	284	223	187	153
Hispanic/ Latino	28	23	23	18	23
Two or More Races	51	55	36	35	28
White	423	310	259	263	215
Not Specified	32	31	16	13	4

This study explored how provisional students are challenged to endure potential risk factors above and beyond the risk factors they bring to college with them. First, the acceptance letters that provisional college students receive in the mail indicates their provisional admit status. As already discussed, "labeling students as [provisional] is not only self-defeatist on the part of the educational system, but sets in place a self-fulfilling prophecy that ensures eventual failure" (Agada, 2001, p. 82). During my experience of working in the advising office, for at least three weeks after provisional students receive their admission letter, the advising office was bombarded with phone calls from parents wondering why their son or daughter had to take "all these extra classes" and when he/she "would be admitted into the university." The confusion was common and constant.

Second, for at least the first academic year, most provisional students are secluded in one building away from the rest of the campus [pseudo name: building 'off campus']. This building is where they are advised, where they take many of their first year classes (often remedial), and where they attend a [pseudo name: success seminar] specific to provisional students. During my employment in the advising office that met with provisional students, myself as well as other were in constant angst as to the language used in the provisional admission letter, the language used during new student orientation, and the instilled value with the isolation into the building 'off campus'. All first semester students were required to take the success seminar unless they were directly admitted into their degree granting college. There were designated sections specifically for provisional students, which singled them out from other students. Singling students out for special treatment in ways that typically imply a need for remediation (Charles, 2009) is not conducive to creating a sense of inclusion and provides another layer of stigmatization (Jones et al., 2002). These potential risk factors that provisional students endure are what drive my reason to do this study.

I worked in the advising office where provisional students were admitted. My responsibilities were to meet with new provisional students each semester during New Student Orientation, advise in regards to academic progress, recommend a clear and direct pathway to a degree, help explore resources to maximize self-awareness and facilitate academic maturity, and examine external factors that influenced career and individual development. As already identified, provisional students come to college with risk factors that can impede their ability to attain a college degree but, being labeled and alienated to one building could also be risk factors that could impede provisional

students' ability to persist. During my doctoral coursework and in preparation for my dissertation, I conducted a pilot study that posed two overarching questions: "How do you feel about being a provisional college student?" and "Do you feel like you fit into the university?" Four provisional students with one year of completed college were interviewed. Three out of the four students expressed concern with the "provisional" label. One student, Sally said, "I just don't like the title 'provisional' I felt like people looked at me differently." She continued, "You guys have me under this "provision" like in a sense it's almost like you feel we are not ready, it kind of first really made me feel slow and everything" (pilot study interview, 2014).

All four students expressed concerns of "not being on campus". For example, Sally reminisced, "I felt like I wasn't a university student. I felt a little weird like I wasn't on campus." Another student, Ann also expressed concerns of

> There are more regular people and then on campus you see a lot more college students. [There is] a lot of homeless people surrounding the buildings—just people hanging out—it's just the people that don't go there—I want to say like the public and the homeless—they just come in and sit around. It's kind of weird they just kind of sit around and look at you. (pilot study interview, 2014)

Students that fall into the 'provisional' category already experience risks that can impede their ability to persist. Whether it is an ACT score at or below a 16 or 17, a high school GPA score at or less than a 2.3 or both, it is imperative to also address how the label 'provisional students' and the alienation into one building serves as perpetual reminders of being provisional students could also be risk factors that influence students' persistence and degree attainment.

Addressing risk factors and low graduation rates can be classified in one of two ways: "focusing on failure or focusing on success" (Morales, 2010, p. 164). Framed in a

way that focuses on success, the playing field should level for students in order to acquire the necessary skills and resources, risk will be reduced, and students are more likely to persist (Iverson, 2007). The latter category is the growing emphasis on educational resilience research in higher education (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005). Resilience is defined as the "process of, capacity for or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances" (p. 426). Educational resilience can be defined as "the process and results that are part of the life story of a [student] who has been academically successful, despite obstacles that prevent the majority of others with the same background from succeeding" (Morales & Trotman, 2004, p. 8). The opposite of risk factors are protective factors. Protective factors are "specific circumstances experiences or resources that buffer [student's] reactions to a situation that is an ordinary circumstance lead to maladaptive outcomes" (Werner & Smith, 1992, p. 5). In other words, protective factors indicate

> …specific experiences, events, or resources that buffer against risks that typically would lead to maladaptive outcomes, whereas resilience reflects a [students'] ability to deflect, reinterpret, or otherwise circumvent risk factors that are presented through challenging and compromising circumstances. (Werner & Smith, 1992, p. 5)

Consequently, the focus should be on protective factors rather than risk factors in efforts to uncover how students overcome vulnerabilities and utilize compensatory strategies that contribute to their academic success (Morales, 2008).

The aspect of resilience has long been used in the educational arena. The premise of educational resilience research is based on the assertion that an efficient and underutilized means of mitigating the sparse graduation rates is through acquiring a complete picture of the *whole student* (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005; Milstein & Henry,

2000). The notion of fostering the *whole student* is not a new phenomenon as enhancing the identity development of students has long been a primary role of student affairs practitioners. Within the student affairs literature, identity is commonly understood as one's personally held beliefs about the self in relation to social groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, class) and the ways one expresses those relationships (Torres, Jones, & Renn, 2009). For the provisional students under investigation, the context and interactions they have with others; including other people, societal norms, and expectations instilled upon them will influence how they construct their identities (Jones, 1997; McEwen, 2003). In reality, when asked "Who are you?" most people would not respond with a single identity, but rather a sense of self can be based on several facets of identity that can be determined simultaneously. This study will use intersectionality as a theoretical framework. Intersectionality is defined as "relationships among multiple social dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations (McCall, 2005, p. 1771). In simpler terms, it can be defined as the processes through which the intersections of identities converge and ultimately shape individual and group experiences (Shields, 2008).

Based on the university's admission criteria, and in the context of provisional college students, the role of 'provisional' is foregrounded without attention to how the social categories might influence the students' identity development (Abes, 2016) and how students are able to successfully negotiate their college experience despite experiencing "challenging or threatening circumstances" (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005, p. 426). An intersectionality framework captured a more complete and accurate picture of the complexities in the everyday lived experiences of provisional students by explicitly

linking individual, interpersonal, and social structural aspects to their college experiences (Dill & Zambrana, 2009; Shields, 2008). For example, the lived experiences of an Asian, middle class provisional college student who lives off-campus will differ from the lived experiences of a White, first-generation, and of low-socioeconomic status provisional college student who lives on campus. Rather than examining singular aspects of their identity, such as, Asian or White, a focus on the intersections (meshing and converging) of their multiple identities (such as; White, first-generation, of low economic status, etc…) can be used to explore how the many facets of their identities influence their ability to persist and making meanings out of those experiences.

This study looked at the intersection of race/ethnicity and role-identity in the lived experiences of provisional college students drawn from the "theoretical explanations or the resilience phenomenon which involves the interaction of risks factors, including individual vulnerability and the protective factors to explain why some are spared and others are not" (Taylor, Karcher, Kelly, & Valescu, 2003, p. 47). Race/ethnicity and role-identity cannot be captured wholly by looking at the race/ethnicity or role-identity separately (Abes, 2016) but rather, intersectionality centers analysis on how experiences are enmeshed in their social structures (Torres et al., 2009). Race is historically referred to as biological differences between people, but it is now accepted as a meaning system that signifies socio-political conflicts between groups (Brooks & Clunis, 2007). Ethnicity is a word used to denote group differences based on shared ancestry, traditions, and categorization by those within an external to the group (Kenny & Briner, 2007). Race/ethnicity is identified as aspects that influence identity development (Morales, 2008). According to Moya and Markus (2010), the term *race* should be used when

referring to how people are placed into groups according to perceived physical and behavioral human characteristics that are often "imagined to be negative, innate, and shared [and] associated differential value, power, and privilege with these characteristics" (p. 21), whereas the term *ethnicity* should be used when the groups are viewed more positively, for instance; when the grouping confers "a sense of belonging, pride, and motivation" (p. 22). There is a significant body of literature on the influence of race/ethnicity on identity development of college students (Root, 1990) and with at least 50% of provisional students at the university under investigation from diverse backgrounds, investigating race/ethnicity was fitting for this study.

Role-identity is a set of characteristics or expectations that are simultaneously defined by one's social position and thus a dimension of one's self (Yi-Ching & Billingham, 2014) and also identified as a factor that influences the identity development of college students (Riley & Burke, 1995). Role-identity tends to result in role-consistent behavior only when the demands of the situation are consistent with the behavior of that identity, therefore when constancy exists, role support from the context provides self-verification and confirms the relevant identity and thus increases the probability of the role behaviors (McCall & Simmons, 1978). The implication for role-identity on provisional students is found in the premise of role-identity salience. Role-identity salience as it is found in the association with behavior; meaning the more salient the role-identity, the higher the probability that provisional students will behave consistent with that identity (Stryker, 1987). For example, when college students perceive that they are expected to be responsible, their role-identity of being responsible becomes stronger. Further, role-identity theory postulates that college students who believe they are

expected to be responsible are more likely to define themselves as responsible and act accordingly (Callero, 1985). This premise is found significant in research. For example, an initiated special program for African-American students at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, in where students were not stigmatized by a label of remedial or compensatory program, but rather they were told that "as Michigan students, they had survived a competitive selection process, and that their assignment to the program was intended to maximize their strong potential" (Charles et al., 2009, p. 5). Thereafter, the university officials identified the students' worth as scholars, communicated their high expectations for them, and explicitly labeled the program with those messages in mind. A systematic analysis of the participants' academic progress showed that students in the program lived up to their academic potential, while comparable students who were assigned to remedial programs did not (Charles et al., 2009).

Institutional policy, practice, and culture within the realm of higher education must move beyond implementing programs and policies that foster a culture that encourages accommodations for the perceived deficiencies of students and move towards embracing their *whole self* through fostering the development of the multiple facets of their identities (Abes, 2016). According to Abes (2016), this means "thinking outside the box on programming when working with and supporting students in all of their complexities and recruiting and hiring professionals who identify in multiple ways" (Abes, 2016, p. 93). However, on the contrary, and according to Edwards (2002), educational research demands "a core set of value-laden concerns about individual, community, and social well-being" (p. 158), and the productive relationships between policy-makers and researchers which will depend on "conversations where the

assumptions of both policy-makers and researchers can be disrupted and research can responsibly support reflective and forward-looking policy-making" (Edwards, 2002, p. 159). This disruptive process will extend to practitioners whose expectations of a straightforward application of research finding to college setting will be challenged, instead, they will be offered conceptual tools which will enrich their capacity to interpret and respond to the demands of practice (Edwards, 2002). Hamilton (2002) takes a similar approach, stating that "research may be a basis for action but it is not the guarantee of action" (p. 160). Student affairs practitioners can provide appropriate support services to provisional students by fully acknowledging, embracing, and educating themselves about who their students are and the multiple intersecting identities they possess (Abes, 2016). Further, practitioners can help students develop their *whole self* by supporting intersectional thinking and support services that can influence students' understanding of self and how to navigate the collegiate world around them (Abes, 2016). An example of this challenge is found in an excerpt in Pearson's (2010) report exposing a student's struggle of making meaning of her intersecting identities:

> I became increasingly confused about my identities and felt like I failed to fulfill my role and duties … I literally felt like I was trying on different costumes to find which would make me more acceptable in society. My failures fueled my anger and urged self-destruction. (p. 352)

The sense of urgency to help students discover, embrace, and foster their intersecting identities rather than their perceived deficiencies continues to be validated in the literature on college completion numbers.

Student development has been described as "the ways that a student grows, progresses, and increases his or her development in an institution of higher education" (Rogers, 1990, p. 27). The accompanying theory used to explain and understand student

development allows educators to "proactively identify and address student needs, design programs, develop policies, and create healthy environments that encourage positive growth in students" (Evan, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998, p. 5). The language of 'identity' is ubiquitous; however, the common usage of the term identity belies the considerable variability in both its conceptual meanings and its theoretical role (Stryker & Burke, 2016). According to Josselson (1996) "identity is what we make of ourselves within a society that is making something of us" (p. 28). A socially constructed phenomenon refers to "one's sense of self and beliefs about one's own social group as well as others are constructed through interactions with the broader social context in which dominant values dictate norms and expectations" (Torres et al., 2009, p. 577). Identity development is a socially constructed phenomenon; the more practitioners understand how students make meaning of their identities, the better they can help promote their healthy identity development (Torres et al., 2009). Finally, social identity development pertains "to the ways in which individuals construct their various social identities, namely, race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, and the intersections of these multiple identities, including social class, ability and disability, and religion" (McEwen, 2003, p. 13).

In light of the issues presented in this paper, student affairs professionals, practitioners and policy makers must continue to move from theory to practice and practice to theory. They must continue to explore the intersections of provisional students' identities in efforts to provide the necessary supports and help influence students' understanding of self (Abes, 2016). Further, by using intersectionality as an approach for examining students' experiences at the nexus of multiple identities will help

both provisional students and practitioners make sense of their intersecting identities (Atewologun, Sealy, & Vinnicombe, 2015).

Student Development Theory: Guiding Institutional Policy and Practice

All student development theories are rooted in paradigms. A paradigm often referred to as a world view or as a "set of interconnected or related assumptions or beliefs" that guides thinking and behavior (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014, p.3). A poststructural paradigm grounded in the assumptions that systems of oppression form reality, the ways in which these systems shape reality needs to be deconstructed, and reality is ever changing and defies labeling (Lather, 2007).

Poststructuralism can be defined

> …negatively in terms of what it rejects. It denies the possibility of any kind of universally valid knowledge of the kind proposed by advocates of the scientific model. It insists not just on the relativity of all knowledge claims but also that knowledge is a product of desire or power…Any claim on the part of researchers to be in pursuit of truth, or to be in possession of knowledge, is treated by poststructuralists as hiding the work of others interests. (Hammersley, 1995, p. 14-15)

Labels are not neutral; they contain assumptions about the problem and the remedy. As Tyack (1989) states "being labeled [provisional] is certainly not neutral and must be weighted carefully for its relative potential for possible and needed assistance or intervention and its potential for damage, disempowerment, or further marginalization (p. 34). This study used a poststructural perspective to address systems of discourse. According to Foucault (1979) and Derrida (1967/1978), poststructuralism is the belief:

> That knowledge and truth are social constructions that reflect the prevailing interests of those who hold the most social power; that knowledge and truth are neither objective nor universal; and that all knowledge and truth reflect the specific cultural and historical contexts in which they were developed. (p. 194)

Poststructural perspectives not only uncover the ways in which some student development theories silence labeling but also create prospects for new ways to conceptualize student development theory that "loosen and empower" these same students (Abes, 2016, p. 10).

In this section, the evolution of student development theory is examined further. The foundational student development theories were situated in 'families' of psychosocial (for example, and in order of publication date to reflect evolutions, Erikson, 1959/1994; Marcia, 1966; Chickering, 1969); cognitive-structural (Piaget, 1952; Perry, 1968; Kohlberg, 1981; Kegan, 1982; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Baxter Magolda, 1992, 2004; King & Kitchener, 1994); typology (Holand, 1997); and maturity (Heath, 1968). Although this first collection of theories recognized the roles of the environment and the interaction between the individual and larger context (Lewin, 1936), the majority of these theories represent the context of their times and are largely based on samples that were mostly White men from privileged socioeconomic backgrounds (Abes, 2016).

The second evolution of student development theories addressed the growing diversity of students entering colleges and universities. These theories aimed to describe students' unique experiences and developmental pathways by incorporating specific social identities like racial identity, ethnic identity, and sexual identity (Torres et al., 2009). The pioneering work of psychologists William Cross (1978), Janet Helms (1993), Jean Phinney (1992), and Vivienne Cass (1979) created a strong foundation for many subsequent theories that concentrated on understudied populations (Abes, 2016). The hallmarks of the second wave theories were that they were more inclusive of the

experiences and identities of all college students with introducing the influence of structures and inequality in the understanding of college students' development; particularly focusing on campus climate on student success (Abes, 2016). Further contributions were made by providing an important new pathway to understanding student development outside of developmental perspectives by regarding social identities, the influence of larger contexts, and a more compound emphasis on the whole student (Abes, 2016). While there are significant contributions to an increased focus on minoritized and marginalized social identities, there is further emphasis on majoritized and dominant identities being left unscrutinized and according to critical perspectives on student development theory, "not examining dominant identities reinforces their 'normalcy'" (Abes, 2016, p. 21). A poststructural analysis deconstructs theses discourses to create new possibilities for identity construction (Abes, 2016).

The latest progression of student development theories is grounded in critical and poststructural theoretical frameworks. Perspectives that seek to critique, challenge, and dismantle inequitable power struggles are significantly altering the progression of student development theory (Abes, 2016). Further, such perspectives challenge implicit assumptions about the nature of identity and social relations by situating social identities as creations of inequitable power struggles instead of innate and natural (Hesse, 2007). Related to student development theory; poststructural perspectives institute three elements: the role of context, intersectionality, and acknowledgment of individual agency. This study will focus on the aspect of intersectionality.

Identity Development

The identity development of students in colleges and universities has been a major research interest in the history of higher education and student affairs (Jones, 1997; Evans et al., 2010). Identity development theories can help student affairs practitioners to understand how students go about discovering their "abilities, aptitude, and objectives" while assisting them to achieve their "maximum effectiveness" (American Council of Education, 1937, p. 69) and can offer insight into efforts of retention. Undeniably, there has been over 60 years of significant advancements concerning understanding students and how they grow and develop during their college experience (Evans et al., 2010; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Torres et al., 2009). Despite these advances, professionals in higher education do not have a complete picture of the lived experiences of students with identified risk factors, how the intersection of their identities influence the ability to persist, and how resilience, self-efficacy, and stereotype threat inform those negotiations (Jones, 2009).

Research on understanding intersecting multiple identities and how those intersections influence multiple domains of development is in its infancy (Abes, 2016; Abes & Jones, 2004; Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2007). The identity development of undergraduate students that negotiate risk factors has not been widely researched in higher education regarding what aspects of students' identities influence their ability to persist in college. Some researchers have explored this group of students in one capacity or another (Bergerson, Hotchkins, Furse, 2014; Le, LasCost, & Wismer, 2016; Lynch et al., 2010; Stebleton & Soria, 2012; Stuber, 2011; Pizzolato, 2003; Tran, 2016; Yeh, 2002) however, these studies do not provide insight into the lived experiences of provisional

students as they persist. The term 'lived experiences' involves the immediate, pre-reflective consciousness of life and thus an attempt is made to understand the essential features of a phenomenon as free as possible (Dilthey, 1985). The important question still remains as to what are the lived experiences of provisional college students and how is the intersection of their identities influencing their ability to persist.

The significant influence the campus environment has on identity development in a general sense has been at the forefront of academic research (Enochs & Roland, 2006; Fischer, 2007; Harris, Cook, & Kashuback-West, 2008; Howard-Hamilton, 2003; Jones & Abes, 2014; Jones & McEwen, 2000), others have studied the interaction of the college environment with undergraduate students' identity development (Renn, 2004; Torres et al., 2009; Simons, 2016), yet, studies have not specifically included the measure of the campus environment in terms of how students develop and make meaning of their identities. It is critical to attend to what students are saying about what influence the college environment has on their identities.

Statement of the Problem

College admission into the 'provisional' category is determined based on pre-college success indicators; ACT score at or below a 16 (between the years of 2011-2013), and 17 (between the years of 2013-2016), a high school GPA at or below a 2.3, or both. As outlined above, research has identified risks that can impede students' ability to persist and experience degree attainment; however provisional college students are challenged to endure potential risk factors above and beyond the risks they bring to college. First, the acceptance letters that provisional college students receive in the mail indicates their provisional admit status. As already discussed, "labeling students as

[provisional] is not only self-defeatist on the part of the educational system, but sets in place a self-fulfilling prophecy that ensures eventual failure" (Agada, 2001, p. 82). Second, for at least the first academic year, most provisional students are secluded in one building almost off campus—reported by students as "a sketchy area - off campus." This building is where they are advised, where they take many of their first year classes (often remedial), and where they attend a success seminar course specific to provisional students. Singling students out for special treatment in ways that typically imply a need for remediation (Charles, 2009) is not conducive to creating a sense of inclusion and provides another layer of stigma (Jones et al., 2002).

Provisional college students can benefit from supports and interventions; however, student retention efforts would be better served if the appropriate supports and interventions were grounded in the unique experiences of the intersection of students' identities, how students make meaning of their multiple identities, and the influence of the campus environment on their identities. The attempt to isolate the influence of any one dimension of identity such as 'provisional' fails to capture how the membership in multiple identity groups can influence how students are perceived, treated, and how they negotiate their college experience (Berger & Guidroz, 2009; Crenshaw, 1995). Additionally, it cripples the ability for researchers and student affairs professionals to create successful intervention strategies because the focus is one of a defeatist approach rather than an opportunist one. Student voices have not been heard as to what provisional college students are doing to persist in-spite experiencing risk.

This research will use intersectionality as a theoretical framework. Intersectionality as a framework for understanding identity grew out of the field of

critical legal studies (e.g., Crenshaw, 1995) and scholarship of women of color (e.g., Collins, 1998; Dill, Mclaughlin, & Nieves, 2007) and has been used prominently in other fields, especially feminist theory studies (Bowleg, 2008; Cole, 2008; Collins, 1998; Dhamoon, 2011; Hancock, 2007; McCall, 2005; Nash, 2008; Warner, 2008). This study can did the following: provided insight into the identity development of provisional undergraduate college students; explored what students say about the influence of the campus environment on their identity; and consider how intersectionality can be useful for understanding how provisional undergraduate college students can make meaning and fully articulate intersectional identities in order to reflect on the *whole self.*

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to use students' voices to capture the lived experiences of provisional college students, explore the intersection of their identities in the ability to persist, and examine what provisional students say about how the campus environment influences their identities. Practitioners are encouraged to reflect on scholarship that recognizes identity as a continuum and explore how the intersection of multiple identities inform each other (Abes, 2016). This type of intersectional thinking around identity can allow for a richer understanding of provisional students' lived experiences and inform the need for creating true intersectional campus spaces, environments with significant variations, and make systematic changes to encourage educators to begin with themselves by interrogating and reconceptualizing provisional and the intersectional identities in colleges and universities (Abes, 2016). Intersectionality attunes us to "multiple identity dimensions, acknowledges the dynamics

of identity construction and offers an agent-centered perspective on experiences" (Atewologun et al., 2015, p. 227).

Research Questions

The research questions for this study used students' voices to capture the lived experiences of provisional college students, explored the intersection of their identities in the ability to persist, and examined what provisional students say about how the campus environment influences their identity in the following capacities:

(1). What are the lived experiences of provisionally admitted college students?

(2). What aspects of provisionally admitted college students' multiple intersecting identities influence their ability to persist?

(3). What do provisionally admitted college students say about what influence the campus environment has on their identities?

Significance of the Study

There were four fundamental reasons to embark on this study. First, it gave voice to the lived experiences of provisional college students and insight from the students themselves as a means to inform institutional policy and practice, campus administrators and support staff, college level educators, and suggestions regarding provisional admittance.

Next, as previously discussed, the college environment is an area that has the possibility of significantly influencing students' identity development (Strange & Banning, 2001; Renn, 2004). Research about how undergraduate students make meaning of their selves and develop as a *whole* people is in the infancy stages of exploration (Patton & Simmons, 2008; Torres et al., 2009; Abes & Kasch, 2007; Museus & Griffin, 2011; Winker & Degele, 2011). This represents a considerable gap in the literature; how

provisional students develop and how the campus environment may foster or inhibit their identity development. The diversity of undergraduate student populations are growing on college campuses (Brock, 2010; Engle & Lynch, 2009; American Council on Education, 2010; Le et al., 2011; AD Council, 2006; Dowd, 2003; Stebleton & Soria, 2012; Stuber, 2011), they need relevant programming, support, and services that can assist in their pursuits of academic success.

Further, this study aided in the illustration of how intersecting identities influence students' lives. Intersecting identities of college students have been examined at some level (Abes & Jones, 2004; Abes 2016; Museus & Griffin, 2011; Jones & McEwens, 2000; King & Baxter Magolda, 2005; Reynolds & Pope, 1991; Stewart, 2008, 2009; Torres et al., 2009); however, research on provisional undergraduate students will add to the knowledge that we have concerning intersecting identities of college students. As practitioners help students develop as *whole* students, a lack of research and support on intersectional thinking can influence students' perspective of self and how they navigate the world around them. There can be real consequences to the college experience of provisional students concerning their identity development if we do not fully acknowledge, embrace, and educate ourselves about whom our provisional students are and the intersecting identities they possess (Abes, 2016).

Lastly, my study situated in an intersectionality framework provided insights as to the challenges and benefits of its use in higher education research. While many writers have used intersectionality as a paradigm and methodology in other areas (Bowleg, 2008; Cole, 2009; Collins, 1998, 2015; Dhamoon, 2011; Hancock, 2007; McCall, 2005; Nash, 2008; Warner, 2013), it has not been widely used in higher education identity-based

research. Research is at its infancy in its use of intersectionality as both a theoretical framework and methodology for theories of student development (see Abes, 2016; Jones, 2009, Torres et al., 2009).

Researcher's Subjectivity

In any research study or data collection process, research bias can have a potential influence on the work of the researcher. Peshkin (1988) suggests that to adhere to strong ethical boundaries and their reputation for personal integrity, it is imperative that one's subjectivity is represented throughout any research study. I have already established advisor/advisee relationships with the students participating in this study. The familiarity allowed for a certain amount of trust already developed between me and the participants.

Definition of Terms

Several significant terms have been used throughout this research study; therefore these terms have been provided.

Campus environment: "In the broadest sense, we can define the 'campus environment' as including any characteristic of the college that constitutes a potential stimulus for the students" (Astin, 1968, p. 3).

Discourse: Term used to reference "the way in which language or, more broadly, bodies of knowledge . . . define the terrain and consequently complicate attempts at change" (Bacchi, 1999, p. 40).

Ethnicity: Word used to denote group differences based on shared ancestry, traditions, and categorization by those within an external to the group (Kenny & Briner, 2007).

First-generation students: The term ‘first-generation’ referring to college students for whom neither parent has completed a four-year higher education course” (Collier & Morgan, 2008, p. 426).

Identity: “Identity is what we make of ourselves within a society that is making something of us” (Josselson, 1996, p. 28).

Identity development: Identity development is an interactive process between individual and environment that leads to an increasingly complex understanding of self and self in context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1993; Bubolz & Sontag; 1993).

Intersectionality: As a construct, intersectionality is defined as the processes through which multiple social identities converge and ultimately shape individual and group experiences (Shields, 2008).

Paradigm: A paradigm, often referred to as a worldview, is a “set of interconnected or related assumptions or beliefs” that guide thinking and behavior (Jones et al., 2014, p. 3).

Provisional college students: Students that fall under the “provisional” category based on the university’s admission criteria are those who have an ACT score at or below a 16 (between the years of 2011-2013), and 17 (between the years of 2013-2016), a high school GPA at or below a 2.3, or both.

Protective factors: Specific circumstances experiences or resources that buffer [student’s] reactions to a situation that is an ordinary circumstance leads to maladaptive outcomes” (Werner & Smith, 1992, P. 5).

Race: Historically refereed to biological differences between people, it is now accepted as a meaning system that signifies socio-political conflicts between groups (Brooks & Clunis, 2007).

Resilience: Resilience is defined as the "process of, capacity for or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances" (p. 426).

Risk factors: Existing constructs that have the potential to create roadblocks or impediments to academic success" (Morales, 2010, p. 165).

Role-identity: A role-identity is a self-view or a meaning attributed to oneself about a specific role (Burke & Tully, 1977).

Stereotype threat: Something that arises from any situational cue signifying that a person is at-risk of being judged in light of a negative stereotype about one of his or her social identities and supports the fundamental determinant that whether a person is identified with a domain is whether the domain has "relevance to one's self-definition" (p. 616).

Socially constructed: Refers to a concept that "one's sense of self and beliefs about one's own social group as well as others are constructed through interactions with the broader social context in which dominant values dictate norms and expectations" (Torres et al., 2009, p. 577).

Student development: Student development has been described as "the ways that a student grows, progresses and increases his or her development in an institution of higher education" (Rogers, 1990, p. 27).

Self-efficacy: An internalized evaluation about self, which can be, to a great extent, influenced by external factors, such as the social aspect of self, relationships, and communication with others (Cho, So, & Lee, 2009).

Social identity development: Pertains "to the ways in which individuals construct their various social identities, namely, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, and the

intersections of these multiple identities, including social class, ability and disability, and religion" (McEwen, 2005, p. 13).

Summary

This research was situated in its focus on the lived experiences and identity development of provisional undergraduate college students. It explored what influence the campus environment had on students' identity development. Lastly, it used intersectionality as the theoretical framework and phenomenology and phenomenology and heuristic inquiry as of the methodological paradigms (see chapter 3). The subsequent chapter, literature review, is a review of all applicable and relevant literature. In particular college enrollment patterns, resiliency theories, identity development theories, multiple and intersecting identity theories, the college environment, and intersectionality are detailed. Followed in the third chapter; methodology, an in-depth review of the theoretical underpinnings; a review of the research questions, research tradition, setting, sampling procedures, sampling size and saturation, ethical considerations, instrumentation, and data analysis, data collection and data analysis that embodied this study. Chapter four will offer an overview of the findings from the study. Lastly, chapter five will include the findings, conclusion, discussion, implications for practice, and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter was to provide background and support for this study in the exploration of three research questions: (1) What are the lived experiences of provisionally admitted college students?, (2) What aspects of provisionally admitted college students' intersecting identities influence their ability to persist?, and (3) What do provisionally admitted college students say about what influence the campus environment has on their identities?

I explored the foundational literature relating to seven primary areas including college enrollment patterns, discourse, resiliency theories, identity development theories, multiple and intersecting identity theories, the college environment, and intersectionality. I begin by discussing enrollment and completion patterns. Next, I discussed related resiliency theories. Next, I examined the evolution of identity development theories while considering issues that surround the identity development of college students. Next, I examined the aspects of multiple identities related to the identity development of students' whole self. Then, I outlined the influence the campus environment has on students' identity development. Finally, I introduce intersectionality as a theoretical framework used for this study.

Student development theories are rooted in paradigms. A paradigm is referred to as a worldview, a "set of interconnected or related assumptions or beliefs" that guide

thinking and behavior (Jones et al., 2014, p. 3). The spirit of a theory and how a theory is used in practice depends on the paradigm in which it is situated. Ball (1995) offers a poststructural definition of theory:

> The theory is a vehicle for ‘thinking otherwise'; it is a platform for ‘outrageous hypotheses' and for ‘unleashing criticism.' Theory is destructive, disruptive and violent. It offers a language for challenges, and modes of thought, other than those articulated for us by dominating others. It provides a language of rigor and irony rather than contingency. The purpose of such theory is to de-familiarize present practices and categories, to make them seem less self-evident and necessary, and to open up spaces for an invention of new forms of experience. (p. 266)

In a canonical text on the disposition of knowledge according to Kuhn (1962), new paradigms materialize as the limitations of existing ones become clear. A poststructural paradigm used in this study is grounded in the belief that systems of oppression shape reality, how systems influence reality need to be deconstructed, and reality is always changing and resists categorization (Lather, 2007). Further explained by Jones et al. (2013) and central to the works of poststructural theorists Foucault (1979) and Derrida (1967, 1978) are the beliefs:

> That knowledge and truth are social constructions that reflect the prevailing interests of those who hold the most social power; that knowledge and truth are neither objective nor universal; and that all knowledge and truth reflect the specific cultural and historical contexts in which they were developed. (p. 194)

A poststructural investigation deconstructs these discourses to establish new possibilities for identity constructions that are "not shackled by power" (Jones, 2016, p. 13).

Enrollment and Completion Patterns

Students enrolled in colleges and universities has increased in diversity, in terms of culture, religion, race/ethnicity, native language, physical ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, levels of academic preparedness, and family background (Ishler, 2005; Pryor, Hurtado, Sharkness, & Korn, 2007). According to the National Center for

Educational Statistics (NCES), in fall 2017, approximately 20.4 million students are expected to attend colleges and universities in the United States, constituting an increase of about 5.1 million since fall 2000 (National Center for Education, 2017). The percentage of American college students who are Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, and American Indian/Alaska Native has increased. For example, between 1976 and 2014, the percentage of Hispanic students rose from 4 to 17 percent, Asian/Pacific Islander students rose from 2 to 7 percent, Black students from 10 to 14 percent, American Indian/Alaska Native students rose from 0.7 to 0.8 percent. During the same period, the percentage of White students fell from 84 to 58 percent (National Center for Education, 2017). Further, according to the NCES, during the 2011-2012 academic year, 34 percent of undergraduate students were the first in their families to go to college. However, although the demographic composition of colleges and universities has become more diverse over the last forty years, according to Brock's (2010) report on college entrance and increased access, student success in college as measured by persistence and degree attainment has not improved. For example, the percentage of high school graduates enrolling in college has increased for all racial and income groups (Engle & Lynch, 2009); yet, increases in college access rates are not met with equal gains in students completing a college degree (Hunt & Carruthers, 2004). Lynch, Engle, & Cruz (2010) noted, approximately 60% of minority students do not complete a degree within six years after initial enrollment. Further, roughly 40% of underrepresented students fail to graduate from college within six years of initial enrollment (Brock, 2010). Additionally, statistics indicate 60% of White students graduate with a bachelor degree within six years after initial enrollment, in contrast with 38% of Native American, 40% of African-

American, and 49% of Hispanic students (Lee et al., 2011). Engle and Lynch (2009) report that the degree-attainment gap between White students and students of color is wider today than it was in 1975, and the gap between low-income and high-income students has doubled (Engle & Lynch, 2009). Additionally, findings point to income as a determinant to educational attainment with only 6% of students identified as low socioeconomic status earning a bachelor degree as compared to 40% of students with high socioeconomic status (Dowd, 2003). Students of color are disproportionately represented among low-income students and have lower graduation numbers than White students (Dowd, 2003). Although over 90% of low-income students aspire to achieve a college degree, a dramatic increase since the late 1980's (AD Council, 2006), this population continues to struggle the most to graduate from college. While almost one-third of first-generation students enter college, only 73% return for their second year (Stebleton & Soria, 2012; Stuber, 2011).

Although there is a significant body of literature that identifies risk factors that can impede students' ability to complete a college degree, they are highly idiosyncratic (Rolf et al., 1990). Diverse student populations have different value systems, an intensified awareness of their minority status, a need for climate inclusiveness, and who are often first-generation (Astone & Nunez-Wormack, 1990). Further, as discussed in the previous chapter, terms like "disadvantaged," "ethnic minority" "academically disadvantaged" "high risk students" "first-generation," "underrepresented," and "at-risk" are used to identify student populations deemed at-risk for non-degree completion. The concern however is a focus on students' deficiencies and the need to develop programs and services to compensate (e.g., intervention programs, first year experiences, academic

support services) (Iverson, 2007) stigmatizing students as less than fully qualified in the labels that we bestow upon them can result in demoralization and feelings of stereotype threat if they perceive that others have low opinions of their abilities (Charles, Fischer, Mooney, & Massey, 2009).

At the institution under investigation, a six-year graduation rates for provisional students admitted into the university during the years of 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2014, was 8.1% to 13.95% (Institutional Research, 2017). The provisional label, like other labels such as "disadvantaged," "ethnic minority," "academically disadvantaged," "high risk students," "first-generation," "underrepresented," and "at-risk" are used to identify students deemed at-risk for non-degree completion. Although there is a significant body of literature that identifies risk factors that can impede students' ability to complete a college degree, they are highly idiosyncratic (Rolf et al., 1990). Labels placed on students can produce barriers that perhaps surpass the concerns of already associated risk factors.

To situate my review in the larger context, I first examined the problems of persistence and degree attainment and the most commonly cited causes for this phenomenon. Race is a socially constructed concept (Brooks & Clunis, 2007) and given its social constructiveness, conceptual notions of Whiteness and Blackness have emerged (Ladson-billings, 1998). Contemporary examples of Whiteness include "school achievement, middle classness, and intelligence," whereas examples of Blackness include "gangs, welfare recipients, and basketball players" (Ladson-billings, 1998, p. 9). The aforementioned categories were not "designed to reify a binary but rather to suggest how, in a racialized society where Whiteness is positioned as the normative, *everyone* is ranked

and categorized in relation to these points of opposition" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 9; italics in original).

Minority student populations are faced with challenges that require them to manage and cope with psychological distress as they negotiate the campus environment. Further, research supports the influence of "ethnic distress" coupled with being of "minority status" (Saldana, 1994, p, 44) on students ability to persist. Although most students find college life to be somewhat challenging, the minority status bring another level of stress to students from diverse backgrounds (Wei, Ku, & Liao, 2011). Studies (Museus, 2008; Tinto, 2007) have demonstrated that minority students experience a far more difficult time transitioning into college than their White, middle-class peers and thus apt to leave college early (drop-out or dismissed) at rates that are disproportionately higher than the student body in general (Carey, 2004; Swail, Redd, & Perna, 2003). The most commonly cited reason for this is minority students tend to be "underprepared compared to White students" (Zarate & Gallimore, 2005, p. 56), which perhaps stems from inequitable school funding, grouping (tracking and ability), deficit theory teaching approaches, lowered teacher expectations, and punitive behavioral management (among various other issues) (Anyon, 1990).

Minority student attrition is influenced by students' perceptions that college campuses are "hostile, alienating, socially isolating and are less responsive to their needs and interests" (Smedley, Myers, & Harrell, 1993, p. 435), a perception that is found in many examples of overt and tactic racism on campuses (Kent, 1996). This perception is reinforced in the "cultural mismatch" (White & Lowenthal, 2011, p. 286) between

minority college students and their mainstream peers and professors (Gonzales, 1999; Kent, 1996).

Attrition amongst minority students is also influenced by the disparity in minority collegiate peers and minority faculty role models to whom to turn for advice and support (ACT Policy Report, 2002). Likewise, they are less likely to have relatives with college degrees who can serve as support systems (ACT Policy Report, 2002). Furthermore, minority students are more likely to come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds than White students (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009) and thus more likely to experience significant burdens in financing college expenses (Conley, 2001).

First-generation students tend to struggle academically in college "compared with continuing-generation students" (Stephens et al., 2012, p. 1178), and take fewer credits, have higher dropout rates, and acquire lower grades than "continuing-generation students" (Housel & Harvey, 2009, p. 30). Further, students who are first-generation are less likely to have the necessary financial resources than "continuing-generation" students (Horn & Nunez, 2000, p. 35) to support their college experience, and as a result, first-generation students often work one or more jobs to pay for tuition and living expenses (Phinney & Haas, 2003).

Fundamentally, research has reinforced a well-known fact that being academically underprepared for college is a risk factor of non-degree completion (Deil-Amen, 2011). However, research has found that students identified as remedial students have more in common with non-remedial students than reflected in past findings (Deil-Amen, 2011). An overlooked report on this topic is that by-in-large, nearly all underprepared students, both those who are and who are not enrolled in remedial/developmental coursework

struggle to persist. Those in both categories who do persist are significantly delayed in their attainment of a college degree (Deil-Amen, 2011). This appears to be true regardless of whether or not students are enrolled in remedial coursework, however, the preceding studies do not mention this reality. Thus, the main difference in college completion between students who demonstrate some level of under-preparedness and those who do not is much greater than the difference between those enrolled and not enrolled in remedial coursework (Deil-Amen, 2011). Further, Deil-Amen and Goldrick-Rab (2009) conducted a study with the vast majority of remedial students being "underprepared racial minority students" (p. 64) found that students experienced "fear of being stigmatized," stereotype threat, and fear that they will be the "example of the low-achieving minority students" (p. 64) that their peers and instructors expect. Perhaps practices and policies should aim at dismantling old-remedial dichotomies in favor of an expanded approach that captures the common challenges faced by all students with potential risk, regardless of their institutional label as remedial or non-remedial (Adelman, 2006). Minority stress is a source of added risk for attrition among minority students when the role strains or typical stressors associated with college life (e.g. academics, friends, and finances) are taken into account (Smedley et al., 1993).

Minority Stress

Stress occurs when people perceive that contextual demands of the situation (stressors) exceed their ability to take action, which, in turn, threatens their well-being (Folk-man, Lazarus, Guren, & DelLongis, 1986). Further, the term *minority stress* is used to refer to the encounter of stress in negative situations in which the person's membership in a stigmatized social group, that is, a group that is "target of discrimination and

prejudice" (Arbona & Jimenez, 2014, p. 162), a salient aspect of the interaction between person and situation (French & Chavez, 2010). A constant perception of feeling inferior or low intelligence is likely to result in minority students dropping out of college (Arbona & Nora, 2007). A study conducted as a predominately White college showed ethnic minority students were more likely than White students to have experienced discrimination and prejudice. Findings from this study indicated that these perceptions affected adjustment to college and academic performance (Nora & Cabrera, 1996). Further, among Black students, minority stress was associated with low academic persistence (Neblett, Philip, Cogburn, & Sellers, 2006) and low graduation rates (Brown & Seller, 2006). Furthermore, many Latino students do not complete a college degree as a result of discrimination during their college experience (Fry, 2004). In a similar vein, Asian American Students experience difficulties connecting with peers from their own ethnic group in search of supports and dissuasion from dropping out (Okamura & Agbayani, 1997).

In an early study, Smedley et al. (1993) operationalized minority stress among an ethnically diverse group of students (African American, Latino/a, and Filipino) enrolled in a predominately White university in terms of five dimensions: social climate, difficulties in intergroup relations, discrimination, within-group pressures, and academic achievement stress. The perception of the campus environment as unwelcoming to members of the study's group is referred to as university social climate stress. The perceptions of negative relations among students from different racial and ethnic groups, primarily with White students are referred to as intergroup stress. Discrimination stress refers to issues related to personal experiences of prejudice and discrimination based on

the student's group membership (Abrona & Jimenez, 2014). With-in group stress emulates perceived pressure to conform to the norms of the student's group regarding "language, behaviors, and ways of thinking" (Arbona & Jimenez, 2014, p. 163). Achievement stress signifies students' concerns regarding the relative inadequacy of their academic preparation and ability that are compounded by group membership and family's socioeconomic status. The review of literature supports that minority stress constitutes an added source of risk for the social and psychological aspects of ethnic minority college students (Arbona & Jimenez, 2014).

Social Climate Stress

Social climate stress is also an added risk to students with already having perceived risk. Social climate stress refers to the degree that students feel isolated, alienated, or underrepresented on campus (Smedley et al., 1993). Examples of social climate deal with not having multiculturalism incorporated in the curriculum, minimal ethnic faculty represented, and an ambiguity in defining diversity. As Turner (1994) explains, minority students are "still guests in someone else's house" (p. 356). McClelland and Auster (1990) notes,

> Racial tensions have been documented at integrated institutions at least since the 1960's. Stereotyping by their White faculty and peers as "special admits," a perceived lack of support by faculty and staff, and largely segregated social life have made Blacks at White schools feel quite aware of their marginal status and have contributed to feelings of socio-cultural alienation. From their perspective, the racial climate at our nation's colleges and universities has never been good. (p. 612-613)

Social climate stress has been found to have negative effects on college students. For example, students who felt like they were singled out or treated differently reported a high sense of alienation (Cabrera & Nora, 1994). This finding while significant for all

racial/ethnic groups, appeared more detrimental to Blacks' ability to persist (Hurtado, Clayton-Pedersen, Allen, & Milem, 1998). Further, a longitudinal study of high extremely academically prepared Latino students found that perceptions of racial tensions between groups on campus had consistently negative influences on their academic and psychological adjustment in subsequent years in college (Hurtado, Carter, & Spuler, 1996). Furthermore, the study found that while reports of overt isolation did not significantly influence their academic and personal-emotional adjustment, the Latino students did experience attachment issues to the institution (Hurtado et al., 1998). Finally, another study on minority students found that perceptions of discrimination influenced their academic and social experiences but not their ability to persist (Nora & Cabrera, 1996). One speculation of this finding is that, although the minority students were academically confident and endured experiences of being marginalized, they learned how to deal with the discrimination (Tracey & Sedlacek, 1985).

The 'At-Risk' Phenomenon

Historical context or antecedents for the contemporary 'at-risk' discourse can be found in an array of disciplines, including medicine and public health, sociology, child welfare, and social work, developmental psychology, early childhood education, special education, public policy, economics an demography, and higher education (Swadener & Lubeck, 1995). The phrase 'at-risk' appears frequently in:

> Education and social science literature comes from medicine and alludes to the threat of disease or injury. During the past decade, practitioners and researchers in education adopted this conceptual paradigm for elucidating educational problems. They defined those conditions that tend to affect students negatively and reduce success in traditional school settings as producing "risks," and, gradually, educators developed a set of characteristics that place [students] "at-risk" for school failure. (Winborne, 1991, p. 252)

Luis Laosa (1984) and others (Bremmer, 1974; Grotberg, 1976) have argued that identifying certain groups of students as ‘at-risk' goes back well over two-hundred years in U. S. public policy. Laosa (1984) writes, "there is historical continuity in Anglo-American social welfare policies toward [students]; in every era, over the past 400 or more years certain groups of [students] have been considered as being ‘at-risk,' and hence of social concern and responsibility" (p. 1).

Students identified as "at-risk" can be understood as a struggle of power over how to define students, families, and communities who are poor, of color, and native speakers of languages other than English. The discourse attempts to frame these students and families as "lacking the cultural and moral resources for success in a presumed fair and open society and as in need of compensatory help from the dominate society" (Swadener & Lubeck, 1995, p. 3). During the early 1960's, White professionals referred to children from oppressed groups as "disadvantaged" a "culturally deprived," believing that their families provide "few of the experiences which produce a readiness for academic learning either intellectually or attitudinally" (Goldberg, 1963, p. 87). Further, in the 1960's and early 1970's, the struggles of the Civil Rights movement, oppressed groups attempted to redefine both their political and economic positions relative to the dominate society. In the 1980's, as conservatives attack against oppressed groups mounted, the dominate society resurrected the earlier metaphor of "cultural deprivation" and gave it a different term: "[students] at risk" (Swadener & Lubeck, 1995, p. ix). Since the word appeared to be new and linked to what appeared to be a new crisis of a "nation at risk," educators disassociated the "at-risk" discourse from any contexts of historical, political struggle and reserved it for the arena of education (Swadener & Lubeck, 1995).

Discourse

One of the most productive ways of thinking about discourse is not as a group of signs or a stretch of text, but as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49). In this gist, a discourse is something which creates something else (an utterance, a concept, an effect), rather than something which lives in and of itself and which can be studied in isolation (Mills, 1997). A structure of discursive can be sensed through the systematic of ideas, opinions, concepts, ways of thinking and acting which are created within a particular context, and because of the influences of those ways of thinking and behaving (Mills, 1997). In terms of thinking about discourse as having influence, it is significant to consider the factors of truth, power, and knowledge. Truth, for Foucault, is not something fundamental to an expression, nor is it an ideal abstract qualities to which humans aspire; he sees truth as being something far worldlier and more destructive:

> Truth is of the world; it is produced there by virtue and multiple constraints . . . Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is the types of discourse it harbors' and causes to function as true: the mechanism and instances which enable one to distinguish true from false statements, the way in which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures which are valorized for obtaining truth: the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Foucault, 1989, p. 46)

Institutional Discourse

Most colleges and universities have employed officials committed to one or both; creating policy for recruitment and retention efforts of underrepresented populations and nourish esteemed cultures on campus environments (Iverson, 2007). However, what is reality is a dominant discourse that perpetuates climates of inequality. The dominant standard —"sometimes called rational" approach to policy analysis views policy making

principally as a process of problem solving; which involves "description, explanation, and prediction of issues" (Hawkesworth, 1988, p. 2). Policy makers use formulaic steps in the policy making procedures, and value decisions that are assumed to be "relatively straight forward" and are "clearly formulated in advance," meaning the issue that policy aims to resolve is established as an "unquestioned, objective fact, and attention is instead focused on identifying solutions to the given problem" (Bacchi, 1999, p. 18).

The concerns with conventional approaches to creating policy posit that such policy approaches are driven by a "technical-rational" evaluation of what makes "such policy—meaning they want to offer ways of 'doing it better'" (Bacchi, 1999, p. 20) and serve to "legitimize some socially constructed norms of behaviors that functions to categorize people, things, and ideas" (Iverson, 2011, p. 589). Creating policy using rational approaches are by-in-large uncritically accepted, "naturalized in the individual, and ignore the social construction of the policy (Allan, 2003, p. 40). From this perspective, policy involves consensus and risks "ignoring and creating silences on the contradictions of lived experience and social ideas" (Ball, 1990, p. 139). Characterized by conventional approaches to creating policy in actions plans for recruitment and retention efforts finds students labeled as "deficient" "disadvantaged and underprepared" and need "college predatory and remedial courses" (Iverson, 2011, p. 2011). This discursive framing of policy fails to critically examine the "systemic factors that perpetuate deficit thinking and reproduce inequities" for student populations (Garcia & Guerra, 2004, p. 155).

Academic Discourse

Colleges and universities represent definitive examples of academic discourse communities; complete with specific policy, rules, and regulations for participation therein (Gravett & Petersen, 2007). Full participation within the academic discourse communities required that students learn and adopt the university's distinct discourse patterns (Bizzell, 1982). Entrance into academic discourse communities, because they are "culturally and linguistically exclusive—is, therefore, sometimes problematic for those not versed" in the forms of language required therein (White & Lowenthal, 2011, p. 295). Examinations of academic discourse tend to concentrate attention to a number of essential components: verbal assertiveness and voluntary participation, formality and explicitness, and specialized jargon (Elbow, 1998). In one study on minority freshmen college students found resistance to employing the conventions of academic discourse because the students had learned a different, and conflicting cultural discursive norm (white, 2003). For example, one student, a Native American, had been told prior to coming to college to "be careful what you do, because what you do, people—the upper, the majority—will look at you, and what you do or what you say is going to reflect on us" (White, 2003, p. 111). He went on to say, "That's what they always said to me. That kind of stuck in my head, you know, 'remember not to say too much; they [White students and professors] might think you speak for all of your people…They won't understand" (White, 2003, p. 111, *brackets were not added*).

This Native American student, like others found in research (Snow, 1993; Au, 1991) were so unversed in using academic discourse that he believed he came to college knowing less than his peers: "You know," he explained, "I'm still wet behind the ears

and I don't know much, man. I came from a place where I hardly even knew that this system [the university] existed" (White, 2007, p. 278, *brackets were not added*). He went on to say, "I just don't want to participate in class because I don't want to be judged. I guess if I was more confident, like, in how I talked, if I felt safer, I would talk more" (p. 286). Instead, this student found safety in silence. The course referenced in the quote was "Race and Oppression," a course the student had first-hand knowledge about, yet, his feeling of alienation and inferiority because he equated his peers' use of discursive conventions of academic discourse with actual knowledge (White & Lowenthal, 2011). Many students, particularly minority students had never been taught academic discourse (and how to "code-switch" into it), consequently misjudging themselves, their peers, and their overall college experience. To learn the dominant academic discourse in the setting of college or university, students need to learn style shifting (Kutz, 1998), or what other literacy and linguists have termed *code switching* (Baynham, 1993). Although students are required to change their manner if discourse, it is not permanent; rather, they must learn to code-switch between discourses. Kutz (1998) explains, "What we are really asking students to do as they enter the university is not replace one way of speaking or writing with another, but add yet another style to their existing repertoire" (p. 85).

In conclusion and as discussed throughout this paper, there are several groups of students who are considered at-risk for non-degree completion; ethnic minority, academically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, of low socioeconomic status, and probationary students (Heisserer and Parette, 2002). First-generation college students are also be considered as "high risk of withdrawing from the tertiary study (Collier and Morgan, 2008). As already discussed, risk factors are highly idiosyncratic and thus early

studies of risk focused on one risk factor rather than a web of risk factors that may include a sequence of challenges rather than a single experience or event (Garmezy & Masten, 1985; Rolf et al., 1990). And concluded throughout; the ideology of focusing on the identification of students' deficiencies and the need to develop programs and services to compensate (e.g., intervention programs, first year experiences, academic support services) (Iverson, 2007) is not conducive to providing successful supports, inclusion, and integration. And finally, as Tyack (1989) stated, "Being labeled is certainly not neutral and must be weighted carefully for its relative potential for possible and needed assistance or intervention and its potential for damage, disempowerment, or further marginalization (p. 34)."

Resilience

Resilience research emerged over 40 years ago as investigators began contemplating the question: Why do some kids who are exposure to high-risk environments successfully adjust while others do not (e.g., Masten, 1997; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990; Werner & Smith, 1977)? An early focus of resiliency focused on the person and as time went on the focus became broader and more inclusive it scope by situating risk not in children, but rather in various socioeconomic systems, institutions and risky public and social policies (Benard, 2004; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Davis, 2007). This new scope allowed movement from traditional problem-based, deficit, pathology models of resilience to positive, protective, and preventative ones (Benard, 2004; Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Williams & Newcombe, 1994).

Shifts in Scope for Resilience Research

Although resilience is widely assumed as a process, it hasn't always been defined as such. For example, Goldstein and Brooks (2005) advised that rather than acknowledging resiliency research for its factual phenomena, Rutter (1987) identified resiliency research as a search "for the developmental and situational mechanisms involved in protective processes" (p. 2). The primary resilience studies addressed the personal qualities of resilient children (e.g., Jessor, 1993; Masten & Garmezy, 1985) which lead to the conviction that resilience was an inherent trait. This character perspective was, in essence, saying that some people "simply do not have what it takes" to overcome adversity (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000a, p. 546). Nevertheless, this trait perspective was not embraced in resilience research (Benard, 2004) and thus moved beyond the span of acknowledging only personal traits that support the protective process including the interactions of factors external to the person—family, school, community, and other external systems (Garmezy, 1987; Rutter, 1987; Werner & Smith, 1982). In Benard's (1991) report, he identified personal strengths that buffer risk and foster resilience including social competence; problem-solving and metacognition; a sense of autonomy and identity; and a sense of purpose and belief in a brighter future. In a later report on resiliency, Benard (2004) identified and classified three significant environmental processes that buffer risk and foster resilience: 1) forming caring relationships; 2) maintaining positive and high expectations; and 3) providing opportunities for students to participate and contribute (p. 56). Further, under the education umbrella, McMillan & Reed (1994) designated four factors that relate to resiliency, including personal attributes, positive use of time, family and the school

learning environment. Nevertheless, although there is a consensus as to resilience being a process rather than a trait, there is still ambiguity and misrepresentation with the inconsistent use of terminologies such as risk, vulnerability, protective mechanisms, protective processes, and protective factors (Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994). The definition of resilience as the process of positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity involves both significant adversity and positive adaptation (Luthar et al., 2000a). Luthar (2006) later characterized the superordinate construct of resilience as a phenomenon that "is never directly measured, but rather is indirectly inferred based on evidence of the two subsumed constructs" (p. 742). Therefore, resilience as a construct—its definition, application, and assessment is confounded because of the need to define, operationalize, and assess the two additional constructs of positive adaptation and significant adversity (Luthar, 2006).

The operational definition of positive adaptation is the identification of efficacious materializations of particular social competencies and stage-salient developmental tasks (Luthar et al., 2000a; Masten, 2001; Masten and Coatsworth, 1998). Positive adaptation begs the question: 'Does that mean better than expected outcomes or positive outcomes in spite of adversity?' which continues to add to the complications in the study of resilience (Masten and Coatsworth, 1998). Further, substantial adversity or risk has been operationalized by addressing a number of exposure people have to high-risk environments and statistical analytics to look for maladjustment probabilities (Levine, 2006). High-risk environments are areas of where poverty, violence, substance abuse/addiction, parental depression are prevalent (Levine, 2006; Luthar, 2006).

Educational Resilience

Educational resilience can be defined as "the highlighted likelihood of success in school and in other life accomplishments, despite environmental adversities, brought about by early traits, conditions, and experiences" (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1994, p. 46). For example, a first-year college student who expressed a high degree of resiliency was more likely to acclimate to the college environment, as opposed to their less resilient counterparts (Banyard & Cantor, 2004). Fassig (2003) compared attachment style and resilience as predictors of adjustment to college for first-year college students. The operational definition of resilience in this study was "a combination of locus of control, self-efficacy, and optimism" (Fassig, 2003, p. 9). The operational definition of adjustment to college was defined by first semester grade-point average, scores on each of the four sub-scales of the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire, the number of behavioral infractions while living in the residence halls, and enrollment in the second semester. This study consisted of two stages of data collection. In the first stage, data were collected from 1,191college freshman at the University of North Colorado. After the first semester, the students were invited to participate in the second stage of data collection. In this stage of data collection, 433 students responded. Findings revealed that attachment style did not predict any of the components found under adjustment to college. Further findings revealed that resilience was found to be a significant and stronger predictor of adjustment than did high school grade-point average, ACT scores, and varying levels of life stress (Fassig, 2003).

The Pell Institute (2004) explored factors that influence first-year college students' adjustment to college. Higher education institutions in the United States were

selected that had a significant population of low-income students. Twenty students were used in the analyses: ten students from schools with lower than average graduation rates and ten students from schools with higher than average graduation rates. Five factors that influenced resiliency were found; academic skills, financial support, academic direction, instructional and academic support, and involvement in campus activities. Also, Avery and Daly (2010) also examined students with associated risk factor and first-year college persistence. This study's operational definition of resilience was a "driving force that allows a person to progress despite adversity and disruptions" (p. 51). This mixed method study used 57 White, Hispanic, and Black students identified as "high-risk" for non-degree completion (p. 47) to "explore variables that affect persistence to graduation through the experiences of those ‘high-risk' students who were able to successfully attain their degree" (Avery & Daly, 2010 p. 47). Findings revealed that the interconnection between resilience and self-efficacy had a significant influence on degree attainment. Self-efficacy was defined as a "performance-based measure of perceived capability" (p. 11).

Resilience model. Connor's (1992) model of resilience addressed five characteristics of resilience, which are; positive, focused, flexible, organized, and proactive. Further, there are three inherent characteristics; students' generation status (ex. First-generation), family's socioeconomic status, and ethnicity. In addition, change-related self-efficacy was defined as student's perceived ability to handle change in given situations and to function successfully in college despite demands of change. Depicting the significance of change-specific self-efficacy, Conner (1992) advised that students who are not confident about their abilities will not perform well in change contexts.

Urban stress model. The urban stress model purports that for to students to excel within a stressful environment, they must endure both exogenic (external) and endogenic (internal) antecedents (risk factors), by employing internal and external mediators (protective factors), which will allow students to engage in a coping and adaptation process that ultimately results in positive outcomes (Myers, 1982). Houston (2010) also investigated the influence of the external factors of educational resilience in a study that used college graduates who were able to overcome adversity. The participants included 15 college graduates, all who experienced childhood poverty and who sustained other risk factors as children. The themes generated from the qualitative study were support of family and friends and structural supports within schools and community programs were both factors found in the influence of overcoming adversity. Further found; stereotype threat, race, and harmful relationships as barriers to success (Houston, 2010).

Regardless of the specific framework employed, comprehending the actual interplay between risk and protective factors in the specific context of resilient students' lives is a complicated and arduous task (Morales, 2010). However, the most common approach to studying resilience is merely that of isolating and identifying major protective factors in the lives of resilient people (for examples see Bogenschneider, 1996; Gardynik & McDonald, 2005; Garmezy, 1991; Gordan, 1995; Werner & Smith, 1982). Further, although the method of isolation is often useful and a necessary endeavor, its value is limited because it provides only limited scope into the complexly of the phenomenon (Morales, 2010). Further, as identified in resilience research, rarely do protective factors operate in isolation (Luthar, Doernberger & Zigler, 1993). The best approach is looking at a combination of protective factors that propel the at-risk to

resilience (Morales & Trotman, 2004), the recognition and examination of specific arrangements of salient protective factors become paramount (Morales, 2010).

Identity Development Theories

A commitment to developing the whole student was depicted in the earliest documents framing the significance and philosophy of the field of student affairs in higher education [e.g., Student Personnel Point of View ("American Council on Education," 1937, 1949)]. An interest in a holistic view of student development is also apparent in early conceptualizations of identity development under the presumed assumption that identity development is a process characterized by consistent patterns, stages, and developmental tasks that all college students experience (Evans et al., 1998). This quotation from a well-known young leader in search of an identity, Alice, from Alice in Wonderland, gets at the root question of "Who am I?" which has long served as the foundation of the identity development of college students: “I wonder if I've changed in the night. Let me think. Was I the same when I got up in the morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But, if I'm not the same, the next question is "Who in the world am I?” (Carrol, 1898, 1993, p. 8). Ah, that's the great puzzle!

Identity theory traces its roots to the writings of George Herbert Mead (1934) who presented a framework underwriting the study of several sociological and social psychological issues. In a highly simplified form, Mead's framework asserted a formula: "society shapes self-shapes social behavior" (p. 54). His seminal work on identity theory began by attempting to specify and make researchable the concepts of ‘society' and ‘self' and to organize these as explanations of specific behaviors; such accepted explanations could be tested in systematic empirical research (Stryker, 1968). Acceptance of Meads

"self-reflects society" statement suggests that the self is multifaceted, made up of interdependent and independent, mutually reinforcing, and different parts (Stryker & Burke, 2000). Further, an earlier recognition of identity theory developed by James (1890) concludes that "vision of persons possessing as many selves as groups of persons with which they interact" (p. 35) and when referring to each group-based self. From this work, the term identity was created to support the belief that people have as many identities as unique networks of relationships in which they spend their time in. By the mid-20th century, identity theorists understand identities as cognitive schemes, internally stored information and meaning serves as the framework for interpreting experiences (Markus, 1997; Stryker & Serpe; Callero, 1985).

Poignantly, the existence of identity is always assumed, widely talked about, yet variously understood in the literature. Even Erikson (1968), commonly mentioned as the pioneer in identity development theory warned against the overuse and the misuse of the concept of identity. In a comprehensive text on the life and work of Erikson, friend and colleague Robert Coles (1970) believed that Erikson's intention was not to define identity, but to describe it (Jones et al., 2012). Nevertheless, Erikson (1963) defined identity as "the ability to experience one's self as something that has continuity and sameness and to act accordingly" (p. 42). Josselson (1987), in surmise of his work defined identity as a "primarily unconscious process that unites personality and links the individual to the social world" (p. 10). While Erikson's conceptualization of identity nods to the position of external forces and social context, his view of a primarily internal and unconscious progression of identity quieted the influences of social identities such as race, class, and gender (Jones et al., 2012). Further, the established origin of Erikson's

theory also situated identity within what is believed to be a linear and sequential path (Marcia, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) with a well-defined purpose, the "achieved identity and authentic self" (Jones et al., 2012). Indeed, as Shields (2008), seized, "in contemporary American society, identity is emphasized as a quality that enables the expression of the individual's authentic sense of self" (p. 301). Erikson inspired, Josselson (1996) began to deepen the understanding of the interrelationships between self and the social world and cautiously introduced the concept of identity being a socially constructed phenomenon (Jones et al., 2012). According to Josselson (1996), the sense of agency, "An authenticity within a context of the larger social world is tempered, living our identities is much like breathing. We don't have to ask ourselves each morning which we are. We simply are . . . Identity is never fixed; it continually evolves" (p. 29). Nevertheless, although notions of continuity, fluidity, and the active progression of identity development are introduced, missing from these definitions is recognition of the influences of social identities like race/ethnicity, class, and gender (Jones et al., 2012).

Although there are several identity development theories recognized in the literature, a few theories are particularly relevant to understanding college students' identity development in a general sense. Erickson's (1968) eight-stage model of human development, Chickering's (1969) seven vectors of development, and Chickering and Reisser's (1993) revised and reordered version of the seven vectors of development are discussed in this review. Erickson (1959) developed a psychoanalytic theory of psychosocial development comprising eight stages of development from infancy to adulthood. Within each stage, people experience a psychosocial crisis with having either a positive or negative influence on their personality development. Each stage

characterized by in what Erikson referred to as a "psychosocial virtue, polar orientations or attitudes, and a series of crises" (Widick, Parker & Knefelkamp, 1978b, p. 3) for students to resolve (Abes & Jones, 2013). According to Erikson, the ego develops from successfully resolved crises which are noticeably social. Further, Erikson asserted that personality develops in a predetermined order and builds upon each previous stage; this construct was identified as the epigenetic principle (Erikson, 1959). Additionally, within the eight distinct stages of development, taking in five stages up to the age of 18 years and three stages after that, Erikson believed that people continued to grow and develop throughout their lifetime and that crises occur at each stage of development. Furthermore, the crises are of a psychosocial nature because they involve psychological needs of the people experiencing the crisis. For Erikson, a crisis does not signify a physical or psychological emergency, but rather a time for a decision requiring significant choices among alternative courses of action (Erikson, 1959).

The first scholar to apply Erikson's theory to college students was Arthur Chickering (1969) in his conceptualization of the seven vectors of development that "describe major highways for journeying toward individualization – the discovery and refinement of one's unique ways of being – also toward communion with other individuals and groups including the larger national and global society" (Chickering & Reisser, 1969, p. 35). Chickering (1969) recognized the dearth of a methodological framework for integrating or synthesizing the copious empirical evidence on college students. Based on his review of the literature, he identified seven vectors of development, each having several subcomponents, and labeled each of the seven dimensions of vectors "because each seems to have direction and magnitude-even though

the direction may be expressed more appropriately by a spiral or by steps than a straight line" (p. 8). Identity development was deeply situated in Chickering's theory, and his seven vectors allow for great specificity to this central construct while detailing the developmental aspects that lead to and follow from it (see Sanford, 1967). Although some may argue that the seven vectors have "withstood the test of time," more recent conceptualizations of identity development now exist that are helpful in understanding the construction of identity among today's diverse college students, "who bring to campuses increasingly complex and multifaceted ways of constructing their identities and presenting themselves" (Jones & Abes, 2014, p. xx). And just as Knefelkamp et al. (1978) insinuated, "Important changes have occurred in the field" (p. vii) in the past two decades.

Chickering and Reisser (1969) used the seven vectors to describe the psychosocial issues that students experience in college, including; developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity (Abes & Jones, 2013). Chickering and Reisser (1969) conclude that:

> Since the stabilization of identity was the primary task for adolescents and young adults, it [Erikson's work] was a logical anchor point for Chickering's attempt to synthesize data about college student development into a general framework that could be used to guide educational practice. (p. 22)

In their later work, Chickering and Reisser (1993) subsequently amended and reordered the seven vectors and their specifications in light of the significant amount of research conducted since the model appeared in 1969. The modified model is believed to apply to colleges students of all ages and it "tried to use language that is gender free and appropriate for persons of diverse backgrounds" (p. 44). The pace of passage along any

of the vectors may be simultaneous with the change of another; progress "from ‘lower' to ‘higher' brings more awareness, skill, confidence, complexity, stability, and integration" (p. 34), but moving backward and retracing steps are possible. Further, according to Chickering and Reisser (1993), developing purpose, expanding competencies, developing interpersonal relationships, and clarifying identity “requires some sense of direction and purpose. Development along the vectors occurs as an individual answers not only the question "Who am I?" but also "Who am I going to be?" and not just "Where am I" but "Where am I going?" (p. 52).

Nevertheless, although these early conceptualizations of identity believe these stages of development are applicable to all college students; and although the content development may vary among students (see, e.g., McEwen, Roper, Bryant, & Langa, 1990); little was mentioned as to the role of social identities and how students understand themselves (Jones, 2016). In the context of provisional college students, the role of ‘provisional' is foregrounded without attention to how the social categories might influence students' identity development (Abes, 2016; Agada, 2001; Jones, 2009).

Socially Constructed Identities

Henri Tajfel (1981) coined the term social identity to describe how people's self-concept originates from the knowledge about their "membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (p. 2). Emphasizing the significance of social identities necessitates a view of identities as socially constructed and the recognition of certain social identities like race/ethnicity, class, and gender anchored in group membership and mutually conceptualized by a larger social context (Jones & Stewart, 2016). About provisional students, this means an

"individual's sense of themselves as Black males, for example, will shift depending upon the contexts in which they are enacting their experiences" (Jones, 2016, p. 25). A focus on social identities emphasizes the significance of not only how students see themselves but also how they are perceived by others. Additionally, the salience of specific social identities, as well as the value placed on students' membership in a social group, changes with time and context. Further, attention to social identities required acknowledgment of the role of power and privilege in both self-definition and social categories and roles, such as ‘provisional' (Jones, 2016).

The meaning of social identities such as race/ethnicity, gender, social class, career decisions and life planning, and current experiences are externally defined and consequently minimize the personal ownership of the various identities (Jones, 1997; Stewart, 2008). This contrasted with other aspects of identity, such as personality characteristics, personal attributes, and roles were found to have significant personal meaning and ownership for students (Jones, 1997). Scholars in higher education have explored ways in which aspects of identity influence development across domains of development: race/ethnicity (Atkinson, Morton, & Sue, 1998), self-efficacy (Ormrod, 2006), stereotype threat (Smith & Cokley, 2016), and role-identity (Callero, 1985). These studies demonstrated that identity development is better understood as a cyclical process rather than a linear or hierarchal one. Further, these studies also found conflicting messages between the interplay of social identities, personal characteristics, and roles and externally defined identities as well as internally chosen and defined ones (Abes, 2016; Jones, 1997; Jones & McEwen, 2000; Stewart, 2009).

These conceptualizations foreground an understanding of identity development that requires attention to the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality as "systems of oppression" that are "complex, pervasive, variable, persistent, sever, and power based" (Weber, 2010, p. 23). Social psychologist, Kay Deaux, described the relationship between personal identity and social identity. Deaux (1993) wrote:

> Many investigators have proposed distinctions between personal and social identity, although the basis for this distinction is not consensual. Some, such as Brewer (2001) and Turner (1987), posits a temporal trade-off between a sense of personal identity when one feels different from others, and social identity, when one focuses on shared group characteristics. In this analysis, there is not a distinctive content of personal and social identity. Rather, what is personal or social depends on the particular fit of an individual to context. Others make a substantive distinction, wherein social identity refers to group membership such as being English or being a professor, and personal identity encompasses more individual relationships such as a daughter or friend, or a lover of Bach. (p. 5)

Deaux's perspective (1993) was that any distinction made between personal identity and social identity is "somewhat arbitrary and misleading" (p. 5). Instead, she suggested, "rather than being cleanly separable, social and personal identity are fundamentally interrelated" (p.5), and therefore, personal identity is defined are at least in part, by group memberships, and social categories are infused with personal meanings. This conceptualization situates an inextricable link between personal and social identities, between the student, the social world and the meaning the student makes of his or her experiences. In the arena of student development, the emergence of the social identity theories grew out of interest in membership in groups that are underrepresented and oppressed (Abes, 2016).

Identity salience. Salience refers to the value attached to a particular experience, idea, feeling, or in this case, social identity. Like the term *identity*, the term *salience* brings with it differing disciplinary interpretations. For example, Stryker's sociological

interpretation emphasizes commitment, identity salience, and role choice (Stryker & Burke, 2016; Winker-Wagner, 2009). Stryker and Burke (2016) wrote, "Identity salience is defined as the probability that an identity will be invoked across a variety of situations, or across persons in a given situation" (p. 286). They went on to suggest that the higher the salience of an identity relative to "other identities incorporated into the self, the greater the probability of behavioral choices in accord with the expectations attached to that identity" (p. 286). However, Winkle-Wagner (2009) critiqued Stryker's definition of salience, arguing that opportunity of ‘choice' is not always afforded to all, as was the case in her study of Black women in college. Winkle-Wagner (2009) signifies the value of attending to the role of structures of privilege and oppression identity construction and in the perceived salience of particular identities (Jones & Abes, 2013).

Ethier and Deaux (1994) emphasized the relationship between context and identity salience. They wrote:

> Social identity theory and self-categorization theory posit that when identity is made salient, as by chance in context, a person will become increasingly identified with his or her group. The concept of salience can be elusive, however, particularly when dealing with long-term changes in context. (p. 244)

They went on to advise three bases on which one might predict the influence of salience on social identity:

> (1) Those who are highly identified with their group, impendent of context (for example, those students who grew up with a strong cultural identity, such as Latina, would experience this identity as salient, even on a predominately White campus); (2) those for whom there is a contrast between self-perceived social identity and context (for example, [college students] whose status is [provisional] are likely to perceive that identity as more salient than those [students] who are not identified as [provisional]); and (3) those for whom there is a contrast between past background and current context (for example, the greater the contrast, the greater the increase in salience, such as when moving from a racially homogeneous neighborhood and high school to a racially diverse university. (p. 256)

Viewing identities as socially constructed situates identity development in a larger historical, social, political, and cultural context alluding that identity "does not exist outside contingent social realities – and therefore is constantly changing amid shifting contexts rather than fixed and stable" (Jones & Abes, 2014). Research, theories, and models on specific identities, such as racial identity, cultural identity, ethnic identity, to name a few among myriad possibilities. The attention on developing the whole student signifies an interest in getting at both an all-inclusive representation of the whole student as well as the complexities of identity when considering multiple dimensions of identity (for example, race/ethnicity, social class, ability) and different domains of development (for example, cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal) (Jones & Abes, 2014). This next section will examine the context of personal characteristics and social identities.

Self-efficacy. Although there is a plethora of literature of self-efficacy related to college student development, a few theories are particularly relevant regarding self-efficacy as a dimension of identity development. Bandura's (1977) developed a social cognitive theory. This theory assumes that peoples' actions can be influenced by observing how others perform and whether certain behaviors incur reward or punishment within the context of the social interaction. The process of social learning and modeling is facilitated at greater levels when people see others like them successfully perform the same behaviors. Bandura (1994) proposed that self-efficacy beliefs are created to the extent in which people believe they have the capability to model the observed behaviors, and that belief is determined by the perceived similarities between the people. On the premise of successful outcomes, the greater the perceived similarities, the more strongly

they would believe that they possess the same or similar capability, and thus resulting in greater self-efficacy beliefs.

According to Bandura (1986), efficacy is characterized as a generative process in which cognitive, social, and behavioral sub-skills become part of the integrated strategies to be used in different situations. Further, according to Ormrod (2006), self-efficacy "is a belief that one has the capabilities to execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations" (p. 24). Further, Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as the belief in one's own ability to perform a given task which in turn can have a positive influence on performance. For example, provisional students with high self-efficacy will experience more favorable academic outcomes than those with low self-efficacies. Moreover, competent and effective functioning requires both skill and belief in one's efficacy (Locke, Frederick, Lee, & Bobko, 1984). Furthermore, Bandura (1986) concluded that perceived self-efficacy related to people's ability to internalize, process, and make judgments about their capabilities to "organize and execute courses of actions required for attaining designated types of performance" (p. 383).

Research findings have found connections between identity and self-efficacy. For example, Tajfel and Turner (1979) studied the connection between identity and self-efficacy and found that people perceive greater similarities with members of their in-group than they do with people the out-group. And people define their sense of identity regarding the social categories or group memberships to which they belong. Concluding, the strength of a group membership that advocates for certain behaviors and perceived social support are significant predictors of self-efficacy beliefs. These findings are also confirmed by Ashforth, Harrison, and Corley (2008) work on identity and self-efficacy

found that by examining peoples' interactions and relationships with others who were associated with a particular social group are likely to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of peoples' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Students will then use this understanding to define their identity accordingly. Also, Guan and So (2016) explored the connection between identity and self-efficacy found that people who experience social support from a social group have positive perceptions about the ability to perform behaviors advocated by the group. This hypothesis was further supported by Robnett, Chemers, and Zurbriggen's (2015) research on the association of academic experience, efficacy, and identity. Findings in their research indicate a significant correlation between efficacy and identity.

Several researchers have explored racial identity, self-efficacy, and institutional integration. For example, Jaret and Reitzes (2009) investigated the varying degrees of influence race/ethnicity had on Black, White, and Asian students' identity development and how those identities are correlated with college students' sense of self-efficacy and ability to integrate into the university. Findings of this research reveal that how students perceive themselves as college students and the way they devise their own racial and ethnic identities are correlated to their self-esteem, self-efficacy, and their ability to navigate their college environment (Jaret & Reitzes, 2009). Further, concluded in Reid (2013) research on racial identity, self-efficacy, and institutional integration revealed that successful Black males report a heightened sense of self-efficacy and racial identity attitudes. Moreover, findings indicate Black male students that are confident and satisfied with their opportunities to interact informally with faculty perform better than students less confident or who experience less favorable interactions with faculty.

In conclusion, although there has been little empirical research on how self-efficacy influences the identity development of college students, there is a sizable body of research that demonstrates the influence of social identity on peoples' intentions of engaging in behaviors or activities advocated by an identified group. There are three themes that can be drawn from these findings. First, there is an overwhelming consensus that social identity exerts significant influences on group-advocated behavior and that self-efficacy is the key mechanism used to explain such effects (Guan & So, 2016). In other words, peoples' actions can be influenced by observing how others perform them and whether certain behaviors incur reward or punishments with the context of social interaction (Bandura, 1977). Second, the research findings indicate that the stronger people identify with a group that advocates for a particular behavior, the more people will possess a high level of self-efficacy in accordance to what the group advocates (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Bandura, 1987). Finally, social support is a crucial mechanism through which social identity can exert its influence on self-efficacy (Reid, 2013; Pajares, 2002; Guan & So, 2016; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Stereotype threat. Theories regarding stereotype threat support the view that students who experience stereotype threat are motivated to disconfirm negative stereotypes that target their identity (Kray, Galinsky, & Thompson, 2001; Vandello et al., 2008) or at least to avoid confirming them (Brodish & Devine, 2009; Chalabaev, Major, Sarrazin, & Cury, 2012). And a few of the theorists consider creating identity-safe environments to ensure students that their stigmatized identities are not a barrier to success in targeted domains (Davies et al., 2004). Further, a few studies have explored stereotype threat and the influences of multiple stigmatized aspects of identity (Tine &

Gotlieb, 2013; Rydell, Beilock, & McConnell, 2009). Literature on the influence of stereotype threat on identity development can be used to explain why there is reason for hope in reducing threat by capitalizing on the fact that students can be categorized on the basis of any one of the multiple identities and students tend to view themselves as a member of various social groups that are subject to positive or negative stereotypes. These findings conclude that increased accessibility of social identity associated with possible threatened stereotypes may reduce the influence of stereotype threat when a social identity that is associated with a negative stereotype is also available (Tine &Gotlieb, 2013; Rydell et al., 2009).

Some studies have explored the relationship between stereotype threat and identity development. For example, Steele and Aronson (1995) explored the relationship between stereotype threat and identity development. After a serious of experiments in which high-achieving minority and majority student groups completed a test of conditions where stereotype threat was induced. Findings indicate that the two groups measured; those who experienced a non-threatening condition in where students were told to complete a problem-solving task that was non-diagnostic of individual differences in ability while the second group of students (in the threat condition) were informed that they were taking a test that measured their intellectual ability. Consistent with stereotype threat theory, results proposed a large majority-minority test scores difference in the threat condition versus those in the non-threat condition. Comparable results were found when the threat was made salient in a different fashion such as when students were asked to reveal their race/ethnicity. The main thrust of this work revealed that by making students aware, either blatantly or subtly of negative stereotype relevant to a social group

to which they belong impairs student's performance in the stereotyped domain (Steele & Aronson, 1995). However, interestingly, Nguyen & Ryan (2008) in their study on stereotype threat and math ability in women and minority students found that subtle cues triggered larger stereotype threat effects for women's math scores than did blatant or moderate cues, whereas for minority students moderate cues created the largest stereotype threat effects.

Self-definition has been found to be a significant factor stereotype threat research. For example, Steele (1997) defined stereotype threat as something that arises from any situational cue signifying that a person is at-risk of being judged in light of a negative stereotype about one of his or her social identities and supports the fundamental determinant that whether a person is identified with a domain is whether the domain has "relevance to one's self-definition" (p. 616). Steele (1997) encouraged caution regarding whether a domain has relevance to one's self-definition suggesting that it cannot be answered with a single question. Instead, one needs to ask a series of questions, including the following:

> Are the rewards of the domain attractive or important? Is an adequate opportunity structure available? Do I have the requisite skills, talents, and interests? Have others like me succeeded in the domain? Can I envision wanting what this domain has to offer? And so on. (p. 616)

This extra pressure can undermine that targeted groups' performance, making it more difficult for them to succeed than it would be for students who are not being stereotyped (Steele, 1997). This contention also supported by Purdie-Vaughns et al. (2008) in the inference in which people are more inclined to be highly sensitive to cues signifying that one of their identities might be devalued. However, other findings indicate that students who are being stereotyped may be largely unaware of the source of the threat (Steele,

1997). And that stereotype threat may surface from any situational cue signifying that students are at-risk of being judged in light of a negative stereotype about one of their identities (Davies et al., 2004).

Although there are some notable exceptions, stereotype threat and its influence on identity development has received widespread support. Across studies, self-definition appears to be an important factor in stereotype threat research. Concluding that the fundamental determinant of whether a person is identified with a domain is whether the domain is relevant to how a person defines the self. However, Steele (1997) encouraged caution regarding whether a domain has relevance to one's self-definition suggesting that defining self cannot be answered with a single question. Further, consistent with stereotype threat theory conclusive findings indicate that when students of stigmatized groups are in situations where negative stereotypes provide a potential framework for interpreting their behavior, the risk of being judged in light of those stereotypes can elicit a disruptive state that undermines performance and aspirations in that domain (Spencer, Logel, & Davies, 2016; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Smith & Cokley, 2016).

In conclusion, there is a unique experience at the intersection of students' identities, and efforts to isolate the influence of any one social identity fails to capture how membership in multiple identity groups can influence how students are perceived, are treated, and experience college and university environments (Berger & Guidroz, 2009; Crenshaw, 1991, 1998). This premise sets the underpinning for the next section of this paper, which he focused on multiple and intersecting identity theories.

Dimensions of Identity Development

There are two dimensions of identity development significant to my research focus of provisional college students. First, I will explore race/ethnicity as a dimension of identity. Then, I will explore the dimension of role-identity and identity development.

Race/Ethnicity

In Erickson's (1968) seminal book on identity, he devoted a chapter to the challenges of race and identity. He argued that the likelihood that members of an "oppressed and exploited minority" (p. 303) might internalize the negative perspectives of the dominant society, thereby creating a negative identity and self-hatred (Phinney, 1989). And according to Tajfel (1978), these negative views about having membership in a disparaged minority group can create psychological conflict; meaning, minority group members are challenged with a choice of accepting the negative perceptions of society toward their group or rejecting them in a search for their own identity (Phinney, 1989). Conclusions as to the value of exploring the impact on ethnic group membership on one's identity can be summed up in Maldonado's (1975) statement that "ethnic self-identity is . . . central to the development of the personal identity of minority group members" (p. 621).

Most conceptual writings have addressed the role of ethnicity in development has focused on young children, where the central them has been the ways in which children learn the label for their own group membership and the attributed derived from that label (Aboud, 1987). Research that has moved into adolescents has focused on the shift in thinking—shift from learning one's ethnic label to understanding, including "increased cognitive abilities, more interactions outside their own community, and greater concern

with appearance and social life" (Phinney, 1989, p. 35). These factors have contributed to a greater awareness of current social issues and thus likely to make ethnicity salient for minority youth (Gay, 1978), especially at a time when ego "identity formation is the central developmental task" (Erikson, 1968, p. 32).

Model of identity development. Marcia (1966, 1980) provides an operationalized version of Erikson's (1968) theory of ego identity development, which provides a useful starting point for study of adolescences'' ethnic identity. Marcia's model illustrates four identity statuses based on the presence or absence of investigation and commitment. People who have not explored nor made a commitment are said to have a diffuse identity; a commitment made without exploration. This position is usually grounded on the basis of parent values represents a foreclosed status (Marcia, 1980). Further, if the stage of exploration occurs without the commitment is known as moratorium; a firm commitment following a period of exploration is reflective of an achieved identity. Findings indicate that although achieved identity is seen as the most "sophisticated identity status" it does not necessarily suggest a developmental progression (Phinney, 1989).

Race and cultural identity development model. Atkinson et al. (1998) created the racial and cultural identity development model (RCID) to illustrate how people develop in racial capacities. Five stages of the RCID model are identified; conformity, dissonance, resistance and immersion, introspection, and synergistic articulation and awareness. The lower stages of the model depict students' relationships with the "privileged culture" and issues correlated with that identification (Atkinson et al., 1998. p.83). The middle stage of the model recommends recognition with and internalization of

one's racial identity. And the upper stages of the model reflect a subsiding of racial superiority and health commitment with racial issues. This model provides a basis for understanding what Black students go through in the process of identity development. Further, this model serves as a foundation for research on racial identity development for future researchers.

A three-stage model of ethnic identity. Phinney (1992, 2007) developed a three-stage model of ethnic identity development in adolescence. Phinney's model postulates that by adolescence people acquire an awareness of the attributes that distinguish groups (e.g., skin color, languages, and academic posture) and that understanding informs opinions, behaviors, and expectations about both their reference group and the out-groups. The three stages of the model are diffusion/foreclosure, moratorium, and ethnic identity achieved. Stage one of this model has been compared to identity foreclosure, as described in Marcia's (1980) work of values and attitude which concluded; people have taken on without question the values and attitudes to which they have been exposed. However, there is no clear evidence as to if people in this stage necessarily have negative perceptions of their own group. Nevertheless, it is possible that young adolescents from families that have stressed "ethnic pride" perhaps have adopted positive beliefs about their own group and thus less likely to adhere to the preference for the majority culture, even though they were excluded in the sense of not having surveyed the issues for themselves (Phinney, 1989). The period of exploration, or moratorium, has been identified as the time of experimentation and inquiry (Waterman, 1985). The ethnic identity search for minority youth is characterized by the aim to clarify the personal significance of their identity (Cross, 1978). The final stage and ideal outcome of the

identity process is an achieved identity. Ego identity achievers have settled the questions about their future and have made commitments that will guide future action (Marcia, 1980). Further, “following this period of cultural and political consciousness . . . individuals develop a deeper sense of belonging to the group . . . When the person finally comes to feel at one with the group, the internalization process has been completed, and ethnic identity established” (Arce, 1981, p. 186). “Tension, emotionality, and defensiveness are replaced by . . . self-confidence about one’s Blackness (Cross, 1978, p. 18). According to Kim (1981), “Self-concept during this stage is positive. Subjects feel good about who they are and feel proud to be Asian American, they also feel comfortable with both parts of themselves (Asian and American)” (p. 150). An achieved identity is characterized by a clear, confident acceptance of oneself as a minority group, ridding the negative self-image described by Tajfel (1978).

Model of Black identity development. Cross and Fhagen-Smith (2001) created a model to illustrate Black identity development. Their model was a derivative of Cross's early work from the 1970's. Six sectors of development or periods in life were identified within the model; infancy and childhood in early Black identity development, preadolescence, adolescence, early adulthood, adult nigrescence, and nigrescence recycling. Within each segment, there are four profiles or nigrescences that characterize areas of development, including; pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion, and internalization. Helms (1990) amended Cross's (1971, 1978) version of the theory of the five stages of racial identity development by introducing the term ‘nigrescence' to describe the process of becoming Black. Further, in Cross and Fhagen-Smith's (2001) model, Blacks in the pre-encounter stage range from low-salience unbiased people where

race plays an insignificant role in their everyday lives, to an anti-black attitudinal pattern in which people have internalized racist stereotypes and have either actively abandoned Blacks as a reference group or perhaps engage in acts of inflicting harm on other Blacks (i.e., gang membership; Cross, 1995). The encounter stage is one in where people begin to question their self-concepts because of a dramatic event or series of experiences that might occur in school, on the job, or an encounter with the penal system (Cross, 1971, 1978). The immersion/emersion stage is marked by Black people engaging themselves in Black experiences and withdrawing from White people as a means of formulating their own new identity. This model has served as a primary source for informing research on racial identity formation. It recognizes movement within the sectors, and it provides a view of racial identity development through the lens spanning an entire lifetime. Further, the concepts of identity salience and reference group orientation were developed in the spirit of the model (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

White identity model. Helms (1990) created a model of White identity development. The focus of this model was to help White people identify their role in racial issues. It also proposed strategies for healthy collaborations in a racist society. There are two main features of the model; the evolution of a non-racist identity and the abandonment of racism. Helms (1993) defined racial identity as "a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group" (p. 3). This sense of identity permitted White people to move from awareness and understanding to action through six positions: contact, disintegration, reintegration, pseudo-independence, immersion/emersion, and autonomy (Helms, 1990). These positions illustrate contact with status quo in the current

world view, disintegration resulting in anxiety due to conflict, reintegration of racist ideology and idealization of Whiteness, intellectualized commitment of Whiteness, acknowledging the awareness of Whiteness, and group solidarity and pride of being with Black people (Helms, 1990). In conclusion, Blacks who have resolved any issues with their racial identity no longer look solely to their reference group for appraisal, but rather they are motivated by what is uniquely best for them as individuals.

Asian American identity development model. Kim (2001) developed a model of Asian American identity development that included five stages: social-political consciousness, Asian American consciousness, ethnic awareness, White identification, and incorporation. Illustrated in this model is the ability for students to move through the stages as they identify with their own racial identities. And while moving through the stages students can interact with and make sense of the world around them. In an earlier study, Kim (1981) used retrospective interviews with adult Japanese-American students and found that all the students saw themselves as having changed toward more advanced stages. Other researchers found similar findings. For example, Atkinson et al., (1981) found a comparable sequence by clinical experience, Arce (1981) addressed the process conceptually about Chicanos, and Cross (1978) found that students experienced changes in progression while comparing their past, present, and projected future attitudes. These findings conclude that students perceived themselves as progressing from lower to more advanced stages of Black identity.

Researchers have identified factors that influence racial and ethnic identity development of multiracial students. For example, Renn (2000, 2004) investigated the value of space, peer culture, and the changeability of identity in multiracial college

students. Found in this research were five identity patterns that may define multiracial college student at any point in their life. They are monoracial identity, multiple monoracial identity, multiracial identity, extra racial identity, and situational identity. There are two key aspects of this model; the models are not linear and there are external factors and systems that have significant influences on students' identity development (Renn, 2004). Further, Root (1990) explored what outside factors influence racial and ethnic identity development of multiracial people. Findings of this study determined that there are ten foundational factors that may influence identity development including; the history of race within a geographic location, generation, sexual orientation, gender, class, family functioning, family socialization, community, personal attributes, and physical appearance. This research adds leverage to other models that combine aspects of identity and environmental influences.

Research has demonstrated the influence of contextual influences on race and ethnic identity development. For example, Torres (2003) investigated ethnic identity development through the experiences of Latino students and found two foundational areas of ethnic development; situating identity and the influences of change. Within these two areas, there are three important potential influences on college students' ethnic identity development; the environment where students grow up, the family influence and generational status, and self-perceptions and societal status (Torres, 2003). Further, cultural dissonance and changes in relationships are two factors that may be indicative of changes in ethnic identity development. Further, Davies et al.'s (2005) research on racial identity attitudes or variations in the stages of racial identity may explain why some Black students struggle to engage with students of other races in predominately White

settings while others maintain high levels of peer cohesion with White students and faculty. Further, Harper (2010) discovered in his work on racial attitudes that Black males who do well in predominately White setting possess an internalized racial identity that governs their ability to function within and they can transition from school and home boundaries.

Intersectionality research has identified the intersection of race/ethnicity in identity development. For example, Moya and Markus (2010) created a visual representation of intersecting race/ethnicity in identity development. According to this research, although looking at the intersection of race/ethnicity are important, there are times when focusing on either racial and ethnicity separately while not overlooking or denying their interactions may be helpful. Represented as a zipping mechanism, a student, researcher, or educator has control over how to make sense of the constructs and whether it is the best to distinguish and focus on either race or ethnicity or to combine them (Abes, 2016). Moya and Markus (2010) proposed that the term race be used when referring to how people are placed into groups according to perceived physical and behavioral human characteristics that are often "imagined to be negative, innate, and shared [and] associated differential value, power, and privilege with these characteristics" (p. 21), whereas the term ethnicity should be used when the groups are viewed more positively, for instance; when the grouping confers "a sense of belonging, pride, and motivation" (p. 22).

In conclusion, there are several models of race/ethnicity identity development (Arce, 1981; Atkinson et al., 1998; Cross, 1978; Kim, 2001) contend with Marcia's (1980) model where achieved identity is the result of an identity crisis, which involves a

period of exploration in hopes of moving toward a definite commitment. However, the models differ with Marcia's in their presumptions that students progress over time. The majority of models cited have assumed that a period of exploration into the meaning of students' ethnicity is central to ethnic identity development (Cross, 1978). Further, the existing models of ethnic identity development indicate that minority group members begin with the acknowledgment of the values and attitudes of the majority culture, including other internalized negative views of their group that is held by the majority (Phinney, 2007). Nevertheless, the overall findings from early studies on race/ethnicity conclude that to one degree or another race/ethnicity play a key role in the development of identity. However, according to the findings in more recent research, the traditional models of racial and ethnic identity development are limited in their scope not necessarily because of their stage-based approach, but because they single out or conflate the two concepts (Johnston-Guerrero, 2016). Further, current research concludes that rather than using a linear approach to understanding identity development, it is valuable also to consider the intersection of race/ethnicity, which can be useful in understanding both racial and ethnic identity development (see, Johnston-Guerrero, 2016; Sanchez, 2013; Maramba, Dina, & Velasquez, 2012; Jourdan, 2006).

Role-identity

A role-identity is a set of characteristics or expectations that are simultaneously defined by one's social position and thus a dimension of one's self (Jones et al., 2016; Yi-Ching & Billingham, 2014). These expectations that prescribe behavior are considered appropriate by others (Simon, 1997). The relative significance of a given role-identity in one's self-structure is referred to as the salience of the role-identity (Callero, 1985;

Stryker, 1968). Further, role-identity salience is perceived as "an important predictor of behavior" (Stryker, 1968, p. 560).

A plethora of research has identified the significance of role-identity on behavior. For example, Callero (1985) explored role-identity and the specific roles that become closely tied to peoples' sense of self and their identity. In other words, the self consists largely of the various social roles in which people engage (Callero, Howard, & Piliavin, 1987). For example, when college students perceive that they are expected to be responsible, their role-identity of being responsible becomes stronger. Further, role-identity theory postulates that college students who believe they are expected to be responsible are more likely to define themselves as responsible and act accordingly. Role-identities link social structure to individual action (Callero, 1985). Further, Terry et al. (1999) examined role-identity in the considerations of predicting behavior. Findings from their research conclude that by not referencing a collective social group of people and by using the phrase "who I am," researchers tend to get measures that reflect the personal-end of the interpersonal-intergroup continuum rather than the group-end. Further, items currently used to measure role-identity are "strongly focused on self-definition and could be regarded as indicators of personal identity" (Terry, Hogg, & White, 1999, p. 20). Further, according to Tajfel (1981), role-identity falls somewhere in the middle of the interpersonal-intergroup continuum, and if the items that researchers use to measure role-identity reflect personal factors more than a balance between personal and social identity factors a bias may influence the conclusions.

Research on social relationships and their relevant meaning to role-identity have been identified. For example, Godin et al.'s (1996) revised role-identity model allowed

for a more explicit reference to a social role (e.g., being a college student) and a specific behavioral context (e.g., joining a collegiate group). These findings inform researchers to consider using items that refer only to the appropriateness of behavior rather than the perception of the appropriateness of the behavior for role-related decision making. In doing so will allow the ability to capture the balance between the personal and social aspects of role-identity. However, to capture self-perceptions (as in Terry et al., 1999), items should be worded in a way aimed to capture a more personalized reference to the role of the people themselves rather than for role occupants in general (White, Thomas, Johnston, & Hyde, 2008). For example, an item may ask, "To what extend do you think that attending every peer-mentor session this semester is a significant part of your role as a student?" (White et al., 2008, p. 477) Further, Stryker (1980, 1987) explored how social relationships are largely perceived regarding their relevant meaning of salient role-identity; this is because people have distinct components of self for each of the role positions that they occupy. For example, a student's role-identity may include the fact that he/she is a provisional college student, first-generation, criminal justice major. Stryker maintained that the more salient the role-identity, the greater the likelihood the situations would be viewed as opportunities for performing the role-identity and the greater likelihood that stable relationships with others will be premised on that role-identity. According to Stryker (1968), research must focus on the implication of role-identity salience as it's found in the association with behavior; meaning the more salient the role-identity, the higher the probability that the person will behave consistently with that identity. Stryker (1987) later introduced self-schemata as a possible influence on the

formation of role-identity in the sense that self-schematics mirror self-expectations or an internal identity standard.

McCall & Simmons (1978) studied the way role-identity is expressed in a hierarchical structure. Essentially, one's self-view or meaning attributed to oneself about a specific role is generated reflexively through the perceived appearance of self or others and the self-judgment of that appearance. Further concluded in this research is that role identities are conceptualized as being positioned at the top of the hierarchy, and those less representative of the self-are positioned closer to the bottom. Role-identity tends to result in role-consistent performances only when the demands of the situation are consistent with the behavior of that identity, therefore when consistency exists, role support from the context provides self-verification and confirms the relevant identity and thus increases the probability of the role behaviors (McCall & Simmons, 1978). These findings are similar to Burke's (1991) research on salient role-identity, whereas when situation-specific demands are inconsistent with a highly salient role-identity, and identity-consistent actions are not valued or confirmed, the identity will be threatened, and the identity holder will experience feelings of distress. These findings conclude that strongly held role-identities are central to a sense of self and people have a commitment to protect their sense of identity (Burke, 1991). Further, Erez & Earley (1993) extended the role-identity precept by considering how culture influences self-concept. While staying in-line with the concepts of role-identity formulation and as people are exposed to or immersed in different cultures, people can experience a self-regulatory process that follows for self-enhancement (maintaining positive self-affects and cognitions) and self-

consistency (experiencing coherence and continuity). Such processes suggest that cultural elements may serve as identity predictors.

Riley and Burke (1995) posits that role-identity stems from two main sources: feedback about the self from social relations and the associated self-views. Role-identity mirrors an internalized set of role expectations with the importance of the identity being a function of commitment to the relevant role. In other words, the generation of self-meaning by a role-identity mirrors a self-regulatory interpretative process of sense-making in which significant inputs from others and oneself are reconciled in an attempt to verify, support, and validate the identity (Riley & Burke, 1995). For example, if students perceive that their teachers, advisors, etc. expect them to do well in college they are likely to identify with being successful.

In conclusion, research has provided significant agreement regarding the influences of social expectations on role-identity development. Maintained in this research is that salient role-identities are found to have significant implications on how we define ‘other' and with whom we develop specific social relationships (Callero, 1985; Riley & Burke, 1995; McCall & Simmons, 1978). Normative expectations of important ‘social others' is a primary source of a person's self-concept through reflexivity or simply by seeing oneself through such expectations (Callero et al., (1987). However, there is some expressed concern in regards to measures of role-identity as measures of past behavior and thus may involve a moral component; nevertheless, there is more recent evidence that supports the distinction between role-identity and past behavior (Terry et al., 1999). Finally, an overall consensus was found that self-definitions associated with salient role –identities are significant because they determine a person's overall

evaluation of self. Specifically, one would expect that since salient role-identities are more likely to characterize the self, they should have a greater influence on one's overall evaluation of the self (Godin et al., 1996; Tajfel, 1981; Terry et al., 1999).

Multiple and Intersecting Identity Theories

An allegiance to developing the whole student was reflected in the earliest text framing the values and philosophy of the field of higher education and student affairs [e.g., Student Personnel Point of View (American Council on Education, 1937, 1949) and the Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs (American College Personnel Association, 1937; National Association of student Personnel Administrators, (n.d)]. The significance in a holistic view of student development is also apparent in early conceptualizations of identity development in where identity was acknowledged as a process of coming to understand oneself through steady patterns, stages, and developmental tasks (Jones, 2016). Therefore, as previously discussed, examining students' identity development through singular categories of scrutiny has proven to be problematic in that consideration for all aspects of students' lived experiences are not taken into account, as well as how their identities may influence each other.

The significance of identifying multiple dimensions of identity implies a shift in the direction used to understand how the multitude of identities that encompass a single student may influence that students' whole identity development (Abes, 2016; Abes & Jones, 2004; Jones & McEwen, 2000). For example, rather than singularly examining how students develop in college, a focus on their multiple identities could be used to explore how the many facets of students' identity, including; race/ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, social class, academic preparedness, etc., may influence their

identity development. To a large extent, this new lens of looking at identity development implies that researchers regard not only multiple dimensions of identity, but also how the intersections of those identities have the ability to generate a unique experience for every individual college student (Abes, 2016; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Stewart, 2009). For example, the identity development of an Asian, middle class college student identified as ‘provisional' based on college admission criteria who lives off-campus will differ from the identity development of a White, first-generation, and of low-socioeconomic status college student identified as ‘provisional' based on college admission criteria who lives on campus. Therefore, research on the intersections of those identities aims to identify how every identity has the potential to influence not only the identity development of students but also how students make meaning of their multiple identities.

Multiple Identity Theories

Many scholars continue to present race, class, and gender as closely intertwined and believe that these forms of stratification need to study about each other, conceptualizing them, for example, as a ‘matrix of domination' or ‘complex inequality' (McCall, 2005). For example, Collins (1990) maintains that all people experience different levels of oppression and privilege through their identities and that people's experiences of oppression or privilege are context driven. For example, while one college student identified as ‘provisional' can feel oppressed on a college campus that promotes elitism, another ‘provisional' college student could feel privileged on a college campus that promotes inclusiveness. Collins (2015) later correlated the ‘matrix of domination' of various groups within a larger social group (particularly men and women) with patterns

of privilege and marginalization. According to Collins (2015), this matrix of domination extends to the levels of ‘personal biography; the group of community level of the cultural context created by race, class, gender; and the systemic level of social institutions.

Bowleg (2012) examined students' awareness of how their identities intersect to inform a unique experience. Findings in this research reveal that students ranked their identities regarding importance and considered all their intersections as a single identity and that power relations shape the salience of social identities. She believes that people do "identity work," where they chose to identify by saying "I'm Black first" or "I can't just be Black and then just a student" as they respond to power dynamics in certain social situations. This research can be used to inform researchers in their efforts to generate further predictions regarding how situational power dynamics can alter the nature of social identities (Warner, 2008; Warner & Shields, 2013). Indeed, Bowleg's work answered Nash's (2008) question on whether intersectionality theory "purports to provide a general theory of identity, it must grapple with whether intersectionality captures how subjects experience subjectivity or strategically deploy identity" (p. 11).

Studies have explored the intersections of social identities. For example, Riggs (2012) examined how different intersections of social identities acquire meaning about one another. In Riggs research on gay college students, he "de-homogenizes" the category of gay men with the use of intersectionality to show how intersections reflect status as manifested in prejudicial statements in an online dating profile. This research is an extension of Warner's (2008) recommendations about what needs to be done in order to include how the identities of one group always already exist in a relationship to the "identities of other groups, particularly across power differentials – and specifically that

one groups' experience of privilege is always the corollary of another group experience of advantage" (p. 806). This thematic examination is a good example of how to dig down to describe and understand the fabric of tension between intersectional groups (Warner & Shields, 2013). Further, Singh (2012) explored the way that identity is relational. Specifically, Singh discovers that people find affirmation from others who share their identities while helping them find labels for their identities and develop resistance strategies against those who question or challenge their understanding of themselves. This study revealed that people that align themselves with for example their race and gender identity, a label will evolve overtimes and circumstance. Collins along with other theorists considers identity in larger capacities (see Crenshaw, 1995; Dill, Abdur-Rashid, & Tyson, 2000; Stewart, 2008, 2009). This group of theorists believes that intersectionality must be focused on looking at people as a whole while recognizing all of their identities.

Intersecting Identity Theories

This next group of theorists has constructed models that employ multiple and intersecting identities. Overall these models are similar in that they situate the person in the middle with categories of identity intersecting each other to form the core of the person at the height of their identity development. Reynolds and Pope (1991) developed a model that included the following categories: viewing one aspect of self-identity according to society; looking at one aspect of self-identity; addressing multiple aspects of self-identity but separately; and viewing multiple aspects of self-identity in an intersecting and integrated way. The work of these theorists explored the influence on

multiple oppressions on identity categories. This model served as a foundational framework for other models to come.

Jones and McEwen (2000) created a model aimed to permeate the multiple dimensions of identity construction at a person's core. The development of this model allowed for a strong consideration of how the environment influences people. Abes and Jones (2004) introduced the prospect of formulating a meaning making aspect concerning identity development. The concept of meaning making was further developed with the proposition for practitioners to use intersectional thinking to provide useful supports in influencing students' understanding of self and how to navigate the collegiate world around them (Pearson, 2010; Abes, 2016). Further, King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) used Jones and McEwen's (2000) model as a foundation in their efforts to create a model that would assist in identifying and understanding the multiple dimensions of identity development. King and Baxter-Magolda's (2005) newer model incorporated context, meaning making, and identity perceptions into their model. Further, Abes et al. (2007) too updated their earlier model also to include a dynamic of identity development in which incorporated making meaning of identities. These models are significant as they provide a definite methodology and changeable lenses for viewing identity as multiple and intersecting while also considering context and environmental influences that should be considered in understanding students' identity development.

Environmental Theories and Identity Development

Stanford (1962) made explicit the role of the campus environment in the development of college students in his plea for both challenge and support of the institution, which would lead “an individual toward greater development must, then,

present [that person] with strong challenges, appraise accurately his ability to cope with challenges, and offer him support when they become overwhelming (p. 46).

According to Stanford's (1962) work, student development is not only located within the individual but in the spirit of the higher education institution (Jones & Abes, 2014). The key components of college environments are their physical design, the characteristics of people who inhabit them, the organizational structure related to their purpose and goals, and the peoples' collective social constructions of the prevailing press, social climate, and culture (Strange & Banning, 2001). Campus climate has been defined and measured in a variety of ways (Hart & Fellabaum, 2008; Worthington, 2008). Historically, the climate has been described as a combination of student's attitudes, perceptions of, and feeling about their environment (Kuh, 1990). Rankin and Reason (2008) described climate as the prevailing standards, behaviors, and attitudes of people on campus, which are informed by access and retention, research and scholarship, curriculum, group relations, university policies, and external relations. Milem, Chang, and Antonio (2005) proposed that a campus climate is a combination of psychological climate, behavioral environment, structural diversity, compositional diversity, and institutional history.

Environmental Theories

There are four foundational theories that concern college students and environmental influences significant to identity development: campus environment theory (Strange & Banning, 2001), a method for considering how environment and students interact (Lewin, 1936), the sociology of collective behavior (Blumer, 1951), and a framework for understanding the systems involved (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Renn, 2004). These theories illuminate the significant influence college campus environments

have on students' identity development. Further, perceptions of college and university environments will be identified amongst diverse cultural groups.

Ecological systems model. Bronfenbrenner (1993) built his ecological systems model to illustrate person and environment interactions. This model has four environmental levels; the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. Each level of the model offers different influences to the development of students. Bronfenbrenner (1979) defined microsystem as "patterns of activities, roles, and interpersonal relationships experienced by the developing person in a given situation with particular physical and material characteristics" (p. 22). The mesosystem, which represents level two defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as the interrelations among two or more settings in where the developing people actively participate such as the relationship among home, school, and neighborhood peer groups. The exosystem referred to one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant, but in which events occur that affect or are affected by, "what happens in the setting contains the developing person" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 25). Lastly, the macrosystem, which represents level four, according to Bronfenbrenner (1979), refer to:

> Consistencies in the form and content of lower-order systems (micro-meso-, and exo-) that exists, or could exist, at the level of the subculture or the culture as a whole, along with any belief systems or ideology underlying such inconsistencies. (p. 26)

Because racial identity is constructed in the context of social relations, in the ongoing interactions between individual and their environment, a theoretical model that shines light precisely on those interactions is useful in exploring racial identities and multiracial identification (Renn, 2004). This continual interaction with questions of identity development is significant because the college environment is the first place in which

deep questions of identity may be broached and the last place in which challenge and support for those inquire and adventures are purposely structured aspect the students' experiences at the institution (Stewart, 2009).

Collective behavior model. Blumer's (1951) work on collective behavior presumes that the reason people behave the way they do is group consciousness. Blumer believed that when people gather in crowds, they can influence how people behave within the crowd. It is essentially a group dynamic, whether the crowds are situated in one experience where the behavior of the collective becomes the behavior of the people within, or whether crowds of people are spread out over a geographic area (Blumer, 1951). Applying Blumer's collective behavior and group consciousness to the context of a campus environment where students are situated in crowds in a variety of spaces can provide insight into how groups of students on college campuses may influence individual student behavior. For example, if a student identified as ‘provisional' and the student knows that he or she is a part of an at-risk population and that group behaves in a certain manner as a collective, it may be that the individual students behave the same way as a consequence of being members of the group.

Lewin's equation for behavior. Lewin (1936) coined the formula B = f (PE) to represent behavior, (B) as a function, (f) the interaction of person, (P) and environment (E). This classic formula reflects a more complex view of human behavior than one from a personal or environmental perspective alone. It requires the understanding of the interactions between students and their campus environments. Later in the century, Bronfenbrenner, translated the equation to D = f (PE) to indicate that development too was the outcome of interactions between the person and environment (Renn, 2004).

When looking at identity formation, it is important to understand that is not only the conditions and characteristics of provisional students but also the conditions and features of the campus environments that provisional students occupy.

Strange and Banning (2001) maintained that college campuses create distinct environments where student identity and development are influenced in the following capacities:

> Environments exert their influence on behavior through an array of natural, synthetic physical features, through the collective characteristics of inhabitants, the manner in which they are organized and as mediated through their collective social constructions. (p. 200)

The structure, culture, demographics, and social structures of college campuses can significantly influence students' experiences. Knowing this is significant to the understanding of how social group communities may affect students' identity development.

College Environments Mediating Diversity

Until recently, most research recognized the campus climate as 'intangible'. However, both qualitative and quantitative findings allowed for a greater definition of 'intangible' quality by assessing and creating policy based on how students, faculty, and administrators perceive the institutional climate, hence, perceptions of racial/ethnic diversity, their experiences with campus diversity, and their own attitudes and interactions with different racial/ethnic groups (Hurtado et al., 1998). However, as Tierney (1997) points out, "No policy can be isolated from the social arena in which it is enacted" (p. 177). While research literature documents the effects of policy, programs, and initiatives, there are few studies of the influence of sociohistorical forces on campus climate (Tierney, 1997). Nevertheless, the goal is to aim for environments that are

"knowledgeable, understanding, and proactive in establishing venues where students can express their differences constructively" (Jones, Castellano, & Cole, 2002).

For all students, positive university environments are central to persistence and graduation (Bennett, 1995). For example, in a sample of Latino students, a positive perception of the university environment was found to be positively related to college persistence attitudes and a mediator between their identity and persistence attitudes (Lei et al., 2001). Contrarily, for all student populations, undesirable consequences of negative perceptions of the campus environment include levels of academic integration, institutional commitment, and academic achievement (Cambrera et al., 1999). For example, when college environments are perceived as "unwelcoming, discouraging, or discriminating," students respond with "low persistence and high academic failure" (Wei et al., 2011).

In persistence and retention literature, Tinto's (1996) integration theory is the most widely cited reference to college students' persistence and retention. The premise of this theory is that persistence increases when students are entrenched into the college environment (e.g., good academic performance) and social community (e.g., students' interaction with college peers and faculty members). However the significance of this model for students from diverse backgrounds is under scrutiny by many researchers (e.g., Castillo et al., 2006). Concerns were found in the lack of acknowledgment to the complexity of racially tense university environments for diverse student populations (Hurtado & Carter, 1997), who often experience minority stress and tensions created by their interactions with the college environment (Wei et al., 2011). Another concern with Tinto's model was that he excluded environmental factors as central constructs in the

process of measuring persistence (e.g., Castillo et al., 2006). With this finding, Castillo et al. (2006) advised to extend Tinto's (1996) theory by adding an environmental factor when studying persistence. Specifically, Tinto's theory assumed that students' increased involvement with the university would assist in their integration into the university, however, this insight did not take into account minority students' struggles with the White cultural norms and valued embedded within a predominantly White university culture (Castillo et al., 2006). Furthermore, the mediating roles of university environments are to create diversity friendly university environments in order to improve minority students' retention (Museus, Nichols, & Lambert, 2008).

Interactions among diverse students groups and perceptions of the campus environment are known as structural diversity. This theory suggests that students attending colleges and universities with diverse populations report interacting more frequently with diverse peers than do students attending homogeneous institutions (Chang, 1999). Further, positive peer interactions with diverse student populations and a sense of community have been found to be the most significant predictors of a positive campus racial climate (Park, 2009). The likelihood of interacting with diverse peers is also influenced by student characteristics (e.g., being a member of a minority group, parental education, academic preparation, precollege experiences with diversity, and major field of study) (Chang, 2001). In addition, informal interactions to diverse student populations have been found to contribute to a positive perception of the campus environment (Chang, 1999).

In conclusion, advocates initiating diversity and inclusion recognize bringing diverse student populations to campus does not automatically improve the campus

climate for diversity (Hurtado et al., 1999). A study conducted by Hurtado, Dey, Gurin, and Gurin (2003) reported that interactions among diverse student groups had a positive influence on student outcomes when: the groups are of equal status, there are common goals and inter-group cooperation, institutional leader supports group equality, and there are extended opportunities for groups to get to know one another. The influence of structural diversity among diverse peers depends on the nature and quality of those interactions. For example, interactions between Black and White students found at one institution resulted in an increase in negative climate when the conditions were not met as identified by Hurtado and her colleagues (Sampson, 1986).

Intersectionality as a Theoretical Framework

Using intersectionality as a theoretical framework allowed me to more completely and accurately capture the complexities of everyday lived experiences of provisional students by explicitly linking individual, interpersonal, and social structural aspects of their college experiences (Dill & Zambrana, 2009; Shields, 2008). As the research on identity development has evolved; recognition of identity as socially constructed and an inclusion of social identities (e.g., race, gender, social class, and sexual identity) resulted in new conceptualizations of identity (Abes, 2016; Jones & Abes, 2013; Kroger, 2004). At its roots, "intersectionality is the intellectual cores of diversity work" (Dill, 2009, p.229) in higher education. The term intersectionality was first used by legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw in her work on violence against women of color. Since, the term has become a buzzword in a wide range of gender, queer, and postcolonial studies in looking at the interaction of dimensions of inequality, such as gender, class, race, and sexuality (Winker & Degele, 2011).

Models on multiple and intersecting dimensions of identity that have recognized individual identities cannot be separated from structures of inequality, and social location has evolved overtime. The assumptions of "multiple identities" (Winkle-Wagner, 2009, p. 17) emphasized the importance of identity salience (e.g., Ethier & Deaux, 2001) and highlighted the dynamic relationship between individual's sense of self and context, or "social cultural milieu" (Rotheram & Phinney, 1987, p. 10), including the influence of a marginalized and underrepresented status. However, these models do not address the multiple and intersecting identities of provisional students (Jones, Kim, & Skendall, 2012). One of the first empirical studies to explore multiple and intersecting identities in higher education and student development research was found in a grounded theory study of a diverse sample of college students (Jones, 1997). The Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity (MMDI) was created based largely on these findings illustrating the dynamic process of identity development and the significance of changing context (Jones & McEwen, 2000). The MMDI conceptualized the relationship between socially constructed identities (e.g., race, gender, culture, social class, religion, sexual orientation) and core identity (personal attributes and characteristics) in which exemplified the relative salience of each identity dimension (Jones et al. 2012). The model was further extended based on the results of inquiry on college students' perceptions of their multiple identities (Abes & Jones, 2004) and then reconceptualized based on those findings to integrate a sense-making capacity (Abes, 2016; Abes et al., 2007; Pearson, 2010). According to Abes et al. (2007), "incorporating meaning-making capability into the model provides a richer portrayal of not only what relationships students perceive among their identities, but also how they come to perceive them as they do" (p. 13).

Furthermore, although this great work on multiple dimensions of identity and the intersecting nature of those identities, its emphasis was primarily on self-perceptions rather than on the inextricable link between identities and larger societal structures. This reality paved the way for intersectionality as a heuristic for exploring multiple identities. As Shields (2008) noted:

> Intersectionality first and foremost signifies the reality of peoples' lives. The facts of our lives uncover the fact that there is not one single aspect of identity that satisfactorily describes how we respond to our social environment or how we are responded to by others. It is important, to begin with, this observation because concern about intersectionality from theoretical or research perspective has grown directly out of the way in which multiple identities are experienced. (p. 304)

Drawing on Crenshaw's foundational research, intersectional scholars have identified four characteristics that define intersectional research as an analysis: Centering the lived experiences of individuals, and specifically those of people of color and other marginalized groups; Complicating identity and examining both individual and group identities; Exploring identity salience as influences by systems of power and privilege and unveiling power in interconnected structures of inequality; and Advancing a larger goal of promoting social justice and social change (Collins, 2015; Dill & Zambrana, 2009). Crenshaw (1991) acknowledged that "through an awareness of intersectionality, we can better acknowledge and ground the differences among us and negotiate the means by which [they]…find expression in constructing group politics" (p. 1299). Nevertheless, intersectionality research is not used without difficulties (Hancock, 2007). By its design, intersectional research according to Dill (2002) is:

> An analytical strategy, an approach to understanding human life and behavior rooted in the experiences and struggles of marginalized people. It is also an important tool linking theory with practice that can aid in the empowerment of communities and individuals. Finally, it is a theoretical perspective that insists on examining the multi-dimensionality of human experience. (p. 6)

Additionally, when intersectionality is used as a research paradigm, the analysis must include the "individual integrated with institutional" (Hancock, 2007, p. 64) rather than a mere additive examination of the individual and the institutional.

Intersectionality is described as an innovative and emerging field of study that provides a "critical analytic lens to interrogate racial, ethnic, class, physical ability, age, sexuality, and gender disparities and to contest existing ways of looking at these structures of inequality" (Dill & Zambrana, 2009, p. 1). The concept of intersectionality refers to the interaction between social identity structures such as race, class, and gender in fostering life experiences, and experiences of privilege and oppression (Gopaldas, 2013). While the term was coined and its metaphor first explained by Crenshaw (1991), its lineage includes the rich intellectual tradition of Black feminist thought, critical race theory, critical race feminism, and "the research, writings, and teaching by and about women of color in the Unites States (both native and migrant)" (Dill & Zambrana, 2009a, p. 3). Intersectionality maintains the position that people are all of their identities at the same time and that these identities cannot be split off from each other, mainly provisional college students, who experience role expectation (Callero, 1985), levels of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), nigrescence (Cross, 1978), and being stigmatized (Steele, 1997). Further, Davies (2008) posits, "the interaction [among] categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions regarding power" (Davies, 2008, p. 68). Intersectionality provides a theoretical framework that supports the understanding of these categories of identities, experiences, and oppression as simultaneously interlocking

(Abes, 2016). This section explores the history of intersectionality, with its core tenets, critiques, and tensions.

Core Tenets

The significance of intersectionality to the multiple fields has been established (McCall, 2005), and Dill et al. (2007) has asserted that "to a large extent, intersectional work is about identity" (p. 630), and a central tenet of intersectionality is that individual identity exists within and draws from a "web of socially defined statuses some of which may be more salient than others in specific situations or at specific historical moments" (Dill & Zambrana, 2009, p. 4). More specifically, Dill and Zambrana suggested that intersectionality is characterized by the following four theoretical interventions:

> (1) Placing the lived experiences and struggles of people of color and other marginalized groups as a starting point for the development of theory; (2) Exploring the complexities not only of individual identities but also group identity, recognizing that variations within groups are often ignored and essenttialized; (3), Unveiling the ways interconnected domains of power organize and structure inequality and oppression; and (4) Promoting social justice and social change by linking research hand practice to create a holistic approach to the eradication of disparities and to changing social and higher education institutions. (p. 5)

Dill and Zambrana's intentional use of the term ‘theoretical intervention' is significant as it insinuates that intersectionality is not a theory itself, but an analytic lens through which theories may be seen and which results in a shifting frame of reference (Torres et al., 2009). This section will explore each of these core tenets in detail.

The first tenet, antiessentialism, is directly connected to the foundation of intersectionality in Black feminist theory, which critiqued White liberal feminist discourse from searching for gender equity as the sanction of other categories of difference such as race/ethnicity, class, and gender (Collins, 2009). A theoretical and

practical denial of the differences among women was the result of this single-issue approach. Hooks (1984) wrote that "white women who dominate feminist discourse today rarely question whether or not their perspective on women's reality is true to the lived experiences of women as a collective group" (p. 3). According to Collins (1990), the statement exposing essentialism was said before the theoretical emergence of intersectionality. Antiessentialism, which in this case disregards the thought of a monolithic or "essential" experience to being a woman, as a critical component of intersectionality scholarship and activism. Grillo (2013) connected antiessentialism and intersectionality, maintaining that "these two concepts embody what is essentially the same critique, but made from two different starting points" (p. 31). Grillo later wrote of their uses: "anti-essentialism and intersectionality are checks on us; they help us make sure that we do not speak for those we cannot speak for or ask others to share our agenda while they patiently wait for their own" (p. 38).

Essentialism is identified as the second tenet of intersectionality as the understanding of identities and oppressions as simultaneous and intersecting. As previously acknowledged, intersectionality posits that we are all of our identities at the same time and we cannot free these identities in our own experiences or our work against oppression (Crenshaw, 1995). At the same time, stigmatization, minority identification, and other forms of oppression are also simultaneous and cannot be teased apart.

Crenshaw (1989) explicated:

> Black women are sometimes excluded from feminist theory and antiracist policy discourse because both are predicated on a discrete set of experiences that often does not accurately reflect the interaction of race and gender. These problems of exclusion cannot be solved simply by including Black women within an already established analytical structure. Because the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism, any analysis that does not take

> intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated. (p. 140)

In concluding this perspective, rather than understanding identity as an additive, identity categories should be viewed as intersecting (Smooth, 2010). As Crenshaw (1989) stated in the previous quote, "the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism" (p. 140), which forces those interested in the theory to look for understanding of the ways that oppression compounds under an intersectional versus a sing-issue lens (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991).

The acknowledgment that people can be privileged and oppressed at the same time is the third core tenet of intersectionality. For example, example, a Black student is privileged regarding ability but may experience oppression because of her race/ethnicity. In summation by Collins (1991): "depending on the context, an individual may be an oppressor, a member of an oppressed group, or simultaneously oppressor and oppressed" (p. 225). In other words, in another example:

> For a White woman in a mixed-gender group of White people, it is likely fair to describe her as a member of an oppressed group, as her gender puts her at a disadvantage. In an interracial group of women, however, her racial privilege may likely cast her as an oppressor. In an interracial group of men and women, her identity as a White woman becomes both privilege and disadvantage. (Collins, 1991, p. 225)

Intersectionality encourages student affairs professions, researchers, and practitioners to better understand the shifting nature of privilege and oppression to more effectively challenge stigmatization and nigrescence (Cross, 1978; Steele, 1997).

Practitioners in colleges and universities can work to understand individual and institutional privilege through the fourth tenet of intersectionality, therefore allowing the lives and experiences of marginalized students "whose voices have been ignored" (Nash,

2008, p. 3) at the center of analysis. This type of examination will show clarity to privilege and oppression, information necessary in creating new success and retention models and approaches for social change.

The fourth tenet of intersectionality is a commitment to both individual and institutional levels of analysis where the concern lies in understanding identities and individual experiences as well as institutions and structures of oppression (Gopaldas, 2013). Within the last 20 years, intersectionality research has been used by a variety of disciplines, including higher education, where it has particularly enhanced identity research (Abes, 2016; Abes & Jones, 2004; Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2007).

A final tenet of intersectionality is its commitment to implementing positive change. Dill (2002), after finishing a study surveying the perspectives of faculty who engage in intersectional work, wrote that "the ultimate goal of this work is to contribute to the creation of a more just society" (p.5). This dedication to social justice manifests at the individual and institutional levels, in academia and society. It can be accomplished through intersectional research, teaching, activism, and working rather than focus on individuals, focuses on the oppressive contexts in which individuals are situated (Pizzolato, 2003). Dill and Zambrana (2009), when citing the work of Collins (2000), perhaps best described the multiple influences of intersectionality and its ability to create social change in the following passage:

> Intersectional analysis explores and unpacks relations of domination and subordination, privilege and agency, in the structural arrangements through which various services, resources, and other social rewards are delivered; in the interpersonal experiences of individuals and groups; in the practices that characterizes and sustain bureaucratic hierarchies; and in the ideas, images, symbols, and ideologies that shape consciousness. (p. 5)

In conclusion, the concern of intersectionality research is to expose and then change the power relations and structures in efforts to advance social justice for all. Further, intersectionality provides a lens both for investigating the aspects of identity development as well as for bring light to the aspects and dimensions of identity (e.g., race/ethnicity and role-identity) to a full range of questions relevant to student development, such as retention, student involvement, campus community, and equity (Torres et al., 2009).

Critiques, Tensions, and Challenges

Intersectionality holds much promise to understanding aspects of identity, but a more refined adopter of intersectionality will also want to be aware of some of the potential limitations (Jones & Abes, 2013), and although intersectionality is promising theoretical lens, the term, and the theory are often misunderstood or only partially applied (Abes, 2016, Collins, 2009; Davies, 2008; Dill, 2009). For example, applications of intersectionality have been critiqued for being too much about identity and not enough about dismantling oppressive social systems (Collins, 2009) or for "flattening differences" (Luft & Ward, 2009, p. 100) when used as a matter of course rather than intentionally. They further argued that there can be unintended consequences to the "blanket applications of intersectionality—uniform deployment may inadvertently contribute to flattening the very difference intersectional approaches intend to recognize" (p. 100). These critiques address the core tenets, as described in the previous section, are not adequately or diligently attended to in intersectional work: in other words, it is the application of the theory where gaps of difficulties may occur rather than in theory itself (Jones & Abes, 2013). This section explores these critiques, as well as the theoretical

interventions of intersectionality as outlined by Dill and Zambrana (2009) as a means for guiding intersectional work and avoiding some of the pitfalls described here.

Luft and Ward (2009) offered a compelling critique of intersectionality as a practice, advising "the prevalence of superficial engagements with intersectionality" and calling for "keeping intersectionality on our growing edge, a politics of ‘not yet,' or just out of reach" (p. 33) to convey the most who claim to be engaged in intersectional work are far from accomplishing objectives (Jones & Abes, 2014). Although some research attends to the micro analysis of individual narratives, this is not the case in intersectional tenets, as macro considerations, "variables and constructs' in research terminology must be integrated" (Jones & Abes, 2014, p. 156). Several scholars have written about intersectionality from a methodological perspective, addressing the challenges (Bowleg, 2008; Jones, 2009; McCall, 2005; Warner, 2008).

In assembling a point of particular relevance to identity research, Bowleg (2008) described the value of considering data within a "macro sociohistorical context of structural inequality that may not be explicitly or directly observable in data" (p. 320) and the need as a researcher to "make explicit the often implicit experiences of intersectionality, even when the participants do not express the connection" (p. 322). This result in what Abes (2012) described as "overlaying a sociohistorical analysis onto the individual's story (p. 193). Further, Warner (2008) warned researchers to focus on methods and the kinds of questions asked in an intersectional approach. She wrote:

> I want to encourage researchers dedicated to an intersectional approach to pay attention to and be critical not only of the questions they ask and the phenomena that they test, but also the questions they do not ask and the phenomena they don't test. Truly, one of the central issues in the study of intersectionality is that a visibility – who is granted attention, who is not, and the consequences of these actions for the study of social issues. (p. 462)

Another critique of intersectionality research is that the researchers can become too focused on the individual or identity level of the theory rather than the social or structural level. In presenting Dill and Zambana's (2009) volume, Patricia Hill Collins (2009) succinctly explained this danger and its impact:

> In recent years, intersectional analyses have far too often turned inward, to the level of personal identity narratives, in part, because intersectionality can be grasped far more easily when constructing one's own autobiography. This stress on identity narrative, especially individual identity narrative, does provide a significant contribution to fleshing out our understanding of how people experience and construct identities within intersecting systems of power. Yet, this turning inward also reflects the shift within American society away from social structures analyses of social problems, for example, the role of schools, prisons, and workplace practices, in producing poverty, and the growing rejection of institutional responses to social inequities, e.g., how governmental social policies might address this intractable social problem. (p. ix)

An additional critique of intersectionality is Luft and Ward's (2009) incisive analysis about how the theory has the potential to "flatten difference" (p. 100). While advocates of intersectionality, they wrote:

> I have also come to believe that emphasizing the simultaneous and interactive workings of gender, race, and other axes of identity and oppression are not always the most effective approach in certain contexts when the aim is intervention. By intervention here I mean intentional acts of resistance, designed to interrupt hegemonic attitudes or practices regarding gender and race. (p. 102)

These challenges barely scratch the surface of that that exist but provide a catalyst for thinking through the contributions and limitations of embracing an intersectional framework. Further, these challenges should encourage students of intersectionality to be knowledgeable about this framework and practice, so they do not fall into the those who are referred to as "superficially engaged" and as using intersectionality because it is "catchy and convenient" (Davies, 2008, p. 75).

Summary

This chapter explored and placed the foundational literature related to six primary areas including college enrollment patterns, resiliency theories, identity development theories, multiple and intersecting identity theories, the college environment, and intersectionality while contextualizing this study's research focus on students' voices—the lived experiences of provisional undergraduate students and how the intersections of their identities influence their ability to persist. In Chapter 3, I explored how this literature informed the study's theoretical framework, as well as outline the design, methods, and procedures of this phenomenological research study.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter first illuminates the epistemological and methodological foundations of this study. Then, it provides a detailed examination of phenomenological and heuristic inquiry. Next, the research design, sampling procedures, and data collection, management, and analysis are outlined. Last is a discussion of the trustworthiness and reliability and validity. Discussion of ethical issues such as representation and insider research are woven throughout.

Research Purpose

As outlined in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to use students' voices to capture the lived experiences of provisional college students, look at the intersection of their identities in the ability to persist and provided an examination of what provisional students say about how the campus environment influences their identities. Toward that understanding, three questions emerged:

(1). What are the lived experiences of provisional students?

(2). What aspects of provisional students' intersecting identities influence their ability to persist?

(3). What do provisional students say about what influence the campus environment has on their identities?

Research Approach

This study sought to examine how provisional college students negotiate the intersection of race/ethnicity and role-identity as they persist and how resilience, stereotype threat, and self-efficacy inform those negotiations was suited for a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research entails the "search for meaning and understanding, the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis…the end product being richly descriptive" (Merriam, 2009, p. 39). Further, by capturing the actual meanings and interpretations that the participants subjectively ascribe to the phenomena in order to describe and explain their behavior was done through the investigation of how they "experience, sustain, articulated, and share with others their socially constituted everyday realities" (Cassell, Buehring, Symon, & Johnson, 2006, p. 132). In addition, the ever-changing nature of qualitative inquiry exists from social construction, to interpretive, and onto the social justices of the world – included below is the latest definition:

> Qualitative research as a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena regarding the meaning people bring to them. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3)

As discussed in the previous chapters, the adopted perspective of identity is it is an ongoing construction. A Qualitative approach is useful for the focus on everyday experiences (Miles & Huberman, 1994) such as ongoing identity construction. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their

experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences (Merriam, 2009). A qualitative approach served useful in going beyond the snapshots of what and how many (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and fitted within the assumptions of identity; a dynamic process. Finally, the use of qualitative research allowed students' voices to be heard. Conversely, quantitative modes of inquiry (e.g., surveys, statistical analysis) could not provide sufficient depth in the examination of intersecting identities.

Epistemological and Theoretical Foundations. All research is grounded in an epistemological tradition, has at least one theoretical perspective, and employs a theoretical framework (Creswell, 2007). These interconnections are outlined below, with a specific focus on how they manifested in and informed this study.

First, epistemology concerns the nature of knowledge (Creswell, 2007) and defined as "the theory of knowledge embedded in theoretical perspective and thereby the methodology" (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). The epistemological foundation of this study was post-structuralism (Jones, 2016; Jones & Abes, 2013; Lather, 2007), detailed in subsequent sections. The theoretical perspective and theoretical framework were perhaps harder to tease apart as delineated by Jones et al. (2014), in the following:

> Whereas theoretical perspective influences how the researcher will approach and design the study and influences how the researcher will approach the topic under study in more abstract terms, the theoretical framework offers suppositions that inform the phenomenon under study and comes from existing scholarly literature. (p. 22)

These definitions were used to tease apart the study's theoretical perspective from its framework.

Epistemological Foundation. The spirit of a theory and how a theory is used in practice depends on the paradigm in which it is situated. In a canonical text on the disposition of knowledge according to Kuh (1990), new paradigms materialize as the limitations of existing ones become clear. This notion is further explained by Jones et al. (2013) and central to the work of poststructural theorists Foucault (1979) and Derrida (1967, 1978) are the beliefs

> …that knowledge and truth are social constructions that reflect the prevailing interests of those who hold the most social power; that knowledge and truth are neither objective nor universal; and that all knowledge and truth reflect the specific cultural and historical contexts in which they were developed. (p. 194)

A poststructural investigation deconstructs these discourses to establish new possibilities for identity constructions that are "not shackled by power" (Jones, 2016, p. 13). Further, all theory is rooted in paradigms. Paradigms are referred to as a world views or as a "set of interconnected or related assumptions or beliefs" that guide thinking and behavior (Jones et al., 2014, p.3). A poststructural paradigm is grounded in the assumptions that systems of oppression form reality, how these systems shape reality needs to be deconstructed, and reality is ever changing and defies labeling (Lather, 2007). Given the phenomenological and heuristic nature of the study, poststructuralism was a more fitting approach; it not only uncovered the ways in which some student development theories silence provisional students but also created prospects for new ways to conceptualize student development theory that "loosen and empower" of these same students (Abes, 2016, p. 10). In this study, a poststructural research concern was applied to complicate, deepen, and unsettle the conventions of methodology and my potential ease as a researcher, researching difficult knowledge (Britzman, 1998; Pitt & Britzman, 2003).

Researching difficult knowledge. In the "Speculations on Qualities of Difficult Knowledge in Teaching and Learning," Alice Pitt and Deborah Britzman (2003) used psychoanalysis in contemplation of how students and instructors make meaning of their experiences with "difficult knowledge" (p. 755). Rather than a conventional approach to interviewing, they designed fifteen themes relevant to encounters or experiences with difficult knowledge and listed sup-prompts to induce narrations from their participants. For example, for the theme "thinking about reconsidering knowledge," prompts included "times when an idea or viewpoint prompted you to reconsider previous views" and "times when you fell out of love with an idea or theory" (p. 771). This unusual interview procedure was shared with participants in my study three days before their scheduled interview, which allowed the participants time for contemplation. Although the design made the study more challenging for me and the participants, it reiterated Pitt and Britzman in their realization that "research must be understood as provoking, not representing, knowledge" (p. 769).

The narrate "difficult knowledge" also depicted a sense of urgency from contemporary methodological discussions in qualitative research raised by Bloom (1998), Lather (2000), Laws and Davies (2000), Rhedding-Jones (2000), St. Pierre and Pillow (2000), Talburt (2000), and Yon (2000). This study's design "provoke[ed], not represent[ed], knowledge" (Pitt & Britzman, 2003, p. 769). Further, this method of inquiry heightened the problem of credibility embedded in such foundational concepts in qualitative studies such as "voice, identity, agency, and experience" while still had the expectation to offer conditional observations about how "individuals –including the researcher – makes knowledge in and out of the world" (Pitt & Britzman, 2003, 756).

Pitt and Britzman (2003) provoked me to acknowledge that to investigate how provisional undergraduate college students' intersecting identities influence their ability to persist, what influence the college environment has on their intersecting identities, and how students make meaning of their identities was to research difficult knowledge. Just like others struggled to draw out and understand stories they learned in the field, I struggled to do the same. They also struggled with themselves as researchers, "Indeed—we learn something of our knowledge when we stumble in the face of our persistent blind spots, and we collude with interviewees in their production of satisfying narratives that dance around the surprise of self-implication" (p.769).

Phenomenology. Phenomenology is the "study of human experience, and of the ways, things present themselves to use in and through such experiences" (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 48). It has been recognized as a "complex, multifaceted philosophy [that] defies simple characterization because it is not a single unified philosophical standpoint" (Schwandt, 2015, p. 234). Phenomenology is rooted in the work of Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty; each started a distinct branch of phenomenology: transcendental, hermeneutic, and existential, respectively (Jones & Abes, 2014). Each of these traditions operate from the assumption that "there is an essence or essences to shared experiences" (Patton, 2015, p. 116). The purpose of this phenomenological research was to understand how we make sense of these lived experiences individually and collectively, an appreciation that can only come "by turning from things to their meaning, from what is to the nature of what is" (Schwandt, 2015, p. 234). Lived experience involves our immediate, pre-reflective consciousness of life

> ….a reflexive or self-given awareness which is, as awareness, unaware of itself. A lived experience does not confront me as something perceived or represented; it is

> not given to me, but the reality of lived experience is there-for-me because I have a reflexive awareness of it because I possess it immediately as belonging to me in some sense and only in thought does it become objective. (Dilthey, 1985, p.223)

Lived experiences are the starting point and ending point to phenomenological research (Merleau-Ponty & Lefort, 1968).

Phenomenology, philosophically and methodologically is centered on the lived experiences and how people experience their life-world. The life-world is the intersubjective world of human experience and social action of common-sense; knowledge of everyday life. It is comprised of the "thoughts and acts of individuals and their social expressions of those thoughts and actions (e.g., laws, institutions)" (Schwandt, 2015, p. 185). Further, studies that use phenomenology are interested in how people transform experiences into consciousness; it is an important distinction, they are not concerned with finding the objective "truth" of what happened but rather how people understand their experiences and incorporate meaning into their worldviews and life-worlds (Gallagher, 2012). The challenge for researchers conducting phenomenological research is as Paton (2015) wrote, "methodologically, carefully, and thoroughly capturing and describing how people experience some phenomenon – how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, talk about it to others" (p. 115).

This phenomenological inquiry aimed at put aside all presuppositions about phenomena through a process called epoche, while the investigator "looks inside to become aware of personal bias, eliminate personal involvement with subject material – that is, eliminate, or at least gain clarity about preconceptions" (Patton, 2015, p. 575). In phenomenological research, epoche is used during every phase of the research by

"relying on intuition, imagination, and universal structures to obtain a picture of the experience" (Creswell, 1998, p. 52). Bracketing prejudgments uncovered by epoche, the phenomena under investigation was taken out of the world and its essence examined (Patton, 2015).

The phenomenon under investigation was what influence the intersections of provisional college student' identities had on their ability to persist; what influence the campus environment had on their identity development; and their ability to make sense of it through meaning making capacities. In attempt to understand the life-world, I collected data from provisional students "in the form of descriptions of their lived experiences through journals, semi-structured interview questions, and observations. In the protocol provided to them, student participants were asked to as Crotty (1998) asked, "lay aside, as best we can, the prevailing understandings of those phenomena and revisit [their] immediate experiences of them, [so that] possibilities for new meaning emerge for us or we witness at least an authentication and enhancement of former meaning" (p. 78).

Heuristic Inquiry. Heuristic inquiry used in this research challenged the fundamental question, "What is my experience of this phenomenon and the essential experience of others who also experience this phenomenon intensely?" (Patton, 2015, p. 118). Heuristic inquiry means to discover or find, and it involves both the researcher and the participants in the discovery of knowledge. This form of phenomenological study required the researcher to "have personal experience with and an intense interest in" the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2015, p. 119). To work in a university as an academic advisor for provisional students is an intense experience, but perhaps of more significance, it is an intense experience to be an intersectional provisional college student

(a student with intersecting identities) who does intersectional work (addressing the intersection of role-identity and race/ethnicity) while doing so, negotiates the influence of stereotype threat, self-efficacy, and resilience at a university that acknowledged only one aspect of their identity; provisional. Provisional college students face daily inescapable tensions related to this label; required enrollment into a semester long success seminar course specific to students of their status; required progress reports with their instructors which single them out based on their status; required advising meetings in an advising office specific for provisional students; and in many cases they take their first year of college classes in one building alienated from the rest of the campus. These tensions, as well as the experience of their intersectional selves, can impede their college experience.

Given the nature of the topic and what drew me to it are my own interests, concerns, and beliefs, as a university we are not successfully serving all students admitted to the university. To that end, a heuristic inquiry was fitting as a methodological approach for this study. I worked not only to deepen what could be learned but I also co-associated myself as a researcher and participant in the elicitation, understanding, acknowledgement, and experiences of graveling with the negotiations of the intersection of role-identity and race/ethnicity and how stereotype threat, resilience, and self-efficacy inform these negotiations (Moustakas, 1990).

The term being-in-the-world was created to accentuate that people cannot abstract themselves from the world and thus it is not a pure content of human subjectivity that is the focus of inquiry but, rather, what the narratives imply about individuals everyday experiences (Lopez & Willis, 2009). Heuristic investigations require unequivocal methods for the investigator to follow such as; self-dialogue, tacit knowing, intuition,

focusing, and an internal frame of reference (Moustakas, 1990), all means to the discovery of the researcher's experiences, suppositions, and knowledge of the phenomena under investigation. Amidst these processes, epoche is replaced. Further, detailed in the heuristic inquiry are six phases that do not remove the phenomena from the world; initial engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination, explication, and creative synthesis, thus bracketing is removed as a method of employing heuristic research. Particularly, the final stage is the only stage that the researcher "moves outward by engaging with the experience of others who have shared the experience of the phenomenon under inquiry and can provide additional data, insights, and feedback" (Patton, 2015, p. 120). The last stage, the creative synthesis stage, Moustakas (1990) expressed that behavior is governed and experience is determined by:

> The unique perceptions, feelings, intuitions, beliefs, and judgments housed in the internal frame of reference of a person. Meanings are inherent in a particular world view, an individual life, and the connections between self, other, and world. (p. 32)

Research Setting

Students selected for this study were from a large four-year, public research university in the Mid-West. For this study, the operational definition of 'provisional' students as defined under the university's admission criteria was used in this investigation. In students' admission letter from the university, they are informed of their provisional admission. After that, the term 'provisional student' is used to identify these students until they are accepted into their degree granting college. Acceptance into their degree granting colleges typically follows after the completion of thirty college credits. In this case, students that earned either an ACT composite score below a 16 (between the

years of 2011-2013), and 17 (between the years of 2013-2016), a high school GPA at or below a 2.3, or both are admitted under the provisional admission.

Participant Selection

Both purposeful and convenience sample was employed in this study. Brott and Myers (1999) described purposeful sampling as a way to select participants that will "illuminate the study and elucidate variation as well as significant common patterns within the variations" (p. 342). Further, Merriam et al. (2002) proposed that because qualitative research is used to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon or situation through the eyes of the participants under study, it is "important to select a sample from which the most can be learned" (p. 12). Convenience sampling was also used for the ease of accessing the selected participants. Including convenience sampling as a sampling procedure allowed for ease of availability for the participants, the ease with for observations, and the quickness with which the data could be gathered for analyzed (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

To ensure that the intended sample audience will be targeted, I requested that an academic advisor in the advising office where the provisional college students are assigned to run queries on all students identified as provisional, who have completed at least two semesters of coursework, and who are still enrolled as a student. An email was sent out to all prospect participants with detailed information regarding the purpose and nature of the study and request their informed consent of voluntary participation (See Appendix A). The email also included information regarding the data collection method, which included two phases: a ninety minute face-to-face interview which will be audio recorded and one journal entry. In the email, all participants were informed that their

participation is voluntary and consent could be withdrawn at any time. Time and location of the interviews was identified upon the participants' acceptance.

Sample size and saturation. Although Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend sampling until a point of saturation or redundancy is reached, Wolff (2002) advised that sample size is challenging in phenomenological research and self-reflection is the key to understanding when the sample is large enough:

> The answer lies not in some externally sanctioned number, but inside the one who embodies the research process. The researcher comes to understand that one does not "decide" when the description is over, and the reduction is about to begin; rather, one recognizes that the reduction has already begun and that the descriptions are in the process of ending. (p. 177)

Wolff acknowledged that this "creates an uneasy, problematic situation for phenomenological researchers - particularly for the first time" (p. 117), as researchers must pay close attention to when they become "less awash in the description and more awash in emerging themes" (p. 118). With this in mind, I proposed four to six participants when creating the study, with the responsibility to include more if reduction did not occur. Patton (2002) recommends specifying a minimum sample size 'based on expected reasonable coverage of the phenomenon given the purpose of the study" (p. 246). Six participants responded to my participation request and all six participants completed both phases of the study. They were interviewed on a rolling basis and the "reduction already began" (p. 117) after interviewing the first round of participants.

Role of the Researcher

While this investigation employed heuristics in the phenomenological inquiry, I engaged in a rigorous exploration of my own experiences about the study's topic. The heuristic practice served as a means of triangulation, my own experiences were another

breadth of the study and were identified and critically examined. Moustakas (1990) wrote, "self-dialogue is the critical beginning; the recognition that if one is going to be able to discover the constituents and qualities that make up an experience, one must begin with oneself" (p. 16). By meticulously pondering my own thoughts, experiences, and meaning-making, another layer of data emerged. Further, the practice of heuristic inquiry was used as a means to clarity of my own research biases (Creswell, 1998).

Data Collection

I collected data for this study using four different sources. These sources included semi-structured in-depth interviews, written journal entries, and observations and my own heuristic inquiry. I discuss each of these three data sources in the section below.

Interviews

The interview process was standard for all participants (see Appendix B). While I originally wrote traditional questions to get to the study's inquiry with van Manen's (1990) guiding principles in mind, I disregarded them in favor of a more challenging, generative, and potentially precarious interview protocol after reviewing Pitt and Britzman's (2003) work (see Appendix C). The term "difficult knowledge" is used as a metaphor for inquiry in that "the evocative qualities that language conveys resist interpretation, and this struggle is an important aspect of experiencing" (Pitt & Britzman, 2003, p. 757) the lived experiences of provisional college students and contingent "difficulties require homework to fill in the readers' gap of knowledge" (p. 757). Thought prompts were used as a tactic to ponder difficult knowledge. I sent via email the interview thought prompts to participants three days before the scheduled interview so that the participants could begin pondering the prompts. I invited the participants to print

the thought prompt exercise before coming to the interview. They were encouraged to take notes, reflect on stories, experiences, and thoughts that may wish to share during their interview. The interview questions were grounded in four major areas (see Table 2). The full list of interview questions is found in (Appendix D) which also includes the interview questions link to theory. Linking theory to questions is a process according to Miles and Huberman (1994) describes the moving up "from the empirical trenches to a more conceptual overview of the landscape. We're no longer just dealing with observables, but also with un-observables, and are connecting the two with successive layers of inferential glue" (p. 261).

Journals

At the end of each interview, I discussed the second phase of the study; journaling. I requested that each participant write a reflexive response to several prompts (see Appendix E). I requested that the participants have their journal entry to me within three days after their interview. Students have the option to email, drop off, or mail their journal to me. All six participants emailed me their journal entry. To encourage frank and reflective admission, participants had the option to put brackets around sections of their writing that they wanted to private as these sections would not be quoted in the final write-up. No students put brackets in their journal entry.

Observations

The theoretical framework, the problem, and the questions of interest determine what is to be observed (Merriam, 2009). LeCompte and Preissle (1993) wrote that what to observe depends on the topic, conceptual framework, and "the data that begin to emerge as the participant observer interacts in the daily flow of events and activities,"

and the intuitive reactions and hunches the participant observer experiences as all these factors come together (p. 200). Observing student interactions in their college environment gave insight as to how students successfully negotiate the college environment, what influence the campus environment may have on students' identity development and the influence of the campus environment on students' ability to make meaning of their identities. I requested that the participants allow me to observe activities and interactions that they engage in throughout their day. I did not get any favorable responses so my observations took place throughout the amenities at the university. This study employed Patton's (2002) advised criterion which focused on (see Appendix F):

- The physical settings of the university, the participants in a scene, the activities and interactions amongst the participants in the scene;
- the content of conversations that take place;
- subtle factors such as; informal and unplanned activities, symbolic and connotative meanings of words, nonverbal communication, unobtrusive measures such as physical cues;
- my behavior;
- and "what does not happen" – especially if it out to have happened (Patton, 2002, p. 295).

Field notes. The written accounts of the observations constituted the field notes, analogous to the interview transcript. Field notes from this study entailed; verbal descriptions of the setting, the students, the activities, direct quotations or at least the substance of the conversation heard, and other comments that were relevant to the reflective component of the field notes. Reflective comments included my feelings,

reactions, hunches, initial interpretations, speculations, and working hypothesis (Merriam, 2009).

Assumptions

To ensure valid and reliable "quality" research, assumptions and biases should be revealed within the text (Merriam et al., 2002). There were assumptions related to this study. First, it is assumed that I took every known precaution to monitor my subjectivity and bias during data collection and analysis through heuristic inquiry. Second, it is assumed that each of the participants in my study engaged in an honest, open, and candid manner. Third, it is assumed that I took every precaution to assure that each participant was viewed as an individual with his or her personality, background, culture, academic experiences and frame of reference. My philosophical orientation, the belief of how knowledge can be achieved, the "nature of knowledge and justification" (Schwandt, 1997, p. 39) was a pragmatic approach that reality is what is practical and useful.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of making sense of the data and making sense of the data involves "consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read—it is the process of making meaning" (Merriam, 2009, p. 175).

Coding procedures. Coding began as soon as each transcription was completed, with the assistance of NVivo. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) point out that "assisted" is the operative word here, because "the computer program only help as an organizing or categorizing tool, and does not do the analysis for the researcher" (p. 187). I cycled through at least two coding phases for each round of data collection. I used three primary

coding methods outlined by Saldãna (2013): process coding, which looks for "actions intertwined with the dynamics of time, such as things that emerge, change, occur in particular sequences, or become strategically implemented" (p. 266); value coding, which "reflect[ed] a participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or world views" (p. 268); and emotional coding, the "label [ing of] the emotions recalled by the participants" (p. 263). These coding techniques revealed core experiences of the phenomena, which I then clustered together with the use of pattern codes in the second coding phase of journal entries. Pattern codes were used to create "meta-code[s]…And organizes the corpus into sets, themes, or constructs and attributes meaning to that organization" (p. 266).

Data management. Data management is no small facet of analysis. It is difficult to cleanly separate "data management" from "data analysis" in qualitative research. Coding was used to label passages of text according to the content and provided a means to collect similarity labeled passages. As Richards and Richards (1998) pointed out, "the generation of categories, even the simplest descriptors . . . is a contribution to theory" (p. 215). Every effort possible was made to protect the privacy of the participants including, digital files stored with passwords, paper field notes stored in a locked cabinet, and audio files security uploaded to the transcription service's website.

Rigor and Trustworthiness

Although the method of qualitative research cannot capture an objective "truth" or "reality," there are several strategies that allow a qualitative researcher the ability to increase the credibility of their findings (Merriam, 2009). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the criteria of validity, credibility, dependability, and confirmability must be

established. The trustworthiness of the study depends on the integrity and honesty of the research, therefore, transparency is necessary during the production process.

Triangulation. Triangulation occurred through the employment of various methods, including; interview, journals, and observations (Merriam, 2009). In addition, triangulation occurred through my heuristic practice. This latter means of triangulation is discussed next.

Heuristic Validity

Meticulous analysis of the research data is required in ensuring heuristic validity. Moustakas (1990) exemplified heuristic validity in the following way:

> The question of validity is one of meaning: Does the ultimate depiction of the experience derived from one's own rigorous, exhaustive self-searching and the implications of others present comprehensively, vividly, and accurately the meaning and essences of the experience? This judgment is made by the primary researcher, who is the only person in the investigation who has undergone the heuristic injury from the beginning formulation of the question through phases of incubation, illumination, explication, and creative synthesis not only with himself or herself built with every co-researcher. The primary examiner has collected and analyzed all of the material- reflecting, sifting, exploring, judging its relevance and meaning, and ultimately elucidating the themes and essences that comprehensively, distinctly, and accurately depict the experience. (p. 32)

Face validity. Face validity, or "recycling categories, emerging analysis, and conclusions back through at least a subsample of respondents" (Lather, 1986a, p. 78), was situated into the study's design at many junctures. Otherwise called member checks (Glesne, 2011; Jones & Abes, 2014; Lather, 1986a), face validity is an avenue to "elaborate[ing] on the findings [that should be] treated as additional data." While allowing the participants to "elaborate on the finding" (Jones et al., 2014, p.36), through asking follow-up questions and extracting further reactions, experiences, and perspectives during the interview process, face validity was consistently present in this study.

Construct validity. Lather (1986b) believed that the difficult questions of construct validity must be addressed, such as:

> Were there weak points of the theoretical tradition? Are we extending theory? Revising it? Testing it? Corroborating it? Determining the constructs are usually occurring, rather than they are merely inventions of the researcher's perspective, requires a self-critical attitude toward how one's preconceptions affect the research. (p. 271)

One resolution for this was "systematized reflexivity" (Lather, 1986a; Lather, 1986b). As a qualitative researcher, it is imperative to practice careful reflexivity throughout the process. I agree with Peshkin (1988), Pillow (2003), and several others who believe that subjectivity must be thoroughly explored, discussed, and monitors, as they are "insistently present in both the research and non-research parts of our life" (Peshkin, 1988, p.17). Researchers have provided insight into their subjectivities in relation to their research process in several ways: in their introduction (e.g., Martinez & Waldron, 2006), woven throughout the work (e.g., Lather & Smithies, 1997), or as an overt part of the data (e.g., Dillard, Abdur-Rashid, & Tyson, 2000).

Credibility

When looking at the phenomenon from the participants' eyes, they are the only ones who can accurately judge the credibility of the results and thus it is important to have a certain level of trust between the researcher and participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As noted earlier in the text, I chose participants that I have had a working relationship with, either in advising office and in the student success seminar classroom.

Dependability

There was a careful and thorough process of documenting every step in the research process. Various materials, including observation field notes, interview

transcripts, audio recordings, code sheets, memoing and member checking documents were all a part of the audit trail.

Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality concerns participants' expectations that the information they share the research relationship will not be shared without their consent. Anonymity suggests that "if and when information is shared, no identifiable data will be disclosed (Jones & Abes, p. 176). The appropriate protocol was taken to ensure identity protection and promote anonymity of all participants. Pseudonyms were assigned to each of the participants in the study and were used in all transcribed and written data, as well as during any data analysis and presentation. Email correspondence occurred using the university's secure server. The objective was to ensure that no connections could be made between participants and the data to any external reader.

Summary

This chapter described the methodology of the phenomenological (Schwandt, 2015) and heuristic study (Moustakas, 1990) of how provisional undergraduate college students' intersecting identities influence their ability to persist, what influence the college environment has on their intersecting identities, and how students make meaning of their identities. Post-structuralism informed the epistemological and theoretical foundations of the study. Further, this chapter covered the study's research design, including sampling, data collection and protocol, and analysis. Finally, it explored the study's trustworthiness and reflexivity that was intended and that materialized in the research process. The study's findings are presented next, in Chapter four.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to use students' voices to capture the lived experiences of provisional college students, explore the intersection of their identities in the ability to persist, and examine what they say about the influence of the campus environment on their identities. The results outlined in this chapter were developed from the data collected and analyzed in consideration of the three guiding research questions:

(1). What are the lived experiences of provisionally admitted college students?

(2). What aspects of provisionally admitted college students' multiple intersecting identities influence their ability to persist?

(3). What do provisionally admitted college students say about what influence the campus environment has on their identities?

There are two primary sections in this chapter. In the first section the participants are introduced, while the second section presents the findings related to the study's three research questions.

Participant Profiles

This section will introduce the six participants in the study, each of whom completed the interview and journaling exercise outlined in Chapter three. There are four senior level students and two freshman level students, which allowed for a broad spectrum of experiences amongst them. To familiarize the reader with their unique

perspectives and voices, I wove together data from the interviews, journal entries, as well as my own heuristic inquiry. Heuristic inquiry was used to challenge the fundamental question, "What is my experience of this phenomenon and the essential experience of others who also experience this phenomenon intensely" (Patton, 2015, p. 118). The participants are introduced with their chosen pseudonyms names. I closed each introduction by sharing responses to the question, "How did you feel when your received your provisional admission letter?" Further, Table 2 outlines information each participant self-disclosed in either the interview or journal entry.

Table 2

Student Participant Demographics

Participant Name	Self-Identified Race	Self-Identified Ethnicity	Level in College	Ever Lived on Campus?	Major	Full or Part-time
Angel	Black	African-American	Senior	Yes	[Pseudo name]Emergency Management and Security Services	Full-time
Jessica	Black		Senior	Yes	Sociology/Criminology/ Law Enforcement	Full-time
Emily	White		Senior	No	Family Consumer Sciences/ Family Development	Full-time
Katie	Mixed	Multi-racial	Freshman	No	Family Consumer Sciences/ Family Development	Full-time
Nicki	White		Freshman	Yes	Psychology	Full-time
King James	Black	African-America	Senior	No	Public Relations	Full-time

Colleges and universities that serve academically underprepared students across institutional types use language, policy, and practice to marginalize them further by intervening in support; students arrive on campus and are singled out for special treatment in ways that typically imply a need for remediation (Charles et al., 2009). This study explored how provisional students are challenged to endure potential risk factors above and beyond the risk factors they bring to college with them. First, the acceptance letters that provisional college students receive in the mail indicates their provisional admit status. Second, for at least the first academic year, most provisional students are secluded in one building away from the rest of the campus. This building is where they are advised, where they take many of their first year classes (often remedial), and where they attend a success seminar course specific to provisional students. Singling students out for special treatment in ways that typically imply a need for remediation (Charles, 2009) is not conducive to creating a sense of inclusion and provides another layer of stigmatization (Jones et al., 2002). Students' identities are shaped through discourse—"the place where our sense of ourselves . . . is *constructed*" (Weedon, 1997, p. 21). This discourse situates students' perceived deficiencies as vulnerable, at-risk, and dependent on the university and its' programs to compensate for these deficiencies. This discursive framing of diverse student populations fails to critically examine the "systemic factors that perpetuate deficit thinking and reproduce educational inequities" (Garcia & Guerra, 2004, p. 155).

Angel

Angel—a Black student— graduated with a bachelor's degree in [Pseudo name] Emergency Management and Security Services in the spring 2017 semester. From a "rough neighborhood" in Washington D. C., Angel professed, "I really didn't want to go to school but it was either find a job or go to school. I was going down a bad road—so I pretty much evaluated my life with my best friend and he encouraged me to go to school." Angel reminisced about his support systems outside of the university, "Yeah—my mom, grandma, girlfriend, and my best friend Craig—they are pretty much my motivators to even continue through school. (interview, May 9, 2017)

Jessica

Jessica—a Black student—is a junior in the Sociology/Criminology/Law Enforcement. She admitted that in high school she was an "African-American female but not an academic." Jessica reasoned, "At first college didn't mean much to me. I had no intentions on going to college whatsoever." She continued, "My family made me fill out applications for school. I was the only person in my family to go to college" but now—"I love college." (interview, May 12, 2017)

King James

King James—a Black student is a senior Public Relations major. A native of West Africa, King James and his immediate family came to the U.S. fourteen years ago after winning the U.S. Visa Lottery. King James disclosed, "Back home in Africa we don't have division like there is here—like division of hate—Blacks fighting against Whites." He continued, "We don't have that there—it is all unity. I am not saying there are no issues in Africa but people there seem to be accepting of one another." King James

ruminated on his support systems outside of the university: “God, my mom, my American grandparents who are my sponsors.” (interview, May 26, 2017)

Emily

Emily—a White student graduated in the spring 2017 with a bachelor’s degree in Family Consumer Sciences – Family Development. Emily was “hesitant on going to college,” she contemplated, “I hated school! I absolutely hated being in a room for hours and hours five days a week with people that clearly didn't want to be in the room with me.” Emily reflected on her support systems: “My mom, my dad, and boyfriend are my support systems; emotionally and financially.” (interview, May 16, 2017)

Katie

Katie—a Multi-racial student just completed her first year of coursework in the Family Consumer Sciences – Family Development program. She has a two-year-old son. During our interview she reflected “I am actually the only one in my family to graduate from high school and actually pursue a college degree.” Katie professed—I feel like statistically the odds are against us. We have young moms that dropped out of school and didn’t really like go the way that you are supposed to.” Katie pondered her support systems outside of the university: “I would say that my family and friends but they are like ‘you know you can do this—you got this’— when I really need it, it’s my grandma for sure. (interview, May 22, 2017)

Nicki

Nicki—a White student just finished her first year of college. She recounted her experiences in school: “I have never been a fan of school, honestly! High school never really did anything for me. I was home schooled for a little bit and then went back to

school." She continued, "It was never really my thing." During the interview Nicki regularly discussed her lack of interest in college. She professed, "It's not like I am not enjoying it. I like the people and the atmosphere—but the money….!? I just don't think it is for me personally." She continued, "I am pretty much going through the motions to show my family 'hey, you have a good head on your shoulders.'" Throughout the interview, Nicki talked about "her friends back home" as her main support systems. She explained—"they are kind of different like me." (interview, May 24, 2017)

Three of the participants disclosed being "the only one in [their] family to go to college." According to research, the stigma that first-generation students typically "attend lower quality high schools than continuing-generation students" (Stephens et al., 2012, p. 1179) may influence their ability to persist. Further, first-generation students are often uncertain about the "right way to act as college students" and thus begin to question whether they belong and can be successful in a college setting (Johnson et al., 2011, p. 839).

The acceptance letters that provisional college students receive in the mail designates their provisional admit status. The concern with this policy is that, "labeling students as [provisional] is not only self-defeatist on the part of the educational system, but sets in place a self-fulfilling prophecy that ensures eventual failure" (Agada, 2001, p. 82). At some level, most participants' responses to the question, "How did you feel when you received your provisional admission letter?" were in-line with discourse that situates students' perceived deficiencies as vulnerable, at-risk, and dependent on the university and its' programs to compensate for their deficiencies (Garcia & Guerra, 2004). For example, Angel said, "I thank them for letting me in because if they didn't let me in—

well I only applied to two schools, and this one is public. I believe it is public or open admission so pretty much they would accept anybody." A focus on social identities emphasizes the significance of not only how Angel sees himself but also how the university perceives him (Jones, 2016).

Jessica responded, "In a sense I did view it as a bad thing—I felt slighted. Other students were able to go into their actual coursework and I had to take all these extra classes—I felt like it was a rip-off." She admitted, "It was kind of like…not disheartening but irritating." The salience of specific social identities, as well as the value placed on students' membership in a social group, changes with time and context. Further, attention to social identities require acknowledgment of the role of power and privilege in both self-definition and social categories and roles, such as 'provisional' (Jones, 2016). Jessica compared herself to "other students" which signified a salient role-identity. How we define 'other' has significant implications on how we define ourselves in comparison and who we develop specific social relationships (Callero, 1985).

King James responded by saying, "I don't remember the letter but I mean I was excited and happy to come to school and meet new friends and learn something new in college—I was really excited." The fundamental determinant of whether a person is identified with a domain is whether the domain is relevant to how a person defines the self. According to King James, there is only one [King James], one unique [King James], that is me." Steele (1997) encouraged caution regarding whether a domain has relevance to one's self-definition suggesting that defining self cannot be answered with a single question. Further, consistent with stereotype threat theory, conclusive findings indicate that when students of stigmatized groups are in situations where negative stereotypes

provide a potential framework for interpreting their behavior, the risk of being judged in light of those stereotypes can elicit a disruptive state that undermines performance and aspirations in that domain (Spencer et al., 2016). This concept is relevant to King James and will be further developed in the finding ahead.

Katie professed “I wasn’t the best high school student and so I didn’t know if I would get accepted.” She continued, “I was thinking how I had the odds stacked against me—so I was like relieved. I was happy to get the letter even if it meant….? Like I was going to do whatever I had to do to do what I needed to do.” In Benard's (1991) report, he identified personal strengths that buffer risk and foster resilience including social competence; problem-solving and met-cognition; a sense of autonomy and identity; and a sense of purpose and belief in a brighter future.

Emily responded, “It wasn't different to me…I almost expected it! When I was in high school I was known as the dumb girl so that wasn't a big shock to me. I accepted that about myself.” She professed, “I felt more confident when the teachers wanted to hear from me. I got positive feedback…it wasn't rolling your eyes but it was I want to hear more from you, so that helped my confidence.” Students identified as "high-risk" for non-degree completion indicate the interconnection between resilience and self-efficacy has a significant influence on degree attainment (Avery & Daly, 2010). Role-identity mirrors an internalized set of role expectations with the importance of the identity being a function of commitment to the relevant role. For example, if students perceive that their teachers, advisors, etc.… expect them to do well in college they are likely to identify with being successful students.

Nicki validated her position, "I was actually really happy. Like I said, in high school I was a good student, I did good in my classes—I just wasn't there a lot. Because of that, it was hard to get into a college."

Summary of Participant Profiles

While these introductions cannot encapsulate the inimitable complexity of each participant, they introduce their educational backgrounds and role as provisional students, while a few of the participants were very forthcoming as to how race/ethnicity matters. The remainder of this chapter surveys the phenomenon at hand.

Lived Experiences of Provisionally Admitted College Students

"What are the lived experiences of provisionally admitted college students?"

For the first research question "What are the lived experiences of provisionally admitted college students?"—Three themes emerged: (1) "I have changed" (2) getting over the hump: "I can do it," and (3) basic classes**: "**Why do I have to take these basic classes!?" While in some aspects, negotiating the intersection of race/ethnicity and role-identity of the provisional students was shared amongst all participants, there were also marked differences between them. Rather than flatten these differences (Luft, 2009), I instead attempted to show delineations and dimensions between them.

"I Have Changed"

The first main theme is *"I have changed."* All participants uniformly shared that they could not ignore that aspects of their identity changed due to their lived experiences as provisional college students. These changes occurred at varying degrees amongst the participants. As they shared, one broad subtheme emerged (1) desire to help others. While negotiating the intersection of race/ethnicity and role-identity are highlighted in

this section and in the overall study, it is noteworthy to mention that some participants described their lived experiences of "I have changed" largely from the vantage as a White student or Black student more than others.

Angel reflected on "I have changed" by noting, "I pretty much gone from a terrible person to just getting better and better—I am finally succeeding. I feel that I am successful as a person now." Angel further supported his position as he discussed "growing up I was identified as like a Black hood person" and now he is referred to as being a "superhero." Angel stated, in full:

> Actually I was talking to my cousin about this—he was saying how my identity as far as freshman year—I was like a partier—so he used to call me party boy. That was basically my identity—I was a partier. He basically told me that I went from partying all the time to studying more. (interview, May 9, 2017)

Angel illuminates a "mirror of self-expectation" (Stryker, 1987, p. 80), consistent with the theory of role-identity in that his role-consistent performances only occur when the demands of the situation are consistent with the behavior of that identity. When consistency exists (e.g., Angel "striving to be great"), the role support from the context provides self-verification and confirms the relevant identity and thus increases the probability of the continued behaviors (McCall & Simmons, 1978).

Angel talked about how he had changed in college as he reminisced about a memorable college experience, an experience that he admitted, "I would have never done before."

> One college experience that I had near and dear to my heart was when I helped out a student. She was in a wheelchair and it was like I felt as though like everybody was just like passing by her but not saying 'hi' to her or anything. I felt kind of bad, so I went over to her and had a nice conversation with her and actually walked her to class. I kind of felt good—it felt weird because she just looked sad. Why not just go up and have a conversation with her…?! Like making someone feel good was near and dear to my heart.

Jessica spoke of change on the basis of "getting to choose" her identity. She expressed "having a hard time [assigning] her identity" in middle and high school to "My identity is an African-American female; young, educated, and a leader" as a college student. She explained, in full:

> The public schools are Black and Puerto Rican. I went from a culture where there was only one White kid in my class to a catholic school where I was the minority. Their identities were completely different from mine. They were 13-year-old White girls and I was a 14-year-old Black girl. At that age, they were all straightening their hair—my mom would never have let me straighten my hair. It was hard for me to assign my own identity to myself because the girls around me were not like me. It was hard to connect my identity to others. It was definitely a time when I struggled with my identity. When I was with my White friends I did things that identified with them—not with me. (interview, May 12, 2017)

Jessica was able to "depict [her] relationship with the 'privileged culture' and issues correlated with that identification" and internalize her own racial identity (Atkinson et al., 1998, p. 83). Further, her comment, that she is an "African-American female; young, educated, and a leader" supports her reaching the upper stages of the race and cultural identity model—"subsiding of racial superiority" (p. 83).

King James' experiences of change came from his success and perseverance, as he acknowledged, "I have not quit college yet—I am a senior and have not quit college yet…" (interview, May 26, 2017). On several occasions, King James expressed his frustration of when he was going to graduate, and that he has been at the university for "six years" and "he still had not transferred into his college." One of the requirements to transfer into a degree granting college was to successfully complete the general education math requirement. Because King James had to repeat several basic math sequences, he was not able to transfer. During my time as an advisor working with provisional college students, not feeling apart of their college was a common theme of concern. Most

provisional students take their first year of coursework in or near the building 'off campus.' Further, based on ACT and COMPASS test scores, it is typical for most provisional students to take at least one developmental course (many students need to take several courses before they begin their college coursework). Like King James and Jessica, students may need to retake developmental coursework. The need to retake developmental coursework keeps students isolated in the building 'off campus' and feeling a sense of "never getting out of here." Indeed, students need to master content before moving forward into other coursework, as indicated in provisional students lived experiences, students experience "feeling slow," "wondering why the are there," and acknowledging "all the African Americans in basic classes."

King James has also changed in his perceptions, he has "come to realize most African-Americans are looked at in the wrong way by cops—that is why most young Black males are gun down wrongfully by cops because of identity." Reflecting back to new student orientation King James shared his concerns that "you people don't care." He did not elaborate on the comment but through a working relationship (i.e., advisor/advisee), time and compassion earned his trust. I have worked with King James in the advising office since fall 2011. We had regular advising appointments to discuss his challenges with math, his "racist boss," when he was going to "get into his college," and bouts of extreme depression.

Katie's experiences of change was viewed through a different lens—a lens of "being a mom." During our interview, she recounted the lived experiences of a provisional student and how

> …now—me being a mom—I feel like people are drawn to me—before, I didn't feel like I was not that nice—being a mom, I am more approachable now. People

> say ‘you have changed so much’—that makes me happy that people actually want to be around me. It makes me feel good about myself that people want to be around me.

Although, Katie’s strongest relevance of change stems from her being a mom, she also admitted to “having a more positive mind.” She explained

> Like in your class—I was like why am I in here—I don’t need anybody to help me?! And now—it’s like your class helped me. I am more open now—I am willing to accept what people have to say. Before when people would say something I would say ‘whatever—I got this’ and now I am open to hear other people and their suggestive criticism. [After a long pause] Also, I would say that even though I am still a procrastinator, I am less of a procrastinator—I know I have to get stuff done—I know that in order to get good grades. College has helped me change. I don’t want to say lazy but the drive to get good grades gets me up and moving. When I know I have work to do—it pushes me to get up and get stuff done, even if that means getting dinner done and giving my son a bath. (interview, May 22, 2017)

Minority students make-up at least one-half of the provisional student population and thus a minority status imparts an additional burden of stress on minority students and could warrant increased risk for negative outcomes beyond that which are attributed to stresses of being a college student (Saldana, 1994).

Emily compared her experiences in high school to her lived experiences of change as a college student. She declared, in full:

> In high school I wasn't confident in my academic abilities I wasn't even confident about myself as a person. When I got into college people talked to me—they spoke to me like I was an adult. In college, I was able to learn about things that I was interested in like social sciences therefore I did well—which boosted my confidence. It was when I decided for myself with the help of learning about things that I'm interested in and having a whole completely different learning environment—free flowing, and professors saying ‘we want to hear from you’ that things totally shifted for me. (interview, May 16, 2017)

Emily, although “always known as the dumb girl,” did not take on that role-identity in college. Her found confidence lends support to Godin et al.’s (1996) role-identity model, an explicit reference to a social role (e.g., being a college student) and

specific behavioral context (e.g., shifts in self-perception) based on her belief that her professors expect her to be responsible. Emily continued the notion of change by stating, "It means that I'm getting one step closer to being the person that I've always wanted to be."

Nicki is unique in that her change is emanated in her new found "strong capability to execute a desired action." Nicki explained that before college she was "shy and scared to broaden [her] horizons." She continued, "I have always thought about it but I have never said, 'let's do it'." She conceded by saying that she says "'yes' to a lot more things than [she] would have normally...". Nicki's change came from her scuffles of what "I am willing to put into the investment of an education or if I want to work for a living." She expands on her contemplation, in full:

> I am working a little bit more each day to get my impression of what I view as my desired action. College has helped me learn more about myself like things I am interested in and more about money. Like for instance, if I didn't go to college, I would have never known if it was for me. So I would have wondered… 'hey should I have gone?'. I know I was 'iffy' about it—I know it's not really my thing and now I need to focus on where to go from here. Right now I am more about finding myself. I am going to be traveling and seeing what I want to do. [College] gave me an opportunity to dig deeper at my emotions toward college and in a way helped me make my decisions more clear and shined a little bit of light on making the choice of what path I want to take. (interview, May 24, 2017)

Nicki pondered or "Really [asked herself] those questions and hearing [her] responses" allowed her to negotiate her identities as a college student in a meaning making capacity. Asking herself questions and hearing her responses "showed how [she] felt on the topics and indicated that [she] should follow [her] gut on making life choices when dealing with a future career." As indicated here and throughout the interview and journal entry, Nicki is pondering whether she wants to move "toward a college degree or

choose a different path." Her success would not be in terms of getting a college degree but rather confidently "making life choices."

Like Nicki, Katie, King James, and Jessica all expressed not wanting to go to college. However, all students except for Nicki decided that there was a place in college for them. Although all the participants were provisional students, they all had different experiences; some were reminded of their provisional status more than others. Nicki was the only participant that did not have to take basic classes and thus was able to take classes "all over campus," and not associate basic classes with the building 'off campus'. Throughout the interview, Nicki expressed having one "foot out the door."

Subtheme: Desire to help others. All the participants at some level expressed the desire to help others—informed by their notions of "I have changed."

Angel said, "I want to be the type of person to bring somebody up from the bottom. Angel expressed an extreme gratitude for the opportunities that he experienced. He explained, "I just feel as though it is my duty to help somebody else like I have been helped all my life." He wants to "help [people] apply for jobs and get them on their feet. I want to help wash them, bathe them, and give them something to eat."

Jessica said, "I need to be the type of person that people can talk to. I need to have an authoritative teaching style to teach minorities like [me]." She continued, "Beings that I'm Black, my main focus is cultural inequalities."

Katie said, "I want to be some type of counselor that works with kids and women. I can be an outside source and contort. Well I feel like I didn't have anyone to talk to because it's like hard to talk about personal stuff."

Emily said, "I've always wanted to be a counselor—the person that I needed to

have a want growing up."

Nicki said, "Right now I am in business but I still like the aspects of helping out those who are struggling with anxiety and depression.

King James said that he wants to open "a non-profit to help the needy—the less fortunate—that has always been my dream." He explained:

> I see a lot of people in severe poverty and that is why I want to help people—especially people of color. I am an American and I want to help the people that are struggling even though they might be Black or White, brown. It doesn't matter their race or background. (interview, May 26, 2017)

All participants uniformly shared that they could not ignore that aspects of their identity changed due to their lived experiences as provisional college students, although change occurred at varying degrees amongst the participants. In-line with Masten & Coatsworth's (1998) findings on resilience, these students experienced a sense of positive adaptation, meaning better than expected outcomes or positive outcomes in spite of adversity. For example, Angel came to college with the image of "being a Black hood person" and changed into a "superhero." Jessica came to college with past experiences of "having a hard time [assigning] her identity" to self-identifying in college as an "African American female; young, educated, and a leader." Further, although Emily, Katie, King James, and Nicki did not express the influence of race/ethnicity in their experiences of change, but the influence of "being a mom," "making life choices," "perseverance," and being "confident as a person." These findings can be drawn from the "theoretical explanations or the resilience phenomenon which involves the interaction of risks factors, including individual vulnerability and the protective factors to explain why some are spared and others are not" (Taylor et al., 2003, p. 47).

Getting Over the Hump: "I can do it"

The second main theme is *getting over the hump: "I can do it."* Consistent with Avery and Daly's (2010) definition of resilience, participants experienced a "driving force that allowed [them] to progress despite adversity and disruptions" (p. 51). All six participants reflected on "I can do it" with varying degrees, acknowledged by statements like "got off probation," "transferred into my college," "I decided that I was actually smart," and "getting my first semester done." As they shared, two broad subthemes emerged (1) managing stress, and (2) finding purpose.

Angel reminisced about his first year in college.

> …I didn't do too good my freshman year—partied too much, didn't focus on school so my GPA was like a 1.8. After that first semester, I did better second semester—got like a [GPA of] 1.9. That was still bad, my mom and my grandma saw my grades and they were kind of mad at me as they knew I can do better. They just had to sit down with me and talk about it. After seeing all the tears in their eyes and all the drama that I put them through in the first semester, I turned it around and got off academic probation. (interview, May 9, 2017)

Angel mentioned early in the interview that in Washington D.C., he was identified as a "Black hood person" and has changed into a "super hero." In-line with minority stress research Angel's encounters of stress like he "didn't do to good in [his] first year" and his membership in a stigmatized social group, a "Black hood person," a group that is a "target of discrimination and prejudice" (Arbona & Jimenez, 2014, p. 162), is a salient aspect of the interaction between person and situation (French & Chavez, 2010). A constant perception of feeling inferior or low intelligence is likely to result in minority students dropping out of college (Arbona & Nora, 2007). However, Angel magnifies a true reflection of resilience despite adversity and disruptions as indicated below as Angel continued to reflect, "Yeah that was so amazing!!" He said, in

full:

> Freshman year was so difficult. I remember taking your class—your class was the only class I had a 'B' in—I think I got a 'D' in another class—and then an 'F' in another. I was already on academic probation. Then I felt so embarrassed giving the [progress reports] to the professors to sign—that was one of my motivations to get off [academic probation]. To have to give my professors a paper saying if I am doing good or not while showing the class and all that. The day I got off, that was a good feeling! (interview, May 9, 2017)

King James pondered, "Well I will say that I was successful in getting my associate degree in the summer." It was important to King James when he was able to "transfer into his college and that he could feel a part of his college."

Emily, Katie, and Nicki pondered "getting over the hump"—going back to their freshman year in college. Emily said, "I decided that I was actually smart and so that shifted my identity." And "throughout these four years—I developed confidence in my academic abilities and [my identity] has just gotten stronger." Nicki explained, "For the most part—it's kind of hard when you are shy." After me probing for more information, Nicki explained: "I am going to Europe this summer—that opportunity was presented to me—I have always been scared." She continued, "A lot of times with being shy—I am scared to broaden my horizons—I have always thought about it but I have never said—'let's do it.'"

The six-year graduation rate for provisional college students stands on average of about 10% (Institutional Research, 2017), and thus getting over the hump is not the experience of most provisional students. The participants in this study found that getting off probation, being able to transfer into their degree granting college, and developing confidence in academic ability as significant aspects to their ability to persist. This further reiterated by Katie as she confessed

> …I was terrified at first, even before this semester when I was feeling like it was too hard—but it's like me getting my first semester done, I am like 'I can do this!' And now I feel like having connections with people here makes you a little less tense. I know where to go on campus if I need help—before I felt like I was by myself. I would leave campus as soon as I was done with class and not try to use things like resources to help me but now I do because I know how to deal better with my anxiety. (interview, May 22, 2017)

Katie came to college as a single mother and the perception that "statistically the odds are against [her]" as she saw her "mom [drop] out of school and didn't really like go the way that you are supposed to," and she knew "she didn't do that well in high school." According to the literature, first-generation students tend to struggle academically in college "compared with continuing-generation students" (Stephens et al., 2012, p. 1178), take fewer credits, have higher dropout rates, and acquire lower grades than "continuing-generation students" (Housel & Harvey, 2009, p. 30).

Jessica reflected about "getting over the hump" as she explained, "I think the interview with you helped me understand myself on a deeper level and it also helped me process my experiences as a provisionary student." She further revealed

> ….It's back to me being a Black student—before I would always be late to class or I would choose on-line classes for the sole fact that I'm already a Black student and I'm already poor. They don't think of me equally anyway and so why care… After I started getting mentors and support systems and hearing them telling me 'it's not because you Black but because you're not trying' I turned it around." (interview, May 12, 2017)

Jessica continued her refection back to freshman year in college: "I looked at my identity as a poor Black student and now I look at my identity as an accomplished Black student." She proclaimed— "I think that changed because I saw the reasons why I was a poor Black student and why I was different from the students around me and why it was set up that way. Jessica explained in detail:

> As an African-American woman in society I understood there [is] a patriarchy, I

> didn't understand why it was happening but I knew it was there. But now I understand that we live in a systemic system of inequality—gender, race, sexual orientation. When I talk to other African-American students on campus as far as their education, they also know that 'they' do not want them to make it. They don't understand how to get over the fact that people not wanting you to make it. This society is systemically set against us and if you understand how it works and what works, you can break through what seems you can't get through.

Jessica's everyday awareness of being Black in her role as a provisional college student and the relief and hope that she felt in "being able to define my identity was a new but good feeling" serves as poignant reminders of the work yet to be done in higher education.

Subtheme one: Managing stress. Stress occurs when people perceive that contextual demands of the situation (stressors) exceed their ability to take action, which, in turn, threatens their well-being (Folk-man et al., 1986). All six participants echoed the challenges of managing daily stress to some degree while others reported various ways of managing their stress. Negotiating lived experiences as provisional college students led the participants to verbalize statements such as "fear of rejection," "all the pressure of work, school, and completing assignments by tomorrow," "having anxiety so bad," "struggling emotionally," and being a "poor Black student."

Angel explained, "All the pressure of work, school work, to have completed by tomorrow, and they don't give us enough time to finish projects—it was so much." Angel also professed to one professor that "really helped me out."

> ….There was one professor, I was going through a time when my family member passed away and I talked to him about it. He was real concerned about me because my grades and quizzes were slipping. He's like 'you're kind of slipping'- I feel like something is wrong or bothering you.' I usually raise my hand and answer questions. He pulled me aside and basically like ask 'what's wrong, you're not acting like yourself?' When I explained what was going on he sat me down and talked about how he overcame death and it made me feel good that he knew where I was coming from. It kind of made me feel good that he took the time to

> talk to me. He motivated me because he was happy that I was going to school. I don't know if I want to share with them—I would probably shed tears.

Angel's experiences are informed by identity and self-efficacy research; his experiences of support from his professor who believes in him ignites his ability to perform (Guan & So, 2016). Like Angel, Emily also acknowledged that connecting with her professors provided great support for her inherit "fear of rejection." She explained, "My professors usually provide a great support system by emailing me and letting me know assignment details and they giving me feedback." Emily said, "for example, I will email them and say 'hey I appreciate your feedback'. I feel that I have created great relationships with most of my professors." Emily believes that her professors "expect her to do well" and therefore she does perform well.

Similar to Emily, Katie echoed the significance of support from others in dealing with stressors. She recounted the lived experiences of "having anxiety so bad that even if I [knew] the answer, my anxiety was so high that like everybody [was] looking at me—so I never raised my hand." Further, Katie reminisced about "two students that were "contributing factors to [her] personal success." She explained, in full:

> I met these girls last semester—they were twins. They just came out of high school and we are getting these same grades. I don't know if they know this or not but they helped me just by being them and seeing them have all their achievements. It wasn't like they did anything for me personally but just helped me just by being them. They would be contributing factors to my personal success. (interview, May 22, 2017)

Katie experienced others who "helped [her] just by being them and seeing them have all their achievements" and "getting the same grades that she [was]" is compatible with Bandura's (1994) theory of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy beliefs are created to the

extent in which people believe they have the capability to model the observed behaviors, and that belief is determined by the perceived similarities between the people.

King James admitted to "struggling emotionally" and questioned whether he would even be able to "complete the semester successfully." He admitted that often times he "[didn't] know what to do." Singh (2012) explored the way that identity is relational. For example, people find affirmation from others who share their identities while helping them find labels for their identities and develop resistance strategies against those who question or challenge their understanding of themselves. King James acknowledged the significance of connecting with others as a means of relieving stress. He remembered that, "[I] helped [him] when [he] first came and enrolled into the university." He continued, "You were my first academic advisor. You helped me orient into the university and into the computer. You made sure that everything with me was going right." King James reflected on his extreme difficulty of completing his math requirement by saying, "Even though I felt frustrated with math, you told me that it would be ok." King James further intoned the feeling of "being stressed out" and sought support from the diversity president at the university. He expounded, "Whenever I had an issue of diversity— in search for how to deal with "issues related to race or just stressed out." The participants in this study were able to rise above the stigmas attached to their identities, stigmas like being a "Black hood person," "the dumb girl," "just because I am Black, they think we are all criminals," and the "odds are against me." Davies et al., (2004) advised that universities must consider creating identity-safe environments to ensure students that their stigmatized identities are not barriers to success.

The crux of Jessica's stress stemmed from people "judging a book by its cover."

She reminisced about an experience in her statistics class with an "Indian professor"

> … the students always questioned him. Like, I think he would not be in the classroom if he was not capable of teaching the material. Dependent on their ethnic background, your teachers are different in some type of way. I have never seen it by a White male or White female. I never saw anybody question a professor like that. I think that people have to respect your identity in order to understand you. I think we have to problem of judging a book by its cover. We are such a racially divided society. (interview, May 12, 2017)

Jessica continued to ponder daily stress as she compared herself to "other" students:

> When it came down to other students like they all were 'yeah my dad just got my car and I live in the [pseudo name: Burg] apartments'. I'm like living in [pseudo name: Cortez] and I have to split rent with my dad. I have to pay for food and everything else. So that was another thing I had to get over was that my background is so much different than everybody else because financially we don't come from the same places. But I also think that both of those factors contributed to my personal success. I know that economically to advance myself I have to work harder to get to where I want to go. (interview, May 12, 2017)

Attrition amongst minority students is influenced by the disparity in minority collegiate peers and minority faculty role models to whom to turn for advice and support (ACT Policy Report, 2002). Likewise, they are less likely to have relatives with college degrees who can serve as support systems (ACT Policy Report, 2002). Further, minority students are more likely to come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds than White students (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009) and thus more likely to experience significant burdens in financing college expenses (Conley, 2001).

Subtheme three: Finding purpose: "Sometimes I wonder—why am I here!?"

Three of the participants reflected at various points in their college experience on the question: "Why am I here?" Angel admitted, "I have not told anybody this but there was one night where I was lost—I literally sat in the mirror and asked, who am I and what is my purpose?" Angel admitted to, "Literally [sitting] there thinking about

everything that was going on in [his] life at that time." He continued as he professed to "[feeling] lost." He continued, in full:

> It goes back to freshman year, I felt scared because I didn't know what I wanted to do in college. I was scared of succeeding, scared of the future because I was confused and didn't know what to do. I was partying too much. Pretty much every time I went to class I was taking basic classes. I didn't even have a major. I think I had like an art degree. I can't draw anything; I don't know why I was coded as an art degree. And I was just looking at majors and I just couldn't figure it out. Like I didn't know what I wanted to do. I was getting kind of scared because the second semester approaching. I still had basic classes but after that pretty much should have a major. I was scared of not knowing what I want to do in life. (interview, May 9, 2017)

Although three of the participants expressed the concern of not having a major, one found this concern to be "scary." During the interview, Angel contemplated a thought prompt: encounters of not knowing, he explained, "It was going into the second semester and I [didn't] even have a major!" He continued, I think I had like an art degree. I can't draw anything—I don't know why I was coded as an art degree. I was just looking at majors and I just couldn't figure it out—like I didn't know what I wanted to do. I was getting kind of scared because the second semester was approaching. I still had basic classes—but after that, pretty much should have a major. I was scared of not knowing what I want to do in life. (interview, May 9, 2017)

Like Angel, Nicki too professed that she questioned, "What am I doing with my life?" She continued:

> I would be doing a paper and then be like 'what are you doing.' Or I [would] be up at 3:00 o'clock in the morning—my sleep schedule is messed up. I think 'what am I doing with me life?!' I am still learning with my life. I am wrestling with my identity and college… I ask myself, why am I doing this..?! I try to view it as a third person, looking in to see. I am just going through the motions right now. (interview, May, 24, 2017)

Nicki's position as to "if college is for her," was mirrored in her sense urgency in choosing a major. She stated, "I was doing psychology, but right now I am in business. I still like the aspects of helping out others who are struggling with anxiety and depression." She continued to ponder, "And then the more I thought about it, business is the best bet to get a job because it falls in a lot of categories."

Although both Angel and Nicki pondered: "What am I doing with my life," Angel is developing purpose. He is not only asking the question "Who am I?" but also "Who am I going to be?" and not just "Where am I?" but "Where am I going?" (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, p. 52). Developing purpose, expanding competencies, developing interpersonal relationships, and clarifying identity requires some sense of direction and purpose. Angel expressed concern of not having a sense of direction and purpose. His question of why he was "coded as an art degree, I can't draw anything" caused for persistent concern and confusion for many provisional students. The policy of the university under investigation was that all provisional students admitted to the university were to be admitted into the student success program and coded as associate of art students and thus not counted in the university's graduation rates for bachelor degree students. Provisional students were not coded into their indented major until they entered their degree granting college. According to the poststructural paradigm, systems of oppression shape reality, how systems influence reality need to be deconstructed, and reality is always changing (Lather, 2007). Essentially, there is little accountability on the part of the university for provisional students.

Katie, although moving in the right direction with a major, she hadn't quite pinpointed it. She reminisced about a story:

> I met with my advisor and he recommended child education. And then when I met with you—you said 'you want to be a teacher?' and I am like—'no I do not want to be a teacher.' I tell people all the time that maybe if you don't get what you need from your advisor you can talk to another on. You can get another advisor to help guide you in the direction. (interview, May 22, 2017)

Basic Classes: "Why do I have to take these basic classes!?"

The third main them is *basic classes: "Why do I have to take these basic classes!?"*. The participants verbalized challenges related to "why do I have to take these basic classes!?" and "I thought we were all equal?!" According to Wilcox (1991), billions of dollars of aid is awarded each year to "provide needy students with access to higher education" (p. 48), and although the need for remedial education holds a significant place in student retention outcomes, the need to promote positive campus environments free of discrimination and labeling students' is relevant (Hoyt, 1999).

Four of the participants in the study expressed being disgruntled about taking "these basic classes." King James argued, "I never understood why I needed math." Of all the participants, King James "struggled with math" the most. He admitted to retaking his math course sequence four times. He explained, "It was a challenge for me, but now I don't have to deal with math anymore." King James went to math tutoring "on a regular basis" and while some "where helpful" there was one that he said was "racist." He did not elaborate…

Like King James, Katie "sucked at math in high school" but unlike King James, she admits that when she got to college "it was different." Katie's COMPASS test scores placed her into basic math. But after being in the basic math classroom, she said her math teacher kept asking her, "'why are you in here?'—and Katie said she was thinking, 'why

am I in here?!'" She continued, "My teacher supported and encouraged me to be better—I was able to test out of the math and not take the class."

> Jessica's COMPASS math test also placed her into basic math. She professed: I felt like it was a rip-off—the classes that I was taken—I didn't feel like they were actually needed. I ended up failing a class and then I had to take it again—it was a long drawn-out thing for me. It was kind of like…not disheartening—it was just irritating. I thought we were supposed to be all on the same page equally—then I had to take all these extra courses before my coursework. (interview, May 12, 2017)

Angel could relate to Jessica in his experience with taking "basic classes" as he explained, "I just didn't feel like myself in the class, I felt kind of slow. And looking around me, I was getting the feeling that there are a lot of African Americans in basic classes." He continued, in full:

> I took basic math one and two. I was taking basic math one. I was looking at everybody in the class adding and subtracting. And—I forgot my teacher's name— but he had us write the answers on the board. There were at least four or six people that did not know how to add and subtract—I sat there just thinking to myself—why am I here and why are they here….?! I am not putting anybody down but this is like adding and subtracting—we learned this in first and second grade. So I came to the conclusion that I need to get out of here. I felt as though that class was holding me back—I felt like not less fortunate—but I am a student that can do way better than this—I am good at this, can I move on….!? I didn't know that we can take the test until after I passed [the class]. It wasn't until after the class, the professor said 'you were doing good all semester, you could have taken the test.' Like seriously, I could have been out of this class?! I was telling my teacher 'I know this' and he's like 'yeah but you are in here'— and I was like—'Yeah but I know this!' He could have told me then that I could have retaken the test. Like seriously….!? (interview, May 9, 2017)

Katie had a very different experience than Jessica, King James and Angel in regards to basic classes. Katie's experience was "My teachers supported and encouraged me to be better" while Angel perceived his professor to not be supportive. He expressed the concern of why he was in the class and the response he got was… "Yeah but you are in here."

Classroom environments, student expectations, perceptions of discrimination and social integration are indirectly related to student retention (Hoyt, 1999) and a significant aspect to provisional students' ability to persist. Jessica's comment about "I thought we were all equal," King James's comment that the math tutor was "racist," and Angel's concern—"To this day—I still wonder why there are a lot of African Americans in basic classes...?!" These experiences are in-line with social climate stress. Students who feel like they were singled out or treated differently report a high sense of alienation (Cabrera & Nora, 1994). This finding while significant for all racial/ethnic groups appeared more detrimental to Blacks' ability to persist (Hurtado et al., 1998). Perhaps practices and policies should aim at dismantling old-remedial dichotomies in favor of an expanded approach that captures the common challenges faced by all students with potential risk, regardless of their institutional label as remedial or non-remedial (Adelman, 2006).

Overall, all six participants in the study shared their lived experiences of being provisional college students. The significance of "I have changed," "getting over the hump," and taking "basic classes" varied amongst them. Factors that contributed to that variation appeared to be level in college, race/ethnicity, whether the participants had to take basic classes, their perception of being a provisional student, and the support that they received through faculty, peers, and administration.

Intersecting Identities that Influence the Ability to Persist

"What aspects of provisionally admitted students' intersecting identities influence their ability to persist?"

Participant responses, stories, and descriptions of experiences were largely shared from the vantage of a White student, Black student, or a multiracial student. The framing

of their race/ethnicity and role-identity as inextricable was informed by their understanding of intersectionality and also by their life experiences and thus increased the saliency of being provisional college students. This section is a synopsis of the core experiences of the of the study's White participants, Black participants, and the multiracial participant, and shared experiences among them. While in some regards, negotiating the intersection of race/ethnicity and role-identity of the provisional students was shared amongst all participants, there were also distinct differences amongst them. Rather than flatten these differences (Luft, 2009), I instead attempt to show delineations and dimensions between them. All six participants contemplated the thought prompts. The thought prompts used in this research were deliberately multiple and open-ended and designed to help the provisional students think about experiences, situations, and moments when they knowingly or unknowingly negotiated your race/ethnicity and role-identity (Pitt & Britzman, 2003), and to help ponder what influence if any resilience, stereotype threat, and self-efficacy had on their ability to persist**.** Two themes emerged: (1) times when relationships were impossible and (2) treated differently: "I think it was because of race."

Times When Relationships Were Impossible: "…hating or being mad or just ignorant…?!"

The first main theme is *times when relationships were impossible* (See Figure 1). The participants all verbalized varying degrees of challenges related to relationships. As they shared, three broad subthemes emerged, (1) name/claim identity, (2) under scrutiny, and (3) rejected.

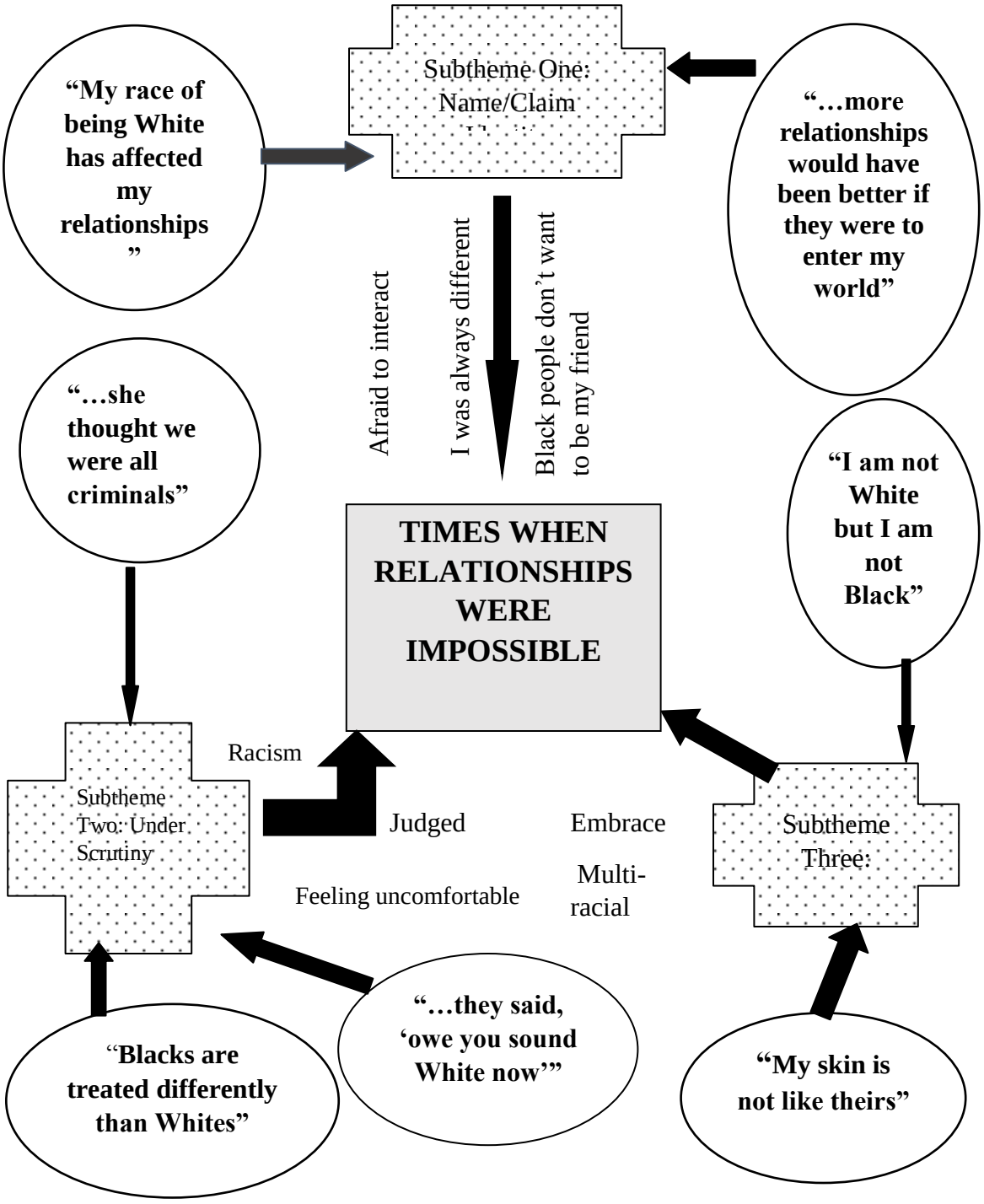

Figure 1: Figurative Summary of Theme-Times When Relationships Were Impossible

Subtheme one: Name/claimed identity: "….affected my social interactions…". Three of the students found value in "being able to define [their] identity" at different levels. While pondering the thought prompts, several students verbalized statements such as "a break through," "I didn't understand why it was happening, but I knew it was there," "I don't think it should matter…" and, "I never really thought about it before."

The study's two White students, Nicki and Emily, were diverse is how they identify with other college students, how their identity influenced their role as college students, and varied levels of cognizance of White identity. The core experiences illustrated by these participants were also marked by incongruity, though of a different type, and centered on their understanding of not being required to identify as White in most situations.

Emily came into her role as a college student aware that "being White makes it difficult to discuss race." Emily pondered the thought prompt: thinking about identity - times you named/claimed your identity. She contemplated, "I came from a predominately White high school where there may have been two or three Black people in the entire school" she never thought about her race/ethnicity because she "didn't need to, [the Black students at her school] acted like White people, they didn't have their Black culture so it was never an issue." And now a senior in college, Emily posited "I feel like I owe them something." Emily continued to ponder how she named/claimed her identity as she explained further:

> My race of being White has affected my social interactions in college. I am almost afraid to interact with people that are Black because they make me feel like I owe them something. I almost feel guilty if I don't bend over backwards for them—it shouldn't be that way because all races owe each other respect equally—

> it's almost seems like Black people don't want to be my friend which limits my friendships.

She continued to say that, "I have noticed a lot of Black people don't want to talk to me on campus." She professed…. "You know there are certain sorts of things I've noticed that I have never noticed before so that limits my friendships." Emily is aware that she is "perceived in a variety of ways for being a White woman." She continued

> …I even went as far as buying a Black student lunch because she forgot her wallet—I felt like she thought she was entitled to it. Now, when I see her in the halls she doesn't even look at me. Whenever I talk to her in public she doesn't make eye contact—it's like she is embarrassed to talk to a White person. (interview, May 16, 2017)

According to the white identity model, racial identity is defined as "a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shared a common racial heritage with a particular racial group" (p. 3) and this sense of identity permitted White people to move from awareness and understanding to action (Helms, 1990). According to this model, Emily is in the disintegration stage—the stage that results in anxiety due to conflict. Further, according to this model, the ideal stage for White people to be in is the stage of autonomy; a group solidarity and pride of being with Black people (Helms, 1990).

Nicki also reflected on the thought prompt category of: thinking about your identity, but she zeroed in on times when someone rejected my identity. Nicki's negotiations of race/ethnicity and role-identity were not from the vantage of race/ethnicity but from the position of being a tom-boy— people look at her "kind of weird and different." She proclaimed, "This was a big role growing up." She continued in full:

> I was always different and I was always into different things. In high school, people didn't really come to me to get to know me—they just kind of went on what they heard from other people. I think that is really important! More positive relationships would [have been] built if people would take the time to get to know people for who they are instead of just assuming who they are. It's also important to not change who you are. For example growing up, before I went to a public high school, I went to a catholic school. They had girl scouts—you know girl scouts are really girly with brownies and cookies. I feel like I scared a lot of people because I was into tom-boy stuff and rock roll. (interview, May 24, 2017)

Like Emily, Nicki expressed the concern that friendships suffered because of her role-identity negotiations. Nicki expressed, "I am not really a girly-girl" and "I believe more friendships would have been built if they were to enter my world and take interest in my stuff." She continued, "If you could see from their point of view, you would get along better with them—even if you don't agree, at least you can understand where you are coming from."

King James struggled with the thought prompt of thinking about identity, as seen in his proclamation:

> I don't think it should matter because employers shouldn't look at my identity but look at me as an individual. They should look at me as a qualified individual. That's how I see my identity. If am going to apply to a non-profit, the employer should look at me as a qualified individual. There is only one [King James], one unique [King James]... That is me. (interview, May 26, 2017)

At some level all participants acknowledged their identity and the identity of others as significant to social interactions. This significance was largely from the vantage of race/ethnicity and past experiences or lack thereof. This is seen in comments such as "being White makes it difficult to discuss race," "people should look at me as a qualified individual—identity shouldn't matter," and "I have noticed a lot of Black people don't want to talk to me on campus." This thematic examination is a good example of how to

dig down to describe and understand the fabric of tension between intersectional groups (Warner & Shields, 2013).

Subtheme two: Under scrutiny: "She thought we were all criminals". The study's Black participants—King James, Angel, and Jessica—were also diverse, particularly in how their identity influenced their role as college students and in their approaches to negotiating race/ethnicity and role-identity and how resilience, self-efficacy, and stereotype threat inform those negotiations. They also described shared core experiences related to being Black provisional students negotiating race/ethnicity and role-identity in their ability to persist. These shared core experiences must be understood as multiple and contradictory, as they described a state of simultaneous hyper-visibility and invisibility (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). These shared core experiences occurred in heightened situations of scrutiny and expectations from professors, peers, and others.

Angel began by reminiscing about his roommate from Egypt. He said she is "New to America" and that she never had a "Black African-American friend." She expressed that her perception of Black people was they "were all criminals." He continued, "I explained to her that every race has criminals. We are great friends now." Throughout the interview, Angel was very forthcoming with his stories, experiences, and perspectives—and many times, not prompted. Angel shared a story of being under scrutiny when he had to "defend his Black identity." He explained, in full:

> It was during my senior year of college and I posted pictures on Instagram. At least half of the pictures were of my White friends. My friends back in D.C. said 'oh you sound White now'. They kind of made me feel bad—it's like 'ow you changed— you turned into one of those people." [Angel] said no I am not—how are you going to call me White because I have White friends?! They [were] saying 'you just changed'. Just because I don't like to stand on the corner all day and talk to girls—that's your thing—it is not me. Now I just keep it plain and short. I felt some type of way when they said that—I didn't like that at all. In their

> words they are saying I am being fake—and not a real person. It made me feel sad—I am guessing that them seeing me succeed in life has made them mad at me.

Angel expressed through this experience, "[feeling] some type of way." He professed, "I am an African American Black man. I have friends—Indian, Asians, all different cultures". Angel's experiences are in-line with models of identity and self-efficacy. By examining peoples' interactions and relationships with others who were associated with a particular social group are likely to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of peoples' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Ashforth et al., 2008).

Throughout the interview and journaling process, Jessica expressed a strong position of "People frustrated me because of my identity." She reminisced about a conversation that she had with a classmate. She expressed the concern that

> …she just couldn't understand the fact that because I identify as a Black woman is why I felt uncomfortable and she didn't understand being Black in a way makes you feel uncomfortable, or she just doesn't understand that because she's a White girl.

Jessica reflected on the thought prompt: times when relationships were impossible. She discussed an argument with her friend:

> We had an argument over making America great again and I said from my perspective I don't think it was ever a great country because we idolize that way too much. In order for a country to truly be great—we have to actually think about the things that we do that are not great. In order for us to be great, we have to take responsibility for the things we've done. Until we've done that we cannot be a great country. Even after the war you bought your things, we rented them. Native Americans, Japanese any minority in America did not go through something great, so how can you say it was a great time? (interview, May 12, 2017)

King James came into his role as a college student under scrutiny and aware that "I see a lot of Blacks and some minorities are treated differently than White people." Since his dual citizenship began fourteen years ago, King James has developed a strong

sense of identity. “I am an American—I am an African-American senior college student.” He continued, in full:

> I will say when it comes to identity and this nation—it is in a crisis. Most African-Americans are looked at in the wrong way by cops—they are given the wrong impression by cops—that is why most young Black males are gun down wrongfully by cops because of identity. I am an African. In Africa but we don’t have hate. People there seem to be accepting of one another—we don’t hate people. For me—I don’t have a criminal record but if I walk around or go to the mall, I am looked at very differently than my Caucasian friends—which I can understand. I have come to understand the people here judge based on race—they feel because I am Black I must have a criminal record—I must be dangerous. That is what I have come to notice—I have come to understand the culture—it is not right but I have come to understand the culture. (interview, May 26, 2017)

King James reminisced about another story “going to the store to buy something,” he explained, in full:

> I feel because for me personally when I am going to the somewhere to buy something from the store, I am looked at by the shop attendants because of my race—they give me an extra look. Well I don’t feel good about it but at the same time I understand that it is how it is—so I understand. You just respect other people’s views, learn from them and move on. There is nothing that you can do. Just respect other people’s views. People want to be ignorant, and then let them be, there is nothing that I can do about it. (interview, May 26, 2017)

The three Black students all expressed experiences of scrutiny by others in their lived experiences. There were expressions of “she thought we were all criminals,” “owe you sound White now,” “she doesn’t understand because she is a White girl,” and “they give me an extra look.” These experiences are in-line with the social climate stress which has been found to have negative effects on college students. Provisional college students’ experiences of social climate stress are an added risk to students with already having perceived risk. If students feel singled out or treated differently they tend to report a high sense of alienation (Cabrera & Nora, 1994).

Based on identity development research within the student affairs literature, identity is commonly understood as one's personally held beliefs about the self in relation to social groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, class) and the ways one expresses those relationships (Torres et al., 2009). For the provisional students under investigation, the context and interactions they have with others; including other people, societal norms, and expectations instilled upon them will influence how they construct their identities (McEwen, 2003). This is significant given that average demographic composition of provisional students at the university under investigation consist of almost 50% White, 40% Black, and 10% other diverse cultural representations.

Recommendations about what needs to be done in order to include how the identities of one group exist in relationship to the "identities of other groups, particularly across power differentials – and specifically that one groups' experience of privilege is always the corollary of another group experience of advantage" (Warner, 2008, p. 806) are forthcoming in chapter five.

Subtheme three: Rejected: "I rejected that I was Black because they rejected me." The study's multiracial student—Katie—shared core experiences with both White and Black students were marked by contradiction. She discussed in full:

> I remember me being younger and of mixed race. My dad is African American and my mom is White. I remember in elementary, I had a lot of White friends because the Black girls didn't think I was Black—or I wasn't Black enough. I remember them saying 'you're not Black' and [me] saying—you're right, I am White—but I am Black…?! I rejected that I was Black because they rejected me. But as I got older, I learned to embrace all of me. Before I embraced being multi-racial, my grandma was the one that tried to help me understand that I was more than just Black or just White. I would say so I am not Black—my skin is not like theirs, my hair is not like theirs…?! I would get frustrated with her like how can I be Black when they are telling me I am not. I can just remember going back and forth with her. (interview, May 12, 2017)

The participants all verbalized varying degrees of challenges related relationships. The ability to define identity appeared significant in building successful relationships. Three of the students found value in "being able to define [their] identity" at different levels. Further, feelings of scrutiny and rejection appeared to influence approaches to negotiating race/ethnicity and role-identity. Research on the influence of stereotype threat and identity development can be used to explain why there is reason for hope in reducing threat by capitalizing on the fact that provisional students can be categorized on the basis of any one of their multiple identities. Students tend to view themselves as members of various social groups subject to positive or negative stereotypes and thus, increased accessibility associated with possible threatened stereotypes may reduce the influence of stereotype threat when a social identity that is associated with a positive stereotype is also available (Tine &Gotlieb, 2013).

Treated Differently: "I think it was because of race"

The second main them is being *treated differently: "I think it was because of race"*. Four of the participants in the study believed that at some level they were treated differently "because of race." Deil-Amen and Goldrick-Rab (2009) found that the vast majority of "underprepared racial minority students" (p. 64) experience "fear of being stigmatized," stereotype threat, and fear that they will be the "example of the low-achieving minority students" (p. 64) that their peers and instructors expect.

King James, Angel, and Emily discussed their lived experiences of being treated differently "because of race"—provoked comments like: "racially divided society," "I was treated unfairly," and "racism goes both ways." King James maintained the position that "I see a lot of Blacks and some minorities that are treated differently by some faculty

member and some managers." He continued, "I was treated unfairly by my previous manager. I think it was because of race, other African Americans say so too—so I wasn't the only one." He continued, in full:

> I wouldn't say it was race but they have favoritism—some White students—it's not right but that is what I have noticed. This past semester I had two classes with one professor and the professor—well he is a strict professor—but at the same time he seems to give favoritism to other students. I am not the only one to notice—others students have noticed it.

I urged King James to continue, I asked, "who does he give favoritism to?" and he responded, "All the students that are not my race." He continued, "I mean he will always say 'can you buy coffee for me or can you do this for me' and I think that is an exchange for a good grade." Racial identity research findings indicate Black male students that are confident and satisfied with their opportunities to interact with faculty perform better than students less confident or who experience less favorable interactions with faculty (Reid, 2013).

For King James, a student worker at the university expressed difficulties with a former manager who "treated me unfairly because of my race—other African-Americans said so too—so I wasn't the only one." This extra pressure that King James experienced—"being judged by race"—can undermine his targeted performance (e.g., succeeding in school, etc…) and thus making it more difficult for him to succeed (Steele, 1997)—as he eluded to: "I am getting so frustrated—I have being in school since 2011." King James indicated earlier in his introduction there are "divisions of hate between Blacks and Whites" and that he was "treated unfairly because of race." According to racial identity research, students that perceive themselves as college students and the way they devise their own racial and ethnic identities are correlated to their self-esteem, self-

efficacy, and their ability to successfully negotiate their college environment (Jaret & Reitzes, 2009).

Angel reflected about an experience that he had with a professor, as he described it, "I was [a] big [man] with a small voice." He shared his story in full;

> There was a professor that I didn't think he liked me. That was challenging because I felt that every time he asked me something I was not scared but kind of nervous—it was the thought that every time he looked at me it wasn't a good look—it was like one of those looks like—you are doing something—what are you doing. One day he asked me a question and I gave him my option—and he took a whole different route with it—he was like what are you talking about…?! He didn't say that but that's the message he wanted to send. I was trying to explain to him but he looked like he didn't understand me. I wish I had after class talked to him and expressed how I feel. Basically saying I don't think you like me. I don't know if you do or if you don't—I wish I would have—probably because I was kind of scared—I didn't feel strong, I wasn't confident presenting—I was like big with a small voice. Now, I can say anything now—I can speak my mind. (interview, May 9, 2017)

Angel's experiences are in-line with academic discourse research in that many students, particularly minority students had never been taught academic discourse (and how to "code-switch" into it), consequently misjudging themselves, their peers, and their overall college experience. According to Kutz (1998), to learn the dominant academic discourse in the setting of college or university, students need to learn style shifting, or what other literacy and linguists have termed *code switching* (Baynham, 1993). I asked Angel if he had that same experience now, would he say something. He responded, "Most definitely— I would have definitely asked him now. I probably would have asked him in front of the class—I am more confident and strong now. Not scared to speak my mind now." Further, making students aware, either blatantly or subtly of negative stereotype relevant to a social group to which they belong impairs students' performance in the stereotyped domain (Steele & Aronson, 1995).

Emily—from the vantage of a White student reminisced about a lived experience of being treated differently "because of race." She expressed, "I work at the university as a student assistant. I never had to be concerned with getting the hours that I needed and was always given until a Black student was hired. Now, she gets 20 hours and I get 12 hours. Hmmm—racism goes both ways."

Although five out of the six participants discussed extensively on the significance of race/ethnicity on identity development and role-identity on their ability to persist, three participants reminisced about experiences of feeling "differently because of race." Awareness of racial identity affects students' ability to persist. Several researchers have explored racial identity, self-efficacy, and institutional integration. For example, Jaret and Reitzes (2009) investigated the varying degrees of influence race/ethnicity had on Black, White, and Asian students' identity development and how those identities are correlated with college students' sense of self-efficacy and ability to integrate into the university. Findings of this research reveal that how students perceive themselves as college students and the way they devise their own racial and ethnic identities are correlated to their self-esteem, self-efficacy, and their ability to persist (Jaret & Reitzes, 2009).

King James, Jessica, and Angel were all able to devise their own racial and ethnic identity. This was evident in comments like, "There is only one [King James], one unique [King James], that is me," "I went from a Black hood person to a superhero," and "This society is systemically set against us and if you understand how it works and what works, you can break through what seems you can't get through," and "I had to get over that my background is so much different than everybody else because financially we don't come from the same places." Further concluded in racial identity, self-efficacy, and institutional

integration research, successful Black males report a heightened sense of self-efficacy and racial identity attitudes (Reid, 2013). Moreover, findings indicate Black male students that are confident and satisfied with their opportunities to interact informally with faculty perform better than students less confident or who experience less favorable interactions with faculty.

The Influence of Campus Environment on Provisional Students' Identities

"What do provisionally admitted students say about what influence the campus environment has on their identities?"

Campus environments in a general sense include any characteristic of the college that constitutes a potential stimulus for the students (Astin, 1968). And according to Stanford's (1962) work, student development is not only located within the individual but in the spirit of the higher education institution (Jones & Abes, 2014). According to Strange and Banning (2001), the key components of the college environments are their physical design, the characteristics of people who inhabit them, the organizational structure related to their purpose and goals, and the peoples' collective social constructions of the prevailing press, social climate, and culture.

For all students, positive university environments are central to persistence and graduation (Bennett, 1995). For example, in a sample of Latino students, a positive perception of the university environment was found to be positively related to college persistence attitudes and a mediator between their identity and persistence attitudes (Lei et al., 2001). Contrarily, for all student populations, undesirable consequences of negative perceptions of the campus environment include levels of academic integration, institutional commitment, and academic achievement (Cambrera et al., 1999). For

example, when college environments are perceived as “unwelcoming, discouraging, or discriminating,” students respond with “low persistence and high academic failure” (Wei et al., 2011).

Until recently, most research recognized the campus climate as ‘intangible’. However, both qualitative and quantitative findings allowed for a greater definition of ‘intangible’ quality by assessing and creating policy based on how students, faculty, and administrators perceive the institutional climate through perceptions of racial/ethnic diversity, their experiences with campus diversity, and their own attitudes and interactions with different racial/ethnic groups (Hurtado et al., 1998). However, as Tierney (1997) points out, “No policy can be isolated from the social arena in which it is enacted” (p. 177). While research literature documents the effects of policy, programs, and initiatives, there are few studies on the influence of sociohistorical forces on campus climate (Tierney, 1997). Nevertheless, the goal is to aim for environments that are “knowledgeable, understanding, and proactive in establishing venues where students can express their differences constructively” (Jones et al., 2002).

According to Benard (2004), there are three significant environmental processes that buffer risk and foster resilience: 1) forming caring relationships; 2) maintaining positive and high expectations; and 3) providing opportunities for students to participate and contribute. Students’ subjective sense of integration into campus life can likely be gleaned from the extent to which stress is derived from student’s minority status, interpersonal relationships and the student services that mediate their college experiences, and their subsequent subjective sense of integration (Jones et al., 2002).

Three themes emerged in reflecting on the third research question: "What do provisional students say about what influence the campus environment has on their identities?" The themes are: (1) relationships: "I get to choose," (2) "there is something for everyone," and (3) the building 'off campus': "It's like they don't care about the building 'off campus.'" Observation scripts and heuristic inquiry was incorporated into these themes.

Relationships: "I get to choose"

The first main theme is *relationships*. When asked to describe the campus environment at the university (socially, emotionally, physically), although the responses were varied in degrees, all six participants believed that the campus environment helped influence their identities through the relationships that were formed or in some cases not formed. For the participants, this included "getting to choose," being able to "take off that fake mask," and interacting with a "mixed group of people."

Jessica shared that "college is a different experience for me because I get to choose—I have ties to the Black community on campus and I also have ties to my White peers on campus. From the vantage of being a Black student, Jessica continued:

> On campus, I know that Black people are like me; same identity as me and same interests as me. I didn't need to feel like I had to conform to a different identity. So I made them really understand how I feel as a student trying to incorporate myself into the college community without trying to change myself. So I think it was a really good time with them— understanding me as a student and as a Black student. (interview May, 12-2017)

Interactions among diverse students groups and perceptions of the campus environment are known as structural diversity. This theory suggests that students attending colleges and universities with diverse populations report interacting more frequently with diverse peers than do students attending homogeneous institutions (Chang, 1999).

Angel described his perception of the campus environment from an emotional and social standpoint when thinking about how the campus environment influenced his identity development. Reflected back to his freshman year, Angel proclaimed, "The college environment changed dramatically—especially from friendships to partying." He continued, in full:

> Like parties then were cool. Everybody knew each other and we partied—go to sleep and do it all over again. I know I had too much fun… Everybody was friendly to each other. They would volunteer to help me out—just good friends—they would text me 'like hey, what's up? Want to go to work-out?' But now—everything is so different. The people that I met are not the same. They don't help you out, motivate you, and just be good friends. Now it is like everybody is doing their own thing. It's not friendly anymore. I don't know if I am getting older but times have really changed. I guess change is a good thing. When I was admitted, it was open enrollment and now it is not open enrollment, have to have good grades to come in. That's probably one of the biggest things that change in my perspective and how the school has evolved from then to now. (journal, May 11, 2017)

Angel was admitted into the university in the fall 2011 semester. The provisional admission criterion at that time was: ACT score at or below a 16, a high school GPA score at or less than a 2.3 or both, however it was common to see ACT scores of 12 and 13. Angel's experiences in-line with peer interaction research in that positive peer interactions with diverse student populations and a sense of community have been found to be the most significant predictors of a positive campus racial climate and a sense of inclusion (Park, 2009). Angel was able to persist long enough to be able to interact with diverse student groups on campus, rather than succumbed to, "Everybody knew each other and we partied, [went] to sleep and [did] it all over again" when he was isolated in the building 'off campus.' Angel admitted to "Hardly seeing anyone from his freshman year."

Angel continued to reflect on the influence of culture on his friendships and his identity development, he acknowledged:

> The culture here I can relate to—when I came to new student orientation I looked at all the mix group of people. The first high school I went to was all Black—in a bad neighborhood. After two years of being there I didn't do too well—I changed schools—it was mixed, all different types of people there. I got to be friends with all different types of people—it was a good and loving environment. Changing schools changed my life—as of high school wise. When I came to Akron—it was like high school with different people—it was not just one group of people. It made me want to come to Akron—I have Chinese friends, Muslin friends, and Indian friends then and now. Same environment but just a little older people—I am glad I chose Akron for that. (interview, May, 9, 2017)

Angel's experiences are consistent with Guan and So's (2016) theory on identity and self-efficacy in that people who experience social support from a social group have positive perceptions about the ability to perform behaviors advocated by the group. Further, according to research on risk factors for low persistence and low graduation numbers of college students are minority status (Dowd, 2003), first-generation (Astone & Nunez-Wormack, 1990), and academically underprepared (Brock, 2010). Concluded here, given the six year graduation rates for provisional college students at the university under investigation between 8.1% and 13.95% in in-line with reports that the likelihood of interacting with diverse peers is influenced by student characteristics (e.g., being a member of a minority group, parental education, academic preparation, precollege experiences with diversity, and major field of study) (Chang, 2001).

King James, described the campus environment at the university

> … I feel like the college environment has supported me. It has supported me if I need help— I can reach out and he or she is ready to assist me. I can go to the office hours and they are ready to help me. I can work with a tutor and they can help me.

He further acknowledged, “I have made a significant number of friends when I use to work at the student union that have helped me and some of my professors have supported me.”

Emily professed that the campus environment “Supports my identity because you can be whoever you want to be.” She continued to support this notion by stating, “People have completely different values so [the campus environment] supports you to take off that fake mask and explore who you really are.” However, with that said, Emily expressed the concern that the diversity of the campus “limited her friendships.” She explained:

> Campus it's very diverse—Black, White, Hispanic, and people from overseas. I've noticed that Black people eat with Black people, White people hang with White people, people from India hang with people from India— so that limits relationships that I could have… I don't think that the university hinders my identity at all— I think the students inside the college hinder my identity as far as making friends (journal, May 18, 2017)

Advocates that initiate diversity and inclusion recognize bringing diverse student populations to campus does not automatically improve the campus climate for diversity (Hurtado et al., 1999). Interactions among diverse student groups had a positive influence on student outcomes only when the groups are of equal status, there are common goals and inter-group cooperation, institutional leader supports group equality, and there are extended opportunities for groups to get to know one another (Hurtado et al., 2003). And the influence of structural diversity among diverse peers depends on the nature and quality of those interactions. For example, interactions between Black and White students found at one institution resulted in an increase in negative climate when the conditions were not met as identified (Sampson, 1986).

Katie responded to the interview question from the vantage of the students on

campus being "accepting" of other students. She explained, "I think it is an easy going environment and also very diverse." She continued, "I feel like it's like accepting and because of the diversity, people accept that people are different." She concluded her thought by saying, "I have never seen anyone be nasty to anyone else or any bullying."

Nicki responded through a story as she reflected on the prompt to describe the campus environment her at here at the university from the vantage of her physical living space. She reminisced:

> I was in a big sweat—here there was suppose to be four people [in my dorm] and no one showed up. It was nice because I could study but it was also a down-fall because I had to get out of my comfort zone and go out and do stuff. There was positive and negative to that. It's nice and there is space, but then you kind of want to people to associate with…I am super shy. It was kind of a struggle at first and then I kind of pushed myself. (journal, May 26, 2017)

The consensus of this theme amongst the participants is "I get to choose." While a few of the participants looked through the standpoint of having friends from an array of diverse backgrounds, " I have Chinese friends, Muslin friends, and Indian friends," others like the ability to be with people they can identify with, for example, Jessica said, "Black people are like me." Emily expressed that the campus environment limits her friendships: "I noticed that "Black people eat with Black people—White people hang with White people—people from India hang with people from India." This was also witnessed during an observation I had in the student union. Students were sitting eating, talking, studying, and others acting playful with other students that appeared to have their same or similar ethnic backgrounds. This behavior is consistent with the racial identities and multiracial identification model which suggest that racial identity is constructed in the context of social relations and is ongoing interactions between the students and their environment. This continual interaction with questions of identity development is significant because

the college environment is the first place in which deep questions of identity may be broached and the last place in which challenge and support for those inquire and adventures are purposely structured aspect the students' experiences at the institution (Stewart, 2009). This is a valuable aspect to provisional students. Purposefully structured adventures are what provisional students should experience in order to have a valuable experience of "deep questioning of identity" (Stewart, 2009, p. 30).

"There is Something for Everyone"

The second main theme is *"there is something for everyone*." The question discussed was: "Are you apart of any groups or clubs?" All six participants in the study acknowledged that "there is something for everyone." King James is a member in a Christian Organization, Democratic Group, and an African Student Organization.

Katie answered the question with "I am a mom—I have time commitment issues." She continued… "Actually, I was talking to a group—a pro-choice group. I feel like stuff like that would interest me—but it's controversial."

Emily responded, "I love going to the recreation center to do yoga—I love doing yoga and I also developed friendships there."

Nicki responded to the question by saying "I am just kind of different—I feel like if I would fit in—but just like meeting people—it is just a matter of getting out there and getting involved." She did however say "I was on the Frisbee team—I just kind of went and asked to be on the Frisbee team." She pondered further… "I went to a church group once—I felt like there was a chance to meet people."

Jessica responded, "In college there are so many different people—so many clubs. You get to find yourself within the different clubs— think that's a big different because I

can choose." Jessica is involved in the Black Students United Ambassador Programming Committee for new domestic African-American students at the university to help Black students navigate "the formal education structure" successfully and assist in the establishment of education programs to negate "historical and current issues affecting the African-American student community and the surrounding local community" at a "male patriarch university where White males are dominant."

Angel has not joined any clubs but is a "regular at the recreation center."

All six participants agreed that "there is something for everyone" on campus. Whether it go going to the recreation center, meeting new friends, joining a Frisbee team, or joining groups that advocate for change, there was a resounding, "you just have to get out there." According to Renn (2004), when looking at identity formation, it is important to understand that is not only the conditions and characteristics of provisional students but also the conditions and features of the campus environments that provisional students occupy. The culture, demographics, and social structures of college campuses can significantly influence students' experiences. This is significant to the understanding of how social groups may influence students' identity development. For example, if students conform to defining themselves in congruence to their surroundings, the value of creating environments that reflect intersected and multiple identities is significant for students in their ability to make meaning of their own identities (Renn, 2004). In addition, informal interactions to diverse student populations have been found to contribute to a positive perception of the campus environment (Chang, 1999).

Subtheme one: hanging out. For the participants, this included a span of "sitting at Starbucks doing homework" to sitting outside "[thinking] about life." Although all six

participants responded to the question: “Where do you hang out on campus?” there was a range of answers. For example, Katie—“I am a mom” but when I do stay on campus after class I sit with people in the student union.” Katie admits to “just sitting down next to people and just start talking”—people that “she has never seen before.” She enjoys having “crazy conversations, like the big bang theory.”

Emily responded to the question but admitting to, “I pretty much don't really hang out on campus—I go to class and then I go to work… there's no hanging out. I might sit at Starbucks at the student union, but not often. People pretty much do their own thing.”

King James answered the question with, “I have made friends in classes. Sometimes we can study together so that has helped me a lot. Sometimes we go to study and then we go to the recreation center.”

Angel confesses to “one of [his] hang-out” areas is “out in front of the front circle.” He said, “I like to reflect on my week—what’s next and how am I feeling now. He continued, “[I] just think about what I am going for the next ten years—just thinking about life.”

Nicki admitted to “being super shy” so she struggled with hanging out on campus but said she “enjoyed walking on campus”.

The building ‘off campus’: “It’s like they don’t care about the building ‘off campus’”

The third main theme is *the building ‘of campus’* (see Figure 2). Three of the six participants mentioned the building ‘off campus’ in their interview, journal entry or both. As they shared, three broad subthemes emerged: (1) security concerns, (2) homelessness, and (3) “…why are all the African Americans in the [building ‘off campus’]…?!”

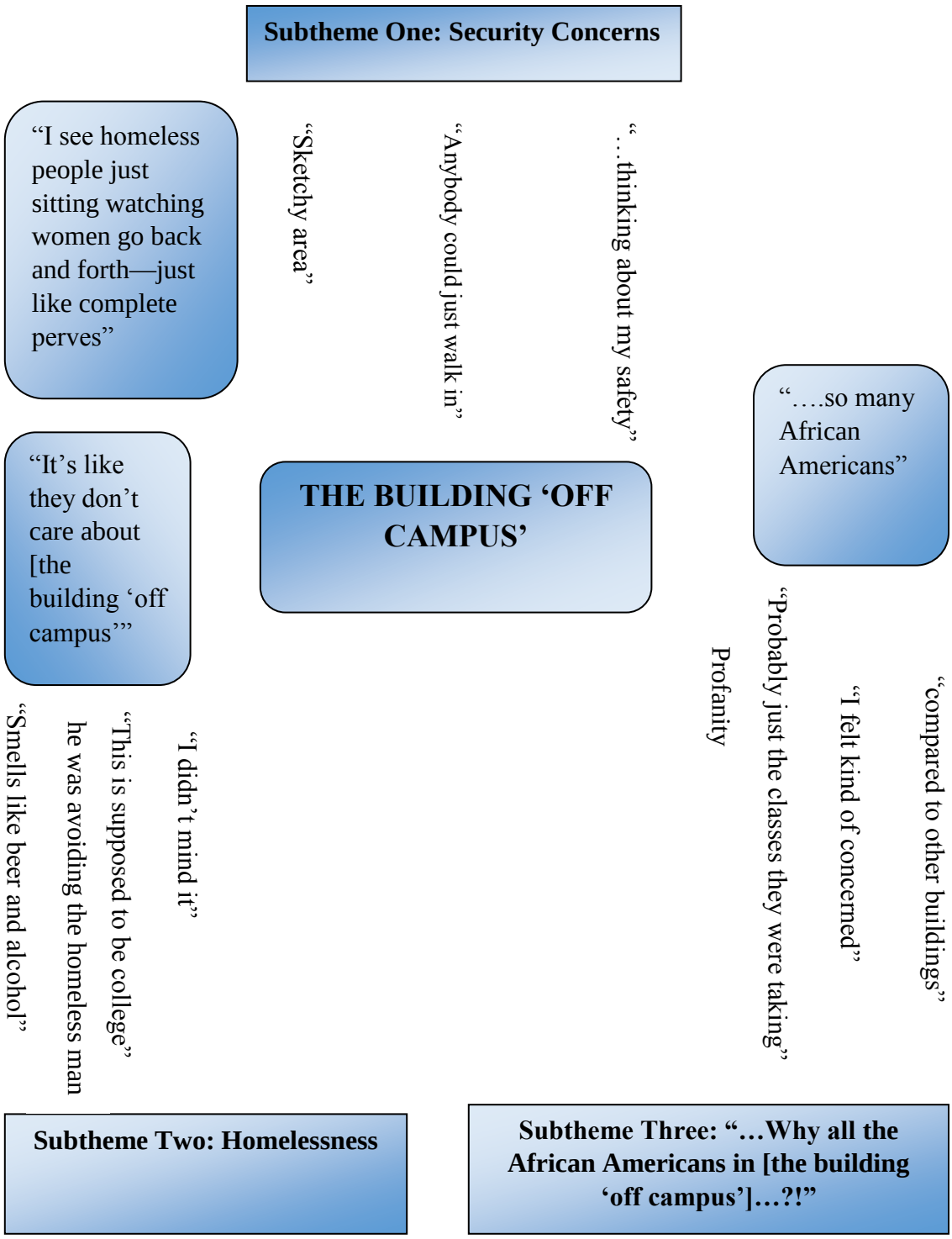

Figure 2: Figurative Summary of Theme-The Building 'Off Campus'

Subtheme one: Security concerns: "I started thinking about my safety."

Angel did not hold back on his concern as he explained, "It's like they don't care about [the building 'off campus']—I feel as though [the building 'off campus'] is at the bottom of the buildings." Angel expressed his concern as he explained, "Anybody can walk in and just do something—I started thinking about my safety." He shared, in full:

> [The building 'off campus'] is left out, it is pretty much open to the public. Most of my classes were in [the building 'off campus']. And both of my majors so I have just been a [the building 'off campus'] person…Anybody can just come into the building, I didn't feel safe. I felt as though, I don't know it was weird—that is just how I see it. To this day, I still think like that. I hope it will change; I would rather have a security guard. (journal, May 11, 2017)

During an observation on the third floor of the building 'off campus,' while sitting at a table in the relatively small food court area, I observed a man sitting on the couch right next to the area where people were eating at tables. I saw the man sitting on the couch often, almost every day. He is a tall stocky Black man, in his usual attire; a flannel shirt, blue jeans, and a ball cap. He does not look homeless, he is clean. He was sitting in his usual spot:

> A small couch almost in the middle of the cafeteria area—he sat there with a smile on his face, just looking around. His mouth moved like he was talking but there was no one close to him to be talking to. I couldn't hear what he was saying, that is if he was talking out loud. A high-top table next to him sat four students; they looked like early college students. They were laughing and talking out loud. They caught the attention of the man on the couch in the flannel shirt, blue jeans and ball cap—he too began to laugh out loud. He just looked at the people at the table and laughed, almost historically. One student noticed but pretended to not. The people at the table began to whisper to each other. The man stopped, looked forward and began to mumble to himself. He smiled and looked around. He was still sitting there when I got up to leave. (observation, May 9, 2017)

Subtheme two: Homelessness: "…homeless people sleeping for hours." Angel expressed a strong concern about "homeless people just sitting there watching women go back and forth just like complete perves." He continued:

> I felt like nobody else but me noticed. And it smells like beer and alcohol. I am like this is supposed to be college, why are outside people coming in…?! I feel as though it doesn't happen in any other building, you don't see homeless people. Like weird stuff happens in [the building 'off campus']—don't see it happening in any other building.

During an observation, I sat across the street from the building 'off campus' on a little stoop. Class must have just let out for the early college students because they were hovering over a good portion of the sidewalk outside in front of the building. The demographic composition was: A large population (60% or so) were Black and approximately 30% were White and the other 10% other diverse backgrounds. Many of the students

> … were using one hand to hold up their pants—there was a lot of chatter. One Black student—he did not look like he is in early college shared several profanities out loud. I am not sure who he was talking to because no one was standing close to him. On the corner of the street where the [building 'off campus'] sat stood a Black man—he was leaning on the side of the [building 'off campus']. Several students walked passed him, one student walked out into the street in order to avoid the homeless man. The homeless man gave each female that walked by him or is in his visual presence the stare down—he just kept staring….He just motioned a female to walk over to him, she quickly looked away and hurried into the building.

Emily responded to the question: Are your classes all over campus or in one area? She said, "Now they are all over, but when I first started, I took classes in the building 'off campus,' I [felt] a bit uncomfortable there" she continued

> … because it is in a sketchy area and the people there don't seem to have the same values as I do as far as the way they uphold themselves. To me it has a little bit more about a punk environment rather than family oriented with values such as respect and those sorts of things. (interview, May 16, 2017)

During an observation on the third floor of the building 'off campus' in the food court, I sat at a table. Fortunately, in this case, the tables were close together because I was able to ease drop on a conversation between two students. They appeared to be doing

homework or studying because they both had books on the table and a drink. They were both White, looked to be freshman. One student said—"I want to get out of here"—the other student responded, "What do you mean?" and the other student said, "I want to get back to main campus….

> I don't like the environment and I don't like that my classes are away from campus. Other student: you are taking basic classes and the degree that you want is here. Other student: I am changing my major, I want to be on campus, I don't like the environment here. (observation, May 12, 2017)

Unlike Angel and Emily, King James "didn't mind [the building 'off campus']." He explained further

> Most of my classes were in the [building 'off campus'], most of my friends that had classes in [the building 'off campus'] didn't' like it because it was a far walk, I didn't mind it. I made new friends that I learned a lot from. They didn't like the atmosphere over there because they didn't like people that weren't students. I was okay with that, I was okay with the [building 'off campus']. (interview, May 26, 2017)

Subtheme three: "Why are all the African Americans in the [building off campus]…?!" During the journal exercise, Angel expressed the concern—"Why are all the African Americans in the [building 'off campus']?" Angel pondered out loud:

> Yeah, I felt—I don't know—I just felt off, like I was just confused. I thought why are all these people here? School is mixed, why are all the African Americans in the [building 'off campus']? I figured it is probably just because the type of classes they are taking, I was just so confused about what was happening. In my freshman year, I always wondered why in the [building 'off campus']there were so many African American as compared to other buildings, there were a more mixed group, but the [building 'off campus'] always had just straight African Americans—I felt kind of concerned about that. (journal, May 11, 2017)

During an observation of the third floor of the building 'off campus,' it was a slow day as there was not much traffic going in and out. This observation does not have a theme to it, just random observations of what I saw during the thirty minute observation provided below:

> Students were sitting and eating lunch, people who did not appear to be college students came into the bistro to order food. Some people were watching the big screen TV that was attached to the wall. Many students were on their laptops…. Class must be out because the halls were filled with students passing. Many of the students passed by look like early college students, this was apart based on their behavior; jumping around, pushing, cussing, just being kids. I looked over toward the bathroom, there was a gathering of Black males just hanging out, and business looking people came into the building and walked over to the Starbucks Coffee shop. I looked over at a couch alongside of the wall there were two people sitting, and they look homeless. The TV was loud enough for me to hear it, there was a lot of chatter amongst the groups of people sitting at the tables and couches, eight students who looked like early college students have gathered on a couch to the left of me, acting playfully with each other—hugging each other, they all appear to know each other. More business looking people came into the building; they either walked to the bistro or the coffee shop. (observation, May 9, 2017)

Although Emily, King James, and Angel all mentioned the building 'off campus,' Angel was the only participant that addressed the concern, "Why are all the African Americans in the [building 'off campus']?" and "It's like they don't care about [the building 'off campus]." The participants experiences are in-line with minority student research, in that a constant perception of feeling inferior or low intelligence is likely to result in minority students dropping out of college (Arbona & Nora, 2007). Further, among Black students, minority stress was associated with low academic persistence (Neblett et al., 2006) and low graduation rates (Brown & Seller, 2006).

Demographic data of the university under investigation reveal that at least half of the provisional student population is minority students. The findings of this study in-line with minority student attrition research in that minority students' perceptions of college campuses can be "hostile, alienating, socially isolating and are less responsive to their needs and interests" (Smedley et al., 1993, p. 435), a perception that is found in many examples of overt and tactic racism on campuses (Kent, 1996) can potentially influence provisional students' ability to persist. Further, although Emily acknowledged the

building ‘off campus’ as an uncomfortable place to be, she didn’t acknowledge the cultural mismatch of as Angel put it, “Why are all the African Americans in the building ‘off campus.’ This perception is reinforced in the “cultural mismatch” (White & Lowenthal, 2011, p. 286) between minority college students and their mainstream peers and professors (Gonzales, 1999).

Summary

This study had three main purposes: it used students’ voices to capture the lived experiences of provisional college students, examined the intersection of their identities in the ability to persist, and explored what provisional students said about how the campus environment influences their identities. Data were gathered from three sources, including semi-structured interviews, journals, and observations. This data as used to help answer the three guiding research questions of this study.

Data analysis of the first research question addressing lived experiences determined that three themes were present for all study participants. These themes included (a) “I have changed,” (b) getting over the hump: “I can do this,” and (c) basic classes: “why do I have to take these basic classes?!” These themes were found to exist through the lives experiences of provisional college students.

In regards to the second research question on the intersecting identities, data analysis revealed two themes were present for study participants that experienced intersecting identities that influenced their ability to persist. These themes included: (a) times when relationships were impossible: “…hating or being mad or just ignorant…?!” and (b) being treated differently: “I think it was because of race.”

Finally, in respect to the third research question on campus environment, data analysis concluded that four themes were present. These themes included: (a) relationships: "I get to choose," (b) "there is something for everyone," and (c) the building 'off campus': "It's like they don't care about the building 'off campus.'"

An analysis of the findings from the data collected from study participants' has generated insights that may serve useful to campus administrators, faculty, and policymakers. Further, the findings of this study provide insight into what provisional students do to negotiate their college experiences and what influence stereotype threat, self-efficacy, and resilience had on those negotiations. The data gathered from the students in the study illuminates academic status matters, relationships matter, and race matters.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study used students' voices to capture the lived experiences of provisional college students, explored the intersection of their identities in the ability to persist, and examined of what provisional students say about how the campus environment influences their identity. In this final chapter, I will first provide a synopsis of the key aspects of the study; a discussion of the purpose of the study, the research approach taken, and the employed research methods which included the inferences related to the study's unique methodology, specifically: the tension between "provoke[ing]…knowledge" (Pitt & Britzman, 2003, p. 769) and the implementation of phenomenology in the field of higher education. Second, the major conclusions are discussed followed by the implications for institutional policy and practice, campus administrators, college-level educators, and provisional admittance. The implications and recommendations are in-line with Intersectionality in that the examination must transpire onto the researcher and into the facets of the institution (Collins, 1991). Third, the limitations of the study are discussed and recommendations for future research are provided.

The purpose of this heuristic phenomenological study was to describe the lived experiences of provisional college students, explore the intersection of their identities in the ability to persist, and explore what they say about the influence of the campus environment on their identity. Although research has been conducted on how college

students negotiate risk factors during their college experience in general (Bergerson et al., 2014) very little research has been done that specifically provides insight into the voices of provisional students' lived experiences and the intersection of their identifies in the ability to persist. Further, there is significant research on the influence of campus environments on identity development in a general sense (Enochs & Roland, 2006), however studies have not specifically included what students say about the influence of the campus environment on the ability to persist in terms of how students develop and make meaning of their identities.

By exploring first-hand accounts of the lived experiences of provisional students through this study, various groups can be informed, including: campus administrators, college-level educators, and institutional policy and practice. Three research questions guided this study:

(1). What are the lived experiences of provisionally admitted college students?

(2). What aspects of provisionally admitted college students' multiple intersecting identities influence their ability to persist?

(3). What do provisionally admitted college students say about what influence the campus environment has on their identities?

The research approach used in this study was created to ensure the authenticity of student voices and first-hand accounts of the provisional students were clearly represented in the study's findings. A qualitative research approach ensured the "search for meaning and understanding with the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis" allowed for the end product to be "richly descriptive" (Merriam, 2009, p. 39). Further, by capturing the actual meanings and interpretations that actors

subjectively ascribe to the phenomena; how they "experience, sustain, articulated, and share with others their socially constituted everyday realities" have proven useful to the descriptions and explanations of behavior (Cassell et al., 2006, p. 132).

Both purposeful and convenience sample were employed in this study. Purposeful sampling was used as a way to select participants that will "illuminate the study and elucidate variation as well as significant common patterns within the variations" (Brott & Myers, 1999, p. 342). Further, because qualitative research is used to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon or situation through the eyes of the participants under study, it is "important to select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Merriam et al., p. 12). Convenience sampling was used for the ease of accessing the participants selected for the study. This sampling procedure allowed for ease of availability for the participants, the ease with for observations, and the quickness with which the data could be gathered for analyzed (Etikan et al., 2016).

Although, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend sampling until a point of saturation or redundancy is reached, Wolff (2002) argued that sample size is challenging in phenomenological research and the key to understanding when the sample size is large enough is self-reflection, he explained:

> The answer lies not in some externally sanctioned number, but inside the one who embodies the research process. The researcher comes to understand that one does not "decide" when the description is over, and the reduction is about to begin; rather, one recognizes that the reduction has already begun and that the descriptions are in the process of ending. (p. 177)

For this study, I collected data using four different sources, which included: observations throughout the campus amenities (where students eat, socialize, workout, walk, study, etc…), face-to-face semi-structured in-depth interviews, written journal

entries, and my own heuristic inquiry. What to observe depends on the topic, conceptual framework, and "the data that begin to emerge as the participant observer interacts in the daily flow of events and activities," and the intuitive reactions and hunches the participant observer experiences as all these factors come together (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 200). I was a complete observer of six hours of observation, all in half-hour increments. All six participants participated in the ninety minute face-to-face semi-structured in-depth interview. All interviews were conducted in as study room in the library. Further, all six participants submitted a journal entry within three days of their interview via email. Finally, as this investigation employed heuristics in the phenomenological inquiry, I engaged in a rigorous exploration of my own experiences about the study's topic. The heuristic practice also served as a means of triangulation in that my own experiences were another breadth of the study and were identified and critically examined. By meticulously pondering my own thoughts, experiences, and meaning-making, another layer of data emerged. The practice of heuristic inquiry was used as a means of clarity to my own research biases (Creswell, 1998). Upon the completion of the participants' participation, I met them individually at the student union on campus and gave them their money incentive.

I cycled through at least two coding phases for each round of data collection. I used three primary coding methods outlined by Saldãna (2013): process coding, which looks for "actions intertwined with the dynamics of time, such as things that emerge, change, occur in particular sequences, or become strategically implemented" (p. 266); value coding, which "reflect[s] a participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or world views" (p. 268); and emotional coding, the "label [ing of]

the emotions recalled by the participants" (p. 263). These coding techniques revealed core experiences of the phenomena, which I then clustered together with the use of pattern codes in the second coding phase of journal entries. Pattern codes were used to create "meta-code[s]…And organizes the corpus into sets, themes, or constructs and attributes meaning to that organization" (p. 266). By triangulating the data with the use of the three data resources, rigor and trustworthiness of the study was established (Merriam, 2009).

On average, three hours was used for each study participant for the audio-recorded interview data to be transcribed. There were 68 pages of double-space text used in the analysis. In accordance with heuristic phenomenology, intonation of the speakers' tone was largely lost in the reading of text; I attempted to capture as many non-verbal cues as possible. Pauses and notations were made in the form of brackets (Thibodeaux, 2011).

Conclusion

Intersectionality provided a framework for understanding the experiences of the participants who experience risk factors, while also offering the possibilities towards paths of coalition. It is "through an awareness of intersectionality, we can better acknowledge and ground the differences among us and negotiate the means by which [they]…find expression in constructing group politics" (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1299). The study findings validate the need for coalition across differences (Cole, 2008) and core experiences within colleges and universities that admit provisional students that bear further discussion and research. Many of the findings in the study exemplify intersectionality literature. Above all, there is significance in the acknowledgement that

all participants routinely discussed their race/ethnicity, ability, socioeconomic status, and other identity markers—as well as racism—as intertwined and inseparable. This significance is in-line with the tenets of intersectionality, being simultaneously privileged and oppressed (Collins, 1991) through the various aspects of their identities. As a researcher, I could not make clean categories of my participants' stories and was at times forced into convoluted evaluation of their individual examples of the intersection of race/ethnicity and role-identity; this was often noted by cross-referencing participants' stories across aspects of heuristic phenomenological findings. And as evident in the historical evolution of intersectional thought, the experiences of marginalized groups are foreground in theory and practices, and in this case, with a specific scope on the intersection of race/ethnicity and role-identity. Centered are the lived experiences of students from marginalized groups which allowed for new knowledge to signify the voices of those previously excluded (Jones & Wijeyesinghe, 2011). From the data collected, three conclusions were drawn. Each of these conclusions will be discussed in the next section.

Academic Status Matters

Findings of this study demonstrate that singling students out for special treatment in ways that typically imply a need for remediation (Charles, 2009) is not conducive to creating a sense of inclusion and provides another layer of stigmatization (Jones et al., 2002). First, before provisional students get to campus, they receive a letter that indicates their provisional admission. As already discussed, discourse situates students' perceived deficiencies as vulnerable, at-risk, and dependent on the university and its' programs to compensate for their deficiencies (Garcia & Guerra, 2004) as heard in the voices of the

participants. For example, Emily said, “It wasn't different to me…I almost expected it! When I was in high school I was known as the dumb girl so that wasn't a big shock to me.” Angel said, “I thank them for letting me in because if they didn’t let me in—well I only applied to two schools, and this one is public. I believe it is public or open admission so pretty much they would accept anybody.”

Second, participants expressed feeling singled out in their need to take “basic classes” as mirrored by their voices, “I felt slighted, other students were able to go into their actual coursework and I had to take all these extra classes—I felt like it was a rip-off, ” “I thought we were all equal,” “I just didn’t feel like myself in the class, I felt kind of slow,” “looking around me, there are a lot of African Americans in basic classes,” and “I felt like not less fortunate—but I am a student that can do way better than this—I am good at this, can I move on….!?”

Lastly, most provisional students are isolated in the building ‘off campus’ for at least the first year of college as that is where they take their first year of coursework (often remedial) and where their advising unit is located. Although not probed in the interview questions or in the thought prompts, the building ‘off campus’ was a sizable area of discussion generated by three study participants that expressed issues, concerns, and thoughts. Three significant points are implied in this conclusion. First, students need to feel safe in the spaces that they are assigned to occupy. This implied in comments like “I didn’t feel safe, homeless people just sitting there watching women go back and forth—just like complete perves,” “Anybody can just come into the building,” and “I would rather have a security guard.” Second, the physical space that students are assigned to sends messages. For example, Angel reflected back to his first semester at the

university with “It’s like they don’t care about [the building ‘off campus,]’” “Why are all of the African Americans in [building ‘off campus’],” and “it smells like beer and alcohol.” He continued, “I thought this is supposed to be a college—this doesn’t happen in other buildings.” Third, students need to feel a part of the university. This was implied from comments like, “I want to get back to main campus” and “I don’t like the environment and my classes are away from campus.”

Relationships Matter

Second, and possibly one of the most emphasized conclusions of the study; positive relationships with professors, administrative supports, peers, and family were found to be significant. All six participants reported extensively on the significance of the influence of positive relationships with professors in the negotiation of race/ethnicity and role-identity in their ability to persist. Although all participants reported about the significance of positive relationships, not all students experienced them.

Emily indicated the significance of hearing professors say “we want to hear from you” as explained, “I felt more confident when the teachers wanted to hear from me. I got positive feedback…it wasn't rolling your eyes.” Emily believed that her professors “expect[ed] her to do well” and therefore she did “perform well.” Emily’s experiences are consistent with role-identity theory in that the generation of self-meaning by a role-identity that mirrors a self-regulatory interpretative process of sense-making in where significant inputs between others and self are reconciled in an attempt to verify, support, and validate the identity (Riley & Burke, 1995).

Angel professed that one professor made him “feel good,” and “motivated [him].” He was going through a tough time due to the loss of a family member and his professor

was “real concerned about [him] because my grades and quizzes were slipping.” On the contrary, Angel expressed concern with his basic math professor’s influence on his identity development as a provisional college student. He explained

> … It wasn’t until after the class, the professor said ‘you were doing good all semester, you could have taken the test.’ Like seriously, I could have been out of this class?! I was telling my teacher ‘I know this’ and he’s like ‘yeah but you are in here’— and I was like—‘Yeah but I know this!’ He could have told me then that I could have retaken the test. Like seriously….!?

King James commented that professors “Don’t seem to care or know what they are teaching” which lead to his advice: “Hire more professors that care more for the students, show an interest for the students, show an interest in the students, and show an interest in the subject they teach.”

Other participants in the study commented, “ I don’t think [he] likes me,” “It kind of made me feel good that he took the time to talk to me,” “My teachers supported and encouraged me to be better” and “I think that people have to respect your identity in order to understand you.”

All the participants at some level believed that positive experiences with administrative support services were found to be significant aspects of influence in their ability to persist. King James reminisced, “You were my first academic advisor, you helped me orient into the university and into the computer and you made sure that everything with me was going right.” King James further intoned the feeling of “being stressed out” and sought support from the diversity president at the university. He expounded, “Whenever I had an issue of diversity— in search for how to deal with “issues related to race or just stressed out.” Katie, found significant in her academic

advisor. She believed that “If you don’t get what you need from your advisor, you can talk to another one.”

Family and peers were found to be significant influences in the participants’ identity development and ability to persist. Angel reminisced about his support systems outside of the university, “Yeah— my mom, grandma, girlfriend, and my best friend Craig—they are pretty much my motivators to even continue through school.” His friend Craig called him a “super hero” which encouraged him to “[strive] to be great. Angel illuminates a “mirror of self-expectation” (Stryker, 1987, p. 80), consistent with the theory of role-identity in that his role-consistent performances only occur when the demands of the situation are consistent with the behavior of that identity. When consistency exists (e.g., Angel “striving to be great”), the role support from the context provides self-verification and confirms the relevant identity and thus increases the probability of the continued behaviors (McCall & Simmons, 1978). This too is reflected in an experience significant to him, when he“[helped] out a student” on campus who was “in a wheelchair.” He said that he “kind of felt good” about and that he “would have never done that before.”

King James ruminated on his support systems outside of the university: “God, my mom, my American grandparents who are my sponsors.” Emily said, “My mom, my dad, and boyfriend are my support systems; emotionally and financially.” Throughout the interview, Nicki talked about “her friends back home” as her main support systems. Katie, “I would say that my family and friends but they are like “‘you know you can do this—you got this’— when I really need it, it’s my grandma for sure”.

Katie also reminisced about "two students that were "contributing factors to [her] personal success." They "helped [her] just by being them and seeing them have all their achievements" and "getting the same grades that she [was]" is compatible with Bandura's (1994) theory of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy beliefs are created to the extent in which people believe they have the capability to model the observed behaviors, and that belief is determined by the perceived similarities between the people.

Race Matters

In addition to the two conclusions already discussed, findings of the study demonstrate the tensions of negotiating race/ethnicity and role-identity in students' lived experiences. The Black participants in the study expressed shared core experiences that can only be understood as multiple and contradictory, a state of simultaneous hyper-visibility and invisibility (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). All three Black students and one White student in the study described experiences of racism. For Angel, he admitted to "feeling some kind of way" when he acknowledged that the building 'off campus' was "straight African Americans." He later referenced an experience with a professor that "Every time he looked at me it wasn't a good look—it was like one of those looks like—you are doing something—what are you doing!?" He expressed feeling like "[a] big [man] with a small voice." These experiences are in-line with stereotype research in that if students feel stigmatized as less than fully qualified and if they perceive that others have low opinions of their abilities, the result can be demoralization and feelings of stereotype threat (Charles et al., 2009). In spite these experiences, Angel was able to persist. According to Benard (2004), there are three significant environmental processes that buffer risk and foster resilience: 1) forming caring relationships; 2) maintaining

positive and high expectations; and 3) providing opportunities for students to participate and contribute (p. 56). Angel expressed caring relationships with a diverse group of friends on campus, caring experiences from his professor, and support from his family and friends back home. Further, Angel admitted to acquiring high and positive expectations about himself after receiving feedback from professors and friends. Finally, Angel expressed that during his sophomore year, he felt "heard" and "had a voice" and thus able to provide contribution in the classroom. Minority students who are confident and satisfied with their opportunities to interact informally with faculty perform better than students less confident or who experience less favorable interactions with faculty (Reid, 2013).

Jessica discussed her concerns about a "racist experience she had with a professor," she explained, "We have a problem judging a book by its cover." She described these circumstances as rarely avoidable, "When I talk to other African-American students on this campus as far as their education—they also know that they don't want them to make it." Jessica sought support in her ability to persist from peer mentors and the diversity office on campus who helped her work through the perception that "They don't think of me equally anyway and so why care…" by telling her "'it's not because you Black but because you're not trying" she admitted to "[turning] it around."

King James exhibits a perception that is found in many examples of overt racism on campuses (Kent, 1996). He expressed difficulties with a former manager who "treated [him] unfairly because of race—other African-Americans said so too—so I wasn't the only one" and, "I see a lot of Blacks and some minorities are treated differently than White people." King James also detailed an experience with a professor that "gave

favoritism to other students" he continued, "All students that are not my race." In his search for support, he spent time with the diversity officer on campus where he got "help with issues of race" and he frequented my advising office. An apparent trust between us was known as he shared intimate details with me about his struggles at home, in the classroom, at his job on campus, and his feelings and experiences of racism. The fundamental determinant of whether a person is identified with a domain is whether the domain is relevant to how a person defines the self. Both Jessica and King James illustrated a strong racial identity and actively sought out supports for institutional integration. According to King James, there is only one [King James], one unique [King James], that is me," and Jessica, "My identity is an African-American female; young, educated, and a leader" as a college student.

During the interviews and journal entries, the participants shared a variety of expressions of negotiating race/ethnicity and role-identity, like Jessica who shared "Black people are like me" in her introduction to the discussion of having "A hard time [assigning] identity," in higher school to "I [having] ties to the Black community on campus and I also have ties to my White peers on campus." Angel expressed, "I have Chinese friends, Muslin friends, and Indian friends then and now." These experiences are in-line with racial identity, self-efficacy, and institutional integration revealed that successful Black students report a heightened sense of self-efficacy and racial identity attitudes (Reid, 2013).

Emily, from the vantage of a White student believed that she was treated differently "because of race." She expressed working at the university as a student assistant and that she "Never had to be concerned with getting the hours that [she] needed

and was always given—until a Black student was hired." She continued, "Hmmm—racism goes both ways." This perception is reinforced in the "cultural mismatch" (White & Lowenthal, 2011, p. 286) between minority college students and their mainstream peers and professors (Gonzales, 1999). Emily came from a "predominately White high school where there may have been two or three Black people in the entire school" never thought of her race/identity because she "didn't need to, [the Black students at her school] acted like White people, they didn't have their Black culture so it was never an issue." This is a good example of Turner's explanation that minority students are "still guests in someone else's house" (Turner, 1994, p. 356).

Emily said that her "Being White" affected her friendships. She explained, "It's almost seems like Black people don't want to be my friend which limits my friendships." She continued to say that, "I have noticed a lot of Black people don't want to talk to me on campus." Further, Emily expressed, "I [have] noticed that "Black people eat with Black people—White people hang with White people—people from India hang with people from India." The college environment is the first place in which deep questions of identity may be broached and the last place in which challenge and support for those inquiry and adventures are purposely structured aspect the students' experiences at the institution (Stewart, 2009).

To that end, Intersectionality was used in this study as a way to challenge the false silos that are created by addressing only single diminution of a student's identity (Bowleg, 2008) and their interaction with structural inequality as member of multiple marginalized groups (Dill & Zambrana, 2009). Students' social group memberships can exist across multiple locations of privilege and/or marginality. Student development

theorists and actors in higher education alike can consider how intersectionality can be useful for understanding how both privilege and marginality shape and inform each other in students' identity meaning making and in the context of their environments (Abes, 2016).

Implications

> Think back to when you were little and really wanted to be invited to a party. Mainstreaming is like inviting you to the party. Only this isn't a party—this is life. — Beth Swadener and Lubeck Lubeck, *Children and Families at Promise*

To stay true to the tenets of intersectionality, examinations must occur both with the participants and the various levels of the university (Collins, 1991), and thus recommendations in both areas are identified and woven together that address campus administrators, college-level educators, institutional policy and practice, and implications of provisional admittance. Implications offered bridge the participants and institutional levels and must include the "individual integrated with institutional" (Hancock, 2007, p. 64).

Institutional Policy and Practice

It has long been recognized by academia that all too often there is a loosely coupled relationship between policy initiative at the upper level of the implantation staircase and the deciding factors on the ground level (March & Olsen, 1975). As Cohen and March (1974) say: [in universities] anything that requires the co-ordinated effort of the organization in order to start is unlikely to be started and anything that requires a co-ordinated effort of the organization in order to be stopped is unlikely to be stopped (p. 3). Likening universities to "organized anarchies" Cohen and March say they have the following characteristics:

- problematic goals – it [the university] discovers preferences through actions more often than it acts on the basis of a preferences;
- unclear technology – it operates on the basis of a set of trial-and-error procedures, the residue of learning from the accidents of past experiences, imitation, and the inventions born of necessity;
- fluid participation – the boundaries of the organization appear to be uncertain and changing. (p. 3)

Decisions associated with change in colleges and universities of organized anarchy closely approximate a 'garbage can model' in which various problems and solutions are dumped by participants:

> The mix of garbage in a single can depends partly on the labels attached to the alternative cans; but it also depends on what garbage is being produced at the moment, on the mix of cans available and on the speed with which garbage is connected and removed from the scene. (Cohen & March, 1974, p. 81)

Organized anarchy is seen in the discursive representation of diversity in educational policy. For example, diversity action plans propose to "feed the educational pipeline" to open access, to "widen the net," and to eliminate barriers and obstacles, to increase the "presence" and "prevalence" of diversity who "remain hardly noticeable" (Iverson, 2007, p. 593). Once inside the university, diversity action plans "shift their focus to affirming and welcoming the presence of marginalized groups as achieving insider status" (Iverson, 2007, p. 594). The majority, represented as the norm—White, male, and/or middle class—serves to signal the ways in which people of color are outsiders (Jennings & Lynn, 2013, p. 595). Applied to this inquiry, discourse refers to "the way in which language, or more broadly, bodies of knowledge…define the terrain and consequently complicate attempts at change" (Bacchi, 1999, p. 40).

Students with risk are typically described in diversity action plans as "deficient," "disadvantaged," "underprepared," and of "need of college preparatory and remedial education" (Iverson, 2007). Such policy approaches are guided by a "technical-rational

evaluation of what makes effective policy—meaning they want to offer ways of "doing it better" (Bacchi, 1999, p. 20) and "serve to legitimize some socially constructed norm of behavior that function to categorize people, things, and ideas (Iverson, 2007, p. 589). Through facilitated dialogue, institutions can examine (in)congruence between problems and solutions conveyed in policy, and an understood discursive construction of diversity can provide a different lens through which to view full inclusion. Such a "cognitive shift" (Bensimon, 2005) may provoke discussions about different solutions to success and retention issues and deploy the tactical use of discourse (Iverson, 2007). People do not "stand outside of discourse and choose when, where, and how to adhere to particular discourse in order to produce some intended and predictable effects" (Allan, 2003, p. 65). Policy makers cannot write discourse into a policy recommendation to produce different effects; they cannot simply rewrite policy by finding and replacing certain words with others, such as searching a document for *disadvantage* and replacing it with *equality* to shift from deficit to an equity focus. They can however be more cognizant and critical of the ways in which policy documents are discursively constituted, ignoring the social construction of policy problems (Allan, 2003).

Institutions of policy and practice must consider how the articulation of solutions in policy corresponds to the stated problems. Create strategic deployments of discourse, in other words, reframe the problems. Normally, in the institutional approaches to educational policy-making as a system of problem-solving, every policy proposal contains within it, explicit or implicit diagnosis of the problem (Bacchi, 1999). A word of caution; how the problem is framed determines the solutions; this approach, can conceal an array of options that could emerge from alternative conceptions of the problem.

Awareness calls for an interrogation of the assumptions that ground the construction of the "policy problem—the assumptions about the cause of the 'problem'" (Bacchi, 1999, p. 109), this can be done by purposefully becoming deliberate agents of socialization.

The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) introduced an initiative base on the concept of "inclusive excellence" to guide a national movement and campus efforts to make the success of all students a focus point. Specifically, it defines inclusive excellence as:

> (a) a focus on student intellectual and social development; (b) a purposeful development and utilization of organizational resources directed at student learning; (c) attention to the cultural differences that learners bring to the educational experience that enhance the educational enterprise; and (d) a welcoming community that engages all of its diversity in the service of student and organizational learning. (AAC&U, 2007, p. 63)

In this perspective, a diversity agenda becomes part of the institution's goals in achieving academic excellence using a student-centered approach. In doing so, institutions will need to understand what role campus climate for diversity and intergroup relations plays in students' ability to persist to graduation. To center experiences of all students in higher education, create "programs, policies, organizational structures, rituals and routines" from the perspective of diverse students groups and with special attention to marginalized groups (Abes & Jones, 2013, p. 145).

The perception of the campus climate for minority students is often very different than the perception of racial majority students (Jones & Abes, 2013). An intersectional analysis on retention of Black men for example, would locate itself in the structural inequalities of the institution, rather than in the deficits and deficiencies of the student (for example, "He didn't have good preparation for college in high school and, thus, can't succeed" and "His parents didn't go to college, so he doesn't have any family support").

An intersectional analysis would insist on an examination of how race, class, gender, and other dimensions of identity influence this dynamic (Jones & Abes, 2013). Further, a Poststructural lens illuminates how people and social structures like higher education institutions use language, symbols, and other forms of representation to exercise power or discourse (Seidman, 2008). Revise the language of students' admission status, institutional websites, letters, and publications to be more inclusive to all students for as poststructuralism urges—the complex interworking of cultural, social, and institutional relationships establish how students can self-identity in socially recognized and validated ways (Abes, 2016).

Institutional leaders and policy makers can significantly strengthen the culture of inclusion and multiculturalism by designing systematic and comprehensive educational programs to help all members of the campus community in identifying and confronting barriers to academic success like stereotypes and myths that people have about those who are different than them (Hurtado et al., 1998). By creating cross-racial interactions, the magnitude of difference in perceptions of the racial climate between students on campus is likely to be dramatically reduced. Cross-racial interactions such as ensuring that all students perceive the institutional climate as fair and just can be done through clearly stated policies and procedures. Campus communities that have representation from all members of the campus community (students, faculty, administration, staff, etc…) can confront and resolve conflicts and disputes (Hurtado et al., 1998). Because there are significant differences in the perceptions of the climate based on experiences and positions, campus leaders should insure that the perspectives of all members of the campus community are considered in the decision-making processes. This can be done

through regular and on-going assessments of the campus climate for diversity (Hurtado et al., 1998).

Practitioners involved in programming and policy initiatives must use their role and authority to increase structural diversity on college campuses. Increased structural diversity however is usually accompanies by increased levels of conflict. Nevertheless, conflict should not be viewed as a destabilizing force but as an essential component of meaningful communities, which Parker Palmer (1987) defines "as a capacity for relatedness within individuals—relatedness not only to people but to events in history, to nature, to world of ideas, and yes, to things of the spirit" (p. 24). To assist, amplified dialogue through stories and counter-stories can be used as an act of transparency; uncovered by practitioners to facilitative cross difference dialogue (Iverson, 2007). Scholars attest to the need for and benefit of facilitated dialogue (Boler, 2004), though counter-stories are not "tolerant, sensitive, affirming, and homogenizing" but rather they are "dangerous discourses" (Nieto, 1999, p. 109) that will likely generate "moments of discomfort, feelings experiences as we hover on the threshold between certainty and uncertainty, knowing and unknowing as we step out of familiar and unfamiliar story lines" (Huber, Murphy, & Cladinin, 2003, p. 359). To alleviate this concern, creating a "free space" (Phelan, 1994, p. 88) can allow people to share individual histories and expectations in the connection of multiple campus communities (Iverson, 2007).

Campus Administrators and Support Staff

The roles and functions of campus administrators and support staff are dependent on the internal organization, institutional type, size, etc… At some level, they are all charged with the implementation of programs and policy. The implementation of

programs and policies as witnessed in intersectionality research should reject the post-positivist assumptions of an additive approach to social inequality, in where oppression is measured by adding together the effects of identifying with more than one marginalized group (for example, identifying as Black, first-generation, and underprepared) (Bowleg, 2008). It is not just about the students; instead, it is about the understanding of "the multidimensional ways people experience lives—how people see themselves and how they are treated by others" (Dill et al., 2007, p. 630). From an intersectional perspective, intervention and support services can view students' identities as the "product of a social location defined by the convergence of ability, class, ethnicity, race, and other social identities" (Abes, 2016, p. 77). In other words, practitioners must use an intersectional framework while working with students to complicate identity with a focus on both individual and group identity as "influenced and shaped not simply by a person's race, class, ethnicity, gender, physical ability, sexuality, religion, or nationality—but by a combination of all of those characteristics" (Dill & Zambrana, 2009, p. 6). This can be accomplished by creating culturally engaging campus environments.

Culturally engaging experiences have significant influences on students' sense of belonging and academic dispositions (e.g. self-efficacy, motivation, and intent to persist) (Museus, Zhang, & Kim, 2016). Design intentional experiences of cultural familiarity in where students have an opportunity to physically connect with various institutional agents (e.g. faculty, administrators, staff, and peers) who have similar backgrounds and experiences (Museus et al., 2016). This can be done by creating cooperative learning groups where student-centered learning experiences characterized by distinctive features like: small, intentionally formed groups, well-defined roles for all groups member, group

work structured to ensure that members work interdependently on the same learning tasks to produce a common or unified product, group work structures to ensure that all members of the group are held personally accountable for their individual contributions to the final product, and the facilitator acts as a consultant during her learning process (Cuseo, 2012)

Design success and retention programs with inclusion of diversity in mind and require it for all first-semester students, regardless of academic status, race/ethnicity, etc…. These programs should provide opportunities for personal growth, empowerment, and multicultural awareness that will facilitate an understanding for and an appreciation of cultural differences and similarities. Cross-cultural engagement can allow opportunities to engage in meaningful interactions with peers of different cultural backgrounds that focus on solving real social and political problems. Intentional experiences like a think-pair-square can be used to inform. In this experience, teams are formed to learn a topic and each teammate assumes responsibility for becoming an "expert" on one piece (subtopic) of the main topic. Then members leave their teams to form groups comprised of the students who have chosen to be experts on the same subtopic. After meeting in different expert groups, students return to their home teams and teach their individual areas of expertise to their teammates. The final outcome of this process is the piecing together of the separate subtopics (like a "jigsaw" puzzle) that should result in a more complete or comprehensive understanding of the whole topic by each participating student (Aronson et al., 1978).

Create first-year leadership development programs aimed at building strong academic foundation amongst diverse groups of students in involvement with peer

mentoring, tutoring, career exploration, social activities, student organizations, seminars and workshops. Cultural community service opportunities for example can offer students the ability to engage in curricular and co-curricular effort to positively transform and give back to their own cultural communities (Museus et al., 2016). Use peer mentors for cultural validation in where students feel like their cultural backgrounds and identities are valued (Museus et al., 2016). Ethnic student organizations and ethnic studies programs have found to have positive influences on involvement and success because they constitute spaces of cultural familiarity, opportunities for exchange of culturally relevant knowledge, vehicles for cultural community service, and sources of cultural validation (Museus, 2008). Involvement in racial/ethnic student organizations and minority programs have been found to increase students' identity awareness and increased interest in interacting in other cultural and cross-cultural activities (Hurtado & Carter, 1997).

Students' precollege experiences with diversity and whether they have interacted with homogeneous peers or diverse peers may predispose them to continue the same interaction patterns in college (Saenz, Ngai, & Hurtado, 2007). Interactions across racial/ethnic boundaries can facilitate mutual liking and respect, if such interactions are deliberate and structured to be more than superficial encounters (Locks et al., 2008). Campus programs that provide intergroup relations provide opportunities for students to develop common goals and interact across social identity memberships (Locks, Hurtado, Bowman, & Oseguera, 2008). Programs that emphasize intercultural engagement and dialogues across differences, such as service-learning opportunities where diverse student populations work with each other in serving the community, intergroup dialogues where students have an opportunity to share their experiences, problem-based projects where

students can work with advisors in creating focus groups and think-tanks that allow students to be heard, inspire creativity, confidence, and self-efficacy, and other innovate methods, can help students think more complexly about the lived experiences of themselves and others (Dill, 2009).

A communal commitment to improve the quality of student life and learning is a vital element of successful retention programs (Lopez-Mulnix & Mulnix, 2006). This is done through establishing a firm connection with key faculty, staff, and campus administrators, and being aware of important programs and services that are critical to students' first-year of success. Other objectives include identifying and honoring students, faculty, and staff whose actions support the creating and maintenance of an inclusive, civil, and welcoming campus community; monitoring student perceptions of the climate for diversity; creating partnerships with academic and administrative departments to serve students; and promoting multicultural awareness through personal interactions, training opportunities, educational programs, and dissemination of information (Lopez-Mulnix & Mulniz, 2006).

College-Level Educators

> Learning involves the whole person; it implies not only a relation to specific activities, but a relation to social communities—it implies becoming a full participant, a member, a kind of person… To ignore this aspect of learning is to overlook the fact that learning involves the construction of identities. — Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situating Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*

According to a poststructural perspective, academia cannot claim to speak from a position of being outside power (Humes & Bryce, 2003). Indeed, Foucault (1979) goes so far as to propose that "we should abandon a whole tradition that allows us to imagine that knowledge can exist only where the power relations are suspended" and that knowledge

can develop only outside its injunctions, and its demands (p. 27). The role of education is to operate in the "most efficient ways to provide [students] with the learning they require to optimize their contribution to the social system" (Usher & Edwards, 1994, p. 175). Perhaps a more effectual way to connect with students would be to increase

> …the scope of [professors] awareness of what goes on in [students'] environment and how one is implicated in it. In the case of the intellectual, this probably means the institutional site of knowledge or 'truth' production (e.g., the university, laboratory, or classroom) and its interface with the larger society. (Blacker, 1998, p. 361)

Social events that allow students and faculty to share in the creation of "truth production" (Blacker, 1998, p. 361), in other words, what goes on in students' environments and lives, and intersectional workshops in where faculty can support students intellectual, psychological, psychosocial, and culture-specific needs can be implemented (Taylor, 1997). Further, this can be accomplished by creating linkage mentoring programs that are facilitated by members of faculty and support staff. These 'link' programs can offer opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to come together in creating educational programs such as faculty research internship programs for one-on-one professor/student interactions (Lopex-Mulnix & Mulnix, 2006). Research interns can gain practical experience in the scientific research process while receiving positive feedback and building positive relationship experiences with professors (Lopex-Mulnix & Mulnix, 2006).

Students and the social structures of which they occupy coalesce around a sense of identity; identity is, in turn, imitated in language. Language is cultural, and thus discourse communities are influenced largely by culture. College-level educators consider identifying what role academic discourse plays in students' ability to persist. An

example of this need is found in Angel as he chose not to talk in class because he felt like "[a] big [man] with a small voice." He felt alienated and intellectually inferior because he equated his professor's use of discursive conventions of academic discourse with actual knowledge (White, 2007). College-level educators can facilitate positives interactions in the classroom by insuring that racial/ethnic diversity is part of the course content. They can promote interaction across racial/ethnic groups and student achievement through cooperative learning activities, inside and outside of the classroom. This increased interaction across race/ethnic can lead to intergroup friendships (Slavin, 1985). When students work in cooperatively on course material, they learn more about one another as well as the course content. Further, consider how to modify classroom practices in reducing competition in the classroom. However, given the significant role of faculty content (in and out of the classroom), it is imperative that significant opportunities for all faculty-student contact in and out of the classroom. Finally, given the academic reward structured of many institutions, leaders may need to provide incentive to encourage faculty to engage students in this way (Hurtado et al., 1998).

College-level educators and those teaching first years experiences can find that academic support is more meaningful to students if it's not delivered and received in isolation, but integrated with, the content of the college course and classroom learning. Effective learning strategies cannot be developed within isolated and insulated "learning skills" workshops or "study skills" courses (Gamerson, 1993). Basic academic skills are most effectively learned in a meaningful context, as when they are applied to the learning of specific subject matter. Students need to have a sense of purpose for using these skills

in relation to a specific subject area or particular course content in order for the learning skills to "take hold" (Levin & Levin, 1991).

Provisional Admittance

Intervention strategies and support services for all students should be framed in a way that focuses on success, the playing field should level for students in order to acquire the necessary skills and resources, risk will be reduced, and students are more likely to persist (Iverson, 2007). Students' identities are shaped through discourse—"the place where our sense of ourselves . . . is *constructed*" (Weedon, 1997, p. 21). This discourse situates students' perceived deficiencies as vulnerable, at-risk, and dependent on the university and its' programs to compensate for these deficiencies. This discursive framing of diverse student populations fails to critically examine the "systemic factors that perpetuate deficit thinking and reproduce educational inequities" (Garcia & Guerra, 2004, p. 155). When college students perceive that they are expected to be responsible, their role-identity of being responsible becomes stronger. Role-identity theory postulates that college students who believe they are expected to be responsible are more likely to define themselves as responsible and act accordingly (Callero, 1985). This study used the example of an initiated special program for African-American students at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, in where students were not stigmatized by a label of remedial or compensatory program, but rather they were told that "as Michigan students, they had survived a competitive selection process, and that their assignment to the program was intended to maximize their strong potential" (Charles et al., 2009, p. 5). Thereafter, the university officials identified the students' worth as scholars, communicated their high expectations for them, and explicitly labeled the program with those messages in mind.

Based on the university's admission criteria, and in the context of provisional college students, the role of 'provisional' is foregrounded without attention to how the social categories might influence the students' identity development (Abes, 2016) and how students are able to successfully negotiate their college experience despite experiencing "challenging or threatening circumstances" (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005, p. 426). This intersectional framework captured a more complete and accurate picture of the complexities in the everyday lived experiences of provisional students by explicitly linking individual, interpersonal, and social structural aspects to their college experiences (Dill & Zambrana, 2009; Shields, 2008). Rather than examining singular aspects of their identity, such as, Asian or White, a focus on the intersections (meshing and converging) of their multiple identities (such as; White, first-generation, of low economic status, etc…) can be used to explore how the many facets of their identities influence their ability to persist and making meanings out of those experiences.

There must be institutional commitment for all students admitted to colleges and universities. Assessment of institutional commitment must be an actual and not proxy measurement of the level of real and perceived institutional support students receive (Locks, 2008). Institutions must proactively audit their campus climates and cultures to determine the need for change. As indicated throughout this study, racial realities remain undisclosed and not addressed in systematic ways on college campuses. Until institutional policy and programs espouse commitments to diversity and multiculturalism and without engaging in examinations of campus climates, racial/ethnic minorities, underprepared and first-generational students will continue to feel excluded (Harper, 2010). Admission into colleges and universities should done without the stigma of the

labels. Labels are not neutral; they contain assumptions about the problem and the remedy. As Tyack (1989) states "being labeled [provisional] is certainly not neutral and must be weighted carefully for its relative potential for possible and needed assistance or intervention and its potential for damage, disempowerment, or further marginalization (p. 34).

Increase campus diversity across college campuses. A diverse racial/ethnic make-up should be represented on campus in proportionate numbers. While efforts to increase the representation of diverse students groups on campus and to remove barriers to their participant are crucial, these steps alone are not sufficient to achieving the goal of improving the campus climate and culture for diversity (Hurtado et al., 1998). Meaning, beyond the observable make-up of the students, faculty, staff, administrators, etc…, are the attitudinal and behavior characteristics of how students groups "feel" about and relate to one another. How does the campus "feel" to minority students (e.g., Do they feel welcome? Do they sense hostility? Do they feel valued?). How does the campus respond to racially and culturally different groups (e.g., Does the campus strive to change to incorporate these students or does the campus communicate that adaptation is the job of only the minority students? Does the campus genuinely value diversity?) (Hurtado et al., 1998).

Create effective remediation. Form high school and college partnerships in the creation of summer bridge programs. These partnerships can be used to unite high school faculty with college faculty to teach summer programs (ranging form one to six weeks). The programs can be facilitated during the summer and intervening between their last term in high school and their first term in college, thus serving as a "bridge" between

high school and higher education. These programs can target academically "at-risk" students (for example, low-income, first-generation, or underrepresented students) and can include program components like academic skills assessments and instruction, orientation to higher education, and residential experiences whereby students take course together and reside on campus in residence halls (Cuseo, 2012).

Methodological Implications

Given the study's distinctive design, inferences related to the methodology were also investigated. This section reviews two major methodological implications: the tension between "provoke[ing]…knowledge" (Pitt & Britzman, 2003, p. 769) and the employment of phenomenology in the arena of higher education.

"Provoking Knowledge". Chapter 3 of this research thoroughly outlined why I believe that this study's design would "provoke, not represent, knowledge" (Pitt & Britzman, 2003, p. 769). The study was crafted so that writing, thinking, talking and making sense of current and past experiences would provoke new understandings for the participants. This was evident in the study's implementation, as participants expressed many "aha" moments and instances of "I never said out loud how much others have pushed me to be a better student and individual," which displayed a shift in perspective as a result of telling or retelling stories, experiences, and events. Three study participants experienced shifts in the understanding of self, linked to their involvement in the study: Nicki felt like she learned more about herself by explaining how she truly felt, "It gave her "an opportunity to dig deeper at [her] emotions toward college and in a way made the decision more clear." Angel expressed that he "Never really thought about it before" and was pleased to announce that "I am actually a caring person." In Jessica's follow-up

journal entry, she responded to the thought prompt: Times when you perceived that other students, faculty, advisors, etc… expected you to be successful in college. She professed that "This stuck out to me the most—I never said out loud how much others pushed me to be a better student and person." Jessica's experience allowed her to "Put into perspective how they helped make me a successful student." As she explained, "I think the interview helped me understand myself on a deeper level and it also helped me process my experience as a provisionary student."

My own knowledge was also provoked, as I was challenged to re-examine my understanding of the phenomena. I displayed this through sharing my own learning, inviting participants to provide feedback both in the interview and journal exercise that then forced me to again rethink what I thought I knew about myself, the negotiations of provisional college students, and the practices, policies, and culture of the university—recasting my own experiences in a new light. For example, my experiences with Angel; I am so impressed with his growth. During the fall 2011 semester, Angel was enrolled in my success seminar. He was a shy and quiet student and now he is an outgoing, confident man. I also met with him on occasion in the advising office, although he preferred to see my very kind Black colleague in the advising office next to me. I admit that I often felt disgruntled about Black students going only to Black advisors, sometimes waiting for an hour rather than meeting with a White advisor like myself. I admit that I felt like I needed to convince them that I care about them. In doing this study, I now understand that there are other barriers that provisional students experience; barriers beyond the risk factors they bring to campus with them and beyond the barriers of being provisional students.

Heuristic Phenomenology. The aim of this study was to expand heuristic phenomenology to the higher education arena. The promise of heuristic inquiry is that it offers a systematic ways of "incorporating the self into the inquiry methods" (Hiles, 2001, p. 13), which allowed the ability to increase, impose, circumscribe, and deepen meaning-making capacities. As found in Chapter 4, although theoretical frameworks were significant, institutional context proved to be the strongest critical force in determining how provisional college students negotiated race/ethnicity and role-identity and how those negotiations were informed by stereotype threat, self-efficacy, and resilience. The participants understanding of the culture, policies, and procedures of the university that shaped their initial experiences as well as each subsequent rethinking, reinterpretation, and meaning-making in the students' life-world (Schwandt, 2015). Indeed, heuristic phenomenology is electrifying for its potential to understand the interplay between structures and lived experiences; this is particularly true in the realm of higher education. I confess the methodology was at times challenging to negotiate but it proved to be a rich lens to work through the study's research questions.

Limitations of the Study and Directions for Future Research

As with any study, this research was influenced by several limitations. My identity as a White woman created limitation for the study, as I had my own blind spots, both discovered and undiscovered, in this research process. As I quoted in Chapter 3: "Indeed—we learn something of our own knowledge when we stumble in the face of our own persistent blind spots, and we collude with interviewees in their production of satisfying narratives that dance around the surprise of self implication" (p. 769).

While I made every effort to systematically examine and uncover my blind spots, the very nature of "acknowledging the awareness of Whiteness" (Helms, 1990, p.93) continued to obscure this process. Throughout the data collection and examination process, I was reminded of Helms' (1990) discussion of "helping White people identify their role in racial issues" (p. 93) as the heuristic design of this study mandated my own discovery alongside those of the participants. Therefore, my own "persistent blind spots" (Pitt & Britzman, 2003, p. 769) and "acknowledging [my] awareness of Whiteness" (Helms, 1990, p. 93) must also be considered.

Another limitation of this study is that all the participants were from one institution, thus limiting the applicability of the findings. The lived experiences of provisional college student participants were embedded in a specific student success program and shaped by the characteristics of the institution in which the success program took place limited the applicability only to other institutions of similar size, similar student body characteristics, and similar policy and practices entailed within the success program. Further, the participants self-identified as Black, White, and mixed-race only; additional study of provisional college students who identify as Latinx, Asian, American Indian, etc., could enhance the discussion. It is recommended that future studies explore a diverse college and university populations, and thus expand institutional types and sizes, to allow for a fuller picture of how race/ethnicity and role-identity influence provisional students' ability to persist. It is also recommended that future studies explore the lived experiences of provisional college students that did not persist, but rather dropped out, stopped-out, or were dismissed.

Another limitation in the data collection was time. Perhaps if data was collected at different points during the semester, the participants would have been better able to share their experiences as 'in the moment.' Further, perhaps more participants at each level of their college degree could have created more themes relevant to education level. Finally, given the fact that I had relationships at some level with all the participants, perhaps could have possibly skewed the data.

Summary

Chapter 5 was a synopsis of the findings discovered in a heuristic phenomenological study that used students' voices to capture the lived experiences of provisional college students, explored the intersection of their identities in the ability to persist, and provided and examined what provisional students say about how the campus environment influences their identity. The findings of the study support the notion that addressing students' *whole self* when considering aspects of their identities used in their ability to persist in college is necessary. Additionally conclusions were provided and discussed as they relate to how provisional college students negotiate race/ethnicity and role-identity as they persisted. Several limitations of this study were discussed, and various recommendations for future research were provided, including recommendations for groups such as: campus administrators, college-level educators, and makers of institutional programs and policy.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT

Study Title: Intersecting Identities of Provisional College Students: A Phenomenological Study of Lived Experiences

Researcher: Leslie Tucker

You have been invited to participate in a research project. This project will serve as Leslie Tucker's dissertation research for the requirements of Doctorate of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instructional Studies - Secondary Education.

This is a consent form for research participation. It includes important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. **Your participation is voluntary.** Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign the consent form. I will provide you with a copy of the signed document.

Purpose. This phenomenological study used students' voices to capture the lived experiences of provisional college students, explored the intersection of their identities in the ability to persist, and examined what provisional students say about how the campus environment influences their identities.

Eligibility. In order to participate, you must have been admitted into the university as a provisional student and have completed at least two semesters.

Procedures/Tasks and Duration. If selected, you will be asked to participate in one

interview and one journal entry. Once selected, I will contact you to schedule an interview that will last approximately 90 minutes. After the completion of the 90 minute interview, you will be asked to participate in the writing of a journal. The journal will allow you to continue to reflect further about the interview experience. This is an optional journal. I will provide great flexibility in working around your school schedule when choosing interview times. The interview location will be on the main campus. You are free to skip any questions you do not wish to answer. You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Confidentiality. Every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. Pseudonyms will be used for participants, and identifying information will be removed from the write-up. All audio and text files will be stored on a password-protected external hard drive. Upon the completion of the study all audio taped interviews will be erased.

Incentives. Participants who complete the first phase of the study (face-to-face interview) will receive $10 cash, participants who also complete the second phase of the study (submit via email, mail, or hand deliver your journal entry) will receive an additional $10 cash. All incentives will be distributed at the conclusion of the study.

Participant Rights. You may refuse to participate in this study.

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study. The investigator can also decide to stop your participation in the study without your consent.

Signing the Consent Form

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I will be given a copy of this form**.** _____

Printed Name **Signature**

☐ I agree to have my interview audio taped. I understand the tape will be erased once the study is completed.

Investigator/Research Staff

I have explained the research to the participant before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant.

_____ _____

Printed Name of Investigator **Signature**

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Name: _____
Date: _____
Start time: _____
End time: _____

1. I will introduce myself.
2. Say the purpose of the study.
3. Remind the participants that there participation of voluntary.
4. Discuss confidentially.
5. Provide the opportunity for the participant to ask questions or clarification at any time.

Interview Questions

`Introduction Background questions	1. What has been your most memorable college experience so far, both positive and negative?
	2. Where did you attend high school?
	3. Did you like school Probe: Did you like school? Why? Or Why not?
	4. Who are your support systems? Probe: Meaning – who encourages you in your academic pursuits, career goals.
	5. What does it mean to you to pursue a college education?
	6. What is your major?
	7. What are your career goals? Probe: Summarize – reflect back on the conversation
	8. What does the term identity mean to you?
	9. How would you describe your identity as a college student? Probe: How would you describe or define your identity? Probe: Do you have more than one identity? Probe: Can you share?
	10. How will your identities matter in your future plans? Probe: Can you share how?
	11. How has your identity changed since you have been a college student? Probe: Can you explain further?
	12. How did you feel when you received your provisional admission letter? Probe: Can you share further?

`Thought Prompts that were relevant or interesting to the student and their relevance to meaning-making	13. Prior to our meeting, I sent you a thought prompt exercise. Is there a prompt that you were excited to discuss? Probe: Let's start there.
	14. What other thought prompts cause your attention? Probe: Can you please share why?
	15. Please tell me about your experiences in relation to the prompts that interested you. Probe: For example you said……..
	16. What is the prompt that you least want to engage in, if any? Probe: Can you share why?
	17. What would you say the <u>key</u> component(s) of your college environments are: the physical design, the characteristics of people who inhabit them, social climate, and/or culture? Probe: Can you share why you say that?
The Influence of the college environment on aspects of identity	18. Will you please describe the campus environment here at the university? (socially, emotionally, physically) Probe: Can you please share further?
	19. Where do you hang out on campus? Probe: Can you share why?
	20. Are you a part of any groups or clubs? Probe: Can you share further? Which groups?
	21. Are you comfortable with your academic advisor? Probe: Your professors? Probe: Who (what employee) have you connected with the most here on campus? Probe: Can you share why?
	22. What about the campus environment do you believe supports or hinders your identity? Probe: Can you expound on that?
	23. Are your classes all over campus or in one area? Probe: Have they been like…. starting your first semester? Probe: Do you like that?
	Is there anything else you would like to say about anything we discussed?
	24. Is there anything that you think I should be taken into consideration about this topic?
Wrap up questions	25. Have you thought differently about yourself as a provisional college student as a result of participating in this study? 26. Probe: If yes, how so?
	Housekeeping: *Please choose a pseudonym

APENDIX C

INTERVIEW THOUGHT PROMPTS

Below are the thought prompts for our interview, which I am sending in advance of our discussion. Based on a thought experiment by Pitt and Britzman (2003) the prompts are deliberately multiple and open-ended. They are designed to help you think about experiences, situations, and moments when you: **knowingly or unknowingly negotiated your race /ethnicity and role-identity, and what influence if any resilience, stereotype threat, and self-efficacy had on your ability to persist.**

It is not expected that all topic areas will apply to you and/or resonate with you. Please feel free to mark on these pages in advance of our discussion so that we can focus on the prompts that you feel are most relevant to share. When we meet, I will ask you some brief preliminary questions and then ask you to discuss the prompts you have identified as relevant.

Thinking about identity(s) growing up at home

Times you named/claimed your identity(s)

Times someone named your identity(s) for you

Times you rejected your identity(s)

Times someone did not want to discuss or name their identity(s)

Times shared identity(s) strengthened you or when they created strains

Times identities intersected (merged together)

Thinking about encountering 'others' – meaning those that may not understand your identity(s)

Times you felt understood/acknowledged/heard in a relationship

Times you were frustrated with or disagreed with others

Times relationships fractured or were healed

Times relationships were impossible

Thinking about identity(s) and learning from experience

Times you incorporated new knowledge/learning into your daily experiences

Times you learned from mistakes

Times you acted differently or changed your approach because of something you learned

Times past hurts kept you from action or compelled you to act

Thinking about identity(s) and encounters with speaking truth to perceived authority

Times you spoke up or chose not to speak

Times you felt at risk or when speaking felt unsafe

Times you felt passionate about speaking and/or you could not speak

Times you spoke and were not effective

Times you encountered resistance or hostility

Times you felt you should speak but you didn't know how

Thinking about identity(s) and encounters with your college environment

Times your college environment did or did not support you in your work

Times your college environment did or did not support collaboration with others

Times your college environment was open or was not open to change

Times you were frustrated with or you were proud of your institution

Thinking about identity(s) and encounters with not knowing

Times you didn't know what was happening or how to proceed

Times you didn't know what you didn't know

Times not knowing felt scary or felt freeing

Times you needed to ask for help

Thinking about role-identity(s) as a college student

Times when you perceived that other students, faculty, advisors, etc… expected you to be successful in college

Times when you were successful

Times when you were not

Times when your self-view or a meaning attributed to yourself related to a specific role

Times when you felt a specific role became closely tied to your sense of self or identity

Times when you then behaved according to that role

Thinking about self-efficacy and its influence on your identity as a college student

Times when you felt a strong belief in your capability to execute a desired action

Times when your identity(s) positively or negatively influenced your beliefs about your ability

Times when did or did not interact favorably with your faculty, advisor and peers

Times when you did or did not feel you had the ability to perform a task

Thinking about times identity(s) and pressure to perform in a certain way

Times you were or were not judged or treated badly during your college experience

Times when there was a situational cue that indicated that you were at risk of being judged in which may have influenced your identity?

Times you felt extra pressure to perform

Thinking about times when you overcame adversity as it related to you

Times when you thought about ‘achievement gap’

Times when you thought about ‘socioeconomic statuses

Times when you thought about contributing factors to personal success

Times when you thought about personal characteristics that promote resiliency

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS LINKED TO THEORY

Central Research Question (CRQ)

How do provisional undergraduate college students' intersecting identities influence their ability to persist, what influence do provisional college students say the college environment has on their intersecting identities, and how students make meaning of their multiple identities?

Theory-Based Questions (TQs)

1. What aspects of role-identity influence identity development?
2. What aspects of stereotype threat influence identity development?
3. What aspects of race/ethnicity influence identity development?
4. What aspects of self-efficacy influence identity development?
5. What aspects of resilience influence identity development?
6. What aspects of the college environment influence multiple identities?

Interview Questions (IQs)	TQ 1	TQ 2	TQ 3	TQ4	TQ5	TQ6
What has been your most memorable college experience so far, both positive and negative?						
Where did you attend high school?						x
Did you like school Probe: Did you like school? Why? Or Why not?	x	x	x	x	x	x
Who are your support systems? Probe: Meaning – who encourages you in your academic and career goals?	x	x	x	x	x	
What does it mean to you to pursue a college education?	x	x	x	x		x
What is your major?						
What are your career goals? Probe: Summarize – reflect back on the conversation						
What does the term identity mean to you?	x	x		x	x	x
How would you describe your identity as a college student? Probe: How would you describe or define your identity? Probe: Do you have more than one identity? Probe: Can you share?	x	x	x	x		x
How much will your identities matter in your future plans? Probe: Can you share how?	x	x	x	x	x	x
Has your identity changed since you have been a college student? Probe: How?	x	x	x	x	x	x
How did you feel when you received your provisional admission letter? Probe: Can you share further?	x	x	x	x	x	x
Prior to our meeting, I sent you a thought prompt exercise. Is there a prompt that you were excited to discuss? Probe: Let's start there.						
What other thought prompts cause your attention? Probe: Can you please share why?						
Please tell me about your experiences in						

relation to the prompts that interested you. Probe: For example you said……..						
What is the prompt that you least want to engage in, if any? Probe: Can you share why?						
Will Please describe the campus environment here that the university? (socially, emotionally, physically) Probe: Can you please share further?	x	x	x	x	x	x
What would you say the key component(s) of your college environments are: the physical design, the characteristics of people who inhabit them, social climate, and/or culture? Probe: Can you share why you say that?						x
Where do you hang out on campus? Probe: Can you share why?						
Are you a part of any groups or clubs? Probe: Can you share further? Which groups?						x
Are you comfortable with your academic advisor? Probe: Your professors?	x	x				x `
Probe: Who (what employee) have you connected with the most here on campus? Probe: Can you share why?	x	x	x	x	x	x
What about the campus environment do you believe supports or hinders your identity? Probe: Can you expound on that?	x	x	x	x		x
Are your classes all over campus or in one area? Probe: Have they been like…. starting your first semester? Probe: Do you like that?						x
Is there anything else you would like to say about anything we discussed?						x
Is there anything that you think I should be taken into consideration about this topic?						
Have you thought differently about yourself as a provisional college student as a result of participating in this study? Probe: If yes, how so?						
Housekeeping: *Please choose a pseudonym	x	x	x	x		x

APPENDIX E

JOURNAL PROTOCOL

Please consider sharing your thoughts, stories, and experiences freely with me.

This journal provides an opportunity to deepen the conversation we started about how your multiple identities influence your ability to persist, as well as what influence the college environment has on your identity.

****Journals are confidential and will only be viewed by me, the researcher.

I invite you to place [ ] brackets around any writing or stores that you deem identifying or private. As a researcher, I will use bracketed sections to help me understand your overall experiences and perspective, but will not quote or paraphrase bracketed stories or sections in the final project. Please send your journals back to me via my university email at lt13@uakron.edu within three days after our interview. You can type write into the email or use a Word document. Feel free to put your journal in any format and any style. Please feel free to write as much or as little as you like for each question. In any case, I hope that you share your thoughts, stories, and experiences as freely as you wish.

Writing Prompts

1. How did you feel about discussing the thought prompts during our first interview? Any unexpected outcomes?
2. How, if at all, do you express your identity and multiple identities during your day-to-day experience in college?
3. Choose the most interesting/compelling thought prompt that you are experiencing in this current moment. Please reflect back to your thought prompt guide. Please try and expand on your answers with reflective thought.
4. What would you like to share that has not been asked?

APPENDIX F

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Circle Observation place: Student Union - Residence Halls - Robs Café - Bierce Library - Recreation Center - Outside – Classroom *

other:_____

Date: **Start time:** **End time:**

Observation expectations (new observation expectations could/should be different during each session)

Description of the setting (this should be done before each observation even if the observation is in the same setting as changes to the setting may change-for example the temperature, noise level, any changes in the space layout)

Probing thoughts and questions during observation

Who is involved? * Who is interacting? * What are they saying? * Am I focusing on specific details? * What events are taking place? * What is the energy in the room? * Am I watching peoples' gestures and actions? * Am I noting what I am seeing, hearing, feeling and thinking? *

Am I seeing what I hope to see and not anything else? * Am I being judgmental and evaluative?

Description of the events that transpire during observation (during each observation, time spent can vary from 15 minute intervals up to 45 minute intervals –this can be different during each observation)

1st - 15 min	
2nd - 15 min	
3rd - 15 min	

APPENDIX G

Office of Research Administration
Akron OH 44325-2102

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

Date: April 24, 2017

To: Leslie Tucker,
Curricular & Instructional Studies

SM

From: Sharon McWhorter

IRB Number: 20170409

Title: Intersecting Identities of Provisional Admitted College Students: A Phenomenological Study of Lived Experiences

Approval Date: April 24, 2017

Thank you for submitting your IRB Application for review. Your protocol represents minimal risk to subjects and matches the following federal category for exemption:

- ☐ **Exemption 1** Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices.
- ☑ **Exemption 2** Research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior.
- ☐ **Exemption 3** - Research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior not exempt under category 2, but subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office.
- ☐ **Exemption 4** Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens.
- ☐ **Exemption 5** Research and demonstration projects conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine public programs or benefits.
- ☐ **Exemption 6** Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies.

Annual continuation applications are not required for exempt projects. If you make changes to the study's design or procedures that increase the risk to subjects or include activities that do not fall within the approved exemption category, please contact the IRB to discuss whether or not a new application must be submitted. Any such changes or modifications must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

Please retain this letter for your files. This office will hold your exemption application for a period of three years from the approval date. If you wish to continue this protocol beyond this period, you will need to submit another Exemption Request. If the research is being conducted for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, the student must file a copy of this letter with the thesis or dissertation.

☑ Approved consent form/s enclosed