FINDING THEIR WAY: A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY
OF HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the 14 participants in this study who so generously shared of themselves. I would also like to honor the memory of my friend and classmate, Tim Mains, whose grace and dedication to the pursuit of education—both his own and the many students he helped over his long career—was and will continue to be an inspiration.

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Abstract

FINDING THEIR WAY: A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY

OF HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Institutions of higher education benefit from a clear understanding of how faculty develop teaching expertise and of the contexts in which faculty operate. The purpose of this grounded theory study was to describe the process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through participation in faculty development. In this study, I used faculty interviews to explore participants' perspectives and experiences as they reflected on how they could apply what they learned from a faculty development initiative, and how their teaching practices were impacted. The theory of faculty growth that emerged from this study posits that the foundational elements of Faculty Identity and Institutional Context impact decisions faculty make in Finding Their Way to becoming a better and more effective teacher. Finding Their Way includes how faculty experience feeling confident, how they make choices about teaching and faculty development opportunities, their openness to experimenting with teaching strategies, and their willingness make changes to their teaching practices by trying new things. As faculty pursue growth, they experience Community and Collaboration by finding and nurturing community.

At the most fundamental level, the most significant findings from this research concerned faculty development and what faculty need from their institutions to pursue growth opportunities that, ultimately, help them to become more effective and more innovative teachers. This research study contributes to a better understanding of the importance of a supportive community as faculty members experiment with new teaching strategies, and how institutions need to take a stronger role in developing this supportive culture. Colleges and universities dedicate time and resources to providing professional development activities for faculty and must be thoughtful about where those resources are deployed. Understanding how instructors experience faculty development, and how these activities

have the potential to impact their teaching practices, allows institutions to provide appropriate and useful programming for instructors.

Chapter 1: Introduction

> What happens in the classroom in terms of their teaching, in faculty offices with their scholarship—and often how they view the impact of one upon the other—makes all the difference in terms of the quality of the educational experience that their institutions can offer students and the broader community. (Matthias, 2019, p. 260)

The purpose of this chapter is to situate the reader in the context for this study, the influences from both the literature and from my academic and professional background that inspired me to pursue this study. I start the chapter with an overview of the problem that was addressed: the role(s) of instructors in today's colleges and universities, how instructors pursue development opportunities, and instructors' decision-making processes about their development. I next outline the research context, introduce the research questions and grounded theory research design, and overview the conceptual foundation from the literature on faculty development research. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the significance of this study.

Overview of the Problem

Faculty members have a unique role in helping students adapt to the expectations of college, learn disciplinary content and general academic skills and attitudes, and complete a degree or credential. These important teaching, advising, and mentoring activities occur both in and outside of classroom spaces—and increasingly in virtual spaces. Instructors have a broad range of actions they can take to impact students' sense of belonging and academic confidence (Gianoutsos & Winkelmes, 2016; Strayhorn, 2009, 2010; Terenzini et al., 1996; Walton & Cohen, 2011; Williams & Ferrari, 2015; Winkelmes, 2015a, 2015b); key components that contribute to student success. Some of these interactions happen inside the classroom, over discussions of coursework, but many interactions flow into out-of-classroom experiences and connections. Researchers who explore students' experiences emphasize the role that faculty members play, noting that "it is critical for college student educators to

encourage positive interactions among students through conditions that really matter in college, ranging from advising networks to co-curricular involvement, from learning communities to peer mentoring" (Strayhorn, 2019, p. 2).

Implementing more student-centered pedagogies helps build relationships between students and faculty, connecting students to social and informational networks (Karp, Hughes, & O'Gara, 2008; Karp, O'Gara, & Hughes, 2008) and encouraging students' academic and personal growth. Whether instructors have the capacity or willingness to engage in this work, however, is largely a function of their preparation and the relative importance they place on affective components of the instructor–student relationship. Faculty and administrators in postsecondary institutions will benefit from a better understanding of how faculty develop teaching expertise and the teaching and learning perspectives and contexts in which faculty operate. While understanding who instructors are and what they do is central to examining student performance, it remains unclear how college and university instructors develop pedagogical expertise. This research study focused on the work that faculty do to develop as teachers.

Key Terms

In the design of this study, I drew upon certain terminology that contained multiple meanings or might be used interchangeably. I attempted in my writing to avoid overly technical terminology to increase readability; however, a few terms warrant definition for the purpose of this inquiry.

Faculty and Instructor

Throughout, I use *faculty* and *instructor* interchangeably and inclusively to refer to individuals who teach, whether full- or part-time, in 2-year and 4-year institutions of higher education.

Center for Teaching and Learning

Institutions sometimes have a dedicated individual, center, or unit that supports instructors in developing professionally. Institutions use different terminology; for consistency, throughout this study I

use Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) to refer to an administrative unit or organization within an institution dedicated to supporting teaching.

Faculty Development

Faculty development is the process of learning how to be a faculty member in an institution of higher education. The Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education offers a three-part explanation of faculty development (POD Network, 2016). One piece is the "focus on the individual instructor or future faculty member" (POD Network, 2016, para. 5) and the individual's development of teaching expertise, which is the focus of this research. A second focus is "the instructor as a scholar and professional" and development of creative and scholarly endeavors; a third focus is "the instructor as a person" with emphasis on "programs that address the individual's well-being" (POD Network, 2016, paras. 6–7). I use the terms *faculty development* and *professional development* interchangeably.

Educational Development

The term educational development is broader than faculty development or professional development. The POD network uses *educational development* to encompass the work of its members in faculty development, but also in instructional development (e.g., thinking about development and assessment of courses and programs) and organizational development (e.g., institutional improvement, hiring practices, developing administrative leaders) and how this work impacts individuals, programs, and institutions (POD Network, 2016).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to describe the process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through participation in faculty development. The inspiration for this study was my participation in coordinating a teaching-focused faculty development initiative for full- and part-time faculty at 2- and 4-year public and private institutions in Virginia. The faculty development

initiative is described in more detail when I address the study context in Chapter 3. This research study used faculty interviews to explore participants' perspectives and experiences as they reflected on how they could apply what they learned from the faculty development initiative. The focus of this study was to understand the faculty participants' decision-making process in applying what they learned from the professional development initiative to their teaching.

Methodological Design and Research Questions

This study followed grounded theory methodology to collect faculty interview data to better understand the experience of participating in a professional development initiative.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this inquiry were:

1. How do faculty describe their participation in a faculty development initiative?
2. How do faculty describe their implementation of a teaching intervention?
3. What is the decision-making process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through faculty development?

Grounded Theory

This grounded theory study explored instructors' perceptions of participating in faculty development. I was guided by a grounded theory methodology to better understand instructors' experiences and the process of applying what they have learned to their teaching practices. Grounded theory as a research methodology is founded on assumptions about the world that speak to the "great varieties of human action, interaction, and emotional responses that people have to the events and problems they encounter" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 7). More specifically, the design of this study followed constructivist grounded theory methods, as described by Charmaz (2014), because it offers "a set of general principles, guidelines, strategies, and heuristic devices rather than formulaic prescriptions" (p. 3). I expand on the appropriateness of grounded theory to this study in Chapter 3.

Researcher Positionality

This section briefly outlines the "philosophical, personal, [and] theoretical beliefs and perspectives" (Darwin Holmes, 2020, p. 4). I brought to this study: (a) my position as an "insider" in relation to the research participants, (b) personal and professional experiences that have contributed to my interest in faculty development and this specific research topic, and (c) the research context. Keeping these beliefs and perspectives in mind helped me to consider assumptions I brought into the research process, to keep these biases in perspective during data collection and analysis, and to articulate the underlying core values and beliefs I brought to the study.

I approached this research from a perspective of constructing understandings about participants' decision-making process in concert with the participants, trying to be authentic to their words and meanings while acknowledging that my findings are my interpretations of their expressed reality. As a current teaching faculty member at one of the institutions in the state, I was a peer to the participants in my research study; however, I also have held roles as a faculty mentor at my institution and as a co-leader of the state-wide professional development and research initiative, Creating Equitable Learning Opportunities Through Transparent Assignment Design. Because of these roles, participants might have viewed me as an "expert" or authority in the context of the project beyond my role as a doctoral student conducting interviews. In my interactions with participants, my goal was to see "behavior and actions as being relative to the person's culture and the context in which that behavior or action is both rational and meaningful within that culture" (Darwin Holmes, 2020, p. 5), allowing my insider perspective to provide context for understanding participants' responses.

In my role with the professional development initiative, I was one of three coordinator–facilitators of the initial and follow-up professional development workshops and of the ongoing faculty learning communities that supported instructors as they implemented the initiative in their classrooms. These dual roles, facilitator and researcher, allowed me to develop, as Creswell (2003) explained,

"established rapport with the participants so that they will disclose detailed perspectives" (p. 125). At the outset, I believed this supportive researcher–facilitator role would be important to both the success of the broader professional development initiative, and to understanding participants' experiences. Looking back, my involvement in and knowledge of the initiative did position me as having some level of expertise in the eyes of the study participants, although I tried to keep my role as coordinator separate from the interviews I conducted.

Beyond my immediate work with the faculty development initiative, Creating Equitable Learning Opportunities Through Transparent Assignment Design, I have worked in postsecondary education, community adult education, teacher preparation, and faculty development for my entire career. Through my teaching at different institutions, from middle school to graduate level, I have had many opportunities to participate in teacher education and faculty development. Some of these were excellent, blending best practices with a strong research base, and some were less so. One of my beliefs about faculty development is that successful faculty development initiatives ask instructors to reflect on their current teaching and expose them to new or different ways of teaching and designing course activities. Where faculty development programs often fall short, in my experience, is in the follow-through. I see this as both a design flaw (i.e., developers do not plan for participants' transfer of knowledge into their teaching) and an implementation flaw (i.e., developers do not offer follow-up activities or communications and do not encourage collaboration opportunities post-workshop). Instructors are left without time or resources to implement what they have learned, without guidance for how to implement, and without a community to support them as they consider ways to make changes to their teaching practices.

As Charmaz (2021) noted, "researchers' preconceptions [are] rooted in their respective worldviews and social positions" (p. 154). My personal, professional, and academic background all contributed to an interest in teaching-focused initiatives and a desire to support colleagues'

development of teaching expertise. These teaching and leadership experiences informed my thinking about how faculty become better teachers and provided motivation to pursue this research topic. By acknowledging that these experiences may have influenced how I interpreted the data collected via participant interviews, I am acknowledging my lens as a faculty member and faculty developer.

Conceptual Framework and Sensitizing Concepts

Qualitative research, broadly, is traditionally grounded in the articulation of a conceptual framework, although there are conflicting views as to what a conceptual framework is and how—and whether—it differs from a theoretical framework. C. Grant and Osanloo (2014) proposed a more inclusive approach to what a conceptual framework is, arguing that it should represent "the researcher's understanding of how the research problem will best be explored, the specific direction the research will have to take, and the relationship between the different variables in the study" (pp. 16–17). Creswell (2007) called for a "research map" of existing literature to help situate the proposed research (p. 103) and the "central phenomenon" (p. 104), further noting that for grounded theory "the central phenomenon might be identified as a concept central to the process being examined" (p. 104). Others have viewed the conceptual framework more narrowly. Maxwell (2009) represented this view in explaining that "your conceptual framework is a formulation of what you think is going on with the phenomena you are studying—a tentative theory of what is happening and why" (pp. 222–223).

In a grounded theory study, the end goal should be to articulate relationships between concepts: to develop, if not a theory, then a conceptual framework. Charmaz (2014) explained that grounded theory is "a rigorous method of conducting research in which researchers construct conceptual frameworks or theories through building inductive theoretical analyses from data" (p. 343). The conceptual framework—what Bryant (2017) called "models or frameworks or conceptual schemas" (p. 99) and Timonen et al. (2018) characterized as "greater conceptual clarity, or a conceptual framework" (p. 4)—is often the result of a grounded theory study.

In addressing the use of theoretical frameworks, Corbin and Strauss (2014) unequivocally stated that they "do not encourage their use in grounded theory studies" (p. 52), explaining that "the whole purpose of doing a grounded theory is to develop a theoretical explanatory framework" and that "once analysis has been completed, it makes sense for researchers to compare their theories to established theories for similarities and differences and to be able to locate their theories within the larger body of professional theoretical knowledge" (p. 52). In line with a grounded theory approach, I am not outlining a traditional framework but rather focusing on sensitizing concepts. Charmaz (2014) explained:

> Sensitizing concepts give researchers initial but tentative ideas to pursue and questions to raise about their topics. Grounded theorists use sensitizing concepts as tentative tools for developing their ideas about processes that they define in their data. If particular sensitizing concepts prove to be irrelevant, then we dispense with them . . . Thus, sensitizing concepts may guide but do not command inquiry, much less commandeer it. (p. 30)

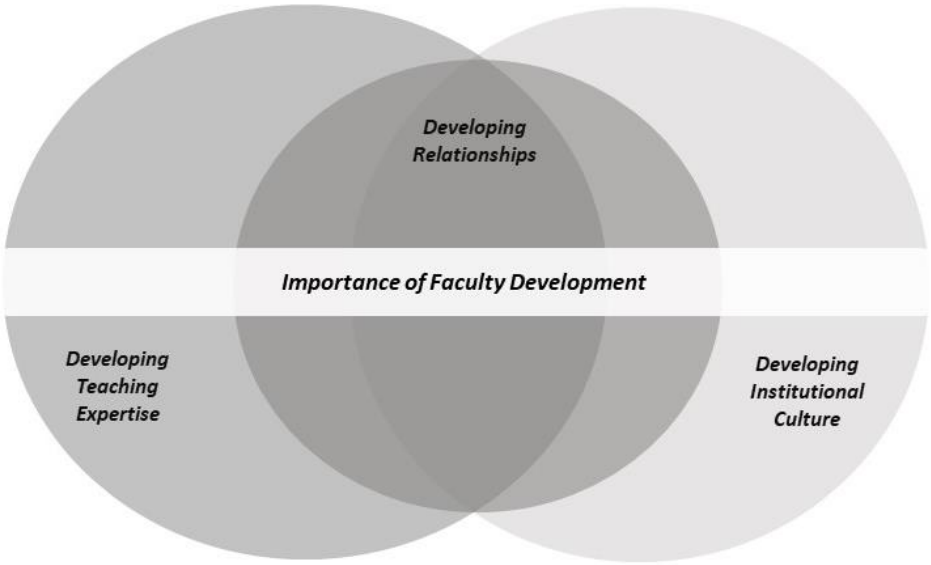
In line with Charmaz and with Glaser, a diverse group of researchers who have written about the use of grounded theory methods across disciplines (Chun Tie et al., 2019; Deering & Williams, 2020; El Hussein et al., 2017; Holton, 2009, 2010; Oliver, 2012; Timonen et al., 2018; Vollstedt & Rezat, 2019) identified sensitizing concepts as a starting point for a grounded theory research study. Identification of relevant sensitizing concepts is integral to how grounded theory researchers use the literature to develop *theoretical sensitivity*, which is the "ability to understand and define phenomena in abstract terms and to demonstrate abstract relationships between studied phenomena" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 160).

The sensitizing concepts that formed the basis for my study related to how engaging in faculty development might connect with (a) developing teaching expertise, (b) instructors developing relationships with students, and (c) institutions developing a culture that supports teaching. These concepts are depicted in Figure 1 and serve as organizing themes for Chapter 2. Figure 1 is a visual representation of the central theme, instructor growth, and the core concepts I identified as potential

sensitizing concepts for this study. This figure is not intended to describe or portray specific directional relationships, even theorized ones, between the core concepts and the central theme. My goal in drafting this figure was to provide clarity on the organization of the literature presented in Chapter 2 and to express the potential interconnectedness of these concepts in a way that may not be as clear from the linear narrative that follows.

Figure 1

Sensitizing Concepts



Significance of the Study

Researchers have shown that faculty, as institutional agents, have a unique role to play in impacting student success (Kuh et al., 2006). Where faculty can be assured of making a difference in the lives—and success—of their students is in the classroom. The teaching intervention that forms the core of the faculty development program this study's participants engaged in was one way that instructors can positively contribute to student success. However, the success of any teaching intervention depends

in great part on the willingness and ability of the instructor to carry out the intervention. Many possible factors impact whether an instructor is motivated to participate in development opportunities, has the necessary resources to participate, has the institutional support to implement changes to their teaching practice, and is prepared to evaluate whether the development activities were successful.

Through professional development, instructors engage in thinking about their practice as a teacher. This is a process that can be a natural extension of dedication to being an effective teacher and a deep examination of who they are and how effective they are as a teacher to determine what sorts of changes they would like to make to their teaching practices. It was these processes of self-examination and self-evaluation that were the focus of this research study. By examining this engagement from the point of view of the instructors, this study contributes to an understanding of how faculty apply to their teaching what they have learned from faculty development opportunities. The results of this research are beneficial to the individual participants and contribute to a better understanding of how to design faculty development programs for a diverse instructor population. Colleges and universities dedicate time and resources to providing professional development activities for faculty, so must be thoughtful about where those resources are deployed. Understanding the barriers and support instructors experience help faculty developers provide appropriate and useful programming for instructors.

Summary

This study explored the process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through participation in faculty development, and as a grounded theory study, proposes a theory to describe this process. In Chapter 2, I provide a review of the literature that frames this study. In Chapter 3, I describe the methods of data collection and analysis for this grounded theory study. In Chapter 4, I provide evidence to support my research findings. Finally, in Chapter 5, I discuss these findings, and suggest recommendations for practice and future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

> Changes in expectations of student success—to include all students—require disrupting classroom pedagogy, curricular pathways, and how we identify the competencies needed on the job. (Eddy, 2019, para. 5)

Purpose of the Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to synthesize relevant literature in the fields of faculty development and the scholarship of teaching and learning. In this chapter, I examine how faculty are prepared from the lens of faculty development as a field of practice and research. I consider current challenges facing faculty developers and articulate the importance of faculty development as a field. From the institution's side, I consider the role of Center of Teaching and Learning (CTLs) and the role of institutional culture in encouraging the development of faculty teaching expertise and the adoption of classroom practices that impact student outcomes and students' sense of connection to the institution. From the individual perspective, I explore motivations for—and benefits of—participating in development activities. I conclude by turning to classroom practices that impact student outcomes and sense of connection to the institution.

This review of literature presents an exploration of three core concepts: (a) developing faculty–student relationships, (b) developing teaching expertise, and (c) developing an institutional culture that supports teaching and learning. Faculty–student relationships are at the core and these relationships develop in the classroom and institutional contexts. The importance of faculty development is the central theme that connects the three core concepts. These core concepts, depicted in Figure 1, serve as organizing concepts for this chapter.

Developing Faculty–Student Relationships

Although this research study focused on the experiences of instructors, in the end all effort to improve instruction comes down to students. Increasingly, administrators at institutions of higher

education must focus on improving equitable opportunities and outcomes for all students. For instructors, individuals who have successfully navigated higher education as a student and then as a faculty member, it is easy to forget how foreign the language of higher education is for many students. As faculty members, if we want our students to feel accepted and to experience the college environment as a place of personal and academic growth, we need to make certain that students feel they understand the values and practices of the institution. Instructors have a unique role in making these connections with and for students. As "institutional agents" (Museus & Neville, 2012), instructors can be a conduit to access and success by helping students tap into various funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005; Moll et al., 2001; Stanton-Salazar, 2011) and by valuing the social capital of each student (Yosso, 2005). Additionally, institutions have a duty to "help young adults make the transition from being shaped by society to shaping society in their role as leaders in society's future" (Baxter Magolda, 1999, p. 630). When faculty have this capacity, what they do in the classroom encourages students to successfully negotiate their multiple identities and embrace the cultures of their home community and school community (Thayer, 2000), and helps students to view themselves as "full members of the campus community" (Kuh et al., 2006, p. 42).

Theories of belonging and validation are an essential part of understanding faculty–student relationships. At the core, most models of belonging and connectedness emerged from Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs. This hierarchy shaped the way many researchers and educators viewed the individual's need for belonging, connection, and community. Two foundational models that have shaped much of the more recent research on student engagement are Tinto's (1993) student integration model and Astin's (1984) model of student involvement, both of which emphasized the importance of relationships with others in the campus community to students' sense of belonging and persistence. The students' sense of belonging is important because it is tightly connected with not just their feelings toward the institution but also their feelings toward themselves as a student, and their actual behaviors

as a student. Overall, a students' sense of belonging predicts satisfaction and can lead to more positive educational outcomes and higher retention rates (Berger & Milem, 2002; Locks et al., 2008; Walton & Cohen, 2011). Numerous scholars (Berger & Braxton, 1998; Milem & Berger, 1997; Museus & Neville, 2012; Museus et al., 2019; Nora et al., 2011; Rendón, 1994, 2000; Rendón Linares & Muñóz, 2011; Terenzini et al., 1994) investigated how students benefit from what Rendón (1994) has called validation. *Validation* is "the intentional, proactive affirmation of students" (Rendón Linares et al., 2011, p. 12) and the result of deliberate engagement on the part of faculty and staff to reach out to students outside of coursework or transactional relationships. This engagement can invite students into new relationships they may not have realized are available to them and can serve to help students write a new narrative for themselves where they are positioned as capable of academic success. Developing strong faculty–student relationships can be vitally important to how students view themselves and their ability to succeed in higher education.

These relationships do not just impact students; instructors and the choices instructors make are potentially shaped by their interactions with students. In Beyer et al.'s (2013) study of growth in faculty teaching, they examined how faculty made changes to their courses, and why. "Internal" reasons, described as "interaction between the students, faculty member, and subject inside the class," were key factors in whether instructors made changes to teaching practices (Beyer et al., 2013, p. 92). Relationships with colleagues also played an important role; participants in the study who were able to work in collaboration with colleagues (e.g., having someone observe their class or observing someone else's class, having structured or unstructured time to discuss teaching issues) reported that these activities had an impact on the changes they made in the classroom. However, not all participants reported having these opportunities. Instructors' decisions about teaching were shaped in part by student needs, course needs, and disciplinary concerns. Beyer et al. (2013), stated, "The learning that faculty members hoped to advance was quite particular to courses, as well as to the disciplines in which

those courses resided" (p. 95), but was also shaped by the instructor's personal views on teaching and learning and a need to improve student engagement in the course or in direct response to observations of student learning (or lack of learning). Overall, participants in Beyer et al.'s study made decisions about their teaching practice based on student learning (e.g., student performance, observation of students in class, course evaluations), the participant's sense of personal growth (e.g., increasing confidence, change in life stage), and participants' interactions with other faculty. Exploring potential connections, if any, between student–faculty relationships, faculty–peer relationships, decisions about faculty development, and application of what is learned in faculty development to teaching practice, is an area where more research is needed. Although the focus of this study was not specifically student–faculty relationships, questions of whether, and how, faculty development activities might influence the types of relationships that faculty members develop with students and with colleagues should be examined so that individuals and institutions can approach these relationships in thoughtful and deliberate ways.

Developing Teaching Expertise

In this section, I examine how faculty are prepared from the lens of faculty development as a field of practice and of research. I consider current challenges facing faculty developers and articulate the importance of faculty development as a field. From the instructor's side, I explore motivations for—and benefits of—participating in development activities. From the institution's side, I consider the role of CTLs and of institutional culture in encouraging development of teaching expertise.

Importance of Faculty Development

Faculty development programs contribute not only to the teaching excellence of the individual faculty who participate but also to a greater school-wide culture of teaching excellence and innovation. The adoption of student-centered teaching philosophies, and more emphasis on building relationships with students, are all powerful ways to impact student success (Condon et al., 2016). Indeed, researchers demonstrate convincing links between faculty development and student learning: "when

faculty learned better practices for teaching students to think critically, students responded by improving the quality of their thinking in their written products" (Condon et al., 2016, p. 31). The instructor does not only impact their students' academic development; student–faculty relationships impact students in other ways as well. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) implemented a meta-analysis of common variables that impact student learning and growth and found that faculty–student relationships and the use of student-centered (e.g., active, cooperative, and constructivist) pedagogies were just as important as a teacher's clarity and organization.

With increasing focus on student outcomes, and specifically on student success as defined by graduation rates and persistence rather than matriculation, it seems natural that there should be an increased focus on the factors that contribute to successful student outcomes. No one could deny the quality of the teaching students receive plays some role there. Researchers need to explore the connection between strong faculty development and resulting changes to teaching practice (Reder & Crimmins, 2018) and must thoughtfully consider the ways we attempt to link these practices to student learning outcomes. Faculty development programs help faculty understand and apply effective teaching principles and practices. Thus, faculty are able to improve the quality of student learning and student satisfaction with the institution (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), improving short-term and long-term student outcomes (Kuh et al., 2004). Despite evidence speaking to the ways different teaching methods impact student success (Hativa & Goodyear, 2002; Kuh et al., 2004; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), and the impacts of organizational/institutional context (Kuh et al., 2005), more research is needed to explore the connection between faculty development programs and effective teaching practices. Researchers need to examine the interrelationships between institutional culture, faculty development centers, and individual faculty, and consider best practices and challenges faced by faculty development centers or programs.

Current Challenges Facing Faculty in Higher Education

There are shifts in climate and context that contribute to an increased need for faculty development support. One factor is the educational climate in the United States, with an increased emphasis on accountability and assessment. Another factor is shifting college demographics and the resulting expansion of who attends college. Different and more complex expectations of the role of faculty in the institution is another factor.

Accountability has pervaded every stage of education, reflecting an evolving understanding of what "good" teaching looks like and how to evaluate it. However, accountability systems in K–12 education have significant weaknesses in evaluating student learning and, by extension, teaching practice (Ravitch, 2011). These weaknesses exist in postsecondary institutions as well, and the weaknesses are further complicated by a lack of common assessments or curricula across higher education institutions and a lack of agreement about what academic success means or how to measure it (York et al., 2019). Thinking about accountability and assessment at the institutional level is "an inescapable and controversial subject," often resented or at least protested by faculty and administrators who are concerned about the "effects on fragile academic structures and cultures" (Ewell, 2018, p. 69). This resistance is fueled by a sense that assessment on the institution level is neither helpful nor necessary to the work that instructors do. Skepticism particularly exists on "the institutional adoption of policies related to the collection of assessment data" and the perception that data-driven decision making "appears to have no relationship with student experiences or outcomes" (Cox et al., 2017, pp. 852–853).

Another factor contributing to the increasing challenges faced by instructors is a demographic shift. As introduced in Chapter 1, the college-going student body has become more diverse, particularly in 2- and 4-year public institutions. As institutions enroll more students who have been traditionally underserved in higher education, there are greater numbers of students who are placed into remedial

coursework (Scott-Clayton & Rodriguez, 2014; Scott-Clayton et al., 2012); these students are also more likely to drop out without completing a degree or credential or transferring to a 4-year institution (Kahlenberg et al., 2019). Traditionally underserved students report earning lower course grades (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2019), are more likely to be working more than 20 hours a week (Center for First-Generation Student Success, 2019a) or have family responsibilities while taking classes (Goldrick-Rab, 2016), and are less likely to take advantage of student support services (Center for First-Generation Student Success, 2019b; Karp, O'Gara, & Hughes, 2008; Thayer, 2000). Within this demographic shift is an increasing focus on meeting students where they are and on teaching everyone—not culling out students who are from less-prepared or less-resourced backgrounds. This focus on helping all students succeed is important and valuable both on a societal and individual level, but necessitates changes in teaching methods and course design, complicating the work of instructors.

Finally, the essential job functions for many instructors have shifted apace with these demographic shifts. As we conceptualize *excellent teaching* as being less about observing what the instructor does and more about evaluating what the learner does (Bain, 2004, 2012), the work of faculty becomes entangled with the work of other individuals responsible for student support services. As colleges and universities become places that address the "whole person" learning of students, faculty have no choice but to address not only the learning needs but also the social-emotional needs of their students. Changes in working conditions and particularly the increased reliance on part-time and non-tenure-track instructors have negative impacts on student success outcomes (Figlio et al., 2015; Ran & Sanders, 2020; Ran & Xu, 2019), including whether students are exposed to innovative and collaborative teaching practices (Kuh et al., 2004, 2005; Schuetz, 2002; Umbach, 2007). The role of college and university administrators is key, as support for contingent faculty is largely shaped by administrators' attitudes and behaviors (Kezar & Gehrke, 2013). These changes impact full-time and tenured/tenure-track faculty as well. Not only does an increased reliance on contingent instructors alter the balance of

nonteaching responsibilities typically shared by colleagues, but “many of the things faculty members used to do—course design, selection of materials, creation of assignments, and assessment—are increasingly being organized by administrators and specialists and then turned over to often peripatetic adjuncts” (Paris, 2013, para. 1).

Best Practices in Faculty Development Programming

There were many examples of excellent faculty development programs in the literature. Some focused on peer collaboration in the form of teaching squares, teaching partners, and developing mentor relationships. These programs were designed to support collegial relationships and foster an interest in discussing teaching and learning in an open format (Bull, 2016; Carpenter et al., 2019). Peer-to-peer models can be effective ways for instructors to compare notes on curricula and teaching models and provide many natural and integrated forms of feedback and assessment. Participation in larger group programs (e.g., new faculty orientation programs and ongoing workshops/seminars) has a positive impact on instructors as well, particularly when there is follow-up to support faculty in implementing new strategies or techniques (Cullen & Harris, 2008). Although some instructors may have the support of a more formalized peer group experience or “community of practice” (Wenger, 1998), it is not a universal experience among faculty—although it can be a powerful way to let faculty lead their own development (Stark & Smith, 2016).

Sometimes resources and institutional culture do not support formal collaborative approaches, such as workshops, seminars, or mentoring programs. Another strategy to support faculty in their exploration of innovative teaching is the portfolio process (FitzSimmons, 2010; Kaufman, 2011; Kelleher, 2016; Saroyan & Trigwell, 2015). Here, the focus is on faculty individually creating a portfolio as a more independent way for faculty to develop and document their growth. One benefit of a portfolio is that it can span multiple years, showing an instructor’s development over time in both their teaching practice and reflection on that practice. Further, the process of developing their portfolio can serve to connect

themes from different points in time and different courses into a more coherent representation of their development as a teacher, particularly if the items in the portfolio are framed as support for one or more overarching goals (Pyorala, 2014). Teaching portfolios serve not only as evidence of good teaching but also to help faculty reflect on their teaching (Reece et al., 2001). Benefits of the portfolio creation process accrue to more than the individual faculty members; Madigan (2008) and Ring et al. (2016) found collaboration and discussion during preparing and reviewing portfolios built positive culture changes in the departments that used portfolios.

The end result, whatever the initiative, must be supporting faculty to make changes in their practices. This happens when development is "centered in their own disciplinary epistemologies, connects faculty to a community of practice, is data-driven, and becomes part of a faculty member's ongoing reflective teaching practice" (Condon et al., 2016, p. 6). To achieve these goals, there must be in place a strong institutional commitment to faculty development both as a project of the institutional community and of the individual faculty member.

Benefits of Professional Development

The benefits for an institution and individual faculty members to invest in robust development programs, encompass many different areas. Most importantly, evidence has shown that faculty development is an effective way to help instructors become better teachers (Condon et al., 2016). Faculty professional development initiatives can help instructors adapt to shifting student demographics, experiment with new teaching practices, and improve "job performance and student success" (Lian, 2014, p. 29).

On a personal level, instructors who consistently engage in development—and who value the opportunities they have—are engaging in what Biggs and Tang (2011) called transformative reflection: "transformation from the unsatisfactory what-is to the more effective what-might-be" (p. 43). Researchers noted a wide variety of other personal and interpersonal benefits for instructors, ranging

from job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011), confidence (Fernet et al., 2012) and performance (Rutz et al., 2012) to preventing burnout and providing a sense of renewal (Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012; Pyhältö et al., 2011; Schwartz & Bryan, 1998). Participating in opportunities to think deeply about one's teaching practice fosters what Neumann (2006) termed "passionate thought" (p. 383), or a blending of the intellectual and emotional sides of scholarship. Engagement in deep reflection and research engages both our intellect and our emotional connection to teaching and taps into intrinsic motivation to become better teachers.

Beyer at al.'s (2013) study illustrated issues of resource awareness and availability, where instructors who are aware of resources tend to use them and find them helpful, but a large contingent of faculty remain unaware of resources that may be available to them. In general, the research on faculty development and how instructors in higher education develop as teachers focused more on the programs and less on what instructors do once they return to the classroom. Amundsen and Wilson (2012), stated, "We know more about how to design educational development initiatives to improve individual teaching practice but less about how this learning is actualized and embedded in the academic workplace" (p. 111).

Research has confirmed that confidence is a significant piece of whether an instructor feels able to implement innovative practices. Instructors who are confident in their skills tend to have "a more extensive, complex, and flexible repertoire of concepts of teaching effectiveness . . . and they draw upon almost twice as many strategies for enhancing student learning" (Hativa et al., 2001, p. 701). This sense of confidence is reinforced by their interest in experimenting with new practices but is also reinforced by teaching and learning experiences they have had along their career. These experiences influence instructors' opinions about and approaches to student learning, and "specific teaching (and study) habits are adopted along with more subtle ways of thinking and acting" (Oleson & Hora, 2014, p. 42).

Faculty as Adult Learners

Finally, faculty developers must consider whether and how they are meeting instructors' needs. Faculty development programs are more likely to be embraced by the faculty they serve if the programs are perceived as meeting instructors' needs (Behar-Horenstein et al., 2014; C.E. Cook & Meizlish, 2011; Matthias, 2019; Sorcinelli et al., 2006) rather than being seen as coming from administrators or only meeting the institution's needs. Research on meeting the needs of adult learners—in this case, the faculty—shows a particular need for opportunities for learner engagement in choosing what and how they learn, based on self-diagnosis of learning needs and goals.

Founded on Piaget's (1932) stages of child and adolescent development and influenced by Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of the cognitive domain, theories or models of adult development (e.g., Erikson, 1950; Maslow, 1954, 1987; Levinson et al., 1978; Kohlberg, 1984), all addressed in different ways the cognitive, social, and/or moral development of late adolescents and adults. Robert Kegan's (1982) constructive-developmental theory of adult growth articulated four different ways of knowing (instrumental, socializing, self-authoring, and self-transforming). Building on Kegan's work, adult development theorists described the importance of transformative learning (e.g., Cranton, 1994, 1996; Mezirow, 1991, 1995, 2006) and specifically the role of critical reflection on the beliefs we hold (Mezirow, 1997), drew connections to student affairs work and how students constructed their adult identities (e.g., Baxter Magolda, 1992, 1998, 1999), and critiqued the validity of traditional adult development theories when describing women's ways of knowing (e.g., Belenky et al., 1986; Goldberger et al., 1996). In his discussion of adult learning theories and the existence of transformational learning, DeSapio (2017) argued:

> There is a kind of learning that transforms, and this transformation is most useful, and indeed necessary, to tackle workplace issues of equality, compassion, and ethics; or social issues regarding racism, justice, and reconciliation. . . . Transformational learning is observable—there

> is no question if it occurs. Most seasoned professionals can describe experiences of transformation they've seen in themselves or others. (p. 58)

DeSapio (2017) further noted the trend in adult development theory to discuss how identity and "identity language" such as "personhood, personality, self, soul, biographicity, competence, wholeness, and being" (p. 60) increasingly formed a central theme on which criticism of adult development theories circled. For individuals in faculty development roles, grounding their work with adult learners in an understanding of adult learning theories asks developers and faculty to consider challenging topics of identity and equity. Engaging with these topics shapes the work that faculty developers do, and shapes what faculty do in the classroom. Focusing on learning as transformation—for both faculty and for students—opens faculty to try new teaching strategies and methods (Brookfield, 1995; Hativa & Goodyear, 2002; Knowles, 1975; Sorcinelli et al., 2006).

Developing Institutional Culture

The capacity of instructors to engage in significant improvements to their teaching depends largely on their teaching context (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Hutchings et al., 2011; Kuh, 2008). Factors include teaching and service load, research expectations, mentoring of graduate students, and publication expectations. Further, many instructors are contingent faculty, teaching part time and earning no benefits, often left out of institutional structures for support of faculty members, and perhaps teaching at several different institutions. To support college faculty in their development as teachers, institutions need to deliberately cultivate a culture that values teaching and supports the pursuit of teaching excellence.

Institutional culture must support a broad focus on improvement to positively impact faculty attitudes about teaching and faculty development efforts (Astin, 1984, 1993; Eckel et al., 1999; Kuh et al., 2005). Condon et al. (2016) noted a "generative culture of teaching and learning provides the crucial environment for ongoing faculty learning that benefits students, faculty, and the institution as a whole"

(p. 6). However, these initiatives are far more successful in achieving long-term impact when they are faculty-initiated.

Part of supporting CTLs is improving the way faculty developers work with instructors. This support needs to come from the institution in the form of both resources and value placed on the work being done. It comes down, as so much does, to the institutional culture. Resources are vitally important to the work; however, as the impacts of faculty development work are looked at, researchers must "investigate ways in which local contexts in the form of higher education institutions constrain or enable academic professional development" (Leibowitz et al., 2015, p. 316). In particular, the ways programs and activities are enacted in different contexts will shape both the faculty members' experiences and the outcomes. Leibowitz et al. (2015) stated:

> Directives intended to enhance teaching or encourage participation in professional development initiatives need to take into account how these might be interpreted and implemented at the local level, and how the various factors at the level of the institution interact to produce both varied and unpredictable outcomes. (p. 328)

Kinzie and Kuh (2004) concluded in their research on high-quality teaching institutions, there are certain organizational or cultural factors that contribute to student success, including a mission-oriented faculty and staff, where the mission is dedicated to student learning, systems in place (e.g., policies and procedures) around student success, and a shared dedication to and responsibility for student success across the institution. High-quality teaching institutions commit resources to the development of these factors. At all institutions, there should be extensive resources available to institutions of higher education, including support for the development of peer-reviewed instructional materials, opportunities for sharing best practices and effective teaching strategies, support for faculty learning communities, and many other possibilities (Behar-Horenstein et al., 2014; Condon et al., 2016; C.E. Cook, 2011; C.E. Cook & Meizlish, 2011; Fink, 2003; Gappa et al., 2007; Handelsman et al., 2004;

McCrickerd, 2012; Sorcinelli et al., 2006). Overall, these researchers concluded that although there certainly are institutions that offer robust faculty development, for the most part, faculty are not sufficiently supported in the pursuit of becoming better teachers. Condon et al. (2016) suggested the reason for this lack of support or lack of focus is that "faculty members' efforts to improve their teaching are simply not as visible as other areas of their work" (p. 3).

To the question of resource allocation, one must also consider the question of institutional motivation. University administrators often see faculty development as a way to affect change and implement top-down initiatives that are important from the institution's perspective, such as training instructors to use a new learning management system or new procedures for advising students. Faculty, for their part, are reluctant to engage in training where the sole purpose is to support administrative initiatives that are not perceived as focusing on instructional practices. This disconnect between institutional and instructor priorities can lead to a lack of trust in any top-down initiatives. Matthias (2019) noted that "institutional change efforts become the locus wherein the tension between faculty and administrators unfolds. Faculty can be suspicious of any initiative that appears to come 'top-down' from the administration with an agenda attached to it that does not align with their own needs or goals" (p. 264). Further, too many institutions enact these initiatives with an assessment focus. Therefore, it makes sense that faculty development activities would be concerned with the assessment of student learning; focusing on student outcomes and using those to quantify the quality of teaching seems like a straightforward way of assessing teaching and learning. However, as K–12 educators might suggest, connecting what teachers do to student outcomes is far from simple or straightforward (Ravitch, 2011, 2017, 2020).

Faculty Development Models

Teaching is a core function of faculty, despite popular misconceptions that professors are primarily concerned with their own writing and research. Faculty surveys have shown even instructors

with high research expectations spend at least half their working time teaching or preparing to teach (Condon et al., 2016). The problem is not that instructors are unconcerned about their teaching; on the contrary, faculty clearly want to become better teachers (Condon et al., 2016). Beyer et al. (2013) revealed in their research at the University of Washington that faculty almost universally feel the need to work on their teaching and are continually engaged in the improvement of their teaching.

Despite the importance of teaching, how to teach is primarily something that college-level instructors learn on the job rather than through formal education coursework like that of primary and secondary school teachers. Different models of faculty development have been proposed that attempt to describe and conceptualize how faculty learn about teaching. Some of these models situate faculty development on a continuum or progression of knowledge and skills that improve classroom instructional practices (Akerlind, 2007; Trigwell et al., 2000; Weston & McAlpine, 2001), while others focus on different spaces in which instructors do the work of improving teaching (Amundsen & McAlpine, 2008; Condon et al., 2016; Kreber & Cranton, 2000; Theall & Centra, 2001). All these models of faculty development have focused on the process of delivery of professional development to the instructors, primarily on the mechanics and logistics of professional development, and secondarily or incidentally on philosophical views of faculty as learners. These models do not integrate the process of implementation by instructors of pedagogical initiatives or interventions.

Models that conceptualize development as moving in a progression along a continuum tend to be hierarchical and unidirectional in nature. They also frame development as something that happens to the faculty member as an individual. Akerlind's (2007) model posited a developmental hierarchy of different approaches to developing as a university teacher, emerging from faculty interviews. Beginning instructors in Akerlind's study tended to focus on discipline knowledge as the core of their expertise. The participants gradually became more interested in developing their practical experience, which informed the development of a "repertoire of teaching strategies" (Akerlind, 2007, p. 29). Instructors

then described a comparative and evaluative process where deep self-reflection and even student feedback helped them "continue improving and experimenting with strategies, even when existing strategies are working quite well" (Akerlind, 2007, p. 30). The model culminates with a "focus on student *learning* outcomes as the primary indicator of teaching effectiveness, rather than student *satisfaction* and teacher comfort" (Akerlind, 2007, p. 31; emphasis in the original). As instructors moved through this continuum, they increasingly described their teaching as shifting from a base of disciplinary knowledge to the development of various teaching strategies to a desire to understand what works for specific students to a willingness to adapt frequently to meet students' needs.

Trigwell et al. (2000) broke down faculty teaching development into four domains, based on the early conceptualization of "separate, but overlapping" (Boyer, 1990, p. 16) areas of scholarship: (a) discovery (i.e., exploring research on teaching and learning), (b) integration (i.e., making connections between these discoveries and personal teaching practices), (c) application (i.e., testing these connections in the development of learning activities and transformation of classroom practices), and finally, (d) teaching (i.e., sharing the "beauty and enlightenment at the heart of significant knowledge" [Trigwell et al., 2000, p. 155] gained in the prior three stages with other instructors). Trigwell et al. (2000) stated:

> We believe this model offers a framework for making transparent the process of making learning possible. The model has four dimensions relating to the areas of (a) being informed about teaching and learning generally and in the teachers' own discipline; (b) reflection on that information, the teachers' particular context and the relations between the two; (c) the focus of the teaching approach adopted; and (d) communication of the relevant aspects of the other three dimensions to members of the community of scholars. All four dimensions are considered to be a necessary part of the scholarship of teaching. (pp. 166–167)

Although Boyer's (1990) model conceptualized different but concurrent functions, and Trigwell et al.'s (2000) model presented growth through the four dimensions, both held teaching expertise as equally valuable to growth in scholarship over an individual's career.

Weston and McAlpine (2001) outlined a three-phase model where faculty begin with "an intention to grow and develop knowledge" about teaching practice, then engage in discussion and collaboration with colleagues on teaching strategies, and finally "share expertise and develop scholarly knowledge about teaching that has a significant impact on the institution and the field" (p. 90). The authors suggested, in this model, "professors can move in two directions in the continuum: within a phase, indicating a growth in complexity; and across phases, indicating a growth toward scholarship" (Weston & McAlpine, 2001, p. 90). Weston and McAlpine (2001) further articulated a goal for faculty developers, stating:

> If our goal is to encourage the scholarship of teaching, then we must move beyond helping individual professors to grow in their own teaching and facilitating dialogue with colleagues about teaching and learning; we must do more to support professors' transition into Phase Three, growth as scholars. (p. 97)

Each of these three models viewed faculty development from a lens of growth along a continuum that is primarily unidirectional and individually focused; even when the final phase is sharing knowledge with colleagues, the focus is on sharing as a culminating step in personal growth, not as a collaborative step of constructing new understandings.

An alternative way to view faculty development is as occurring in spaces both physical and theoretical. Kreber and Cranton (2000) focused on a matrix model that combined three areas of reflection (i.e., content, process, and premise) applied to three domains of knowledge (i.e., instructional, pedagogical, and curricular) to result in "nine distinct kinds of learning" (p. 476) related to the scholarship of teaching. They explained that reflection exists in three spaces, which should not

necessarily be viewed on a continuum or progression, but rather can be addressed in any order or at the same time: instructors are tasked with defining a problem (i.e., content), generating problem-solving strategies and procedures (i.e., process), and evaluating the significance or relevance of the problem. These levels of reflection can be applied to three different domains: instructional strategies, pedagogical foundation, or curricular/disciplinary knowledge. In this model, spaces of growth are found in the combination of areas of reflection with domains of knowledge; this growth is no longer unidirectional (i.e., a progression) but is still individually focused. A similar matrix model places faculty development activities in "individual (independent) experiences to group (collective) learning" (Steinert, 2010, p. 425) spaces, on a spectrum from informal (e.g., community of practice, observing peers) to formal approaches (e.g., workshops, seminars, structured peer coaching).

Development also takes place in spaces more physical or environmental in nature. Theall and Centra (2001) focused on the spaces or "levels" (p. 36) where faculty development can occur: with the individual, in their immediate environment (i.e., their department or division) and in their broader environment (i.e., the institution). The work of sharing teaching strategies and practices, discussing learning outcomes, and developing disciplinary and pedagogical innovation can emerge from any of the three sites and ideally spill over to inform the others.

Some faculty development models address spaces both environmental and psychological where the activities of growth occur. Amundsen and McAlpine's (2008, as cited in Evers et al., 2009) reviewed faculty development literature and identified four sites of development: (a) "intervention by professional consultants" (e.g., workshops or conferences with professional consultants, often sponsored by a disciplinary association or faculty member's institution), (b) smaller scale workshops or individual courses, (c) participation in a mentoring program, and (d) "action research (including classroom research)" (p. 10). Amundsen and Wilson (2012) built upon Amundsen and McAlpine's (2008) earlier review to describe six clusters of development. These educational development clusters

described a range of activities instructors engage in: (a) acquisition of basic “generic” teaching skills, (b) exploration of new teaching methods, (c) process reflection on teaching experiences, (d) involvement at the institutional level and concerned with institutional culture, (e) engagement with discipline-specific pedagogy, and (f) collaboration with colleagues in “action research or inquiry” (Amundsen & McAlpine, 2008, p. 99).

The learning sites described by Condon et al. (2016) were both physical spaces and psychological spaces. The first space they described was the work of professional associations, CTLs, and other development-focused units in a college: formal faculty development activities sponsored by the institution or association, including workshops, brown bags, professional conferences, or colloquia. The second space was the work of individual faculty members: intentional, self-directed efforts to expose oneself to innovative teaching strategies and to implement these strategies. The third space was characterized as routine events that occurred in the context of a faculty member’s work to set personal and departmental goals or to participate in discipline reviews, hiring committees, and annual reviews of their work. These opportunities “are by no means intended as sites for learning about teaching but that carry incidental opportunities to do so, if institutions learn to take advantage of those opportunities” (Condon et al., 2016, p. 5). Condon et al. characterized high-quality faculty development practice as being composed of layers of learning that are grounded in research, both large-scale empirical research and a faculty member’s own action research. They further noted that when faculty “design instruments to gather data about their students’ learning and then apply data-driven, empirical evidence to changes in pedagogy, the spiral lengthens, becomes taller. And when faculty engage in their own learning communities, the improved practices can spread” (Condon et al., 2016, p. 6).

These models of faculty development, whether they articulate development as linear or space-bound, have focused on describing faculty development as a primarily solo, and mental, endeavor. However, teaching and learning are neither solo nor solely mental pursuits. These models have not

sufficiently addressed the collaborative, constructive, and relationship-dependent components of faculty development.

Institutional Support for Instructional Excellence

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), in their book, *Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School*, described teaching as a profession in ways that allow for interesting parallels between K–12 teaching and teaching in higher education. They described a view of "professional capital" that they situated in contrast to "business capital," which they argued is "advocated aggressively in the United States" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 2). The business capital view "favors a teaching force that is young, flexible, temporary, inexpensive to train. . . and replaceable wherever possible by technology" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 2). In contrast was a view of teaching relying on professional capital, recognizing that "making decisions in complex situations is what professionalism is all about" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 5). Where Hargreaves and Fullan's (2012) critique was particularly apt was in the description of the system and institutional culture in which teachers work, where they stated:

> Teaching, like any other profession, doesn't come down only to individual skill or will. It's also profoundly affected by the environment—by the culture of the workplace where the job is carried out. When the teaching of school is all over the place, we shouldn't so much be asking questions about the abilities or commitments of individual teachers. We should be wondering what is wrong with the school. (p. 20)

These concerns about how institutional culture shapes the work that faculty do were echoed by Paris (2013), who critiqued the then-current trend toward using technological interventions in place of human ones, saying:

> What is most dismaying about the current trends and changes in the faculty role is that institutions and their leaders apparently do not see the desirability of actually developing and deploying faculty to effectively take advantage of the new pedagogical possibilities. Fascination

> with technology and cost savings seems to have distracted administrators from thinking about what students need and what technology (and faculty) can offer. There is little or no investment in creating faculty members who can maximize the incredible potential technology creates. (para. 21)

Paris's (2013) concerns about how the interactions between technology, working conditions, the role of instructors, and support for faculty development are just as—if not more—relevant now. Faculty development work occurs in contexts that are not static, and, as Carney et al. (2016) warned, "one of the most important challenges for faculty developers is responding to major restructures of institutions and systems of higher education" (p. 28).

The culture of an institution is important, and in institutions where teaching is valued, faculty are supported in their development. If an institution is truly interested in encouraging faculty to adopt new practices, including practices intended to provide particular support to typically underserved students, Barnett (2011) offered three possible steps: "(a) college-provided incentives to faculty to invest time in assisting nontraditional and underserved students, (b) helping faculty to learn about the importance of meaningful validation of students, and (c) redefining faculty roles and responsibilities to explicitly include validation of students in ways that research suggests may be especially powerful" (p. 113).

Even if faculty see the value of implementing change, too many institutions operate with a top-down, functional approach to faculty development. Even in CTLs, development programs tend to focus on "functional roles" rather than a more grounded approach to inquiry and experimentation as a valid path toward teaching excellence. The functional role approach leads to an emphasis on discrete strategies (e.g., using technology, assessment) often identified by administrators rather than the faculty themselves (Sorcinelli et al., 2006).

Beach et al. (2016) showed, through a survey of faculty developers, that of the top five issues teaching and learning centers focused on (i.e., new faculty orientation, integrating technology, learner-centered teaching strategies, assessment of student learning outcomes, and course and curricular redesign), only learner-centered teaching is genuinely focused on pedagogy. The report further indicated that faculty developers desire to move in a direction to "support faculty to assess, investigate, document student learning" and to "use more evidence-based faculty development approaches" (Beach et al., 2016) but are often thwarted in these efforts by administrative demands.

For instructors, the issue is not a lack of desire to improve teaching practices. There are pressures to focus efforts on research and writing, but one significant barrier is whether there exists an institutional commitment to supporting instructors' efforts to improve as teachers. Conditions that create a culture of faculty learning and improvement include "the presence of multiple initiatives and their visibility on campus" and "the incorporation of attention to teaching and learning in the expectations for faculty in hiring, orientation, and reward systems" (Condon et al., 2016, p. 11). Niehaus and Williams's (2016) research on faculty development and curriculum design found that providing a small stipend demonstrated the value the institution placed on the work faculty were doing, noting that this public support "gave legitimacy to and increased the recognition of" (p. 72) the work and the cross-discipline collaborations.

These expectations are particularly significant to adjunct instructors, for whom the nature of their semester-to-semester commitment is a barrier to experimenting with teaching practices. If their job is reliant on student success (e.g., course grades) and satisfaction (e.g., student evaluations), that is a significant disincentive to experiment—the nature of an experiment is always that there will be challenges and perhaps failures. These concerns lead to participation that Condon et al. (2016) characterized as "defensive" (p. 101), when part-time faculty reported their participation in many professional development activities was primarily performative to ensure that they would continue to

be hired in future semesters. The faculty admitted that participating in these opportunities did not always lead to changes in their teaching practices due to concerns about negative impacts on student course evaluations. This finding should be particularly concerning for community college centers of teaching and learning, given the high numbers of part-time faculty in these institutions. Further, the researchers found, while part-time faculty were more likely to participate in a higher number of opportunities, full-time and particularly tenured faculty were much more willing to implement new strategies or techniques, reporting they were not as concerned about what they saw as a "temporary dip in course evaluations" (Condon et al., 2016, p. 101). Condon et al. concluded that job security in the form of tenure or longer-term contracts led to a greater willingness to experiment with pedagogy.

The role of institutional culture cannot be underestimated in discussing the ability of individual teaching faculty to pursue innovative teaching. Institutions that operate from a "bottom-up" perspective are better situated to support their faculty's actual development needs and better able to focus on pedagogical innovation rather than focusing on a faculty member's functional roles. Institutions that want to support student-centered pedagogy, which supports students' sense of belonging and validation and leads to significant positive impacts on student success, must focus on faculty–student relationships as a primary locus for this work.

Centers for Teaching and Learning

Many institutions currently have a program or a center dedicated to teaching (i.e., CTL), but this is a relatively recent addition to institutions of higher education, growing most over the 1990s and early 2000s with a strong focus on student learning (Matthias, 2019). Some institutions instead have a specific administrator tasked with faculty development, often as one function bundled with oversight over other functional areas, such as human resources or technology training. Despite limited research comparing faculty development across institutions, it appears institutions with a dedicated center or unit are more effective at delivering high-quality faculty development than those where programs are under the

purview of a single administrator (FitzSimmons, 2010). One benefit to having a dedicated center is the breadth of programs offered to faculty and having a dedicated center means significantly more activities, resources, and services a college or institution can offer (FitzSimmons, 2010).

In institutions with successful faculty development initiatives, individual actions and small programs coalesce into culture shifts. To be successful in impacting institutional culture, though, some specific conditions need to be present. Some of the hallmarks of institutions with a strong culture of faculty development include a variety of educational development programs that are active on campus, articulating expectations related to teaching and learning for hiring and promotion, opportunities for instructors to collaborate across disciplines in explorations of successful teaching, and shared labor on specific initiatives or student outcomes (Condon et al., 2016).

For the work of a CTL to be successful at helping faculty consider ways to become better and more thoughtful teachers, there are some key program components that the best centers focus on offering. A critical factor in the success of centers with dedicated staff is how well faculty developers and faculty are able to work together. In schools with strong development programs with demonstrated impacts on student learning outcomes, “faculty developers and faculty worked together in symbiotic relationships to construct a climate of respect for teaching and teaching excellence that resulted in more effective teaching and learning opportunities at these high performing schools” (Bates, 2010, p. 196). Likewise, the institutional needs must be considered, which can be a delicate balance of sometimes competing priorities. Faculty developers should be prepared to work within the institutional mission and goals to stay relevant, balancing institutional demands with serving the needs of the faculty with whom they work. Successfully balancing these duties by bridging institutional mission and faculty goals is challenging, but will ultimately contribute to a strong culture of faculty learning that is respected by both faculty and administration and serves the campus community (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013; Chism, 2011; Lieberman, 2011; Schroeder, 2011). It is important for faculty developers to link their work to the

institution's mission and goals (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013; Beach et al., 2016; Chism, 2011; Lees, 2014; Lieberman, 2011; Neal & Peed-Neal, 2010; Plater, 2002; Schroeder, 2011) and use faculty development to solve institutional problems (C. E. Cook, 2011).

Recent explorations of how faculty development impacts teaching practice (Condon et al., 2016) have shown how it is important to have organized, formalized development procedures in place. Condon et al. (2016) wrote extensively about their finding that "almost universal motivation to improve teaching opens the possibilities for developing a productive culture of teaching and learning. Faculty welcome such development, increasing the likelihood that it will result in positive changes in faculty teaching practices" (p. 9). From the institutional side:

> A faculty development program is more likely to be resourced when it supports institutional goals. From an individual perspective, the degree to which an institutionally responsive faculty development program will engage faculty depends partly on how committed faculty are to institutional values and goals. (Cilliers & Tekian, 2016, p. 145)

In the end, institutional leadership, faculty developers, and instructors themselves must see themselves as collaborators, not adversaries, working together to enact the university's mission and achieve institutional and personal goals (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013; Schroeder, 2011).

There are also concerns on who is responsible for faculty development. As noted earlier, some institutions have CTLs, and some institutions put faculty development under the charge of one administrator or administrative office (Matthias, 2019). With CTLs, responsibility for programmatic decisions may rest with a director or a small group of faculty, for whom faculty development work is a primary focus. In the administrator-driven model, faculty development activities may be grouped under a broader set of human resources or technology training duties. Having administrators in charge of implementing or evaluating faculty development can be challenging because they may also have a role in the hiring and promotion processes. They are not faculty peers but occupy a distinct and evaluative

space in the institutional hierarchy. Matthias (2019) noted that challenges can arise from the "different ways that administrators and faculty members interpret the university's mission and how they see themselves as stewards of that mission. Each of these two groups on any campus can view the other one as adversarial" (p. 263).

In addition to concerns over their evaluative role, it can be harder for individuals in institutional leadership to identify with the teaching development concerns to which a CTL staffed by faculty might more naturally be able to connect. Most of the faculty development leaders interviewed in Bates's (2010) study, all of whom work at institutions that have been nationally recognized for teaching excellence, noted the importance of relationships with faculty across the institution where they worked, and Bates suggested that at schools with faculty-led CTLs (as opposed to administration-led), "communication, problem solving, and conflict resolution may be easier in environments where you see your colleagues face to face and work with all levels in the organization on a daily basis" (p. 182).

A final drawback to administrator-driven faculty development programs is that this model tends to privilege a top-down functional approach to development. The functional approach focuses on "areas within those functions that present unique challenges for faculty (e.g., teaching with technology or assessing students' writing)" (Dee & Daly, 2009, p. 2) rather than focusing on a more holistic view of pedagogy and thinking about innovative teaching strategies. Further, the focus on functional needs typically is a top-down approach to identifying the goals of different development programs, rather than a bottom-up approach where needs are articulated by the instructors the programs serve (Sorcinelli et al., 2006). Although CTLs, as noted earlier, should work with institutional goals and mission, having a separate center provides the space—physical and psychological—for work on improving teaching practices in a nonevaluative way. It is important for faculty to feel that there is freedom to engage in this work free from the evaluative eye of college administration.

Motivation to Participate in Professional Development

Instructors can be motivated to participate in different faculty development initiatives for many reasons, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Institutions need to consider—and respect—these different motivating factors if the goal is to encourage open doors and open communication between developers and instructors. A mismatch between the program content and the faculty's needs might result in resistance to participate in development activities (Matthias, 2019).

When developing effective programs, it is also important to consider the background and underlying characteristics or constraints of the faculty who might participate. Developers may need to consider helping instructors balance their personal and professional lives (Gappa et al., 2007), including concerns about work-life balance and competing expectations of service, research, and teaching. Developers may also need to consider the instructors' mindset toward their development as teachers. Some individuals espouse a growth mindset, while others view teaching as a talent that some have, and some do not. The problem with viewing teaching as a talent rather than a set of skills is that it prevents faculty from holding a growth mindset on their teaching practices. They are less likely to embrace experimenting with changes in their teaching practice out of fear of failure (McCrickerd, 2012).

Despite the benefits, there can be resistance to undertake professional development, particularly when involvement requires more on the instructors' part than attending a short workshop. Probably the most obvious barrier is that of time. Many instructors feel overwhelmed by teaching demands and have no time for other career activities (Hardre, 2012; Murray, 2004; Sperling, 2003). In addition to the simple calculation of whether one has enough time in the week to dedicate to participating in professional development, there is also the mental or emotional load that faculty carry. When faculty are asked to do more with fewer resources, particularly time, there is less capacity to engage in deep thinking about teaching innovations (Austin et al., 1997). Additionally, many faculty are not full-time but are contingent, paid much less than their full-time colleagues, and perhaps teaching at

multiple institutions. Not only does their contingent status render them less able to engage with professional development programs, but researchers have also shown a greater sense of security contributes to faculty's willingness to experiment with pedagogy, while adjunct instructors tend to be less willing to experiment (Condon et al., 2016, p. 101).

Administrations that are serious about building a culture of teaching excellence must be prepared to invest not only on the program level but also in individual faculty. It is important to value the work of teaching—and improving teaching—and to express this value with tangible support. The pursuit of teaching excellence should form part of faculty evaluations and be rewarded with concrete incentives (Lian, 2014) such as "released time, salary advancement, professional activity credits" (M. Grant & Keim, 2002, p. 803).

Motivations, in particular, may differ depending on the instructor's professional "life stage" (Burge, 2015), where a faculty member may be concerned with job security early in their career, success later in their career, and their lasting contribution to the field toward the end of their career. Perhaps the most significant motivation for engaging in professional development initiatives is simple: instructors want to become better teachers. Condon et al. (2016) suggested extensive research has shown "faculty want to improve their teaching, take advantage of institutional opportunities to do so, and strive to change their teaching to deliver better learning opportunities to their students" (p. 3).

Evaluating Faculty Development Programs

One key issue with many faculty development offerings is that they are often one-time workshops or seminars that require little follow-up action on the part of the faculty who participate (FitzSimmons, 2010). Without a more consistent plan for encouraging participants to adopt new practices based on the program they attended, and without a system for assessing the impacts of faculty development that goes beyond immediate session evaluations, it is difficult for developers to make the case that their programs have any impact. Most typically, developers and institutions do not assess

whether or how faculty implement professional development or attempt to measure impacts on student learning (Elliott & Oliver, 2016).

Postevent assessment focuses on satisfaction surveys rather than engaging faculty to reflect deeply on what they will do or what they have done as a result of participating in faculty development (Chen et al., 2017). Assessment of the impacts of development activities typically relies on participation levels and end-of-session evaluations (Frantz et al., 2005), which are relatively easy to collect, rather than attempting to evaluate changes in teaching behavior or student learning, which would be clearer indicators of success, but far harder to evaluate. Where there have been attempts to evaluate the deeper impacts, these attempts have focused on participants' self-reported changes in teaching behaviors, rather than delving into their decision-making process to explore how instructors use new knowledge to make changes to their teaching practices (see Condon et al.'s [2016] work on faculty development and student learning and Kinzie and Kuh's [2004] research on HIPs and student engagement and success). Positive feedback typically focuses on personal relationships and appreciation for services offered without there being a way to measure or demonstrate effectiveness or outcomes from a specific initiative. Reder and Crimmins (2018) argued that developers should be working more closely with institutional offices of research or assessment to both measure the impacts of faculty development and use student learning outcome data to inform development activities. They further suggested involving students in these practices as well, noting that "even at successful faculty centers for teaching and learning faculty members too rarely sit down with students and talk openly about learning and what happens in our classrooms, labs, and studios" (Reder & Crimmins, 2018, p. 17).

By focusing on "best practices," faculty development programs provide individuals with opportunities to learn from colleagues but fail to provide them with any structure to guide the implementation of what they have learned. Development programs need systematic follow-up plans that go beyond simple faculty satisfaction surveys, such as initially asking participants to reflect on how

they might implement new strategies and then returning to the participants in the following weeks or months to ask them about what they actually did (Cilliers & Tekian, 2016). As Bates (2010) concluded in a review of development programs, “interventions need to be ongoing and include follow-up rather than just one-shot workshops. We know that faculty change is a learning process, and nothing as complex as teaching can be mastered in a single three-hour workshop” (p. 42).

Faculty developers need to have a holistic view of the impacts that might ripple out from their work; Condon et al. (2016) urged developers to consider that “integrating faculty development and student learning requires assessment of both kinds of teaching and learning” (p. 2). Understanding this holistic picture requires an expansive set of beliefs about learning; as Condon et al. (2016) stated, “Learning—for faculty and for students—is longitudinal. It happens over time, and progress is neither uniform nor standardized. Measurements need to be aggregated and must observe learning over time, whenever possible, rather than only at a given point” (p. 35).

An institutional culture that values teaching and learning is expressed through an institution-wide focus on improvement and in supporting instructors in their teaching, scholarly, and creative pursuits. Developing this caliber of institutional culture requires a serious and sustained commitment of resources, and research demonstrates that high-quality teaching institutions commit to doing just that. These institutions also encourage faculty-initiated programs, balancing the needs of individual faculty with the top-down initiatives that are important from the institution’s perspective.

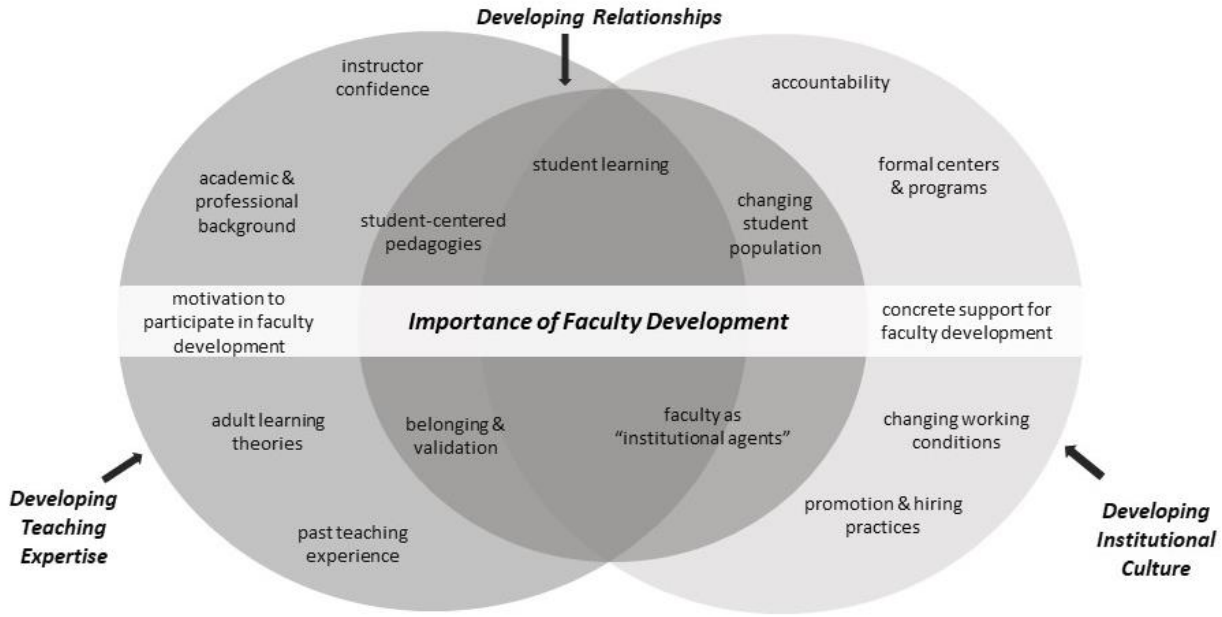
Summary

Demographic shifts have shown more students are attempting postsecondary education, increasing the diversity of the college-going populations. Unfortunately, underserved students from various intersecting identity backgrounds face many challenges that impact educational outcomes. This complex constellation of factors can all be positively impacted by institutional agents working to increase student engagement, students’ sense of belonging, and student outcomes. Figure 2 expands on

Figure 1 to locate potential sensitizing concepts within the context of faculty development, and the interrelationships between participation in faculty development programs with development of teaching expertise, faculty–student relationships, and institutional culture.

Figure 2

Framework of Literature Review Components



There are many possible factors impacting whether an instructor is motivated to participate in development activities, has the necessary resources to participate, has the support to implement changes to their teaching practice, and is able to evaluate whether the development activities were successful. Current models of faculty development address the "best practices" from the point of view of the faculty developer and focus on the process of delivery of professional development to the instructors, which is primarily on the mechanics and logistics of professional development, and secondarily on different philosophical views of faculty as learners. These models largely do not

interrogate the process of implementation of pedagogical initiatives or interventions. Thus, although a fair amount is known about faculty development from the perspective of the developer, much less is known about the process from the perspective of the instructor. Institutional culture and administrative support are important, but what types of support are most effective. Building relationships is vital to helping improve student outcomes, but what role does faculty development play in helping instructors to build these relationships. This research study addressed these issues through exploring the process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through participation in faculty development.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Numerous paths lead to knowledge and produce numerous knowledges. (Charmaz, 2017b, p. 6)

In this chapter, I describe the study design and methodology. I start with an overview of the research design, which followed a grounded theory approach to the data collection and data analysis procedures, including the research questions. Then, I address in greater depth the methodological choices, beginning with outlining the data sources and sampling rationale applied to end up with the instructors who participated in the study. In this section, I elaborate on the selection criteria, explain how I applied principles of theoretical sampling, and provide an overview of the institutions from which the participants came. The next section addresses the data collection procedures, from the interview protocols to data security and confidentiality measures through the data preparation process completed prior to data analysis. The following section of this chapter then addresses the data analysis, focusing on three components: the research journal, grounded theory coding procedures, and writing research memos. I describe how I used the research journal to capture methodological thoughts and questions, explain with examples the iterative grounded theory coding process I used to analyze interview data, and explain how I prepared and used research memos. The chapter ends with a section addressing the study's rigor, including data triangulation, member checking procedures, peer debriefing, pilot testing, and the study's limitations.

Overview of the Research Design

This study employed a grounded theory research design. It was qualitative in the tradition described by Maxwell (2009), where qualitative research is particularly suited to (a) understanding meaning from the participants' point of view, (b) understanding the influence of participants' context, (c) generating new theories about "unanticipated phenomena" (p. 221), (d) understanding the process (the how), and (e) "developing causal explanations" (the why) for events and actions (p. 221). A

grounded theory approach to research relies on intensive involvement with participants and data, and the collection of rich data.

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to describe the process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through participation in faculty development and allow an understanding of how faculty implement changes to their teaching practices to emerge. Because this was a qualitative study concerned with understanding the decision-making process of participants, I implemented a constructivist approach to the research process. As a researcher, I engaged in the research process with an eye toward understanding the meanings participants constructed of their participation in faculty development. Participants were asked to engage in the reflection and construction process alongside me, to "construct the meaning of a situation . . . and of the 'processes' of interaction among individuals" (Creswell, 2007, p. 21).

I also hoped to uncover some of the contextual pieces that are important to a description of how faculty engage in faculty development. As Charmaz (2014) explained, it is important to:

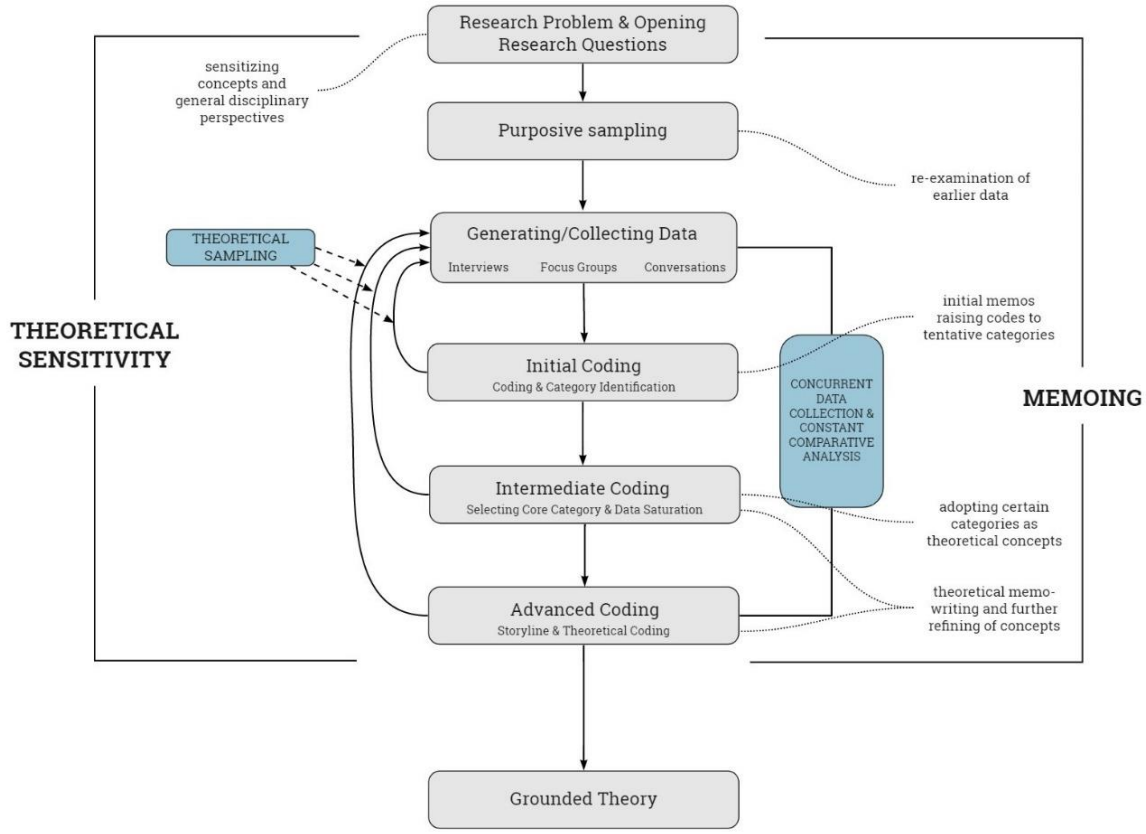
> Locate participants' meanings and actions in larger social structures and discourses of which they may be unaware. Their meanings may reflect ideologies; their actions may reproduce current ideologies, social conventions, discourses, and power relationships. Of course, if we are not reflexive, our research analyses may also reproduce current ideologies, conventions, discourses, and power relationships. We look for the assumptions on which participants construct their meanings and actions. (p. 241)

Grounded theory as a research methodology offers a rich structure that emphasizes the iterative nature of the data collection and data analysis process, as outlined in Figure 3. Figure 3 combines components from two different published diagrams outlining the grounded theory research process. The two diagrams I drew from when creating Figure 3 were the *"*Research Design Framework: Summary of the Interplay Between the Essential Grounded Theory Methods and Processes" (Chun Tie et

al., 2019) and the *Grounded Theory Process* (Charmaz, 2014). I combined parts of each of these diagrams into one for several reasons. First, I wanted to maintain the overall structure laid out in Charmaz's (2014) texts on grounded theory. To that base structure, I wanted to incorporate Chun Tie et al.'s (2019) perspective on the importance of theoretical sensitivity and memo-writing to the ongoing data collection and analysis process (shown in Figure 3 as bracketing the individual steps in the process). I also wanted to integrate the level of detail on functions of memo-writing and connections to specific steps that Charmaz articulated within the more overarching "theoretical sensitivity" and "memoing" sections of the diagram. Thus, the diagram in Figure 3 best captures the process I engaged in as I conducted this study.

Figure 3

Grounded Theory Research Design



I selected grounded theory because of the structured flexibility of the approach and it fit with my broader appreciation of constructivist methods. As Charmaz (2014) explained, "grounded theory serves as a way to learn about the world we study and a method for developing theories to understand them. . . . We *construct* our grounded theories through our past and present involvement and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices" (p. 17, emphasis in original).

Methodological Design

This qualitative study focused on faculty development and specifically explored instructors' perceptions of participating in faculty development, to better understand growth as instructors. A grounded theory approach "expands the borders of the field while simultaneously going deep into the studied phenomenon" (Charmaz, 2017a, p. 300). For this study, a grounded theory approach was appropriate because existing models of faculty development focus on the process of delivery to the instructors rather than implementation by instructors, and thus, existing theory did not sufficiently explain what this study aimed to explore. The choice of using constructivist grounded theory allowed me to adapt "methodological strategies to explore what the researcher discovers along the way" (Charmaz, 2017c, p. 35), and my choices of data sources, collection, and analysis procedures supported a constructivist grounded theory approach.

Research Questions

1. How do faculty describe their participation in a faculty development initiative?
2. How do faculty describe their implementation of a teaching intervention?
3. What is the decision-making process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through faculty development?

Context

Understanding the context of this study is important to understanding who the participants were and how they were recruited to participate, and to understanding how the findings, presented in

Chapter 4, speak to the work that participants do in their specific institutional environments. The setting of the study was a state-wide professional development initiative for full- and part-time instructors teaching at 2- and 4-year public and private institutions. This initiative was a large, cross-institutional educational development initiative and applied research project that focused on introducing instructors to transparent assignment design principles. Instructors who participated in the initiative, Creating Equitable Learning Opportunities Through Transparent Assignment Design*,* were invited to consider how redesigning course assignments could positively impact students' academic confidence and sense of belonging, and lead to higher-quality student work. The initiative commenced with a half-day virtual workshop in April 2021; data collection took place over Summer 2021 (see Appendix A). Workshop attendees were invited by the workshop conveners to express initial interest in participating in a variety of research studies focused on either student outcome data, student work products, student perceptions of transparent assignment design, or instructor experiences with implementing the intervention or with professional development in general. All workshop attendees, approximately 300 individuals, were invited by the workshop conveners to fill out a short questionnaire about their interest in participating in one or more of the affiliated research studies (see Appendix B).

A final piece of context was the timing of this study. At the beginning of the study, participants had all been teaching at least in part online since mid-March 2020, when the COVID-19 global pandemic caused colleges and universities to suspend in-person operations. Some of the participants returned to limited teaching in-person in Fall 2020, but most continued teaching some or all of their courses online through Summer 2021. Much of their nonteaching duties (e.g., student advising, committee meetings) transitioned to online operations as well, remaining online through Summer 2021. At the time of the interviews, Summer 2021, institutions of higher education were still adapting to changing conditions, and the work of faculty was very much in flux.

Data Sources and Sampling Rationale

Participants were identified initially through their attendance at the aforementioned faculty development workshop in April 2021. The workshop was open to attendees from institutions across the state. Nearly 300 people attended the workshop, including full- and part-time faculty from a variety of institutions. After attending the initial professional development workshop, attendees responded to a postworkshop interest questionnaire (see Appendix B) sent out by the workshop conveners, which generated the list of interested potential participants who affirmatively opted in to sharing their contact information with the research team. I then followed up with potential participants (see Appendix C) based on the selection criteria I applied to the list of potential participants.

Selection Criteria

Participants were identified through attendance at a faculty development workshop in Spring 2021. The workshop was open to attendees from institutions across the state; with almost 500 registered participants, just under 300 attendees participated in the live workshop, and all registrants had access to the workshop recording. Participants were asked to respond to a postworkshop invitation to participate in a series of follow-up activities, one of which was this study. My goal was to select participants who fit the following criteria: (a) full-time instructional faculty (not administrative/professional faculty whose primary role is in assessment, evaluation, administration, etc.); (b) at least 2 years of teaching experience at their current institution and scheduled to teach at least one course in Fall 2021; and (c) prior experience with faculty development. I focused only on full-time faculty in part because of the challenges in attempting to interview enough full- and part-time participants to be able to reach saturation regarding the decision-making process in how they apply to their teaching what they have learned through faculty development. I also chose to focus on full-time faculty because I believed these instructors would be more likely to participate in faculty development and more connected to resources and mentors/critical friends in ways that impact their decision making

about faculty development. I further focused on identifying participants who had been teaching full-time at their current institution for at least 2 full academic years (and, in fact, the median was 10 years). This allowed me to focus on instructors who were neither new to teaching nor to their institution. Finally, my goal was that participants would reflect on their decision-making process as they apply what they have learned through faculty development to their teaching practice. To explore this process, I selected participants who had more than one faculty development experience. To recruit participants who met this criterion, I contacted the members of the Virginia Educational Development Collaborative to ask for their assistance in referring faculty at their institution who participated in the April 2021 workshop to the research study (see Appendix D); however, no participants were identified via direct referral. All participants were drawn from the pool of instructors who attended the workshop and responded to my call to participate in the research.

With these criteria applied, I was able to identify a group of 44 interested workshop attendees (i.e., they had responded “yes” or “maybe” to a question asking if they were interested in participating in interviews) and shared with them the consent form with more details about expectations for participation in the study (see Appendix E). For a grounded theory study, Creswell (2007) emphasized the importance of selecting participants “who have participated in the process” being studied, and he adds that there are benefits to identifying participants across a range of sites who can provide “important contextual information” (p. 122). Accordingly, I selected 21 participants to represent diverse academic backgrounds and teaching contexts. Based on responses, I then reached out to an additional nine participants. Some invited participants either never responded or were not able to participate for varying personal circumstances (e.g., on medical leave, left institution before interviews could take place). Over the course of data collection, I conducted 27 interviews with a total of 15 participants. One participant withdrew from the study before the second round of interviews could take place and that initial interview was, therefore, not included in the data analysis reporting. I used a free calendar

scheduling service to offer participants a range of dates and times, and participants signed up for an initial interview over a 7-week period from May to early June 2021. Once I completed initial interviews, I sent out a series of follow-up emails with the same procedure asking participants to schedule a follow-up interview; 12 follow-up interviews took place in late July to August 2021. The timing of the follow-up emails meant that I interviewed participants in roughly the same order for the first and second set of interviews, with two participants not available for a second interview.

The final number of participants depended in part on data analysis as I sought data saturation. The goal of follow-up interviews, with either the same participants or new participants, was to saturate categories (i.e., conceptual groupings of codes) of analysis (Charmaz, 2014) so that "diverse and disconnected" data "form patterns or themes and begin to make sense" (Morse, 1995, p. 147). Morse (2015) noted that this process occurs between data collection and data analysis as theoretical sampling leads the analysis to "[spiral] from participants to data analysis, back to participants, and so forth, as the researcher learns about the phenomenon and develops the theory" (p. 588). The large number of participants that is traditional in a grounded theory study serves also to protect participants' privacy by focusing the analysis on the significant threads that connect participants, and not on the specific details of any one participant (Oliver, 2012).

Theoretical Sampling

In grounded theory, researchers use theoretical sampling to help determine whether they have conducted enough interviews with enough participants to feel confident that additional participants and interviews would not produce new data that has not already been uncovered (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Theoretical sampling is "a method of data collection based on concepts/themes derived from data," the purpose of which is to "collect data . . . that will maximize opportunities to develop concepts in terms of their properties and dimensions, uncover variations, and identify relationships between concepts"

(Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 143). Theoretical sampling means that "data collection and analysis go hand in hand" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 145).

Charmaz (2014) articulated theoretical sampling as the way a researcher "explicates" categories, explaining:

> The purpose of theoretical sampling is to obtain data to help you explicate your categories. When your categories are full, they reflect the qualities of respondents' experiences and provide a useful analytic handle for understanding them. In short, theoretical sampling pertains only to conceptual and theoretical developments; it is *not* about representing a population or increasing the statistical generalizability of your results. (p. 198, emphasis in the original)

Grounded theory calls for enough participants and interviews to reach saturation. The aim of participant selection is to saturate the categories. Corbin and Strauss (2008) explained *saturation* as "development of categories in terms of their properties and dimensions, including variation, and if theory building, the delineating of relationships between concepts" (p. 143). The selection of participants forms part of the saturation process. Participants were "theoretically chosen (called theoretical sampling) to help the researcher best form the theory" (Creswell, 2007, p. 64). Data collection and data analysis are not separate steps in a process but happen continually in iterative cycles, each informing the other. Theoretical sampling informs the selection of participants, and is informed by initial data collection and analysis, which leads to additional data collection in the form of more interviews or more participants. As Corbin and Strauss (2008) explained:

> In theoretical sampling the researcher is not sampling persons but concepts. The researcher is purposely looking for indicators of those concepts so that he or she might examine the data to discover how concepts vary under different conditions . . . Analysis begins after the first day of data gathering. Data collection leads to analysis. Analysis leads to concepts. Concepts generate questions. Questions lead to more data collection so that the researcher might learn more

> about those concepts. This circular process continues until the research reaches the point of **saturation**; that is, the point of the research when all the concepts are well-defined and explained. (pp. 144–145, emphasis in original)

This process is integral to constructivist grounded theory methodology, where the researcher undertakes theoretical sampling as a way to seek out additional data points "to develop the properties of an emergent analytic category" (Charmaz, 2015, p. 3). In practice, I began by identifying participants who were willing to engage in an initial interview with me and continued by inviting selected participants to return for a follow-up conversation based on whether I had enough data to feel confident of my developing interpretations. Charmaz (2014) offered a series of questions for consideration, to help a researcher carefully consider whether they have enough data to feel confident in their interpretations, saying:

> Have I collected enough background data about persons, processes, and settings to have ready recall and to understand and portray the full range of contexts of the study? Have I gained detailed descriptions of a range of participants' views and actions? Do the data reveal what lies beneath the surface? Are the data sufficient to reveal changes over time? Have I gained multiple views of the participants' range of actions? Have I gathered data that enable me to develop analytic categories? What kinds of comparisons can I make between data? How do these comparisons generate and inform my ideas? (p. 33)

Knowing whether enough participants had been interviewed enough times required understanding of the sensitizing concepts that guided my inquiry, developing analysis of the interviews, and thoughtful consideration of the questions posed by Charmaz (2014) on the depth and breadth of data gathered.

Overview of Institutions

As part of data collection, I gathered institution-level data about the institutions presented in the study, wanting to have a rich picture of the institutional contexts in which participants worked. I

explored institution size and number of faculty (both full- and part-time), shown in Table 1. Participants represented eight different institutions from the state in this study. All were public institutions; six 4-year schools and two 2-year schools. Schools represented rural, suburban, and urban geographic areas, with student bodies that ranged from nonresidential to highly residential. Associates-granting colleges, master's level programs (both medium and large), and doctoral institutions with high and very high research activity were represented. Schools ranged in size from under 5,000 to over 50,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. Schools called their teaching centers by different names, and some lacked a center entirely. Where there was any administrative unit or organization within the institution dedicated to supporting teaching, I refer to it as a Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL).

Table 1

List of Institutions

Institution	Approx. Size	Approx. # of FT faculty (% of all instructors)
Medium Community College (MCC)*	10,500	100 (26)
Large Community College (LCC)*	51,000	600 (26)
Small Rural College (SRU)**	5,000	250 (76)
Medium Rural College (MRC)**	9,500	450 (68)
Small Suburban College (SSC)**	5,000	250 (66)
Large Suburban University (LSU)***	36,000	1400 (77)
Medium Urban University (MUU)***	24,500	850 (58)
Large Urban University (LUU)***	31,000	1300 (59)

Note. * Associates degree-granting institution; ** Master's degree-granting institution; *** Doctoral degree-granting institution

Overview of Participants

Fourteen individuals participated in interviews: two men and 12 women. Table 2 lists participants by pseudonym, with institution, discipline, number of years teaching, number of years at their current institution, and average teaching load per academic year. Years of teaching experience

ranged from 7 to 29, with a mean of 14.8 years and a median of 12. Years at their current institution ranged from 2 to 19, with a mean of 10.7 years and a median of 9.5. Participants most commonly had a teaching load of four courses per semester, fall and spring, which for most of them equaled 12 credit hours per semester. There were four participants who taught 15 credit hours per semester, and four participants who taught fewer than four courses (i.e., fewer than 12 credits) each semester. The participants came from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds as well. Two taught physical science courses while three taught in the natural sciences, four taught in the social sciences, and five taught in the humanities/arts. I created participant profiles as part of the memo-writing process during data analysis (see Appendix F for a table of memos and Appendix G for the full participant profiles).

Table 2

Overview of Participants

Participant	Institution (abbreviation)*	Discipline	Years teaching/ years at inst.	Avg. Load
Alberto	Large Community College (LCC)	Physical science**	10/4	5:5
Allyson	Small Suburban College (SSC)	Social science***	20/9	4:4
Becky	Medium Rural College (MRC)	Social science	10/7	4:4
Carla	Large Suburban University (LSU)	Social science	10/2	4:4
Denise	Medium Urban University (MUU)	Natural science****	10/10	2:2
Jack	Small Rural College (SRU)	Natural science	12/7	4:4
Jane	Large Urban University (LUU)	Humanities/arts*****	20/14	3:2
Jennifer	Small Rural College (SRC)	Natural science	15/13	5:5
Jolie	Small Suburban College (SSC)	Social science	20/13	3:3
Maria	Medium Community College (MCC)	Physical science	7/7	5:5
Nora	Large Suburban University (LSU)	Humanities/arts	29/19	2:2
Paula	Large Community College (LCC)	Humanities/arts	10/8	5:5
Taylor	Small Suburban College (SSC)	Humanities/arts	11/12	4:4
Willa	Large Urban University (LUU)	Humanities/arts	15/15	4:4

Note. *More information on the institutions is presented in the overview of institutions; **Physical science includes physics, math, engineering, and technology; ***Social science includes psychology, education, sociology, anthropology, political science, economics, etc.; ****Natural science includes life

and earth sciences; *****Humanities/arts includes languages, literatures, history, philosophy, theology, fine and performing arts.

Data Collection Procedures

I collected data consisting of interview transcripts conducted via Zoom, memos, and a research journal written during the course of the study. An initial interview with participants presented them with the opportunity to explore the decisions they were making about implementation of what they learned from the professional development activities in which they participated. In a follow-up interview with participants, I asked them to react to my developing understanding of their experiences and to emerging themes within the implementation process.

Intensive Interviews

With intensive interviews, as described by Charmaz (2014), the goal is to allow participants to fully describe their participation in the phenomenon. Charmaz (2014) stated, “The in-depth nature of an intensive interview fosters eliciting each participant’s interpretation of his or her experience . . . the interviewer’s questions ask the participant to describe and reflect upon his or her experiences in ways that seldom occur in everyday life” (p. 58).

The faculty interviews (both initial and follow-up) included an interview protocol with a small number of open-ended questions (see Appendix H and I). Corbin and Strauss (2008) described the use of an interview guide and recommended that even when beginning with a semistructured interview protocol, researchers must consider how to develop interview questions in response to what each participant says and in response to “concepts derived from analysis” (p. 152). They explained that in a grounded theory study, “adhering rigidly to initial questions throughout a study hinders discovery because it limits the amount and type of data that can be gathered” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 152). Therefore, I used the proposed interview protocol as a starting point for interviews but allowed participants and my ongoing data analysis to inform the direction of the interviews. Charmaz (2014)

recommended starting interviews with “some broad, open-ended questions” (p. 64) and following up on these questions with prompts to explore participants’ experiences.

Although interactions between me and the instructors were fluid, I addressed several preidentified areas of interest with the participants over the course of the study, particularly in the follow-up interviews. These areas of interest were drawn from sensitizing concepts outlined in Chapter 1 (e.g., teaching expertise, faculty–student relationships, and institutional culture) and from emerging themes from the first round of interviews (e.g., institutional/departmental culture, trust and vulnerability; risk-taking and experimenting; educator identity; life-long learning; setting priorities) and touched on motivation for participation in the professional development initiative, reflection on the process of implementation of the intervention, reflection on the process of professional development, and participants’ academic and professional background. Table 3 shows the timeline for initial and follow-up interviews, as well as a list of topics addressed across the interviews.

Table 3

Timeline of Intensive Interviews

Date	Interview	Topics
May–June	Initial interviews with first-round participants (14)	Academic/professional background; decision to participate in workshop; decisions about implementing the initiative; anticipated supports/challenges implementing; prior experiences with faculty development
July–August	Follow-up interviews with participants (12)	Institutional/departmental culture; encouraging person at institution; life-long learning; taking on an “expert” role; administrative/institutional change

Data Security

I assigned participants a pseudonym during the transcription process, and only I had access to the electronically stored recordings. After each interview, I used the auto-transcription provided by Zoom as a starting point to create a transcript of each interview, and manually checked and corrected

each transcript. All transcripts and memos used participant and institution pseudonyms, with any other potentially identifying data (e.g., colleagues' names, discipline names) removed or masked.

Data Preparation

Data preparation included decisions about how to transcribe the interview recordings (e.g., how to address nonverbal markers, whether to delete repeated words or phrases), how data were sorted and organized, and how data were transformed in preparation for data analysis. Each interview resulted in three files: video, audio, and text transcript created by Zoom. Files were saved in folders labeled by participant pseudonym and interview number (i.e., 1 or 2); transcript text files were copied into Microsoft Word for further manipulation.

Once the transcripts were in Microsoft Word, I deleted all segment notations and time stamps, and deleted extra periods or replaced them with commas, to help the narrative read in the most grammatically clear manner. All proper names were masked with pseudonyms or bracketed notes (e.g., [institution]). Beyond pseudonyms, I redacted information about a participant's academic background or work history, discipline, and current employment, or any other potentially identifying information. Transcripts were unsegmented, transformed into paragraphs of responses rather than separated by timestamps. An example of this data preparation process is shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Comparison of Raw and Revised Transcripts

Raw transcript	Revised Transcript
30 / 00:03:22.770 --> 00:03:26.160 ALBERTO: I need, I would like to reach out to him to. 31 / 00:03:28.920 --> 00:03:29.850 ALBERTO: See if there's a. 32 / 00:03:31.260 --> 00:03:32.340 ALBERTO: An assessment. 33 / 00:03:33.600 --> 00:03:37.500 ALBERTO: or evaluation strategy that works. 34 / 00:03:40.200 --> 00:03:45.570	ALBERTO: I need, I would like to reach out to him to see if there's an assessment or evaluation strategy that works, you know, works for him that I might be able to adapt to, I don't know, to increase the level of accountability that the students are experiencing with respect to doing the work and engaging with it. And sort of decoupling that from the stress and the

Raw transcript	Revised Transcript
ALBERTO: You know works for him that I might be able to adapt to. 35 / 00:03:49.170 --> 00:04:02.730 ALBERTO: I don't know to increase the the level of accountability that the students are are experiencing with respect to doing the work and engaging with it without. 36 / 00:04:06.000 --> 00:04:11.850 ALBERTO: And sort of decoupling that from the stress and the anxiety associated with graded assignments. 37 / 00:04:15.060 --> 00:04:17.610 ALBERTO: So that if there's a way to do that. 38 / 00:04:19.530 --> 00:04:24.480 ALBERTO: thing if I say it out loud maybe I will remember to do it.	anxiety associated with graded assignments, so, that if there's a way to do that thing. If I say it out loud maybe I will remember to do it.

I chose to create seminaturalized transcripts, which include contextual nonverbal information such as "pauses, false starts, repeated sentences, interruptions, or encouragement" (Azevedo et al., 2017, p. 162). I captured hesitations of varying lengths with either ellipses or bracketed notations, as outlined in Table 5. Where I felt it contributed to understanding the meaning of what the participant was trying to convey, I inserted a limited number of bracketed markers like [long pause] and [laugh] or [claps hands to indicate X].

Table 5

Transcript Markers

Verbal and nonverbal marker	Notation in transcript	Example
Hesitations (1-2 seconds)	Ellipses	. . .
Pauses (3-5 seconds)	Notation in square brackets	[pause]
Longer pauses (5+ seconds)	Notation in square brackets	[long pause]
Nonverbal utterances	Notation in square brackets	[laugh]; [sigh]
Silent marker	Notation in square brackets	"and think [smacks forehead]"
Self-interruptions	Indicated with dash (-) and square brackets	"He was wron- [wrong] I mean, he"
Inaudible/unclear segments	Notation in square brackets	[unclear]
Emphasis	Indicated with all capital letters	"Trust is really a huge issue. HUGE."

I did not remove discourse markers such as “like,” “you know,” or “um” from the transcripts, but I did delete repeated words or repeated short phrases for clarity. These transcription deletions and formatting choices resulted in a transcript that was readable, that captured as accurately as possible the meaning of what participants communicated, verbally and nonverbally, and that was ready to be uploaded into the qualitative data analysis software I chose to use.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis followed the constructivist grounded theory methodology addressed earlier, where data collection and analysis happen not with distinct beginning and ending points but rather occur more or less simultaneously, each informing the next iteration of the other. Thus, although I use the term “stage” as I discussed the collection and analysis procedures I followed, these stages are recursive and cyclical, overlapping rather than linear. This constant comparison of data, and the evolution of that data, encourages viewing new data with fresh eyes that are open to new interpretations. As Charmaz and Belgrave (2019) explained:

> grounded theorists analyze our data using comparative methods from the beginning to the end of the research process. We use our early analyses to identify which data to subsequently collect. In turn, these data help us develop our budding ideas. Throughout the research, we successively gather specific data to check and refine our major categories. Thus, grounded theory data evolve throughout the study. To construct fresh theories, grounded theorists attempt to remain open to all possible theoretical understandings of the data and systematically check which one best accounts for them. (p. 744)

Broadly, then, the on-going data analysis identified key phrases and statements in the participants’ narratives, interpreted the meanings of these phrases (through researcher memos), shared these key ideas with participants (i.e., member checking) during follow up interviews, identified

essential features (i.e., the common threads between participants' experiences), and finally attempted to offer an explanation of the phenomenon (i.e., theory generation).

I followed the procedures outlined by Charmaz (2014) in the analysis of interview transcripts, which included a close view of the transcripts (i.e., initial/line-by-line coding) followed by a comparative view of interviews from different participants, or the same participant across different interview sessions (i.e., intermediate/focused coding), and then linking codes into categories (i.e., advanced/axial coding or thematic coding) to allow the most significant themes to emerge. Through this process, researcher memos explored developing narratives and propositions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, 2014) and the research journal served as a record of the data collection and analytical decisions made (Charmaz, 2014).

Coding Procedures

The first time I read through each interview transcript I focused on line-by-line coding, using the participants' own words where possible. For later interviews, I set aside interviews or coding already completed to have fresh eyes as I read each transcript. I approached the coding process as iterative, circling back to earlier interviews to code while also preparing transcripts of later interviews for analysis, and later while preparing follow-up interview questions for each participant. As much as possible, I sought to engage in coding as "a way of engaging with data, a way of stretching our view, expanding knowledge, and raising questions" (Charmaz, 2017a, p. 3).

Initial Coding

Charmaz (2014) argued it is important to begin with line-by-line coding because doing so "forces you to think about the material in new ways that may differ from your research participants' interpretations . . . you may make fundamental processes explicit, render hidden assumptions visible, and give participants new insights" (p. 133). Charmaz (2014) also recommended providing special attention to the types of codes and noted "in vivo codes help us to preserve participants' meaning of

their views and actions in the coding itself" (p. 134), as in vivo codes use the participants' own language. Using in vivo codes, where practical, helped me focus on the participants' emerging understandings of their own participation in the professional development initiative and their participation in the research itself, and helped me to, as much as possible, avoid ascribing my personal biases and perspectives to the participants' experiences.

This line-by-line coding led to a list of in-progress codes, or a codebook, that was added to with each interview. This generated hundreds of unique codes, a small excerpt of which is captured in Table 6, which provides some examples of *in vivo* codes applied during the initial, line-by-line, coding process.

Table 6

Selected Examples of In Vivo Codes During Line-by-Line Coding

Code name
"good" teaching always changing
admin asking too much
admin changes block new initiatives
admin level is where values go to die
admin messaging doesn't match actions
admin sets the tone for valuing teaching
alliances with like-minded people
asking fac what they need
balancing innovation with workload
change is glacially slow
department representation in governance
doing research is motivation
don't reinvent the wheel
good things can come out of frustrating initiatives
good Ts don't need to rely on tech or tools to help them teach
hard to keep up with SoTL
how much change for students is too much
institutional changes not teaching-oriented
institutional initiatives pull away from teaching focus
lack of transparency from admin
learn what students need
loss of connection across campuses
making a difference at institution
messages with no follow through
need to talk to people in the same discipline

Code name
practice-able FD
reinventing the wheel at each institution
stale teaching
technology hasn't made for better teaching
too many institutional initiatives

Intermediate Coding

After one or two read-throughs and in vivo coding of each interview, I used what Chun Tie et al. (2019) called intermediate coding and Charmaz (2014) called focused coding. Focused coding is an active but still iterative process, where "you interact with and act upon your data rather than passively read them. Through your actions new threads for analysis become apparent" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 142). The goal is to identify the most significant or most frequent codes and see whether these codes, applied to other data, reveal something that had not before been identified. A significant code from one interview, applied to other interviews, might reveal important commonalities or connections between participants. On the other hand, a code that seems to be significant for one participant might be found to not appear in the data for other participants, which would pose new and different concerns. Chun Tie et al. (2019) stated:

> Where initial coding fractures the data, intermediate coding begins to transform basic data into more abstract concepts allowing the theory to emerge from the data. During this analytic stage, a process of reviewing categories and identifying which ones, if any, can be subsumed beneath other categories occurs and the properties or dimension of the developed categories are refined. (p. 5)

At this stage, which occurred iteratively throughout the interview process, I read through each interview a second and often third time, looking to identify places where a code from another interview might be appropriate to capture something that my initial line-by-line coding had not captured. I also merged or collapsed codes as needed; at the conclusion of the interviews, I had refined hundreds of in

vivo codes into 200-250 focused codes. Upon review of the codes, I merged some of the codes with other codes, while some codes became subcodes (Saldaña, 2021), providing a "*coding grammar*, a way of initially detailing and organizing data into preliminary categories, subcategories, hierarchies, taxonomies, and indexes" (p. 123, emphasis in original).

Table 7 lists a few codes that I had, at this stage, already transformed from the in vivo codes of Table 6 to focused codes, along with a selection of the final code tree (i.e., code and subcode), showing how some codes became subcodes (e.g., "mentor" under "colleague chat") and other codes merged into existing codes (e.g., "missed opportunity for networking" became part of "networking").

Table 7

Example of Linking and Collapsing Codes

Creation of focused codes from in vivo codes	Interim code tree of focused codes/subcodes
colleague chat	colleague chat
colleague help with transfer	-mentor
colleagues as incentive	-trust other faculty
colleagues as motivation for FD	networking [missed opportunity for networking]
expertise of colleagues	colleagues as motivation for FD [*colleagues as incentive*]
interaction with colleagues	-expertise of colleagues
mentor	-implementing
missed opportunity for networking	-colleague to help with transfer
networking	
trust other faculty	

I used the qualitative data analysis software, MAXQDA, in the process of analyzing the codes. The software program has a code organization tool where a selected number of codes can be pulled into a network or map format. From there, codes can easily be linked as parent or child codes to any other code. Two or more codes can be merged by dragging one code on top of another code. Being able to see the codes visually represented in a network made the process of identifying where codes could be merged and how code hierarchies should be mapped much simpler. Double clicking on any code in the map pulls up a list of all the segments coded to that specific code. Working back and forth between the

map of all the codes, the big picture view, and the detailed list of segments assigned to each code facilitated the process of understanding whether a code was a larger category and where linkages to other codes seemed appropriate.

Advanced Coding

The next step in the data analysis process was to connect previously identified concepts to each other, what Chun Tie et al. (2019) called advanced coding. This stage was called theoretical coding by Charmaz (2014). Charmaz (2014) offered the idea of developing categories of codes, suggesting theoretical coding to "specify possible relationships between categories you have developed in your focused coding" (p. 63). Charmaz (2014) explained, "although I have not used axial coding according to Strauss and Corbin's formal procedures, I have developed subcategories of a category and showed the links between them as I learned about the experiences the categories represent" (p. 148). The goal at this phase of data analysis is to "tell an analytic story that has coherence" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 150). However, Charmaz (2014) was much less prescriptive than other grounded theorists when it comes to describing the role of theoretical coding, saying, "In my view, what you need to do emerges from the studied empirical world and the analytic sense you make of it" (p. 151). Charmaz (2014) explained that their "approach differs from axial coding in that [their] analytic strategies are *emergent*, rather [than] procedural applications" (p. 148, emphasis in original). In practice, advanced or theoretical coding was a stage where I stopped focusing as much on the individual coded segments, and largely stopped returning to the interview transcripts as discrete documents, in order to focus more on developing broader understandings of the relationships between categories. Although I had been drafting research memos throughout the data collection process, as the follow-up interviews finished, I focused on adding to and refining the memos as a tool for testing out theoretical propositions. The research memo process is explained in greater detail in the next section of this chapter.

Research Memos

As I created and coded the transcripts, I drafted researcher memos to explore themes that emerged from the coding process, particularly from the focused coding, which aims to integrate themes across participants. Memo writing is a foundational piece of conducting grounded theory research; researchers must "stop coding and record a memo on your ideas" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 113). Charmaz (2014) advocated for researchers to undergo a regular process of memo writing, which "prompts you to analyze your data and codes early in the research process. Writing successive memos throughout the research process keeps you involved in the analysis and helps you to increase the level of abstraction of your ideas" (p. 162). Charmaz urged researchers to allow the memos to be a space for connection and comparison, in the constant comparative tradition. Charmaz further explained that writing memos on significant codes can help a researcher to identify conceptual categories, "explicate ideas, events, and processes" in the data, and collect themes and patterns that appear across different codes (p. 91). Charmaz (2014) explained:

> To begin, assess which codes best represent what you see happening in your data. In a memo, raise them to conceptual categories for your developing analytic framework—give them conceptual definition and analytical treatment in narrative form in your memo. (p. 189)

The research memos helped me to develop what Charmaz (2014) described as "intimate familiarity with the *studied phenomenon*" (p. 158, emphasis in original) so that I could examine my expectations and preexisting beliefs more fully. As I used MAXQDA to conduct data analysis of interview transcripts, these memos were sometimes connected to either a specific source document or a specific code. I also wrote "free memos," which sometimes were later linked to a code or set of codes or to a set of specific interview segments. I used these memos to explore connections between participants, and eventually to identify the main themes or concepts that formed the emerging theory. Early in the data analysis cycle, I wrote memos frequently, as the data warranted adding a new memo. When further

examination of transcripts was not yielding any new connections, I used the memo-writing process to identify concepts that became the basis for theory. As Charmaz (2014) explained, “memos record your path of theory construction. They chronicle what you grappled with and learned along the way” (p. 164). And went on to state:

> Memo writing is the pivotal intermediate step between coding data and writing the first draft of the analysis. Memo writing helps researchers to define and delineate theoretical categories and to focus further data collection. This analytic step is crucial because it keeps researchers in control of their studies. (Charmaz, 1999, p. 376)

The research memos also helped me to develop the rich description necessary for a grounded theory study and documented the research process over time (see Appendix F for a full list of research memos).

Constant Comparison

Morse at al. (2021) described the lack of immediate and ongoing data analysis as one of the weaknesses of studies purporting to use grounded theory methods. They explained that “failure to begin analysis of data when data are initially gathered and produced . . . commonly leads to under-analysis of the data overall” (Morse et al., 2021, p. 308). I avoided this common pitfall by beginning analysis of each interview as it occurred, approaching each with fresh eyes as I set aside initial analysis of previous interviews, and then approaching each again with the perspective of the analysis and initial codes previously identified. This constant comparison from interview to interview allowed the developing, on-going analysis to shape future interviews, to “modify the direction of inquiry and to confirm/verify your analysis as you proceed” (Morse et al., 2021, p. 315). Throughout, I used my developing theoretical sensitivity to guide selection of later participants, inviting individuals who I believed might have different perspectives to share, and to suggest potential areas of inquiry in interviews.

Storyline and Diagrams

Two additional analytic tools I used during data analysis were creating a storyline and diagrams. The use of storyline in grounded theory is far from commonly accepted practice. Birks and Mills (2019), in their chapter in the *Handbook of Current Developments in Grounded Theory* (Bryant & Charmaz, 2019), traced the development of the use of storyline in Glaser's, Strauss's, and Corbin and Strauss's evolving works, noting Glaser did not use or advocate for the use of storyline, and that over time Corbin and Strauss put decreasing emphasis on storyline. Birks and Mills (2019) concluded "the potential of storyline as an analytical and rhetorical tool has remained largely untapped" (p. 245). Birks and Mills (2019) outlined not only the process but the rationale behind writing a storyline. They explained that "a key feature of storyline is how it provides for the researcher to render a grounded theory in a digestible form" (Birks & Mills, 2019, p. 250) and that "the ability to express findings through an analytical story raises the potential for the products of research to reach the reader in a meaningful way" (Birks & Mills, 2019, p. 256).

Saldaña (2021) recommended using storyline to articulate theory "if there is a story with conditions and consequences to be told from and about your data" (p. 357), but had reservations about whether the strategy is appropriate to all contexts. Saldaña rather urged researchers to consider a range of analytic techniques and spent significant time discussing the creation of diagrams and models to advance data analysis and theory articulation. Birks et al. (2009) offered that diagrams can be equally helpful as storyline for researchers as they articulate the processes emerging from their data and construct theory, saying, "We propose that both are not only useful analytical tools, but also necessary for the researcher who wishes to convey the meaning of their grounded theory comprehensively and unambiguously" (p. 412). Charmaz (2014) mentioned storyline as an analytic strategy only in passing, although they used the technique with frequency in their own research. Charmaz (2014), like Birks et al. (2009), offered diagramming as a useful technique, noting that "many grounded theorists . . . treat

creating visual images of their emerging theories as an intrinsic part of grounded theory methods" (p. 218). Charmaz (2014) urged the use of diagrams to both inform the analysis and theory generation and report on the results of this process, noting:

> Diagrams can offer concrete images of our ideas. The advantage of diagrams is that they provide a visual representation of categories and their relationships. They use various types of diagrams—including maps, charts, and figures—to tease out relationships while constructing their analyses and to demonstrate these relationships in their completed works. Diagrams can enable you to see the relative power, scope, and direction of the categories in your analysis as well as the connections among them. You may find that diagrams can serve useful and diverse purposes at all stages of analysis. You might revise an early quick clustering about a category into a more exacting form as a diagram illustrating the properties of a category. You might develop a conceptual map that locates your concepts and directs movement between them. . . . Conceptual maps can plot the relative strength or weakness of relationships. They also show how your grounded theory fits together. (pp. 218–219)

Throughout the data analysis components of this study, I prepared both narrative memos and visual diagrams of what I thought I saw happening in the data. I found that creating diagrams (see Appendix J for examples of interim diagrams) helped me to capture relationships between concepts and would often "unstick" me in various stages of data analysis and as I was writing up the findings.

Trustworthiness, Soundness, and Credibility

To address issues of trustworthiness, soundness, and credibility in qualitative research, Creswell (2003) suggested the following: use of triangulation, use of member checking, use of rich, thick description, clarification of bias, use of negative or discrepant information, prolonged field time, peer debriefing, and researcher journaling. In the sections that follow, I describe the specific strategies I used to address trustworthiness, soundness, and credibility in the study design, data collection, and data

analysis phases. These strategies included using a variety of data sources and seeking alternative viewpoints. Two rounds of pilot testing provided helpful feedback on my interview protocols and procedures. Multiple groups of critical friends likewise provided valuable feedback on my emerging data analysis, and the use of a research journal throughout the research process provided space for reflection on procedural and analytic issues.

Triangulation and Negative Cases

Maxwell (2009) suggested that triangulation is "a method to increase reliability by reducing systematic (method) error, through a strategy in which the researcher employs multiple methods or sources" (p. 323). This study included a variety of data sources, including initial and follow-up interviews, collected over the span of several months to provide multiple viewpoints. In grounded theory, part of the process of data collection is seeking negative cases to test the limits of the emerging concepts (Charmaz, 2014). As I conducted first round interviews, I sought to elicit interviews from participants who potentially would have different perspectives, within the constraints of my identified participant pool. As an example, I sought out additional participants from an institution that presented initially with what seemed to be intriguing differences in terms of how the first participant described institutional support for pursing growth as a teacher. I wanted to explore whether additional participants from the same institution would describe their institutional support in similar ways. For second round interviews, the questions I asked focused on continuing to refine the emerging concepts and illuminate areas of difference between participants' experiences. Thus, theoretical sampling and seeking negative cases guided my ongoing data collection in several ways.

Pilot Testing

To test out my interview protocol, I conducted two rounds of pilot interviews. The first round occurred in December 2020, where I interviewed three instructors about their experiences in faculty development, and particularly their implementation of a specific faculty development opportunity they

had each participated in over the previous summer (i.e., July–August 2020) and implemented in Fall 2020. Each interview during this winter pilot lasted about 60 to 90 minutes and was recorded using Zoom. The same transcription and transcript checking procedures were followed with the pilot as were described previously under Data Preparation. This pilot helped me to test out my developing interview protocol. My analysis focused on the questions that I asked and the types of response data that I was able to get from each participant based on what question I asked. This interview protocol analysis helped me to revise and refine my interview questions, which I then piloted with two colleagues who had participated in the spring faculty development workshop that my research participants attended, but who were not eligible to participate in the research study because of their status as adjunct faculty. These interviews in Spring 2021 lasted also about 60 to 90 minutes and provided me with the opportunity to test out my revised interview protocol.

Peer Debriefing and Member Checking

Because this qualitative study was one piece of a larger professional development and research initiative, I drew on various groups of "critical friends" familiar with the study and context to review and critique the data collection, analysis, and findings. I solicited feedback from my dissertation cohort at regular intervals throughout the proposal development, data collection and analysis, and writing phases. Members of the cohort, some with K–12 and some with postsecondary experience, had deep knowledge of my study and were able to provide thoughtful perspectives throughout the research process. Members of the state-wide Educational Development Collaborative also served as critical friends at different stages of the research process. Informal discussions with individuals working in faculty development at various institutions provided the opportunity to share emerging themes and discuss alternate interpretations. These individuals' deep expertise in the work of faculty development provided valuable contributions to my evolving understanding. Finally, I had the opportunity to attend an intensive 2-week summer research seminar sponsored by Dartmouth University, where I was able to

work with other educational researchers in small groups to develop and refine coding, present on emerging results, and receive feedback from seminar participants, facilitators, and outside experts. The process of articulating a coding process, discussing my emerging codes and categories, and sharing my ongoing work provided the opportunity for deeper exploration of my interview data and allowed me to reconceptualize and reorganize my data analysis.

Conducting follow-up interviews provided the opportunity to share emerging ideas with participants. Charmaz (2014) explained, “although member-checking generally refers to taking ideas back to research participants for their confirmation, you can use return visits to gather material to elaborate your categories” (p. 210). I used the second interview session with each participant as a place for member-checking, asking participants to elaborate on, clarify, or react to comments they had made in the first interview. Follow-up questions (see Appendix I) were tailored for each participant, but everyone was offered the chance to react to themes of institutional context/culture, life-long learning and growth, institutional change, and collaboration with colleagues. Discrepant data were purposefully sought out by presenting topics neutrally (i.e., not indicating that other participants had all agreed on X topic) and asking participants to provide specific examples related to the theme. Participants were encouraged to elaborate, consider alternate views, and to state disagreement if appropriate.

This peer debriefing feedback, seeking discrepant data and alternative analyses, along with the research memos and methodological journal, were all tools that helped me address concerns of researcher bias and discrepant data and develop a more rigorous study. As I progressed through data analysis, discussions with critical friends helped me recognize when I was confident in my emerging understandings. The ability to “speak in generalities about the interviews” and “anticipate [participants’] response or reactions in certain situations” is an indication that “saturation has probably been reached, and the theory may be constructed” (Morse et al., 2021, p. 316).

Research Journal

The research journal spanned the entire study, from proposal through theory development, and connected data collection to data analysis. Writing a research journal, or "methodological journal" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 165), captured ongoing reflections and questions, and provided space to think though the methodological choices I made. This examination is an important part of research when the researcher is an instrument of the research process. The research journal can—and did—inform research memos written during the data analysis phase, but the journal is a separate document and is a slightly less formal and less focused way of capturing ideas. Charmaz (2014) recommended thinking of the methodological journal as a place to record "methodological dilemmas, directions, and decisions" (p. 165).

Throughout the development of this study, I kept a journal with roughly weekly entries addressing a wide variety of topics. Once interviews began, I composed journal entries immediately after each interview to capture my first impressions and reflections. The exercise of writing these postinterview reflections helped me to consider different interpretations of events, experiences, and feelings shared by participants. As I conducted each interview, I took minimal notes, mostly as a memory aid. I used these notes during each interview to flag ideas or statements that I wanted to follow up on before the interview ended. Postinterview, I saved these notes and added a brief summary and reflection. I saved these notes electronically with the other documentation for each participant and uploaded them into the qualitative data analysis (QDA) software along with interview transcripts. I also maintained a log in the QDA software, using the logbook function, to record ideas related to data analysis steps I wanted to consider (e.g., a note reading "'self as teacher' or 'teaching goals' - text search for similar ideas about identity as teacher? maybe 'educator mindset?'"). Thus, the research journal took multiple forms and provided space to think through data collection and data analysis procedures and insights.

Summary

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to describe the process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through participation in faculty development. I used a constructivist grounded theory approach to the research design because of the structured flexibility of the approach; philosophically, I believe the grounded theory approach was appropriate because existing models of faculty development focus on the process of delivery to the instructors rather than implementation by instructors, and thus existing theory did not sufficiently explain what this study explored.

Throughout data collection/data analysis, I constantly compared my emerging understandings of the data, coding and re-coding, writing and revising memos, and returning to interviews to hear more clearly the voices of participants. I refined interview themes and questions from pilot testing through second interviews with each participant. As code groupings and categories emerged, I shared these with critical friends, attempting to explain and reexplain what I thought I was hearing, how that fit with what I thought was happening for each participant, and how that fit with what I thought I understood about the process of and motivation for faculty development. Eventually this constant comparative method led me to the recurring themes of Faculty Identity, Institutional Context, Finding Their Way, and Community and Collaboration, and to the development of a model of faculty growth. These findings and the model are presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Findings

> I think that universities need to have that kind of development be part of the culture in much deeper, more meaningful ways than it is at my school. (participant interview)

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to understand how instructors made decisions about professional development activities and how they implemented what they learned from that professional development in their classroom practices. This chapter presents the findings by theme, providing narrative explanation and specific evidence from participants to illustrate the themes of Faculty Identity, Institutional Context, Finding Their Way, and Community and Collaboration. The chapter concludes by proposing a theory of faculty growth that emerged from the data analysis process.

The research questions that guided this inquiry were:

1. How do faculty describe their participation in a faculty development initiative?
2. How do faculty describe their implementation of a teaching intervention?
3. What is the decision-making process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through faculty development?

Findings by Theme

In what follows, I describe the findings that emerged from the qualitative data analysis of this study. More specifically, using data excerpts, I illuminate themes that connect across research questions in an overarching story about how faculty made decisions about their growth. Morse (2008) explained that a theme:

> is a meaningful 'essence' that runs through the data. Just as a theme in opera occurs over and over again, sometimes in the foreground, sometimes in the background, and sometimes co-occurring with other tunes, so does the theme in our research. It is the basic topic that the narrative is about, overall. (p. 727)

The data presented in this chapter provide support for the following four themes: Faculty Identity, Institutional Context, Finding Their Way, and Community and Collaboration.

Faculty Identity

One theme that emerged from the data was Faculty Identity. The subthemes associated with Faculty Identity were (a) focus on teaching and (b) focus on students. Faculty Identity referred to participants' sense of themselves and their role as a teaching faculty member at their institution. This included whether they identified as an educator and what that identity meant to them, and how they adapted instructional strategies to support students' academic and socioemotional needs.

Focus on Teaching

One subtheme of Faculty Identity was focus on teaching. Participants frequently talked about the importance of teaching and of being a teacher to their identity. Becky was an example of an instructor who saw herself as a teacher, first and most importantly; she said:

> I am a teacher. It drives my department chair crazy because I am a teacher. I can do research; I know how to do research; I know how to read research. I appreciate people who do research. I did not go to an R1 institution intentionally. I wanted to go to a teaching institution, so I could be a teacher.

Jane described her identity in equally strong terms—and poignant terms, given her status as a tenured faculty member only responsible for teaching four courses a year. She stated, "[I] so strongly feel that identity as a teacher. And I would do twice as much teaching not to do any research at all." Maria echoed this emphasis on an identity as a teacher and how this identity was about building relationships, commenting, "Teaching to me is personal . . . teaching and learning is all personal and so it's kind of cool when, in a professional development environment, you also develop relationships with people."

Carla contrasted her strong identification as a teacher with others in her department, saying "the majority of people in my department are tenure track researchers and are not teachers by

identity." Becky provided an example of how her teacher identity influenced her nonteaching duties and "drives" the work she does outside of teaching; she said:

> I think [it] just comes from being a teacher and wanting to help students. I am serving this summer on the search committee [for a high-level administrative position], and I just keep coming back to, "What about the students? Undergraduate students, you know what about those kids who can't afford a textbook? What can we do for them?" So, I think it's just my teacher identity that drives that work.

Other participants spoke of what the idea of being a teacher meant to them. Paula explained:

> But, you know, the majority of teachers become teachers because we actually do care about, you know, making sure that our students are learning. . . . So, the desire to be an effective teacher comes from a really personal place for me.

Participants frequently spoke of seeing themselves as a teacher and how that role was the filter through which they evaluated development activities. Other instructors explained their choice of where to work was influenced by their perception of how the institution's values matched their own values. As Jane stated:

> I really think I belong at a teaching-oriented institution; I know I belong in a teaching-oriented institution; I do not belong in a research-oriented institution. And when I joined [this institution] it seemed very much like it wasn't a research [institution].

Jack explained he chose to come to his institution because it was a place that would allow him to focus on teaching rather than research, saying:

> I'm always looking for professional development opportunities, particularly for teaching. That's why I came to [this institution]; I sought out a smaller primarily undergraduate institution so that I could focus on teaching. I didn't want to be at an R1 institution, I didn't want to have to worry about major grants every other year and the pressures of publication.

Sometimes this strong sense of themselves as educators led to critiquing colleagues who participants viewed as less dedicated to improving as teachers. Willa found "problematic" who attended—and who did not attend—most development activities offered at her institution, commenting:

> One of the really problematic things I think about faculty development stuff . . . I've been to a number of things, and I remember, looking around the very sparsely populated room and thinking: "They are preaching to the choir. The people who need to be here aren't here, and they're never going to be able to get them in the room." Not that I didn't get anything valuable out of it [but] . . . I think one of the problems with faculty development in general is that the people who need it most are the people who are least likely to show up for it.

Jane expressed disappointment and disbelief in some of her colleagues who were less interested in teaching than Jane was. As Jane lamented:

> Why on earth would you be at a university unless you, I mean, you have all these undergraduates all around you. Why aren't you thrilled to be teaching them? [laughs] I understand that not everybody's like me, but I do love teaching, and I wish that it were more rewarded.

Jack, like Jane, expressed a strong focus on teaching, saying, "Our students are still our primary focus, and so I always want to find ways to get better at teaching." Nora identified her "teaching persona" as important to her interest in being a leader among colleagues, commenting, "I do know that part of my teaching persona is aligned with my faculty development role, my effort at mentorship and to be a good citizen in the department." For all participants, their sense of themselves as an educator, and what that role meant to them, was a strong influence on how they made decisions about opportunities to take and opportunities to ignore.

Although some participants—Becky, Nora, Paula, and Allyson—came to higher education with K–12 teaching experience, participants without this background or without teaching preparation in their graduate programs found other ways to focus on teaching as part of their Faculty Identity. This identity was connected to the strong student-focused perspectives that led participants to identify student needs as a primary motivation for their work.

Focus on Students

The second subtheme of Faculty Identify was focus on students. This subtheme concerned how participants described adapting to students' social-emotional needs and academic-instructional needs. Whereas focus on teaching described participants' views of themselves, focus on students is about their views of students. Participants' perception of who their students were, what the students brought to the classroom in terms of their academic preparation and life experiences, how social and cultural influences shaped student learning, all influenced what decisions participants made to better meet student needs. During interviews, participants frequently returned to how important their students were, and addressed wanting to develop in ways that would help them to better understand and meet students' needs. Focus on students represents the active and recurring choices participants made to focus on students' needs.

In addressing the affective needs of students in the classroom, many participants framed their focus on students in the context of the events of 2020–2021 (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic, Black Lives Matter protests of Summer 2020) that brought so much disruption to higher education. Students are "tender," as Jane explained, "Right now is a particularly tender moment . . . I think a lot of students are very tender right now, they're very, very easily injured by experiences in higher education." Several participants discussed how meeting the affective needs of students was a challenge, but an important challenge to address so that students remained engaged. Becky was one participant who spoke about the impacts she perceived on her students, and particularly on her students of color, noting:

> Last summer [2020] in the midst of all of the racial and social unrest, I was thinking about those students and how can I possibly walk into a classroom in August and pretend that none of this has happened? In the world, I can't pretend it doesn't happen, because the world comes into our classrooms . . . our students can't be focused on learning whatever it is we're trying to teach them . . . if they are preoccupied, worried about grandma in the hospital with COVID, or is my brother going to be arrested for going to the corner and getting a soda.

Jack clearly articulated the many pressures he saw students experiencing that impacted performance in the classroom, saying:

> Recognizing that students, given this past year, they're stressed, they're anxious, just everything, maybe it's not one thing, but everything is just building up on them, whether it's the pandemic, it's adjusting to online learning it's the political divide, it's social justice issues. Everything is just coming together at once, and then it may be family issues, maybe they're trying to stay healthy, there's financial issues, all kinds of things going on. They're stressed, they're anxious there's a lot of stresses on their mental well-being.

In the context of these pressures described by participants, they also addressed how they tried to, as Paula explained, "see where [students] are coming from and make sure that we are meeting them exactly where they are, rather than where we were when we were 18 years old." Taylor talked about how she "made a really strong and active effort to have extra positive energy for students . . . to accommodate everything, to meet them where they were."

One way that participants described focusing on students and meeting students' needs was in getting to know their students. As Becky noted, "effective teachers know their students." Paula concurred, explaining that "forming connections with my students and making sure that they know that I'm here to support them, and I can help them on an individual basis, is really important for me." Both Paula and Becky talked about seeking out professional development that helped them to better

understand who their students were as people, and how these experiences had been transformative in how they worked with their students. Jennifer mentioned a specific training opportunity she participated in, on trauma-informed pedagogy, that really made the explicit connection between students emotional and mental well-being and their ability to perform in the classroom. For Jennifer, this training was "really eye opening" in terms of thinking about students' feelings and recognizing the value of "making the classroom a safe space for everybody, so that their brains are actually in this this spot where they'll actually accept the information that you're giving them."

Participants cited student learning needs, and particularly the context of how these needs were changing, as important to how they saw themselves focusing on students. Some of the changes included increased concern about incoming students who had endured a year or more of disruptive schooling and the impacts this might have on students' ability to be successful as they make the transition to university. Paula said:

> How do we know what students are going to need in a year or 2? I believe there are a lot of different moving pieces. As far as content, I feel like we always need to be prepared for the challenges that students are going to have every year, every 2 years, and those are the sessions that I'm always the most interested in participating in.

Willa provided an example of how she addressed these transition challenges by adapting how she presented course material. Willa noted, "students find a lot of comfort in that [consistent structure]" she provided. Although Willa felt she had successfully adapted instructional strategies to meet student needs, other instructors described being frustrated by trying to adapt instruction. Denise struggled to figure out how to better manage her large classes while introducing elements of active learning, a strategy that she felt strongly would better meet her students' learning needs, but which was a challenge for her to implement. She said:

> It's hard to manage active learning with so many people and not have it get out of control and still try to keep it focused on that material. With so many people in one room, you have to be very careful that it just doesn't go off the rails.

Other instructors addressed feeling challenged by students' varying levels of initiative and preparation, and how best to adapt to what they perceived as changing student needs. As Becky explained:

> I love my students, and I don't want to sound like I am student bashing at all. Overall, it seems that our students are coming to us less and less prepared for the amount of work that we expect them to do. And I have several colleagues who, we very informally talk about how can we help them, what can we give them that will help them manage their time better or prioritize their work in a more productive way?

Jack echoed Becky's opinion of how student needs were changing, explaining that the institution needed to do a better job of adapting to the students actually in the classroom, rather than the students they had in the past or the students they wished they had, saying:

> I think we've got to find ways to, higher education as a whole has to find ways to pivot and meet students where they're at. . . . I don't think our current model, while that may work for some students, [it] is not working for everybody.

Jennifer expressed similar concerns as Jack and Becky, explaining her interest in pursuing faculty development that would help her better adapt to diverse learners, whom she saw "more and more" at her institution. She shared:

> Diverse learners . . . we get that at [my institution] and we're getting that more and more where I feel like there are learners who are coming in inexperienced, and I'm constantly trying to figure out how to get them to the same place [as] our other students coming from other places.

Jack, Becky, and Jennifer each noted a similar trend among their students, and each struggled to find ways to successfully adapt instructional strategies to better meet their students "where they're at."

Participants also thought about adapting instruction to make what they asked students to do feel engaging and relevant, with an eye toward dual goals of "improving their teaching and retaining students." Allyson reflected on faculty motivation "to own it [faculty development] and buy into it," explaining:

> The ultimate goal of improving their teaching and retaining students, really, that's going to become the ultimate goal in the next few years . . . to me it's pretty urgent that you make sure the stuff that's happening in these courses is engaging and useful and they're retaining it and they're finding it worth paying for.

For Allyson, something "worth paying for" was when instructors focused on "the ultimate goal of improving their teaching."

Other participants discussed how a focus on students guided decisions they made to seek out professional development that was student-focused and methods-focused. Paula explained the importance of professional development that helped her to better understand her students and provided a specific example of a workshop addressing students affective needs where participants were prompted to think about "forming connections with our students" and how "it's really important for us to establish the relationships" with students. Participants also specifically connected the learning or academic needs of students to faculty development that they hoped could help them better adapt to meet those needs. As Becky explained:

> I make those decisions [about what faculty development opportunities to engage in] based on what I know about my students and what they need. And what gaps there are. I think about what they need, and what gaps I have in my own knowledge and skills, and think, "How can I fill those gaps?"

Nora expressed a similar view in explaining how she was inspired by the most recent faculty development workshop she attended to reengage in a cycle of improvement each year to better adapt

to students' changing needs, saying, "That constant revision that we do each year, after we get through the hustle of the academic year you go back to your work, and you go, 'Okay, how can I make this better?' That's what I do over the summer."

Jennifer also talked about having decided to attend a specific activity based on whether she thought the topic would help her meet students' needs, noting that "in the promotional email it also said something about diverse learners" and that, at her institution, "we're getting that more and more where I feel like there're learners who are coming in inexperienced and I'm constantly trying to figure out how to get them to the same place [as] our other students." The workshop she attended helped her to evaluate what she was doing in the classroom and whether her students were benefitting from changes. She said, "We just need to evaluate and say, 'Okay, what was meant to do in the classroom? What was the value of it, and do we bring it back?' So that [evaluation] is something that I'm definitely doing." Denise also connected her choice of faculty development to what she saw in her students, explaining the activity helped her to consider in a new way how her students approached her syllabus and assignment instructions. She said, "How do we most effectively put this information up front on the first page that they're going to actually read and help them? Provide our expectations so that there's no surprises?" For Denise as for other participants, it was the academic and nonacademic struggles of students that guided many of her decisions around a focus on students.

As interviews took place over the summer of 2021, the participants had just finished a full year of teaching in the pandemic. They were very clearly seeing the impacts of COVID-19 on student performance as well as students' emotional and mental well-being. Accordingly, they described how they focused on students by trying to meet students' social-emotional needs and the ways in which they adapted instructional strategies to better support students.

Summary of Faculty Identity

Participants described the importance of Faculty Identity, and how the subthemes of focus on teaching and focus on students contributed to their identity. Participants connected their Faculty Identity to their sense of who they were as an educator and their desire to implement new instructional strategies and techniques to better meet students' academic and socioemotional needs. The theme of Faculty Identity honors participants' views that teaching is central to their work as faculty members, and this identity focuses on teaching and on students.

Institutional Context

A second theme that emerged from the data was that of Institutional Context. The subthemes associated with Institutional Context were (a) support for teaching and (b) support for faculty development. Institutional Context referred to participants' perception of the level of support provided by their institution for pursuing faculty development and growth as teachers. Participants described how their perceptions of institutional support for teaching and support for faculty development were influenced by the institution's expressed values and priorities, decisions by leadership, and treatment of different "classes" of faculty. Institutional Context also included resources available to the CTL, whether faculty development activities met the needs of experienced faculty, participants' sense of the stability of institutional leadership, and how promotion and evaluation processes were managed.

Support for Teaching

One subtheme of Institutional Context was support for teaching. In talking about support for teaching, participants addressed whether they saw their institution as "teaching-focused" and what that meant to their experience as faculty members. Only one institution stood out in participants' descriptions as a place where they felt the school really lived the values of being teaching-focused. At SSC, as Taylor explained, "[teaching] has always traditionally mattered the most in promotion and

tenure, your teaching . . . that is really what the institution cares about the most, talks about the most, promotes the most."

Some participants perceived institutional support for teaching as an alignment, or misalignment, of institutional and individual values and priorities. Participants identified times when institutional priorities did not align with their personal priorities, or when institutional priorities did not support the work of faculty, and how this made them feel about whether they fit into the institution. For many participants, whether their institution was committed to teaching-focused priorities was a point of contention; as Jack said, "that's certainly a touchy subject."

Nora shared the bluntest and most critical evaluation of how she viewed her institution's support for innovative teaching, stating: "Administration is the place where real innovation and how we value teaching go to die." Nora was not alone in strongly critiquing the messages sent by upper administration to faculty about the importance of teaching relative to other functions. At one institution, the trust is so damaged that one participant, Jane, characterized the climate as "a crisis of governance." Jane added the critique that what the "central administration" values does not match what the faculty members at her institution value. She shared, "I do not see a strong commitment at the dean's level or the provost level to excellent teaching."

Like Maria, other participants were critical of the perceived disconnect between institutional messaging about support for teaching and follow through on that messaging as an institutional priority. Willa talked about the tension between messages about teaching and actions supporting a teaching focus from her institution, saying:

> I think that universities need to have not just a CTL not only to check the box, but to have that kind of development be part of the culture in much deeper, more meaningful ways than it is at my school. I see evidence that it's more sort of ingrained in the culture at other schools.

Participants frequently connected their institutional culture to whether they felt teaching and faculty development work was valued. Jane articulated what she viewed as a fundamental tension between what her institution said it valued and what it actually valued in terms of teaching, and how disconnect impacted faculty at her institution, saying:

> Unlike at a community college or a small liberal arts college, I think administration at [LUU] and other large research institutions nods at teaching. But really, what they want to talk about is research dollars. And so that means research, specifically in the hard sciences. And then teaching is just something that many of my colleagues think of as an unfortunate necessity.

For some participants, these values seemed to have shifted over time, leaving them feeling less connected to institutional priorities. Jane is one participant who felt keenly disappointed in her choice of institution and in the emphasis on research that had emerged over her time there. She shared:

> When I joined [the institution] it seemed very much like it wasn't a research [focused] school . . . but the provost, president, and deans of schools have made this conscious decision that they're going to keep going for excellence, as it manifests in research visibility.

For Jane, this change in focus on "research visibility" did not align with her priorities or vision for her work at the institution. Becky likewise expressed disappointment in the direction her institution had taken over her time there. She was concerned that changes in administration were leading to a greater emphasis on research and less attention being paid to helping instructors become more effective teachers. She shared:

> I do think [my institution] has a very long history of being a teaching institution, which is what attracted me to coming here. . . . However, since I came to [the institution] . . . the means by which faculty work is evaluated has been changed. Thankfully, I came in under old rules that were more teaching focused. So, I was able to get tenure, and I was able to be promoted. The

> new rules that new faculty come in under have more of a research and scholarly productivity expectation.

Becky framed her concerns about a gradual increase in research and scholarly productivity expectations in the context that faculty are still expected to maintain the same teaching loads, which were among the highest of participants at 4-year institutions.

Paula expressed concern that her institution's focus on student success led to "a focus on a lot of other things and not necessarily the effectiveness of our teaching." In Paula's opinion, the focus on student success did not lead to tangible support in helping faculty improve, and in fact neglected to look at classroom practices at all. She said:

> It's a lot about student success. But not a lot of progress toward ways that we can actually improve student success as far as offering the professional development, and the funds necessary for the things that actually lead to student success. So, you know, we at [my institution] have a lot of focus on advising and pathways and making sure that students are taking the right classes, but we're not often talking about what's actually happening in the classrooms at an institutional level.

Support for teaching was also discussed in the context of institutional leaders and the decisions they made. Some participants explained that institutional leaders held different views from faculty colleagues. Jane explained that what the administration valued did not match what the faculty members at her institution valued, saying:

> I would say immediately, without any hesitation, that every single faculty member if asked: "Why do you like [the institution] or why do you like being at [the institution]?" Their answer, without any hesitation, is "I love the students." And yet, when I look at our central administration, for money, where the awards are, how people get promoted, it's all about research.

Nora provided an example of feeling that her discipline or department's wishes were not being listened to by institutional leadership. She described the process of trying to express her department's needs in meetings with leadership across the university, explaining, "we had four or five meetings for faculty from across the university" to discuss an issue, but that "not one thing" the faculty from her department asked for was considered when the decision was made. For Nora, the experience of not being listened to when it came to a question of instruction was a clear example of institutional leadership having different priorities than she and her colleagues did.

Jane provided another example of how her feelings about whether she fit into the institution were impacted by a similar feeling of not being listened to, explaining that her beliefs about how to do her job were not supported by institutional leadership. She shared, "That's my personal value but it's not what I'm being paid to do, or you know it's not . . . It doesn't fit any of the messages that come from the provost." Maria expressed a similar concern about not being listened to by her institution's administration, explaining that a lack of understanding about what teaching faculty do led to the institution asking "too much" from faculty without providing sufficient support. She said, "I think maybe they ask too much. I think that's where the lack of support is. There's just not, they ask too much sometimes."

Issues of support for teaching were also addressed when describing how institutional leaders viewed the work that participants did, and how this impacted decisions leaders made. Carla described feeling like her hands were tied in adopting new teaching practices she would like to try, because the type of development her institution was prioritizing did not match the types of courses she typically taught, saying:

> There's all this messaging saying do this, do this, do this, but then tie my hands so unless I change what I'm teaching, I can't do what they want me to do. I do feel like within my department I'm becoming more and more supported because . . . what I ask for, what I advocate

> for, I get. As long as I'm careful about what I advocate for. . . . So, I'm getting the support I need there. But I'm not getting it from the teaching and learning center, and I don't feel like I'm getting it from the college.

Jack, too, articulated a "disconnect" between institutional and faculty priorities, saying, "we're constantly playing catch up [to best practices in teaching] and it seems a lot of times like we're denying that we're playing catch up . . . it's a funny disconnect between individual educators and the institutions."

Participants also viewed how institutions treated different groups of faculty as a message about whether the institution supported teaching. Several participants noted faculty in their institutions were of different "classes," and faculty of different categories are viewed differently and compensated differently at most institutions. Carla noted the pay disparity at her institution, saying, "my salary as teaching faculty [laughs] is not anywhere near the tenure track faculty." Nora echoed Carla's observation, pointing out the distinct "classes" of faculty at her institution. She said, "They [the administration] say they value teaching, on one hand, but on the other hand research faculty get treated differently. There are two different classes of faculty." In Nora's experience, teaching-focused faculty clearly came in second, sharing:

> I think that, though, from what we see in terms of policy, compensation, offices, those kinds of things that affect the individual instructor, the individual faculty member whose job is primarily to teach is that teaching is still second, comes in second at the university.

Willa echoed Nora's critiques and explained term faculty at her institution "are much less highly respected. A lot of programs we're not allowed to participate in. I'm very clear that the institution doesn't really give a crap about my development."

Even allocation of space—offices and classrooms—and access to opportunities spoke volumes to participants about who and what is most valued. Nora critiqued the allocation of office space for

tenure-track versus term faculty, where term faculty in her department carried the heaviest teaching and advising loads and yet were given small, shared office spaces. She explained, “Tell me that you really value teaching when this is some of the most important teaching that we do, and we’ve told you that we do it, and then you disperse office space in this way.” Denise explained, at her institution, term faculty teaching “larger classes” have fewer opportunities. She said, “Larger classes that are kind of the lifeblood of each university, they’re paying a lot of expenses for those universities, the instructors for those courses don’t always have professional development opportunities available.”

Pay disparity and access to opportunities sends a clear message about who and what is really valued by an institution. Beyond pay disparity, disparity in how projects are funded and in service and advising requirements were all noted as issues that pointed to the larger disconnect between how an institution said they valued teaching but did not actually value teachers. Although very few participants had positive things to say about their institution’s support for teaching, most did not.

Support for Faculty Development

Another subtheme of Institutional Context was support for faculty development. Like support for teaching, some participants were able to provide examples of how their institution supported faculty development opportunities, although others felt that this support was lacking. In addressing support for faculty development, participants described asking for or receiving support from the campus CTL, sometimes from direct supervisors, and less frequently from others in institutional leadership positions.

Frequently, individuals who were supportive of faculty development were members of the campus CTL, which participants described in largely positive language. For example, one participant, Carla, spoke about how the CTL on her campus identified individuals in different departments and different colleges to help her make connections that would otherwise be very difficult to make at her large institution, saying:

> I think the [CTL] can be helpful in connecting me with those people because they've already said to me a couple times, "Oh, you should talk to this person in the English department" or whatever. So that, that's a helpful thing, a connection thing.

Likewise, Taylor and Allyson identified their campus CTL as being a strong and supportive presence. Taylor described the work of the CTL and particularly the strong leadership to which she credited much of the work, commenting:

> Our teaching center has gone through some changes, and we just have some great new leadership there, and so there have been a lot of really interesting and kind of active things happening with our teaching center recently.

Jolie, from the same institution as Taylor and Allyson, also praised the CTL, noting it was helpful despite being new and underresourced, saying:

> The [CTL] is a relatively new institution, and I feel that it needs to be resourced a little better, like many other things in public universities, it needs to be resourced and, especially, given our [teaching-focused] mission, it needs to be resourced better . . . I think the university is trying to do as much as it can. It's been sporadic.

Participants also took responsibility for not taking advantage of support offered by the CTL. One participant, Maria, admitted the support offered by her campus CTL was not quite meeting her needs, and wondered if that was because she had not communicated her needs or taken advantage of what is available. She said:

> Our CTL center for teaching and learning, they have a lot of support for a lot of different things. Sometimes the support is not what I want, and I think it's mostly because I haven't either asked for it in the right way, or I haven't taken advantage of something that's already there.

Alberto also took some responsibility for "poorly articulated needs" that led him to find CTL opportunities not very helpful, saying:

> I guess I'll just carve out a little bit of space for [the feeling that faculty development needs are not met] not necessarily to be an indictment of the CTL. But it is sort of empirically true that my feeling is that those poorly articulated needs aren't met by the center. And if they in fact are, and I just don't know it, then there's something about the communication of the offerings that is becoming lost in translation. Either it's not being communicated to me or I'm not receiving it right.

Both Maria and Alberto acknowledged that some of the responsibility belonged to them for communicating their needs and seeking out faculty development that would meet those needs.

Although participants were generally positive about their experiences in working with CTL leadership and staff, their descriptions of support for faculty development coming from institutional leadership outside of individuals with faculty development roles were less positive. Participants less frequently cited examples of individuals who supported them outside of the campus CTL. Of those who did, most often a direct supervisor was mentioned, as did Allyson's example of her dean giving advice around which activities to engage in and which to avoid. She shared:

> The person who encouraged me to go do that [specific long-term development activity] was our dean. If that person had not suggested it or had said something like, "You know, this is going to take you away from [other duties], so think carefully about whether you do it," I probably wouldn't have done it.

In thinking about their need for support from institutional leadership, having space to work with colleagues separate from the institutional processes for evaluation was important to participants. Willa talked about how she valued having opportunities to work with colleagues in activities that were not being evaluated by someone from the institution institutional leadership, sharing, "Your boss isn't seeing it and judging you, you're not in danger here, you're just, let's share and let's help each other get

better." For Willa, it was easier to work with colleagues when their interactions were not part of an evaluation process and when the colleagues were not in an evaluative or supervisory role.

Another way participants described challenges related to support for faculty development was in terms of a sense of instability. Nora described how institutional instability in the form of turnover of individuals in leadership roles contributed to her feeling that "changes keep energy . . . from being actualized" into improvements at the program or department level, saying:

> Having that kind of ongoing reliable [department level] support was invaluable. Now dean, provost, university President, that's another story. I think we're on our third university [high-level leader], and certainly our third or fourth [different high-level leader]. This is the third [mid-level leader]. Those kinds of changes . . . I've learned that the changes there keep all the energy that builds at the program and department level from really being actualized. You can do all the planning and all the proposing and all the justifying you want, but eventually it needs to go to the Dean.

Becky saw change at the highest levels of institutional leadership as essentially disruptive:

> [My institution] is getting ready to change [a high-level leader] again . . . [the leader] came in and made a lot of changes. And we're just kind of settling into some of those changes, and here we go again, we'll get somebody new, and they'll come in, and make all sorts of changes.

Allyson likewise noted feelings of instability caused by changes in leadership and how having individuals in acting or interim positions limited their effectiveness, saying:

> We're getting a new [high-level leader], a new interim [high-level leader] for the next couple years. That person is going to be just like trying to stay afloat, basically. We've had a lot of change, like new [multiple high-level leader positions] during the whole time I've been here, new deans. The [mid-level leader] position didn't exist six years ago. So, everything's always changing.

Support for faculty development in terms of evaluation or promotion expectations was another topic addressed by participants. Some participants were expected to engage in a certain number of professional development activities each year; as Willa stated, her institution has "huge requirements for service and faculty development." For many participants, meeting these expectations was a matter of "checking off boxes," as Paula described it, playing the game of promotion rather than undertaking activities that were valued by the administration for their power to encourage innovative teaching. Instead, because of "a few bad apples" who refused to engage in faculty development, everyone had to meet the same low bar of attending the same presentations, as Maria explained:

> I feel like I'm already a good teacher and I already attend to a lot of these things [attending faculty development activities] on an informal level, so the formality of some of the things just sometimes feels like box checking and bean counting.

Participants were able to articulate what their administration would support or encourage; participants pretenure were particularly attuned to not participating in opportunities that would not "count" for promotion or tenure. For example, in reflecting on her pretenure experiences, Allyson described evaluating the suggestions her department leaders made to determine what activities would be most beneficial to the ultimate goal of gaining tenure, sharing, "You learn pretty quickly what they value and what you have to do to retain your job and be promoted and so on. You have to play the game, just like everything."

Willa described her perception of institutional leadership's views on faculty development in equally critical terms, saying:

> They certainly like for us to do that stuff but also, at the same time, I would say they don't care. We are expected to do a certain amount of faculty development, but they don't . . . it's just like they want to see a blob on our annual report, and they don't necessarily care about the content thereof.

Another specific issue with support for faculty development that participants addressed concerned the appropriateness of activities, and problems accessing opportunities appropriate for "advanced" or expert teachers. Participants typically had to go to some lengths to access opportunities that were engaging and challenging. As Maria explained, "it's hard to come up with good professional development that fits everybody . . . you either get stuff that's like, 'I don't need this,' or you get so much stuff that it's hard to pick one." Willa articulated a sense of resigned frustration with the lack of opportunities for experienced or advanced faculty, stating, "It's hard, because the people who have the lowest level of skills aren't getting the help they need, and the people who have the highest skills aren't really getting the support they need. But that's kind of education in a nutshell." Like Willa, Jack felt the support in terms of programming coming from his campus CTL was lacking or was not meeting his needs. He shared:

> I think one of the things I've been kind of surprised by at [my institution] and I don't know if I'm being, maybe I'm being harsh, I don't know, is there's not opportunities to really develop our teaching given that, given our mission, given what we do on a day-to-day basis. It feels light for what we are as a university.

Frequently, participants noted that activities or workshops had been previously offered, as Jack described:

> They [the CTL] repeat a lot of those, and so once you've gone to those one time, you've seen it and you don't need to keep going. Not that you have mastered it or anything but that's not a good selling point—you've already come to this; come to this again.

Allyson expressed the same concern about sessions offered by her CTL, sessions that felt to her to be not appropriate for more experienced instructors. She said:

> Sometimes what they're presenting about I already know about, so I might be less likely to go. I don't want to come off as a know-it-all . . . but sometimes this stuff they're presenting about is

> just sort of less relevant, basically. Like there will be things like . . . how to have a good class discussion. It's like, "Okay, I don't feel like I need that."

Becky shared Allyson's opinion, explaining that her needs were not being met because the sessions were geared for more inexperienced faculty members, saying:

> Honestly, I think, because I am a teacher . . . I haven't really felt like I needed to go to them for advice of how I deliver this content. I got a pretty good idea of how to deliver the content. Just from my own experience. But I'm certainly open to new things that come around.

Carla also wanted faculty development activities that would specifically meet the needs of more advanced instructors, saying, "I'm thinking in terms of leveling, so beginner teacher, advanced teacher, expert teacher . . . not having everything just at the beginner level." Willa agreed with the need for advanced topics, explaining, "I do really want those advanced topics, I think that finding stuff other universities have done and that's publicly available and telling me about it would be amazing, and it would be a relatively low-cost, low effort opportunity." Jolie echoed this concern as she described her efforts to bring attention to the needs of midcareer faculty at her institution, saying:

> There's nothing that is particularly addressed to that cohort [midcareer faculty]. You know there's faculty development mostly focused on getting you tenure, getting through the first big hurdle, but at our institution, and I think many institutions, there's no focus on midcareer faculty.

Even Taylor, who overall was very satisfied with the opportunities she experienced at her institution, noted "more workshops or opportunities . . . that would allow both new faculty and folks who've been teaching for a while an opportunity to learn more to or to engage with each other" would benefit her and her colleagues. Taylor felt the needs of midcareer faculty needed to be taken into account, saying:

> Midcareer people need lifelong learning to stay inspired and engaged. And sometimes that's not always necessarily there because teacher development is often for newer teachers. So, I think any opportunity that is inclusive to folks who have been teaching for a bit is amazing.

Carla emphasized the importance of faculty development opportunities that "reach out to the broader level" and offer programming for new and experienced faculty members, noting:

> I don't expect everybody to like live and breathe teaching like I do [laughs]. So, I think it's important also for professional development efforts to not just reach people who are already interested in teaching, you know, it's also important to find ways to reach out to the broader level, and not just beginner teachers, but teachers have been teaching a long time, and never thought about changing things up for the new breed of students.

Throughout the interviews, participants returned to feeling frustrated about not having enough faculty development to meet their needs. Willa described her feelings about how her status as an experienced faculty member meant there were not many opportunities available to her in blunt terms, saying:

> I want there to be lots of faculty development stuff for me, but probably the university shouldn't be spending a lot of time developing me as a faculty member. Does that make sense? Do you think I'm crazy? [laughs]. It's depressing to me [laughs].

Overall, participants expressed fairly critical views of institutional support for faculty development; despite positive descriptions of help received from the campus CTL, others in institutional leadership positions were not seen as being supportive of faculty development in ways that felt valuable or authentic to participants.

Summary of Institutional Context

Participants described how they perceived Institutional Context. The subthemes associated with Institutional Context were support for teaching and support for faculty development. Participants

sometimes viewed their institution's efforts to support faculty development as not authentically supporting the goal of improving instruction. Although most participants spoke positively about their CTL, there were considerable concerns expressed around institutional support for teaching or support for faculty development. Participants found themselves in positions of having to make do with what was offered, figure out how to ask for their department or institution to support different activities, and find other ways to access more appropriate development activities. This management of their own development was a process of negotiating between what was available to them and what they wanted to be available.

Finding Their Way

The third theme that emerged from the data was that of Finding Their Way. The subthemes associated with Finding Their Way were (a) feeling confident, (b) making choices, and (c) trying new things. Finding Their Way referred to participants' sense of confidence in themselves and their place at the institution, the choices they made about teaching and about faculty development, including finding time for the different responsibilities they took on, and how participants embraced innovation and experimentation.

Feeling Confident

One subtheme of Finding Their Way was feeling confident. For participants who were Finding Their Way, a sense of feeling confident was an important piece of that process. As participants started to think about and share during interviews their decision-making processes, they addressed how their confidence, their feelings of vulnerability, and whether they trusted those around them, impacted their decisions and ultimately their growth. Participants expressed a range of views about their own sense of confidence in their identity as a faculty member, and specifically in their aptitude for changing teaching practices. Some participants described ways that they did not feel valued or listened to, and therefore, did not feel they had trusting relationships with their peers, supervisors, or others in institutional

leadership. Other participants expressed stronger sense of confidence in their teaching and their ability to improve because of participating in faculty development activities. Feeling confident provided support for participants as they engaged in development activities they hoped would contribute to their growth as faculty.

Some instructors expressed a high level of confidence in their abilities. Maria, for example, had little hesitation about trusting her own abilities and her own judgment about what she did in the classroom. She was not bothered by the prospect of needing to change something about her instructional practices, saying:

> A lot of times I'll just try it, I'll try it and see how it works and the part that I like I keep and then the part that I feel like didn't really help at all, or maybe was a problem, then I don't keep. So, I think that's how I decide.

For Maria, the success of whatever new strategy she was implementing was important to deciding whether to continue along the same path or not. Taylor, like Maria, exhibited a high level of confidence in her ability to successfully experiment. Taylor attributed some of this confidence to the upheaval of teaching through the COVID-19 global pandemic, saying:

> This last year I changed so much that I'm not afraid of [starting over] anymore. I'm not afraid of that at all anymore. Like, "Why was I clinging to this idea? I don't know; I don't need this at all. It's out. This idea doesn't work. Oh well, we'll try something else tomorrow." That was so freeing.

Carla, Nora, and Becky likewise expressed a high level of confidence in their own teaching abilities. Carla contrasted her worry early in her career that her teaching needed to change significantly (i.e., "I really feel like I just I could have done this whole semester better") to her confidence at the time of the interviews that she was fine with making only minor revisions each semester (i.e., "[Now] it's not like the whole semester [needs to change]!").

In contrast, Alberto was one participant whose interest in trying new things in the classroom was not matched with equal confidence in his ability to successfully introduce new instructional techniques. As he put it, "I still strongly feel that I am not an expert." His relatively lower level of confidence impacted the decisions he made about classroom practices and about faculty development opportunities. He acknowledged his "lack of practiced confidence" in applying what he has learned from professional development, saying:

> I think, now, about my own aptitude for instructional techniques . . . there might be an aptitude problem. [laughs] That the issue that prevents me from fully implementing a thing that I understand is an improvement is my own ability to implement the thing. Maybe that is an unfamiliarity. Maybe that's a lack of practiced confidence with that new technique and a fear of [pause] causing more harm than good if I try something and it turns out not to work or if, because of unfamiliarity with a particular [unclear], [I] do it badly.

Becky spoke about the difficulty of engaging in faculty development activities where she would need to make herself vulnerable by exposing a lack of skills or knowledge, saying:

> When you lack trust—there's a collaboration piece for you—if you don't have trust, it is really hard to collaborate with people and that's sort of what I was getting at, too, with, "I'll say what I think, but are there going to be any repercussions?" I have to trust that you really want to help me. That you really want to make me a better professor. If I don't have that trust there, then I'm not going to jump in.

Trust is also an important piece of being able to advocate for oneself and one's students. Jane described how the faculty at her institution were afraid to advocate either for themselves or for students, saying, "As a university, we have faculty who are very reticent to speak up . . . I'm just talking about faculty advocating for students and faculty advocating for teaching as the priority. The faculty are afraid to advocate for anything." Jane viewed this environment of fear as stemming from institutional

leadership, mentioning one individual in particular "who has taught exactly one course for one semester in her entire career. She does not [have experience] teaching our students, she is a career administrator. And she frankly terrifies me" because of the power this individual has over faculty. Jane described her colleagues as "afraid to advocate" because of the environment at her institution that led them to fear potential repercussions for speaking out.

Alberto shared his perspective on the vulnerability of trying something that might not work in the classroom. He described being afraid that a new strategy or activity would not work, and grappling with understanding why, saying:

> I think there's a fear that, "Well, I'm trying something different, but actually someone already tried this, and it didn't work." And is that because it actually doesn't work? Or was that context? Or was that because times are different, or?

For Alberto, negative outcomes, in the form of students not getting from an activity what he hoped they would understand, were an ongoing concern. Other participants expressed less fear of repercussions or negative outcomes, focusing instead on the positive side of embracing vulnerability and choosing to trust colleagues and students.

Carla connected her sense of confidence and her openness to vulnerability; she felt strongly that being vulnerable and working through that vulnerability was important to improving as an instructor, explaining, "you have to be vulnerable in order to improve. You cannot think you know everything or think that what you're doing is great, because it's not always great. Sometimes it's great and sometimes it's not great." Taylor also discussed her willingness to be vulnerable in front of others, something she viewed as a strength, saying:

> There are so many people like that who want to present an expert front. . . . In my life I have learned that it is through vulnerability that you gain strength, and that is my entire life philosophy. I don't think there's any benefit in pretending you know everything in order to not

> make yourself vulnerable. I think it's actually a weak choice. I think that we always gain and learn things from other people if we allow that.

Participants connected their ability to trust peers to their ability to benefit from working in a community with them. Participants who described feeling a sense of trust in their colleagues did not always hold equally trusting views of institutional leadership. Allyson noted that part of the reason she believes that faculty development should come from other faculty is that level of trust between instructors that may not be present when administrators oversee faculty development. Allyson explained that "faculty tend to trust other faculty in these roles."

Several participants attributed an increase in confidence with being able to work with or get feedback from a teaching-focused mentor. Jolie provided an example of a time her confidence in her teaching was positively impacted by feedback she received from the CTL on a project she was beginning. She described having the project proposal vetted by the campus CTL staff who were mentoring a group of faculty in course redesign projects, saying, "I wasn't that confident that the idea was that good, but I had some confidence because the proposal was vetted, I mean, the teaching center had gone through the proposal." Her confidence level increased still further once she was able to work in small groups with other instructors in the course redesign cohort, and get feedback from the facilitators, commenting:

> Discussing [the course redesign project] with one of the [group facilitators] at length, actually I spent time discussing it with both the [facilitators] and kind of getting their feedback, and that encouragement did make a difference as well. That, you know, I was not completely off on a path that was doomed to failure, or it was not a completely crazy idea. That definitely helped.

Jane also credited the help of a mentor as she considered what and how to innovate in her teaching, saying, "[My mentor] helped me a lot with thinking through pedagogy and valuing some of the things I was doing without having been taught them…he made me feel more positive or more confident

about innovation in the classroom." Both Jane and Jolie are examples of how feedback and support from someone in a mentoring role helped participants to gain confidence in their ability to implement innovation in their teaching practices.

Feeling confident impacted participants' ability to trust supervisors, others in leadership positions, and peers. For some participants, vulnerability was a feeling to be embraced as a clear space for growth; for others, embracing vulnerability was an ongoing challenge. Some participants talked about having concerns trusting supervisors and others in institutional leadership, noting that asking for help with teaching might put them in a vulnerable position.

Making Choices

Another subtheme of Finding Their Way was making choices. Participants were asked to reflect on choices they made about their teaching and their participation in faculty development. In considering their choices, participants described challenges related to how their faculty development needs changed over time and challenges related to finding time to participate in and benefit from faculty development. Making choices was about opportunities; what to do with what they learned from those opportunities was something all participants discussed.

A common narrative over the course of the interviews was that participants earlier in their careers wanted to do everything they could to make themselves better teachers. They felt they had so much to learn about teaching and about students that they were signing up for every possible faculty development workshop, seminar, or other program that was offered: they were making choices to do everything. For example, Carla described her early-career participation as being eager for anything that would help her to become a better teacher, saying:

> I need to discern more what kind of professional development I'm going to engage in because I feel like I'm starting to get to a point where it's saturated. I've just been grabbing everything I can, and now I'm saturated so that not every single workshop I go to is going to be helpful

> anymore. I need to figure out whether it's going to be helpful before I go spend my time and do it.

Over time, as participants explained, their enthusiasm remained strong, but they began to be a bit more discerning about which activities they would choose to find time for in their busy schedules. At the time of the interviews, every participant expressed ongoing enthusiasm for faculty development and their growth as teachers while viewing opportunities through wiser eyes than at the beginning of their careers. Paula described how she made choices about the faculty development opportunities available to her, saying:

> I choose sessions that are going to help me fulfill that own personal teaching goal that I have . . . I always think about what's important to me as an instructor and then what kinds of sessions will help me to continue to grow in that particular area.

Carla echoed Paula's description of making choices and how her teaching experience influenced the choices she made. Carla described seeking out more advanced development activities, saying:

> I used to be able to go to a conference and go to every single talk, and every single talk would have something new to me. And that's not true anymore. They don't all have something new anymore. So, like once you get to a certain point, you have to figure out what's actually going to be new.

Similarly, Denise wanted to be able to choose development activities that she thought would truly benefit her. Denise saw most development as being for "newbies" rather than more experienced instructors, commenting, "It's not billed as being for newbies. It's just not anything that I haven't already seen, heard about, read about, been introduced to."

For Becky, an important part of being an experienced faculty member was the freedom to make choices about what and how to implement what she learned from faculty development. She shared:

> The fact that I was able to choose this for myself, that I was able to decide what I needed to learn. It wasn't mandated; it wasn't, "Okay, we're all going to do this professional development!" Too often PD is forced down your throat: you're going to do this; this is what we're going to do. Then we're not trusted to take it and make it work for us.

Another concern expressed by multiple participants related to whether their institutions provided them with opportunities to provide input on the content and delivery of faculty development. Denise wanted to see that her institution was paying attention and "reaching out to your more senior faculty that have been doing this for a while and seeing what topics they're interested in. That's something I don't recall ever having been asked." Allyson and Becky both discussed how they would like to see their campus leadership survey faculty about their needs. Allyson noted she "would hope [CTL would do] regular surveys, where people can say, 'Here's what I'm seeing.'" Becky also wanted her institution to be more purposeful in surveying faculty about needs, saying:

> I think it is more helpful if you have choices. And again, the people who plan the PD [professional development] need to know their students—meaning us—well enough to know, "Okay, what are some things we could offer that are going to be really meaningful to them?" You know not things that we think they need to know. But what are some things that they need to know. I don't remember anybody ever asking me what I needed to know.

For participants, making choices about their development meant having enough options that would meet their needs, freedom to choose, and influence over what those opportunities would be. In talking about how they made choices about faculty development, participants described their needs changing over time, and the challenges they faced making choices between options that were not ideal. Making these choices was not always easy for participants, particularly given constraints of time. Finding time to participate in, reflect on, and implement faculty development was a challenge for all participants. Participants all reported they had relatively high teaching loads (most commonly four

courses per semester, with four participants teaching five courses and four teaching fewer than four courses each semester). Participants also reported being expected to take on more administrative, departmental, and governance-related leadership roles as they became more senior, while also being expected to achieve a certain level of research and scholarly activity on top of their teaching. With these constraints, participants described not having enough time to be able to implement new teaching strategies and methods. Jack described feeling overwhelmed with "keeping up with SoTL [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning]" while needing to stay current in his discipline knowledge. He wished someone else, such as the CTL staff, would help him save time by preparing a list of best practices, saying:

> One thing that would help me is, what are the best practices? . . . somebody else do the literature review, and then let me know, what's going on? What should we be doing in the classroom?

Jack's sense of feeling overwhelmed by too many choices and wanting to have help figuring out what were the most promising practices was echoed by Maria. Maria explained that she found it difficult to figure out how to implement ideas she knew were good, because there were too many ideas to try, some her own and some coming from institutional leadership. She said:

> All of these are good ideas, it's just that I keep saying, "There can't be any more," and then, of course, you know, next week there's something more . . . Every time I turn around there's one more thing that somebody is asking, and they are all good ideas, don't dispute that. It's just that we are all really tired already from this past year . . . it's just been a constant parade. I feel like I'm changing my classes, my ways, my processes, monthly. I'm tired.

Maria's relatively high teaching load, combined with noninstructional duties, left her in a difficult position of having to choose between many good options, with not enough time to explore and implement changes in the classroom.

Nora also expressed concern about finding time for faculty development in the context of high teaching loads. Nora talked about pressures faced by faculty in her department, who were largely nontenure track faculty on renewable yearly contracts. She described advocating at the institution level for a reduction in the teaching load for these instructors, so that more time would be available for professional development, saying:

> If you teach a 5:5 load, what happens when you teach 4:4 load to your ability to implement this kind of work? If you're teaching 4:4 and you teach 3:3, what happens then? You can require professional development, as a program we can do a lot more with that. Our university just implemented these promotion guidelines for full-time, nontenure track faculty like me that really actually require all of that stuff. And we're like, "Nothing in their contract says they need to do that, how do we hold them accountable for this without giving them any workload reduction?"

Like Nora, Jack expressed concern about finding time for faculty development, and how to balance what he believed he needed to do to improve as an instructor against the expectations he felt were imposed by his institution. In Jack's experience, too many opportunities "just pass you by" when faculty are "so busy doing all the stuff that we're asked to do" by the institution. Jack's feeling of a disconnect between the institution and individuals led, in part, to his sense of being too busy to take advantage of opportunities. As Jack explained, his frustration stemmed primarily from never having enough time to dedicate to teaching-related faculty development opportunities, saying:

> I always want to be willing to develop. [pause] But also, at the same time, it's so hard to find time to do that. And you know, emails and committee assignments, and trying to keep up with research, and there are student questions, there are things to grade, they're all these other things to do. It's so hard to find time to do that professional development and to keep up. I think that that can be really frustrating sometimes because I think there are many of us out there

> who, we want to do that, we know that we should be doing that, but when? And so that can be really frustrating, too.

Willa also wished that she could find more effective ways to save time while taking advantage of faculty development. She described wanting her institution's CTL or another group offering on faculty development to help her save time by making choices about what to read or do easier for her, saying:

> One thing that I would really like, and I've asked for this actually a bunch of times, is for the [CTL] or whoever or somebody to send me an email, once a week or once a month, maybe just with, "Here are some highlights, some articles you might want to read, some new things we've figured out, some new opportunities, here's a great piece of software you might like." I want one short email so that I can pick and choose. Because going to here and going to here and going to here is just too much.

Making choices about priorities within time constraints was also a concern for faculty members as they considered what changes to implement to their teaching practices. Alberto expressed concern about finding time for faculty development, and he was particularly concerned about the time needed to be able to thoughtfully implement new ideas learned from faculty development opportunities. Alberto spoke of the "intellectual debris" left behind in the process of learning about teaching, and how difficult it was for him to manage the acquiring of that knowledge, much less the implementation of it, saying, "There is miles of intellectual debris behind me from years of professional development opportunities that I don't even remember having picked up in the first place." Alberto explained how he had begun to realize that he was not really benefiting from the many professional development activities in which he had engaged.

Maria discussed trying to make choices about opportunities, seeking a balance between what worked for the students and what worked for her. She explained her process, saying:

> Some of it is how much work it is for me versus how much the students will get from it. Because there's some things I can do an awful lot of work on, and it doesn't really benefit people very much.

Like Maria, Nora expressed concern about workload and finding time for making changes. Nora was very aware and concerned about issues of workload when it came to faculty experimenting with new methodologies or changing assignments and classroom practices. She shared:

> So that sort of reluctance and that concern over "How is this going to impact my workload and what I'm already teaching and all the materials I compiled?" That's a real issue for faculty that I've worked with, regardless of discipline.

Even when it is a change that, with time, would be no more time-consuming or effortful than one's current practice, simply implementing new ideas and preparing new materials or new activities to support these new ideas takes time that instructors do not always have. Maria used the example of the flipped classroom, a popular lesson design strategy, to show how much time making these types of changes would take, saying:

> I have more ideas, good ideas, I'm already planning things out for, you know, this summer, next summer and the summer, after that. I just don't have enough time. And part of that is a lot of the new ideas require - you know, flipped classroom? That's a lot of prep time. That's a lot of time to get all those short videos in place and rework all the assignments, and that's a huge investment in time.

Beyond time constraints and the time needed to participant in faculty development and then to make changes to instructional strategies and materials, participant descriptions of making choices were also connected to what would be immediately useful, what Alberto called "practice-able" faculty development. Paula explained that she always asks herself, saying, "Is this something that I can actually apply?" She said:

> I revisit my notes after [faculty development] sessions and some things I can just immediately, you know if I have my laptop or something I can immediately go into an assignment and start thinking about what I can do to change it. So I try to be really practical about that stuff, about what I'm learning, and what I can apply.

Participants discussed challenges in making choices in terms of participating in faculty development and implementing changes to their teaching practices. These challenges included their changing needs, a high teaching load, lack of time for reflection, and lack of time for implementing new practices.

Trying New Things

The final subtheme that emerged from participants' descriptions of Finding Their Way was trying new things. This subtheme referred to participants' openness to experimenting with teaching strategies and willingness to make changes to their teaching practices. Participants expressed both enthusiasm for the ways they were able to innovate and hesitation about what innovation might mean for their success as a teacher, and the process of trying new things was frequently described as trying to find a balance between these two feelings.

Participants were mostly enthusiastic about being able to experiment and take risks with their teaching and articulated a strong desire to innovate. This enthusiasm was one of the factors that influenced the decisions they made about faculty development and about what they implemented in their classroom. Several participants talked about taking risks in their classroom practices, explaining that they were willing to experiment and keep what worked and discontinue what was less successful. Maria exemplified this as she described her process as "threading the middle" of what worked and what did not, saying:

> I typically tend to be interested in a lot of things; I tend to try a lot of new things, and then keep the parts that work and jettison the parts that don't. I'm always threading the middle, finding the parts that work for me, and I'm completely okay with letting go of everything.

Taylor described being "willing to toss anything," a similar approach to Maria's approach of trying a lot of new things, keeping what worked and rejecting what did not, saying:

> I'm willing to toss anything if it's not working. I'm not wedded to a curriculum per se. And that was really striking this past year because of just how much changed and still how much was kept; I still was teaching the same things, just in a very different way. And it worked, and some of that I'm going to keep. So, I don't know, I guess just the constant willingness to be able to adapt and learn and grow. I'm not wedded to doing things a certain way. If it doesn't work, it has to change.

Participants who described themselves as eager to try new things provided examples of when they were particularly enthusiastic and open-minded in their approach to teaching and faculty development. Taylor spoke of the joy she experienced in having had "the best semester ever" in terms of her teaching, saying:

> I'll say that I had the best semester ever this past semester, because I was, I was online only, and it was the most creative teaching I've done in a very long time. I haven't read my course evaluations yet so students may not agree with that assessment, [laughs] but when everything is new again you are forced to be creative and you are forced to be in a zone that is different, and to me that was a challenge, but it also was an opportunity.

Taylor was able to respond to the challenges of teaching during the COVID-19 global pandemic with creativity and saw those challenges as opportunities, saying, "the ability to adapt in the moment and to have a higher level of flow in terms of creativity, that was really amazing." She also attributed her openness to a sense of being a lifelong learner, commenting, "Just being excited because you learn something new, as opposed to just teaching the same content over and over and over again, it really matters." Allyson also approached choosing to do things differently in the classroom out of a need for something new, saying:

> Because I have been teaching, especially this course I think about a lot like you know another thing that can happen is it can feel like it's getting stale or you're doing the same things over and over.

Multiple participants addressed the idea of avoiding "stale teaching" as motivation for innovating. These participants were concerned about teaching the same activities or teaching in the same way year after year. Taylor repeatedly spoke of wanting to "reinvent" herself and finding ways to do that through opportunities to be creative in discipline- and teaching-focused activities. Other instructors also shared concerns with "getting stale," and the impacts that would have on their teaching and their overall satisfaction, as Jack explained:

> What I've noticed—and very quietly and very subtly—is that you just kind of get stale. That you kind of learn to do your thing. And you just do that. And you can do that, it appears that you can do that for a long time. That's a great way to get bored and to forget why you're doing what you're doing.

For Alberto, a flexible approach was at the heart of how he tried to teach students to think about science. Alberto explained trying to help students to think flexibly is not just about potential answers, but about potential questions, saying:

> And so the intent was to remove the finiteness of the answer set, but even remove the finiteness of the question set. "Here is this content sandbox, let's do things, and then questions will occur." And that's, in a lot of ways, more accurate, more reflective of how science is done. Well, "Let's make some observations," and then, "oh, hey, there's a question we can ask about that!" "What is the answer?" "I don't know, let's find out!" "How do we find out?" "I don't know, let's find out!"

Alberto's enthusiasm for the work of helping students was evident in his description of "how science is done." Nora spoke with equal enthusiasm about how she learned and applied new ideas to her

classroom practices, explaining her excitement for learning influenced her teaching and how she generated new ideas. She said:

> One of the things about teaching that always appealed to me was that it's about learning. It's about me learning and me helping my students learn and the excitement of learning. Yeah, it's hard work, I get it, but it's almost thrilling to me to learn new stuff. And I noticed that in when working with faculty members, those that are habitually doing that are more successful than those [for whom] . . . teaching is more like a side hustle. It's just, "I have my life, and then I do this on the side," and I think, in that sense, those two practices are not intersecting in the way that other faculty who just are a mix of, "I'm learning about this; I'm going to bring it up in my classroom; I wanted to see this exhibit and I'm going to talk about that in class." That kind of thing, I do see that in some of the faculty that I work with. I would say that I don't know how you can be a good teacher today without being an active learner on your own.

For Nora, the intersection of her own enthusiasm for learning with enthusiasm for what she does in the classroom is a space where creative teaching grows. Jack described trying new things in the language of remaining open-minded to new ways of teaching. He said:

> I don't want to be so quick [to dismiss an idea], because I see this with other colleagues that just kind of instantly discount anything that's not what they do in the classroom. And I don't want to be guilty of that, so I want to be open-minded and see how might we find ways to do things differently.

Open-mindedness and enthusiasm helped participants be creative with their teaching and flexible in their approaches. Participants described different ways in which they approached trying new things with an open mind, but also provided examples of when they were hesitant about innovation. Maria, who earlier described her willingness to "thread the middle" of innovative practices was one participant who qualified her enthusiasm, explaining, "where I am right now is that I'm still eager to do

all those things, I'm just really tired." Alberto approached innovation from a philosophical perspective, questioning the value of identifying "best practices" versus the value of exploring other practices. He wanted to be able to fully explore potential "better practices" before committing to something, saying:

> There is value in the sharing of "best practices," but there's also value in the challenging and the knowing of [other] practices. Just because there are "best practices" doesn't mean that there still aren't "good practices" or "better practices" or "practices better than those," right? And if we should default always to the best practices, then that other practice that actually is better doesn't get tried. Relative to the documented things that work, can you encourage experimentation with things that might not?

Like Alberto, Jolie was very thoughtful in her approach to experimenting, and described how she overcame her initial hesitation to "just jump in and do it" from sharing her works-in-progress with colleagues, saying:

> I came away with this lesson that no matter how prepared or unprepared I felt at some point, I would have to just jump in and do it. Because the first time is not going to be perfect, there's going to be a lot of learning, and some of it would be hard, which ended up happening, of course, some of it would be hard, but the confidence part came from hearing everybody else talk about what they were doing.

A sense of security also influenced some participants' willingness to implement innovative practices. Jolie explicitly addressed a shift in her willingness to experiment that occurred after earning tenure, saying:

> I don't really have to worry about tenure and promotion anymore. I can go ahead and kind of do something, and if I bomb it completely, I'll redo it next time. So that opportunity to take risks goes up, obviously, when you have that comfort of tenure and promotion.

Even as she described becoming more willing to take risks with her classroom practices as she gained seniority and security, Jolie was still clearly uncomfortable with the idea of innovating in ways that felt like more of a step outside her comfort zone. This hesitance to embrace trying new things shaped the choices she made in her classroom practice and in her pursuit of faculty development activities. She described a time when she pushed herself to adopt some innovative practices that ended up not being as successful as she had hoped, saying:

> I guess, if I had stuck to it and kind of spent more time, I would have learned more, but then you are constantly being pushed in different directions, so I didn't replicate or didn't repeat this another semester. Instead, I went back to stuff that I was more comfortable with . . . I was still innovating, but I was innovating in a space where at least the tools were not something I was learning.

Jolie decided to go back to practices with which she was "more comfortable," deciding that innovating in a more familiar space was a better choice.

Alberto addressed a different concern related to hesitation about his ability to implement innovative teaching practices. He was concerned that experimentation was stifled in environments where the focus was too much on student metrics, offering the thought that this focus excluded a focus on other important outcomes. He shared:

> I worry that institutional cultures generally, and perhaps particularly the student-metrics and outcome-driven instruction that a community college really values, rightly, makes teaching faculty feel like their discipline is solved in that sense. If these are the powerful strategies and if you're putting together an instructional deck with a different strategy, it's a subpar strategy, because it isn't one of these accepted things.

Alberto's concern was that when his institution focused on a narrow set of student outcomes as the measures for success, other measures of successful learning were overlooked, leading to instructors not

attempting strategies that might be successful if measured by these alternative outcomes. For Alberto, knowing what teaching practices were promising was a question that was not "solved," and he valued having the freedom to explore and experiment in this way.

Situating trying new things in the student context was another concern participants addressed. Some instructors in this study discussed balancing innovative instructional strategies against potential disruption to student learning. For this reason, Denise carefully chose to implement innovation in her courses in ways that kept student learning at the forefront while balancing her needs, the needs of her undergraduate students, and the needs of her graduate teaching assistants. As Denise explained:

> I like to experiment with [my classes]. I try not to experiment too much within one semester, just simply because it's overwhelming for everyone involved. Maybe introduce one or two new things, if they work, then decide whether that's a permanent fixture or if we want to experiment with something else.

Denise described balancing her desire to innovate against what she felt she could reasonably implement in a semester, taking into consideration the challenges of rolling out new activities or strategies to her large group of graduate teaching assistants running labs, and the challenges they might face. Similarly, Alberto expressed concern with how innovation was challenging for his students. He aspired to be more innovative while balancing implementing innovative teaching practices against what might be too disruptive to student learning. When describing potential revisions to one of his courses, he was not certain that his plans would be met positively by students, saying, "I wonder if maybe compared to other courses it's too much of a paradigm shift." Alberto was concerned that innovation in his course would be disruptive to students who had taken a series of courses in their major, with different instructors, that were taught more or less in a similar style or with familiar types of assignments and assessments. For participants in this study, trying new things was one way to avoid the trap of stale

teaching, and to experiment with new instructional strategies and ways of presenting material to students.

Summary of Finding Their Way

Finding Their Way addressed descriptions participants shared of actions they took to identify a direction for their growth as teachers and as colleagues, and actions they took to move in that direction. As participants discussed the ways they tried to Find Their Way, they discussed challenges in reconciling what was asked of them by their institution with what they believed to be the most important priorities. Participants addressed concerns with finding time, explaining how conflicting demands on their time was a challenge. Participants also addressed making choices about faculty development opportunities, balancing what they thought might work for students against the time available to implement something new. At the time of the interviews, each participant indicated willingness to reinvent their classroom practices in hopes that through trying new things they would find new practices that would more successfully meet students' needs.

Community and Collaboration

The final theme that emerged from the data was that of Community and Collaboration. The subthemes associated with Community and Collaboration were (a) finding community and (b) nurturing community. As participants described Community and Collaboration, they painted a picture of working in community with colleagues that went beyond friendship or collegiality. Participants expressed a desire for collaboration that extended to giving and receiving support in the form of shared accountability and shared resources. Across conversations, participants described trying to find and nurture a community of peers with whom to work on thorny issues related to teaching. Although every participant spoke of the need for community, it was a need that remained largely unmet. A few participants provided examples of experiencing a strong and supportive community where they

collaborated with colleagues, but most participants were only able to articulate what they believed was missing from their experience as a faculty member.

Finding Community

One subtheme of Community and Collaboration was finding community. Participants described attempts to find colleagues or peers, attempts that were sometimes successful and sometimes not. Taylor was one participant who had been successful, in some ways, in finding community. Taylor returned several times to her need for community with other faculty members, a need that she described as being met in part through her participation in an online discipline-focused group, saying, "That really was a community of people [who] had really similar experiences/background and really could support each other. More recently it's become more of a support network . . . less about what are you doing and more about, are you okay, today?" For Taylor, finding a community meant she had a place to discuss teaching questions but also a place to find a supportive network. Taylor cited the development of a community with other instructors as a primary motivating factor in her choice of development activities, saying:

> I just kind of leaned into that [faculty development activities] because it just makes me feel better . . . my ability to have an outlet or professional practice has been gone for the whole year, so to me, this was really important. And the more involved I am the better I feel. That's just a personality thing. These are all, these are all things that I wanted to do, right, I chose to do them on my own, but it also has a benefit because that community, I think, is so important.

Carla, too, found community and a "teaching home" external to her institution within an online, discipline-specific group that was focused on sharing resources and providing support for teaching, saying:

> I come from this really tight, tight in terms of like we all have each other's back, but open and sharing community of [discipline] teachers, as part of my professional organization. The amount

> of resources and materials that are out there for people to use in their courses is just incredible . . . There is so much out there in this particular community. And so, I come from that background, that's where my teaching home is.

Participants also shared examples of finding community within their institutions. Taylor described as "wonderful" her participation in a cohort-based program with other faculty at her institution, an opportunity that exposed her to "faculty from all different disciplines" all working together on scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) projects. She described the work of the cohort influencing her research and teaching, saying, "I am incorporating that in my teaching in the sense that I'm going to use this study to work toward an article, a book, and also improving my own teaching practices." Willa spoke of a similar experience with charrettes (i.e., a collaborative planning or design process, where members traditionally bring works-in-progress for discussion with the group), explaining that one of the benefits was the "Venn diagram" of expertise represented by charrette participants, where there was "a whole lot of *not* overlap," something that Willa found "immensely powerful." Willa returned to her experiences with charrettes frequently throughout our conversations, because she felt very strongly that "every university should have charrettes just be part of the thing that they do." Despite her enthusiasm, Willa remained frustrated in her desire for more opportunities, saying: "I want [my institution] to do charrettes twice a year, at least. They don't do that. I've asked for that; they don't do it."

Some participants found community with the help of their CTL. The CTL was a space where faculty could find a community, ideally one free from judgment. Taylor captured the overall view of CTLs held by participants when she talked about how important the campus CTL is in providing the type of help faculty need but often feel they cannot ask supervisors for, saying:

> [It] makes me think how important a teaching center is at these institutions. And having the funding from the administration to back that teaching center. To be able to have workshops,

> opportunities, things for faculty to participate in . . . is making me think how truly important a teaching center actually is as an administrative vehicle to supporting teachers and to bridging that gap that you're talking about from "we expect you to be a good teacher but we're not providing help."

Jack described benefitting from having different communities of colleagues with whom to collaborate, and particularly noted in a second conversation how he appreciated participating in a new faculty learning community organized by the campus CTL that allowed him to meet faculty outside his department. He shared:

> I think it's been really good. I've seen some things like, "Wow I want to do that, that's really good, I've never thought of that." Because, after a while—not to, the colleagues I have around me are fantastic— but after a few years, I kind of know what they do, and they know what I do. So, it's nice to interject some new ideas into the mix. I think that's important.

Although these participants described experiences finding community that in some ways fulfilled their need for collaboration with peers, other participants spoke of wanting to find these opportunities. Many participants talked about how they wished for more opportunities to interact with colleagues, both internal and external, and felt that their institutions were not doing enough to facilitate these connections. Maria ended up doing the labor of bringing faculty together herself in what she called "talking groups." She said:

> After you've gone through [faculty development], we've got all these ideas, you got to talk it out, you got to talk to someone, figure out how it fits, and bounce more ideas and so I'm setting up multiple ways to do that. That was a very long-winded answer to: I set up talking groups.

For Maria, the support in making connections with peers was lacking from her institution, and so she was left to seek out colleagues on her own who had a similar interest in joining a "talking group." Denise wished her institution in general, and the CTL specifically, would do more to facilitate collaboration with

faculty at other institutions, saying "I would like to see more collaboration, more communication, and directly asking . . . what specific things are we looking for." Denise very strongly wanted collaborators at other schools to provide a community of peers but concluded that she "[didn't] see nearly enough of that."

Although some participants were satisfied with finding community with peers, some participants spoke specifically of needing more discipline-specific communities. Maria described trying to organize this at her institution, saying:

> [O]ne of the things that we're talking about is more discipline-specific professional development, I think that could make more sense than just sort of this general PD for everybody . . . What would be helpful for you and helpful for me are probably not at all the same thing. Sometimes it's interesting to cross-pollinate between disciplines, but other times . . . That's a very different answer for you and for me, so that's one thing we're looking at is having some more discipline-specific PD.

Denise also expressed the wish that her institution would take a stronger role in helping her to find a community and make connections with other instructors teaching in the same discipline, explaining that she needed help networking with faculty across institutions. She shared:

> Helping to, either putting together meet-and-greets or ways that we can all meet each other or . . . I don't know that you would call them learning communities, but just networking because I don't know who these people are.

Denise spoke of feeling isolated by being "the only one . . . whose primary responsibility is to teach" in her department, and by having very few colleagues at her institution who taught large enrollment classes. Denise wanted more connection with a community of faculty at other institutions who also taught large-enrollment classes. She wanted more support in finding these colleagues, saying:

> I'd really like to see a collaboration between institutions, especially within the commonwealth. Are they talking to each other? Maybe they are, I don't know. I don't see a lot of opportunity for multi-institutional [connection] . . . There's no way that we're facing these things and other institutions aren't, so I would like to see more collaboration, more communication. Somebody somewhere has got to be thinking about this besides me.

Maria also wanted a broader network extending beyond her institution, and provided an example of successfully finding community with colleagues at other institutions, saying:

> My network has broadened dramatically through [working on a cross-institutional initiative] because not only do I know pretty much almost all of the engineering faculty in the state for the [2-year system] but also, I know a lot of university faculty. So, if I've got a question I don't hesitate; I've got university faculty friends that I'll call and say, "okay, how do you guys do this?" and I'll kind of survey and I'll get three different answers from three different universities.

Jolie also hoped for more opportunities to learn from colleagues who had experimented with similar strategies that she had tried; she commented:

> Some of these things that I have not experimented with, but I am doing now, I would like to have more feedback on, more suggestions, more ability to bounce off ideas off of other people, learn from others that are doing this doing similar things . . . Like community engagement too. I think I would love to have—I know that I'm actually required to give a little presentation in the fall about my experience with community engagement, because I had that funding before. But hopefully there'll be more opportunities to you know get together with others and see what worked in other's classes and what didn't and what are some things to take away.

Likewise, Alberto expressed a desire for more structure from the institution to help him find people with whom to collaborate, saying:

> I wish there were an institutional frame, some sort of structure to facilitate finding those relationships . . . I do wish there were—and maybe this exists, and I just haven't realized how to get it—some institutional structure to facilitate essentially what's going on in the FLCs [Faculty Learning Communities], in discipline. I'm not sure what that would look like. As far as valuable interactions . . . I sort of wish that there was a little more formal means to . . . frankly, some accountable metacognition of my own.

For Alberto, finding community was not just about sharing ideas, but holding himself accountable for reflecting on the ideas and, ideally, taking action. Alberto wanted more external accountability to help him follow through on changes to his teaching, that he admits would be valuable. He explained "an intermediary or some sort of local group leader" would be helpful to "function as a manifestation of individual accountability," particularly in instances where a workshop is a one-time event, with a large number of participants and no set follow-up activities. In these types of activities, he suggested:

> There may be a sense that the accountability is distributed. The accountability that exists is shared among all the attendees and, since none of it rounds up to action, whatever that might be, there is a certain freedom to say, "Well, alright, that's over now" and close the computer and then we're done. But if there's someone from my division or my home institution that's expecting something from me or has shared with me an expectation that they want something from me . . . [otherwise] the accountability ends when the meeting ends.

For Alberto, this idea of accountability is about a collective commitment to following through on new ideas, and not about institutional assessment or reporting. He explained accountability as, ideally, shared between individuals engaged in a common goal or purpose. Other participants were able to find community and accountability in relationships with mentors and critical friends, relationships that offered support and encouragement. These individuals who fulfilled mentor roles were typically very teaching-focused and enthusiastic about engaging in talking about teaching and becoming better

teachers. Maria recounted a specific example of a colleague at another institution who had become a valuable resource and collaborator, at first through personal connections at conferences and then through sustained and regular communications. She said:

> It became an ongoing [relationship]; she and I would see each other at conferences . . . it became a little bit personal, which, that to me is one thing about teaching. Teaching to me is personal; teaching and learning is all personal and so it's kind of cool when, in a professional development environment, you also develop relationships with people that you can come back to.

Jane found mentors at her institution through a deliberate process of identifying individuals she believed had knowledge and experience to complement her own. She said, "I knew they had things that I wanted to learn badly, and I was very careful and politic about approaching them in the first place. And there was serendipity involved." Jane had very positive experiences with her mentors, both in terms of their relationships and in terms of the connections her mentors helped her to make within the institution. Carla's experience with trying to find mentors was quite different than Jane's; Carla described not being assigned a formal mentor due to her status as nontenure track faculty, saying:

> They have a mentoring committee within the department, and they reached out to me early on and said, "You know you're in a really different role, so I don't know if we can, if it's appropriate to assign you a mentor." I didn't really understand that at the time, but then I realized the reason why is because the mentoring committee is about getting tenure. It's about helping people make the right decisions, do the right things that they need to do to get tenure. And I'm not on that track. So that's what the mentoring committee is about. It's not about bringing on new teaching faculty and mentoring them.

Eventually Carla was "mentored" by the department administrative staff member, who she described as "a mentor of sorts because he's the one who helps me figure out the culture of the

department. In a candid way. You know that's something that is really sometimes hard to get that candidness." Even though she appreciated the "candidness" the staff member was able to provide, he was not able to fulfill the role of a mentor for her in other important ways, and he was not able to help Carla find a community with whom to discuss teaching-related topics.

A final way that participants described finding community was in looking for "like-minded people" to ally with. Allyson described her institution as "the kind of place where to be successful and be here for a long time, you have to make alliances with some like-minded people." Allyson also addressed an additional benefit of to finding a community and making alliances beyond one's department: becoming known across the institution. She shared:

> The fact that I knew people and they knew who I was, that . . . really helped later on. So [participating in the faculty development cohort] had this other benefit. I learned about this thing, and I was interested in it, but my other motive was to become known, and know people. Later those people wrote me letters on my tenure file and stuff like that, so it was useful.

Denise, Maria, and Carla each addressed feeling alone, feeling like they are "the only one," as they each repeated, in their department and facing the difficulties they described facing. Denise, in the end, was frustrated in her efforts to find allies, while Maria described being somewhat more successful by reaching out to colleagues at other institutions. Carla ended up recruiting an ally from a new department member, recounting how she welcomed them to the department; she shared:

> Look, I didn't have an ally when I came in, so you have an ally, I will talk candidly with you, and, you know, I want you to do the same with me, because it can be lonely out there when you're not quite sure what's going on with all these scary tenured professors.

Participants overall were active in their pursuit of community, even if that pursuit did not always lead to successful collaboration. Although some participants had examples of times when they were able to create or join a community, they all wanted more opportunities. Faculty development provided

some space for this, but not enough. As Alberto stated, the one thing really missing from faculty development in general was “more time to chat” with colleagues. When they existed, these communities presented a range of positive impacts on participants. More often, participants described trying to find community.

Nurturing Community

The second subtheme of Community and Collaboration was nurturing community. Beyond finding community, some participants described nurturing community through taking an active role in contributing, bringing ideas back to one’s department, mentoring, taking on leadership roles, and participating in ongoing or longer-term activities within the community. For participants, nurturing community was about shifting from participating to more actively contributing to faculty development opportunities, and these were most frequently described as being longer in duration to provide support as participants implemented what they learned.

Some participants noted examples of times they had shared what they learned from faculty development with colleagues as a way of contributing to the department or to their immediate peers. Participants appreciated being able to think about what would be most valuable to bring back to peers in their department to improve collective teaching practices. For Carla, nurturing community was in part about developing relationships. Carla explained how she was able to be successful in nurturing a supportive community within her department. Within a large research-focused university, she described carving out space for collaboration by being very deliberate about creating these relationships both with more experienced faculty in her department and with less experienced instructors, saying, “There’s definitely opportunity; there’s spaces for teachers to collaborate with each other and to learn from each other, it’s just a matter of finding out who they are.” Carla’s efforts to share with colleagues helped to build a bridge between tenured faculty, term faculty, and graduate teaching assistants. She shared:

> I focused on grad students and gradually got to know some of my colleagues and just through a couple of faculty meetings where I mentioned something that I was doing . . . people would reach out to me, and then I would be in an expert role of mentoring them through something new.

Paula had similar experiences as Carla in nurturing community, having some responsibility for mentoring adjunct faculty in her department. Reflecting both on her experience as a participant and as a leader of faculty development activities, Paula noted that faculty-led activities felt more relevant to participants' classroom experiences. She explained that, in her department, "a lot of our professional development is initiated by faculty and for faculty . . . from how we as individuals feel that we might need to grow." For Paula, this "by faculty and for faculty" professional development was a strength, allowing for more timely topics that met the needs of teaching faculty. Paula and colleagues benefitted from having a large department with many full-time faculty members who took turns sharing new ideas with each other. Maria described a similar experience with sharing ideas with colleagues. Maria described how sharing with colleagues "broadens our circle of influence, both directions, people who influenced us and people that we influence." Maria counted in her "circle" both colleagues at her institution and those at other institutions with whom she had had opportunities to work; she embraced a very active approach to reaching out across institutions as "a two-way street" and a "trade of ideas" that benefitted both her and those in her circle of colleagues.

Some participants described connections between taking on more formal leadership roles within their department and contributing to a community of peers. Becky, Nora, Carla, and Allyson each tried to create community for the faculty in their department, despite little institutional support, with varying degrees of success. With the COVID-19 global pandemic-related changes to teaching and learning, Nora found that more colleagues were asking for opportunities to connect within the department. As a leader in the department, she took on responsibility for organizing regular teaching-

focused meetings where colleagues could gather and share ideas. She explained the energy around discussing teaching innovations largely came from “hall talk” with colleagues, rather than as any part of an institutionally supported initiative. She commented:

> I’m also fortunate that I have colleagues who are as enthusiastic [as I am] about learning about teaching, even though we’re doing it on our own. And you know there’s a kind of energy that comes from that. When we were back in our offices and there was hall talk and that kind of thing, and hearing ideas, “Hey, I read this book, I read this article.” That sort of unofficial faculty support is what I think has been an unacknowledged key element of maintaining some sort of currency in our faculty.

Nora described how important these opportunities for “hall talk” were in terms of creating a sense of community and in sharing and spreading new ideas, and she contributed to nurturing community by creating purposeful spaces where colleagues could replicate this “hall talk” during the pandemic. Jolie, in discussing her leadership roles, was similarly motivated to nurture a community of peers. Jolie noted that her reasons for attending a particular professional development opportunity often involved sharing new ideas with colleagues, saying, “If there’s more research that backs [the topic] and there are ways in which I can share with my colleagues how to do it better, I thought those would be good reasons to spend that time at the workshop.” Carla’s role mentoring graduate teaching assistants had led to her being seen as a resource for all faculty in the department. She spoke about encouraging conversations about teaching as a way of nurturing community that would benefit graduate students and full-time faculty, saying:

> Even just these conversations and having them talk to graduate students about their classes has made them be more intentional about what they’re doing in our classes, because if they’re explaining why they did in their class that helps them think about what they’re doing, right? In a way, just having more of these conversations between grad students and faculty or grad

> students and other grad students, just makes the atmosphere, more conversations about what we're doing in the classroom.

Allyson discussed how ideas and initiatives coming from or led by other faculty were often more accepted than initiatives coming from institutional leadership. Allyson decided to pursue a leadership opportunity because "faculty tend to trust other faculty in these roles" and she wanted the opportunity to contribute to a community that supports and focuses on teaching and learning. In recounting these experiences, Nora, Jolie, and Allyson all described how they valued opportunities to engage in sharing ideas with colleagues and how leadership roles, whether formal or informal, were a way to nurture community. Even participants who would not necessarily describe themselves as leaders found ways to contribute to community by sharing ideas they felt were helpful with others at their institution. Jennifer was an example of someone who did not describe herself as taking on leadership roles, but still contributed to her community by bringing ideas she thought would be helpful back to others in her department. As Jennifer explained, "I was so excited about it [what I learned in the faculty development workshop] after that I shared it with two different colleagues!"

Participants also talked about nurturing community by becoming a trusted resource for colleagues. Nora reflected on her role helping faculty in her department adapt to online teaching in the spring of 2020, saying, "And if there's anything I did right about that [mentoring experience] was that I secured her trust throughout the process by not being [pause] pushy. By not saying, 'You need to get this figured out.'" In a similar way, Carla talked about being a resource for her colleagues who wanted to come to her to "ask for stuff" because they did not view her as being in competition with them, saying:

> Other faculty are now learning that I'm somebody who they can ask for stuff. [laughs] Or they can ask, they can just bounce an idea off, whereas I don't think they have, because they're in this high-pressure tenure-track research thing which can feel very competitive, I don't think they have as much collaboration among themselves in terms of teaching. So, you have to be

> vulnerable to share, you know, "Oh, I'm wondering about this, how could I do this better? I got a really bad teaching evaluation; can you help me sort through this?" Right, those are things that are really hard to do with a colleague, if you think you're in competition with that colleague. And I am somebody who's not in competition with them, and so I think they figured that out.

Both Nora and Carla described finding satisfaction in being someone that their colleagues looked to as a leader in their community.

Participants were not always successful in their attempts to nurture an environment of sharing between colleagues. For example, Becky was frustrated by faculty members at her institution who, in her view, were uninterested or even resistant to suggestions that they might try something different in the classroom. She explained:

> Those folks usually get deeply offended when you suggest that they might benefit from some professional development around teaching or around making the connection to [air quotes] the real world. . . . A lot of folks I have known have been very, "Well, this is what it is: I teach it; they learn it. That's it." That's really not how genuine learning works, but you keep going. You keep lecturing for an hour and 15 minutes and see—how's that working for you?

Nora echoed some of Becky's concerns about faculty in her department, saying:

> I don't know that we'll be able to get them to the point where they can make all the changes that they need to make. We have a sort of herding cats kind of thing in our program where there is no required textbook, no required syllabus, faculty get to design your own, and I think the years of that have led to a sort of inconsistency in the way the courses taught. So, we are now trying to get that more in line, still give faculty some freedom, but you know, say, "Look, you need to at least be doing this."

Despite the existence of resistant colleagues, participants tended to focus on how they could positively impact the overall culture of their department by gradually introducing new teaching methods and supporting colleagues in informal ways.

Participants also found ways *to nurture community* though ongoing collaboration opportunities that were consistently mentioned as an important piece of successful and impactful development. Participants who had opportunities they characterized as "long-haul" or "continuing support" frequently described them as transformational faculty development activities. Paula talked repeatedly about opportunities that provided "continuing support" for engaging in development, noting these were "actually really helpful" despite being far less frequent. Taylor felt that ongoing sessions, even online ones, "provided faculty with the opportunity, made them feel like they were getting to know faculty and the community." Allyson spoke highly of her participation in a faculty development-focused cohort earlier in her career, despite not having recently participated in one. She viewed these sustained or longer-duration opportunities as "more in line with [the needs of] midcareer faculty" and wished she had more time to participate. Jane, too, described how she was "drawn to" opportunities that lasted longer than one session, feeling that these were opportunities "committed to the longer haul" of developing faculty, saying:

> I also really love and am drawn to faculty development that lasts more than one or two or three sessions. And again, I think I'm saying something that's totally uncontroversial and that you've probably heard before, but the idea that this [cohort faculty development program] was two years long, that by itself made me pay attention. Because it's committed to the longer haul instead of the quick fix that so much scientific data show don't actually have real impact.

Jolie's participation in an intensive, multisession faculty development opportunity was another example of successfully offering opportunities with integrated support and follow-through. Participants met as a cohort "2 days a week for 3 weeks, and each class session was about 2 hours long" in between

which faculty would work independently, and then in the next group meeting "come back and kind of unpack what we shared with each other." Likewise, Jennifer's examples of transformative faculty development were two longer duration, cohort-based activities, with required follow-up activities.

Jack, Alberto, and Denise each expressed strong enthusiasm for the sustained support of a FLC. Jack said he was "excited" to participate in an FLC because it was "a small group . . . to talk ideas and have people [to work with]." Returning to the topic in a later interview, Jack confirmed that the FLC had been valuable in providing sustained interactions and "ways that we can share across disciplines and interact with people that we don't typically interact with, and see what they're doing in the classroom in it, and I think it's been really good." Alberto spoke with equal enthusiasm about FLCs, saying, "one of the reasons I'm excited about the learning communities" is they provide opportunities to share what he was working on with peers, that "someone will be reviewing the after" as a way to provide a gentle sense of group accountability.

Denise, who had addressed a lack of opportunities in the first interview for sustained work with colleagues, was also satisfied by her experience with an FLC, and noted her group intended to continue meeting through the school year, saying:

> When you pile on the research and the service responsibilities and the teaching responsibilities, they [colleagues] don't always have the time for development. And with my primary role being teaching, I feel like I should be developing, I should be doing better, but there's no one to bounce ideas off of. There's no one to discuss pedagogy . . . And that's part of the reason my learning community decided to keep going, to keep meeting a couple times here, a couple times there. Just to have other people to bounce ideas off of that are kind of in a similar, if not same, similar situation.

Maria discussed wanting more "longer-term, smaller-group way of doing things," explaining that she thought making an ongoing commitment to the topic might be a way to "get excited about

something, have an opportunity to try, [then] to get feedback." She hoped that planning on follow-up with the group would help group members to "complete the cycle, rather than just get excited and then . . . not do anything with it, just be excited and then just stop." Maria was hoping to propose the idea of a longer-term model to her campus CTL to make "professional development more useful and engaging and productive. Where we actually do something with what we learn." From her limited experiences with an FLC, Maria was confident that an opportunity with more built-in follow-up would be beneficial to her and to her colleagues in nurturing community.

Throughout the interviews, participants talked about the importance of "creating community," as Taylor stated, and being, as Jane described, "engaged all the time in a back and forth . . . constructing ideas as a community." These opportunities to participate in "long haul" opportunities and take on leadership roles provided participants with nurturing community.

Summary of Community and Collaboration

For most participants, Community and Collaboration was more aspirational than an already-achieved reality. Participants described largely successful attempts at finding community, and several articulated ways they were nurturing community through deliberately sharing ideas with colleagues or as a leader in their department. When it came to nurturing community, some participants had examples to share although for others it was more wished-for than currently available to them. In describing community, participants provided examples of working with colleagues in ways that supported their growth or transformed their teaching. More frequently, however, participants listed ways in which they wished for more opportunities to develop a community, to engage in longer-term, ongoing faculty development, to share with and learn from colleagues. As participants discussed the ways in which they desired—but often did not succeed in finding—community with colleagues, the theme of Community and Collaboration emerged.

Summary of Findings

The themes that emerged from this study were Faculty Identity, Institutional Context, Finding Their Way, and Community and Collaboration. Participants' experiences with faculty development were founded in their Faculty Identity and their Institutional Context. Their Faculty Identity included their focus on teaching and focus on students and participants connected these subthemes to their sense of who they were as a faculty member and how they adapt instructional strategies and techniques to better meet students' learning and socioemotional needs.

The Institutional Context included support for teaching and support for faculty development. Efforts to support faculty development were often seen as not supporting improving instruction, and participants were not convinced that their institutions supported their growth as teachers. Participants described ways in which they negotiated what support was available to them to advance teaching and learning, and how they worked through feelings of misalignment between individual and institutional priorities.

The decisions participants made about their growth shaped what opportunities they engaged in, and what they did with what they learned from these opportunities. Instructors in this study described their growth as a process of Finding Their Way through feeling confident, making choices, and trying new things. Participants described feeling confident in terms of being open to changing teaching practices, feeling valued by their institution, and having trusting relationships with colleagues. Participants who felt more confident articulated ways that this confidence allowed them to engage in activities they believed would help them become better instructors. When making choices about faculty development opportunities, participants described needing to find a balance between student needs, institutional responsibilities, and time constraints. Drawing on content and pedagogical knowledge, years of experience, and understanding of students' academic and social-emotional needs allowed

participants to take risks with innovative teaching strategies. Participants hoped that trying new things would lead to more effective teaching.

When describing Community and Collaboration, participants addressed finding community both external and internal to their institution, with help of peers and the CTL, and of nurturing community through giving and receiving support, shared accountability and shared resources. For many participants, their desire for Community and Collaboration was not wholly satisfied by existing experiences and opportunities.

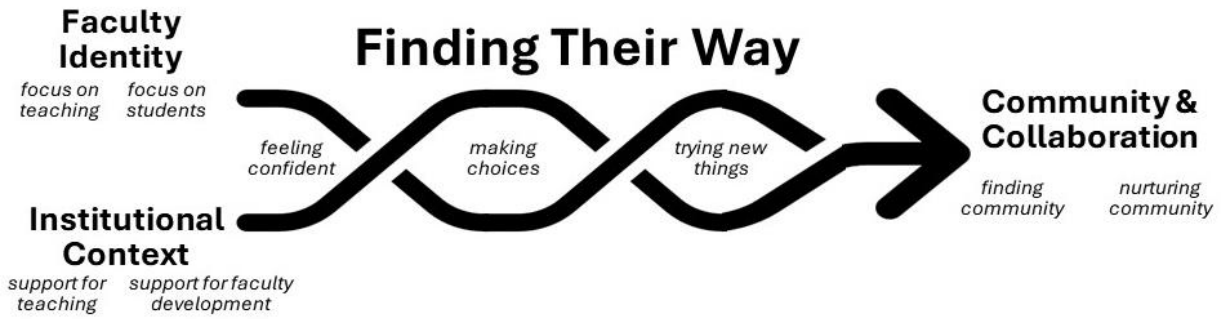
Theory of Faculty Growth

The goal of this study was to propose a theory of how instructors make decisions about engaging in faculty development opportunities and about implementing in their teaching practices what they learned from faculty development opportunities. These decisions are part of the growing process each participant described as they became better teachers and better colleagues.

The findings from this study showed that faculty growth is supported by two foundational elements: the themes of Faculty Identity and Institutional Context. Faculty Identity is comprised of an individual's innate focus on teaching and on being a teacher as an important piece of who they are, and their focus on students as the center of their decision making around faculty development participation. Institutional Context included the supports available from the institution for teaching and for faculty development, and how faculty members experience these supports or perceive a lack of support. The model proposes that Faculty Identity and Institutional Context need to be, if not equally strong, then both present and supportive influences as faculty members take steps to choose development opportunities they see as beneficial and choose to implement what they've learned in the classroom (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

Model of Faculty Growth: Finding Their Way



As is illustrated with the model (see Figure 4), each of these foundational pieces, Faculty Identity and Institutional Context, impact decisions faculty make in Finding Their Way. The decisions faculty members make about their teaching and faculty development shape their journey to becoming a better teacher. Finding Their Way is represented by the interactions between how faculty experience feeling confident, how faculty members experience making choices about teaching and their own growth and finding time for faculty development, and how trying new things contributes to embracing experimentation and innovation. As faculty pursue growth, they experience Community and Collaboration by finding and nurturing community.

Conclusion

Charmaz (2014) noted, "you should keep coming back to the quotes that won't leave you alone" (p. 194). By coming back to the quotes that would not leave me alone, I was able to zero in on the categories that were most meaningful. When Becky said, "I am a teacher," she was expressing a deep, fundamental truth about herself; a view, as it turns out, other participants shared. Although not all participants would agree with Jane's opinion that, "I do not see a strong commitment to excellent teaching" at the institution level, each participant spoke of the importance of an institution supporting teaching and supporting faculty development. Jane's experience was at one end of the spectrum, but all

participants wanted to work at a school that was dedicated to teaching. This institutional culture of supporting teaching and faculty development was an important piece of faculty growth.

Paula spoke for everyone when she explained, “I need to be prepared for the challenges that students face,” centering a commitment to students at the core of the work that instructors do. Participants’ sense of feeling overwhelmed at being asked to do more with fewer resources contributed to a desire to find balance. As Carla admitted, “I need to discern more” to make better choices about where to put limited resources, and to focus on opportunities that would make a real difference to students.

“I have to trust” was a theme to which Becky returned several times, but other participants equally valued a sense of confidence and acceptance of vulnerability. Taylor, in the context of an institution she perceived as strongly supportive of excellent teaching, expressed a high sense of confidence and high desire to experiment when she asserted, “I’m willing to toss anything if it’s not working.” Other participants were less confident, perhaps less willing, to try new activities or less quick to make significant changes, even as they concurred that a willingness to experiment was an attribute they valued. Carla described the importance of her “teaching home” as a space to find colleagues with whom to collaborate. Most participants talked about collaboration in its absence (i.e., a lack of colleagues to talk to, a lack of time to collaborate, and a lack of support from the institution for these forms of professional development).

Each of these “quotes that won’t leave you alone” illustrated a category, explored through interactive cycles of coding and memo-writing. Charmaz (2014) summarized the iterative process where the initial data analysis shapes continuing data collection, explaining:

> Writing memos has already enabled you to flag incomplete categories and gaps in your analysis. Engaging in theoretical sampling prompts you to predict where and how you can find needed data to fill such gaps and to saturate categories. . . . Your predictions arise from your immediate

> analytic work. They are not off-hand conjectures. Rather, they emerge from your grounded comparative analysis of earlier data. Follow hunches to look for data that will illuminate these nascent categories and then go collect these data. If you are conducting an interview study, revise your guide to include a few focused questions to learn about your categories. Next, code the new data and compare your codes with each other, earlier codes, and your emerging categories. Write increasingly abstract and conceptual memos as you proceed to record your new comparisons—and all those flashes of insight you have while filling out your categories. (pp. 199–200)

Throughout her contributions to grounded theory, Charmaz emphasized the importance of being grounded in the data and in the constant comparative process. Charmaz (2014) advocated for trusting one's intuitive sense of the data and the emerging theory, "In research practice, theorizing means being eclectic, drawing on what works, defining what fits" (p. 259) and for flexibility. Charmaz (2021) stated, "My position is and has been flexible: use grounded theory strategies to fit your research objectives, but just be clear on which strategies you are using and to what extent you use them" (p. 157). Through many iterations of constant comparison, I believe I have remained faithful to the constructivist grounded theory of Charmaz in the data collection and analysis process described in Chapters 3 and 4. In Chapter 5, I discuss the interrelationships between the themes identified in Chapter 4, address the significance of the findings, provide recommendations for practice and research, and outline the study limitations and conclusions.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

> The central function of adult educators is to facilitate and precipitate critical reflection by the individual learner. (Mezirow, 1995, p. 59)

Chapter 4 presented findings by theme, providing narrative explanation and specific evidence from participants to illustrate the themes of Faculty Identity, Institutional Context, Finding Their Way, and Community and Collaboration. The themes addressed how faculty experienced the interrelationships between self, student, and institution. Chapter 4 concluded by proposing a theory of faculty growth that emerged from the data analysis process. Chapter 5 reviews the analysis of findings presented in Chapter 4 to synthesize the results. In this chapter, I offer a discussion of the interrelationships between the themes, articulate the significance of the findings, suggest recommendations for practice and for future research, and outline the study limitations and conclusions. The research questions that guided this study were the following:

1. How do faculty describe their participation in a faculty development initiative?
2. How do faculty describe their implementation of a teaching intervention?
3. What is the decision-making process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through faculty development?

Discussion

Four themes emerged from analysis of participant interviews: Faculty Identity, Institutional Context, Finding Their Way, and Community and Collaboration. My analysis of the findings suggested that these four themes were interconnected. Consideration of the relationships between these four themes led to my identification of three areas of connection and overlap: Self and Institution, Institution and Peers, and Self and Peers. The discussion that follows is organized by these interrelationships. First, I address the interrelationship between Self and Institution and how participants tried, not always successfully, to find balance between conflicting expectations. Second, I address the interrelationship

between Institution and Peers, which emphasizes the importance of institutional structures to collegial support. I conclude the discussion section with the interrelationship of Self and Peers, which revealed the aspirational but largely unrealized nature of faculty collaboration.

Self and Institution: Conflicting Expectations and Finding Balance

The interrelationship that exists in the overlap of *self and institution* emerged from the findings of Faculty Identity and Finding Their Way. From analysis of the findings, and then looking across the findings to identify interrelationship between findings, this relationship showed that conflicting expectations influenced decisions participants made about teaching and about participation in faculty development. Where self and institution connect shapes faculty member's decisions about what they do in their classes, how they engage in opportunities to develop as teachers and as members of the institutional community, and ultimately, influence faculty Finding Their Way.

The interconnection between self and institution demonstrates that faculty members experience conflicting expectations between what they prioritize and what their institution prioritizes, and work at finding balance between these expectations. Participants spoke of how finding time and balancing competing demands on their time are perennial problems. For faculty who want to dedicate time to improving their teaching practice, they must balance the "range of different tasks at hand," where teaching is only part of their duties, "and have to allocate time and effort to distinct tasks according to their priorities" (Fischer & Hänze, 2020, p. 298). For participants, finding time to engage in faculty development but also to reflect on how they could implement it in their classes was often lacking. This lack of time was a key reason why they were not able to implement what they learned from faculty development. Participants connected feeling like they did not have enough time for development activities to conflict between their priorities and institutional priorities. They described feeling frustrated by being encouraged to participate in faculty development while being precluded from doing so by too many other professional expectations. It is perhaps not surprising that participants with

the highest teaching and advising loads reported the most difficulty in finding enough time to attend professional development activities, or in having enough time to implement new ideas or experiment with innovative teaching practices. These pressures only increase as faculty become more established in their roles. Participants talked about being expected to achieve a higher level of scholarly productivity and more frequent involvement in institutional governance or other committee work as they became more senior at their institution. Several participants noted the pressure of shrinking faculty numbers, explaining that there was a smaller number of colleagues within their department available to share the work of advising students, reviewing and revising programs and curricula, and serving on hiring committees. Even participants at more teaching-focused schools talked about the pressure of increasing noninstructional expectations. Without time to reflect on what they may have learned from a workshop, and then time to prepare the new activity or materials, or to revise assessments or source structure, participants felt frustrated.

The larger concern that echoes across both participant interviews and the literature is that "rising expectations for student learning have come at a time of diminishing resources for higher education . . . [d]oing more with less, campuses are struggling, and faculty are stretched thin just about everywhere we look," and these constraints are "making it difficult to do sustained work on pressing institutional agendas for student learning" (Hutchings et al., 2011, p. 10). Likewise, these constraints make it difficult to do sustained work on improving teaching. These trends in higher education ask individual faculty members to engage in many activities outside of instructional duties. These trends are colliding at a time of sustained disinvestment in faculty at colleges and universities across the country, with minimal salary growth for faculty over the past 20 years (Colby, 2020), while salary growth for upper administrators has far outpaced that of faculty and staff at all institution types (Flaherty, 2020). The longer-term trends in postsecondary education for faculty to both teach more classes and to teach a higher number of students per course were noted by multiple participants in this study; these

enrollment trends have been the subject of extensive discussion in higher education focused publications. Participants with higher teaching loads (e.g., community college and nontenure track faculty) all talked about time constraints more than tenured and tenure-track participants.

Participants frequently described feeling overwhelmed by increasing expectations on faculty, noting that being at a “teaching focused" institution almost always meant a high teaching load and what they perceived as increasing demand to support students. These factors tended to overload participants’ teaching capacity, making it hard to do anything innovative. Although the focus of this study was not on supporting students or changing expectations of the use of technology in higher education, participants frequently connected the inability to implement innovative practices to a lack of time caused by (a) high teaching load, (b) increasing number of students per course, (c) increasing expectations of supporting students outside the classroom, and (d) increasing expectations of using technology to carry out these tasks. Despite these challenges, students remain one of the most important reasons why faculty engage in implementing innovative practices; as Beyer et al. (2013) found, “reasons for change most often emerge from the interaction between the faculty member and the particular students and course she is teaching, rather than from sources external to the classroom” (p. 10).

Working at a “teaching-focused” institution does not necessarily mean that teaching is given higher value or respect (Bates, 2010); rather, it frequently means that faculty are simply expected to do more of it. Participants described the challenges of balancing teaching-related expectations and other expectations. Maintaining this balance might be particularly challenging for mid-career faculty, who are expected to take on more administrative, departmental, and governance-related leadership roles, while maintaining a level of research and scholarly activity, in addition to teaching (Austin, 2010). Many mid-career faculty are not able to find a successful balance; Mathew’s (2014) research found that 52% of associate professors reported being unable to effectively balance expectations of teaching, scholarship, and service. By not supporting faculty in achieving a workload balance that includes time for faculty

development, participants "read" a clear message about the value placed on these activities. In the end, participants' enthusiasm for teaching and faculty development was tempered by frustration with conflicting expectations. Institutions have an important role to play in helping faculty to resolve conflicting expectations through encouraging and supporting faculty in concrete ways. Haelle (2020) asserted that "the biggest protective factors for facing adversity and building resilience are social support and remaining connected to people" (para. 50), solutions that institutions can start to address through stronger structural supports for faculty and staff. The work of connecting faculty to colleagues and building supportive institutional structures is addressed in the next section.

Institution and Peers: Institutional Structures and Collegial Support

The interrelationship that exists in the overlap of institution and peers emerged from the findings of Institutional Context and Finding Their Way. From analysis of the findings, and then looking across the findings to identify interrelationship between findings, this relationship showed that the existence of institutional structures and collegial support influenced decisions participants made about teaching and about participation in faculty development. Institutional context provides structure for the work faculty do, through formal and informal structures. All the participants noted that institution-initiated and institution-supported programs were helpful in encouraging them to experiment with new teaching strategies or methods. Participants described the importance of support structures as they considered making changes to their teaching practices. Implementation of new strategies is supported by formal structures (e.g., new faculty orientation, promotion and tenure committee mentors, organized faculty development workshops) and by informal structures (e.g., a network of peers, "hall talk") that are part of the institutional context in which participants work.

Research supports the importance of having institutional structures in place to encourage faculty to undertake systematic evaluation and revision of teaching practices. Having in place supportive institutional structures can encourage faculty to engage in exchanges with peers that can lead to longer-

term and deeper changes to practice. The process of engaging in development activities with peers in an "exchange and acquisition of knowledge and information may improve one's capacity and confidence" (Siciliano, 2016, p. 231) by providing access to specific strategies and access to a supportive peer environment, a process that relies on both organizational structure and communities of practice to effect positive change (Dittmar & McCracken, 2012). Biggs and Tang (2011) asserted that improving teaching is just as much about acknowledging and working within the institutional culture as it is about the actions of any one person: "Good teaching is as much a function of institution-wide infrastructure as it is a gift with which some lucky academics are born" (p. 9).

It is important that institutions do not just offer formal structures and formal learning opportunities, as informal communities are significant in contributing to "community cohesion" (Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016, p. 15). Faculty members work so often in isolation from colleagues, particularly those who primarily have teaching duties. Collaboration with colleagues occurs more naturally in nonteaching contexts (e.g., research collaborations, college governance, committee service). Having colleagues with whom to collaborate on teaching-related work, sharing ideas, and receiving feedback fills an important gap for faculty. Participants in this study expressed a need for more structure from the institution to encourage collaboration and a culture of trust and innovation, a finding echoed in the literature: "Trust and innovative climate are two fundamental elements in creating a learning organization where members are open to sharing new ideas and to taking risks in support of better practice" (Daly et al., 2015, p. 29).

Although many faculty are dedicated to improving as teachers (Beyer et al., 2013; Condon et al., 2016), not all know how use evidence of teaching effectiveness to make changes in teaching practices. For some faculty, "years of experience in the classroom has resulted in a recipe for instruction that is satisfactory and does not require any adjustment" (Oleson & Hora, 2014, p. 41). Creating a supportive environment that will encourage faculty to engage in reflection about their teaching practices requires

deliberate action on the part of the institution. By creating an institutional culture that values and supports teaching as a primary product of the institution, faculty are socialized into an environment that supports development of a "repertoire of instructional practices" (Oleson & Hora, 2014, p. 42). As faculty move from being early career to mid-career faculty, they in turn can contribute to the socialization of this "unique cultural group" that supports and values teaching (Oleson & Hora, 2014).

Serious efforts at reform or implementing innovative teaching "require sustained structures to foster collective learning and cross-school engagement" (Cannata et al., 2017, p. 2). An institution's commitment to supporting teachers is evidenced by types of support available—or unavailable—to faculty, and the institutional messages about the value of teaching and the value of faculty development. A few participants in this study described how they felt supported by their institution, but more frequently participants described support they wish their institution provided. Even for participants who provided examples of tangible support provided by their institution, their explanations about whether and how they could make use of these supports was more nuanced. One of the key influences on how faculty made use of support from the institution was the existence of peers with whom to consult and collaborate; this interrelationship of self and peers is addressed in the next section.

Self and Peers: Aspirational but Unrealized

The third interrelationship that emerged from the themes is that of self and peers. This interrelationship emerged from the findings of Community and Collaboration and Finding Their Way. From analysis of the findings, and then looking across the findings to identify interrelationship between findings, this relationship showed that community, for most participants, was something they aspired to but did not frequently experience.

Participants placed great importance on being in community. Collaboration with colleagues was an important piece of how faculty described their faculty development experiences, and collaboration

was described as helping participants feel more capable and successful when attempting to implement new teaching strategies. Being able to work with peers was also important to the decision-making processes in which participants engaged. Just as collaboration and the opportunity to work with colleagues was an important part of participation in faculty development, colleagues play a key role in participants' implementation of initiatives. Participants described, in different ways, a desire for more or different types of collaboration with colleagues. Each addressed the idea that support was needed within one's close colleague group (e.g., the department, to be able to be an effective faculty member). For the most part, participants agreed that they felt supported by their immediate department-level colleagues. Feeling supported, though, is not the same as engaging in collaboration with colleagues. Condon et al. (2016) described that too few faculty report having collaborative relationships or individuals with whom to share ideas: "Faculty often do this work [teaching] in isolation, hoping to build better practices by examining what they see as their successes and failures and then making changes based on teaching experience" (p. 9). Smith (2019) noted, "faculty maintain extensive research networks, whereas teaching is stereotyped as a solitary activity" (p. 7), suggested faculty should apply a similar network approach to their development of teaching-focused connections, and argued:

> Learning in networks involves activities (e.g., dialogue, observing, reading, collaborative work, attending events together, comparing results) appropriate to acquire pedagogical and assessment skills as well as knowledge about teaching and learning processes, instructional technologies, classroom management, and course design. (Smith, 2019, p. 7)

One of the benefits of a community-based approach is that creation and sharing of knowledge is encouraged among members. McKenney and Schunn (2018) explained the benefits of conceptualizing faculty development as a community of collaborative and reflective improvement, noting that, "to address the knowledge-sharing issue, educational researchers have begun advocating for modes of enquiry that feature co-creation and organic diffusion of knowledge" (p. 1085). Benefits for individual

participants are equally important as benefits for an institution. The key benefit to institutions supporting a more systematic way for faculty to engage in a collaborative and reflective improvement community is the potential to use "disciplined, analytic, and systematic methods to develop and test changes that achieve reliable improvements" (Bryk, 2015, p. 475) to instruction and institutional support for students, helping students meet their academic and professional goals. Ideally, the communion of "improvement science with the power of structured networked communities . . . [draws] together the expertise of practitioners, researchers, designers, technologists, and many others" (Bryk, 2015, p. 475).

Collaborative networks can support faculty in pursuing development opportunities and support them in the follow-up activities that help faculty with the transfer of knowledge from what they have learned to what they do. Bridwell-Mitchell and Cooc's (2016) research on urban K–12 school networks showed that "community cohesion" was key to helping teachers develop and maintain relationships with colleagues. They found that cohesion is more than "strength of teachers' relationships given their frequency of interaction or feelings of attachment" (p. 14). The idea of "cohesion" speaks to networks of interactions:

> Cohesion is also the degree of overlapping and mutually reinforcing ties among community members. This means that in cohesive communities, every member tends to interact with every other member; in less cohesive communities, each member mainly interacts with only a subset of other members. (Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016, pp. 14–15)

Phuong et al. (2020) conducted an evaluation of review studies examining faculty development programs; in this systematic review, they found that "the most widespread of the formal FD programs consisted of short workshops and seminars" although more recent studies noted an increase in "lengthier and more comprehensive" programs (p. 31). In an earlier review of studies of teacher educator faculty development, Phuong et al. (2018) concluded that "longitudinal and collaborative

learning experiences" with institutional support structures (e.g. mentoring programs, communities of practices) "empower" faculty change (p. 384).

Collaboration with colleagues is an important piece of faculty development experiences, helping faculty feel more capable and successful when attempting to implement new teaching strategies. Being able to work with peers and with experts in teaching and learning is important to the decision-making processes that lead to substantive change. As theories of adult learning and development (e.g., Mezirow, 2000) have come to describe, transformational learning happens in contexts of support and connection, where relationships between members of the community play an important role in the learning process. When these relationships exist within supportive institutional structures, deep and meaningful collaboration can occur, as the literature and the experiences of participants in this study show. Participants all spoke positively about times when they were able to work with colleagues, and consistently expressed a strong desire to have more opportunities for collaboration. Participants who anticipated joining a Faculty Learning Community (FLC), a follow-up opportunity available to workshop attendees, were enthusiastic about the potential of finding supportive and like-minded peers there. Throughout the interviews, participants described wanting to have a community of colleagues with whom to share ideas about teaching, yet almost all participants lacked this community.

Significance of Findings

The significance of this study lies in developing our understanding of how faculty experience faculty development, and how these understandings can guide the work of Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs). At the most fundamental level, the most significant findings from this research concern faculty development and what faculty need from their institutions to pursue growth opportunities that, ultimately, contribute to better teaching. This research study contributes to a better understanding of the importance of a supportive community as faculty experiment with new teaching strategies, and how institutions need to take a stronger role in developing this supportive culture. This study has

demonstrated, at the time of the study, participants were not getting from faculty development what they wanted or needed to help them grow as teachers and as members of a higher education community. Participants provided rich description of finding community and nurturing community and connected their experiences in community to their most transformational faculty development activities. These descriptions stood out, however, by virtue of how rare it was for a participant to have experienced this type of community. Participants wanted faculty development opportunities in the form of longer-duration activities, cross-discipline and even cross-institutional, with time to reflect, share, get feedback, and implement. They most frequently experienced faculty development that met none of these needs; these activities were one-time presentations or workshops where very little "work" on the part of participants occurred. Too, these activities were frequently focused on faculty new to the institution or on "bad apples," rather than providing support to experienced faculty. Finally, topics tended to address instructional technology (e.g., using the LMS, implementing new early alert systems) and institutional priorities not perceived as related to teaching (e.g., new transfer pathways, institutional assessment). When relevant and interesting topics (e.g., DEI initiatives) were presented, it was often a broad or high-level overview, with no follow-up, providing little concrete support for faculty to engage with the topic in a way that might impact their teaching.

This mismatch between what faculty need and what they were offered points to a rich area for further exploration but also to an expansion of the work that CTLs do. To improve the faculty development opportunities offered, CTLs should focus on the activities participants found most transformational to their teaching practices. Although some participants talked about increasing the number of faculty development activities they participated in over the past year and a half, the same participants questioned how impactful these opportunities were on their teaching without any follow-up or follow-through activities. When talking about opportunities they felt were particularly impactful, each example centered on long-duration opportunities with a cohort or other peer group that provided

not only content knowledge but space to apply and reflect on the content. Faculty in this study described their most transformative development activities as those with expectations of on-going contribution on the part of participants to the work in which they were engaged. In contrast, the development activities they most often took part in were one-time workshops or presentations, with little to no follow-up afterwards. Even the "workshops" involved very little "work" and rarely any accountability for making changes to instructional practice. It is enlightening, if sobering, to realize that the types of activities participants described as "transformational" were the exceptions, each participant identifying perhaps one of these experiences in their career, rather than frequent experiences.

The strength of the desire expressed by participants to collaborate more with colleagues was surprising given how few participants had actually experienced that kind of substantive and sustained collaboration. While participants were able to describe some examples of working collaboratively, meeting colleagues at conferences, coordinating together on research and publication, and some committee work, these opportunities were largely not focused on the work of teaching. The idea of "community cohesion" (Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016), or connections to colleagues that go beyond feelings of collegiality or appreciation for friendly relationships, might be what participants in this study were seeking when they talk about wanting to have more opportunities to work with colleagues. More than friends, more than conversations at the water cooler, more than someone to eat with at a conference or grab coffee with before a faculty meeting, faculty seek a way to develop sustained and substantive connection with colleagues. There are models for what this can look like in a research context. Laboratory work, collaborative investigation, and writing partnerships all exist and flourish because, in many ways, these are endeavors that cannot be approached solo. Teaching in higher education does not offer similar models, perhaps because teaching can most often be approached as an individual endeavor.

Recommendations for Practice

In their review of faculty development literature, Matthias (2019) identified three areas of focus for the field: "(a) individual growth of faculty members based in large part on career stages, (b) a pursuit of integration, and (c) collaboration among faculty members" (pp. 265–266). These areas of focus echoed the needs of participants in this study, all of whom needed different supports and opportunities as mid-career faculty than what they needed earlier in their careers. Institutions need to engage in sustained investment in faculty development to shift to a culture that values teaching, and values efforts faculty make to improve teaching. Institutions also need to support collaboration at a much deeper and more sustained level. These collaborations need to be systematic, data-driven, and inform both teaching and institutional support programs. The following sections provide recommendations for institutions, CTLs, and individuals to consider in pursuit of this aim.

Rethinking Faculty Development

The findings of this study suggest changes in how CTLs design faculty development programs; specifically, offering more longer-term opportunities rather than one-time workshops, and incorporating consistent follow-up to participants. These practices align with the goal of supporting faculty in developing a collaborative community, and with research indicating that longitudinal faculty development is more impactful for faculty and for students (Guglielmo et al., 2011; Manarin et al., 2021; Phuong et al., 2018). Systematic reviews of the research on efficacy of faculty development (Matthias, 2019; McLean et al., 2008; Steinert et al., 2016) as well as large-scale faculty development research initiatives (e.g., Condon et al., 2016) have shown that long-term program participation allows faculty to invest time and effort applying the knowledge and skills from training programs to classroom contexts. While providing short, one-time talks is an easy way to deliver content, it is less likely that these opportunities provide participants with an environment where they can develop trust, build relationships with colleagues, or be challenged to make substantive changes to teaching practice.

Additionally, this delivery matches neither best practices in teaching nor in adult learning. Smith (2019) critiques the delivery of faculty development programming, describing a teacher-centered, rather than learner-centered approach to most development activities:

> Workshops resemble classes offered at scheduled times and led by experts who pre-identify learning objectives. FLCs resemble courses with start and end dates, membership based on application, and expected individual or group outcomes . . . Consultations resemble appointments where a challenged learner receives guidance from a teacher or tutor. (p. 16)

Smith (2019) concluded that CTLs should "nurture CoPs [Communities of Practice]" and identify CTL ambassadors (i.e., "departmental opinion leaders") to leverage networks of faculty interested and engaged in the work of faculty development. Bali and Caines (2018) argued that faculty developers should "strive to build sustainable and sustained communities, with members leaving and rejoining but being able to remain in the same space for longer" (p. 23). Institutions must find ways to both abstractly and concretely support faculty in their collaborations. Colleagues who can provide feedback to faculty as they think through creating and implementing innovative teaching strategies and methods are an important piece of a supportive context. When supportive peers and colleagues, such as faculty development specialists in a CTL, engage with faculty in examining teaching practices and working toward implementing new ones, this encouragement helps faculty apply new knowledge.

Increasingly, faculty developers have called for new ways of facilitating development activities. Bali and Caines (2018) described their approach as providing spaces for support and learning, and argued for more learner-centered, flexible approaches to faculty development that will better meet the needs of all faculty, rather than "[ignoring] the few who have more specific needs" or "following best practices taken from other contexts, [which] may end up being less relevant to local contexts" (p. 3). Török and Conley (2022) described their work facilitating "a de-centered collective community, where each participant is asked to be self-guided as well as responsible to the entire group" (p. 1) as a step

toward meeting the diverse needs of faculty they serve while enacting ideals of feminist pedagogy. Similarly, DeSapaio (2017) advocated for "connectedness," which they explained as: "a person's sense of connection to some external entity (such as an idea, philosophy, person, group, or organization) that gives some measure of meaning to their identity" (p. 62). DeSapaio (2017) related connection to transformational growth:

> Many examples of "transformation" . . . are tethered to various testimonies of awakening to an idea or participation in a community. Communities of practice, or generating buy-in to an organizational mission statement, or commitment to principles such as justice and equality may be examples of the kind of "connectedness" that may promote transformation. (p. 62)

Faculty need to collaborate in longer-term, well-resourced ways. If the types of collaboration participants in this study talked about wanting and needing were easy to achieve, they would already be doing it. Instead, they most often talked about missed opportunities for collaboration: the absence of support or a lack of time to be able to do the type of collaboration they wanted to do. Beyond formal structures put in place at an institutional level through departmental initiatives or CTLs, it is also important for an institution to encourage faculty to participate in supportive, collaborative work. Examples of these opportunities include collaboration within one's own discipline, collaboration across disciplines, and opportunities to both sit in on and be observed by peers. Institutions can help faculty identify individuals with whom to collaborate, encourage faculty to set aside time to focus on collaborative work, and set explicit goals or expectations for the work. This is where the institution has a role to play in supporting the growth of collaborative networks, providing what faculty need most: time for the work and a sense that the work is valuable to the institution and to student learning.

Encouraging faculty to make time to engage in faculty development, reflect on what they have learned, and work with colleagues on "common-cause efforts" (Condon et al., 2016, p. 11) is no small task. It requires both big-picture shifts in institutional culture (e.g., messages about teaching) and small-

picture moves toward placing greater importance on development across the faculty career-span (e.g., including engagement in faculty development as part of the tenure or promotion portfolio). There are examples of institutions successfully meeting these challenges, including one of the institutions represented in this research study. Suggestions for how institutions can rethink investment in faculty and faculty development are presented in the next section.

Sustained Investment in Faculty and Faculty Development Programming

Significant institutional resources are dedicated to providing professional development activities for faculty, even when faculty do not perceive these resources to be sufficient. New faculty members are hired with expectations of a certain level of scholarly and creative productivity, and a certain standard of instructional effectiveness. Most new faculty will not successfully meet these standards before 4 or more years of full-time employment (Boice, 1992, 2000). Four to 5 years of investment in an individual faculty member is a significant commitment on the part of the institution. According to the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (2014), there are a number of steps institutions can take to improve faculty satisfaction with their teaching, including "mak[ing] expectations for teaching clear from the point of hire" and "recruit[ing] faculty who are already devoted to teaching" (p. 2). Funding, in the form of "grants for pedagogical development and innovation" and "public, prestigious, and substantive [teaching] awards" (Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, 2014, p. 2) is also important. The goal of these initiatives is to "make teaching of primary importance in the mission of the institution" (Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, 2014, p. 2).

As participants in this study affirmed, research has shown that mid-career faculty experience "increased teaching load, greater expectations for service and advising, a more competitive market for grants, and the disappearance of mentoring programs that supported them as early-career faculty" (Mathews, 2014, p. 1). Mathews (2014) argued that institutions should purposefully address the lifespan

of an academic career as early as new faculty orientation, and “require departmental plans for mentoring” mid-career faculty (p. 7).

One step institutions could take to increase faculty satisfaction and provide time for faculty development is reducing teaching expectations. Some institutions are experimenting with reducing or shifting teaching loads without significant budget impacts or other negative consequences (Flaherty, 2018); successful examples relied on systematic data collection to make the case for reduced teaching loads, while “‘piecemeal, voluntary, under-resourced’ changes” were not successful in making a real difference to faculty (Flaherty, 2018, para. 20). Hanlon’s (2019) argument in favor of reduced teaching loads speaks to the concerns participants shared over balancing expectations, and the reality that lowered teaching expectations “means more time to reflect on how to do things better the next time around” (Hanlon, 2019, para. 8).

Other institutions are exploring how service expectations impact the time available to faculty to focus on faculty development. These expectations, as scholars are increasingly arguing, have gendered and racial differences. Misra et al.’s (2011, 2012) research found that men spent 7.5 hours each week more than women on research, while women “taught an hour more each week than men, mentored an additional two hours a week, and spent nearly five hours more a week on service” (Misra et al., 2011, para. 10). O’Meara et al. (2021) argued that workload imbalances are an equity issue, and described a range of practices, including modified criteria for promotion and tenure, differentiated workload policies, and planned teaching and service rotations, in which institutions can invest to better support faculty. The rewards the institution reaps from investing in faculty go beyond research productivity and instructional skills: “At a foundational level, investment in faculty leads to their investment in the institution” (Matthias, 2019, p. 260). If institutions want to receive the maximum benefit from their investment in developing faculty, then institutions need to find ways to support the ongoing reflection and application that needs to happen.

Investment must go beyond supporting individual faculty with reasonable balance of teaching, scholarship, and service, as just outlined, to include investment in faculty development programming. Faculty development "needs to become less a complacent afterthought and more an intentional constant" (Bond, 2022, para. 12) in the lives of faculty and in the work of institutions. Successful models of this type of investment rely on a CTL, staffed by a sufficient number of people to support the institution's full- and part-time faculty, with expertise across a broad range of pedagogical and technological areas. Bates's (2010) research on teaching and faculty development centers at high performing colleges and universities led them to conclude that it is most effective when faculty developers and faculty work together "to construct a climate of respect for teaching and teaching excellence that results in more effective teaching and learning opportunities in the institution" (p. 196). The Tracer project (Condon et al., 2016) likewise found that organized and formalized faculty development was a necessary component of culture supporting excellent teaching. The authors outline several conditions that contributed to a culture of teaching and learning at institutions involved in the project: visibility across campus departments/units of initiatives dedicated to teaching; a focus on attributes related to teaching and learning in "expectations for faculty in hiring, orientation, and reward systems" in the "encouragement of inter-disciplinary and inter-departmental efforts;" and finally "extended, common-cause efforts around a specific learning outcome" (p. 11). All of these conditions are supported by the institution having a CTL empowered to work with faculty on developing teaching expertise, and by the institution's sustained investment in these supports. This connects to investment in individual faculty; when institutions reward faculty for caring about improving their teaching (e.g., teaching awards, course releases or service releases for participation in sustained faculty development opportunities), faculty are more likely to seek out the support of experts in the CTL, and more likely to value this expertise.

Implementing Research-Practice Partnerships

Research-practice or research-practitioner partnerships connect practicing teachers with educational researchers to apply systematic improvement principles and practices. While these partnerships have long existed in K–12 education, there are far fewer examples of these partnerships impacting the teaching that happens in higher education. With some notable exceptions, such as the Tracer project (Condon et al., 2016), the American Association of Colleges and Universities' (AAC&U) work on high-impact practices (Finley & McNair, 2013), and the Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubrics (McConnell et al., 2019), there are few opportunities for individual faculty to benefit from systematic application of research, whether that is research on promising teaching practices or using student outcomes data to improve instruction. When faculty are supported in using research to improve teaching, they are typically asked to look at institutional success rates (e.g., DFW rates, retention rates) and sometimes at course-specific success rates. It is less common to find institutions blending these types of data with other data (e.g., student interviews, peer observations, faculty self-ratings) to provide a fuller picture of teaching practices. There is not enough guidance provided to individual faculty about how to use data to improve teaching, and certainly not enough support for them to compare and evaluate various data sources: "Advocates of evidence-based policy and practice often promote the use of rigorous research but are silent about how to integrate research with other types of evidence" (Tseng, 2014, p. 8). Program and policy impacts are frequently studied, but results are limited to local contexts, while benefits of a true research–practice partnership extend beyond classroom impacts. Tseng (2014) noted these partnerships in K–12 school districts provide "professional growth and fulfillment" for individuals in senior roles, provide stability by having ongoing involvement of researchers in the work of the school district, and "[help] the district focus on making continuous incremental improvements rather than chasing the next silver bullet" (p. 10).

Given the success of research–practice partnerships in K–12 education, and the deep research expertise available at most institutions of higher education, applying the research–practice partnership model to institutions of higher education should be possible. Bryk et al. (2011) spoke of this ideal vision of "applied R&D," arguing: "a network organizational approach can surface and test new insights and enable more fluid exchanges across contexts and traditional institutional boundaries—thus holding potential to enhance designing for scale" (p. 131). In many institutions there exists already an education department with expertise in educational research and applying research to teaching practices. Likewise, in many institutions there exists a CTL to lead this research–practice partnership work and facilitate coordination between schools of education and faculty teaching across disciplines. These existing structures need to be empowered to draw together individuals across the institution to support application of educational research to teaching at the postsecondary level.

Engaging in systematic investigations of teaching is frequently used in K–12 school practice but is not a systematic practice in most institutions of higher education, at least not for faculty. Despite the benefits of faculty using systematic examination of practice to better understand their students' learning, the literature and this research study suggest that there are inconsistent opportunities to implement this type of focused improvement. When this research-to-practice approach is implemented, however, teaching improves and the improvements spread (Condon et al., 2016).

Recommendations for Future Research

The recommendations for future research I present here focus on two different directions. The first potential direction for future research is exploration of community and collaboration through the lens of social network theory (Chapman et al., 2016; Coburn et al., 2012; Daly et al, 2015). The desire for collaboration with colleagues was one of the significant findings from this study; this is an area where more research is needed to understand how faculty collaborate, how they wish to collaborate, and what institutions can do to encourage a culture where collaboration occurs. The second potential direction for

future research is exploration of other faculty perspectives that are missing from this study (e.g., part-time faculty, new faculty, faculty developers) or exploration of concerns that were largely not discussed by study participants (e.g., discipline-specific concerns, caretaking concerns) but that might be relevant to explore.

Exploration of Faculty Social Networks

One area of future research important to explore is how collaboration, when it exists, supports faculty in implementing changes to their teaching practices. This study looked at faculty growth and decision making from the perspective of individual faculty, yielding interesting data about the desire for collaborative relationships and, tellingly, the lack of opportunities for collaboration. Future studies exploring whether and how faculty engage in collaboration with colleagues would help to identify how social networks influence the professional development of faculty. Another facet of this future research could look at faculty decision making from the perspective of the network connections: how decisions are shaped by the decisions of colleagues, the instructional contexts, and the institutional culture. Although the results from this study hinted at the importance of collaborative community to how faculty make decisions about their growth, about their participation in faculty development, and about their growth in general, much more research needs to be done exploring how collaborative communities can contribute to innovative teaching practices at the higher education level. The results from this study also hinted at the importance of institutional culture, but again more research needs to be done to explore how institutional culture is constructed and how it is perceived by both faculty and noninstructional university employees.

One possible theoretical and methodological framework for this future exploration of how collaborative communities and institutional culture are constructed and how they influence individual decision making is social network theory. Social network theory examines the relationships between individuals to determine how individuals are connected, how resources are dispersed and shared within

the network, and how the network both supports and constrains individual actors (Daly et al., 2015). Social network theory "shifts the angle of vision" from the individual's attributes or actions "to the system of social relations within which action is embedded" (Coburn et al., 2012, p. 142). Understanding how social networks within an institution work has the potential to shed light on how individuals find peers with whom to collaborate, and the likelihood that they have supportive leaders in faculty development available to them. Social network theory, as applied to educational institutions, examines the network of relationships between employees to understand who is likely to help whom and in which contexts. This examination of faculty as they are part of a network shifts the focus from decision-making processes at the individual level to exploring how these processes work at a larger institution level, "illuminating the emergence of social phenomena that do not exist at the individual level" (Chapman et al., 2016, p. 180).

The process of faculty growth may look very different when development activities occur not in isolation but within supportive networks of colleagues. Understanding this process requires deeper exploration of the institutional contexts that shape how participants view their own development and growth, the development and growth of their students, and the nature of teaching and learning. Despite the relative absence of research on how networks of faculty at the college and university level can leverage strong ties, deep interactions, and high level of expertise to create successful collaboration, it is precisely this genre of collaborative work that faculty in this study wished to join.

Exploration of Other Participant Perspectives

One recommendation for future research concerns the participants. This study focused only on full-time faculty members, with at least 2 years of full-time teaching experience, who were scheduled to teach at least one course in Fall 2021. As it turned out, most participants had high teaching loads, with 10 of the 14 teaching four or five courses each semester. Although a variety of institution sizes and disciplines were represented, future research with a larger group of participants who meet the same

criteria would be helpful in exploring whether the proposed theory of faculty growth outlined here continues to describe the data effectively with an expanded pool of participants. Another recommendation for future research is to explore the experiences of faculty who did not meet the initial criteria for selection, faculty with lighter teaching loads and greater nonteaching responsibilities, for example, to see how they describe their growth as faculty. The groups who did not meet initial criteria but should be the focus of future research on faculty development experiences are described next.

Part-Time and Contingent Faculty

One group not represented in this study is part-time or contingent faculty. Participants in this study discussed development as related to personal growth more than institutional advancement or job security. One possible explanation for why concerns about tenure or promotion did not come up more is that participants in this study were all full-time tenure track or term faculty, with more than 5 years of teaching experience and most having more than 5 years at their current institution. These characteristics may have led participants to feel a greater sense of security and may explain why the participants did not perceive a lack of funding or lack of access to development opportunities as barriers to their growth or significant to their faculty development decision-making process. Future research studies that focus on faculty in more precarious situations, such as contingent faculty, may help to illuminate the importance of different structural constraints on the decision-making process.

New Faculty

Looking at faculty who are newer to their institution might reveal important insights into how faculty are socialized into an education community, and whether they feel their development needs are being sufficiently met by the activities that their more experienced peers find insufficient. New faculty might also have experiences that would shed light on faculty development and concerns about promotion/job security, or might describe different barriers to participation in faculty development.

Faculty From R1 Institutions

Although several participants in this study were from R1 institutions, this was not a deliberate investigation of participants from research-focused institutions versus more teaching-focused institutions. While findings from this study indicate that even some teaching focused schools are not actually "walking the walk," it would be interesting to look in greater depth at what, if anything, distinguishes teaching from research institutions in terms of supports for faculty.

Caregivers

Another potential area of investigation is the impact of having significant caretaking duties on a faculty member's ability to engage in faculty development. I anticipated that I would find participants who wished they could do more, but were limited in their choices by having family, particularly younger children, at home. While time constraints were clearly a common concern, difficulties related to family caretaking duties were mostly not addressed by participants in this study. This was surprising given how pervasive the discussion about gendered differences in workload have become (e.g., Misra et al., 2012) recently, and particularly over the past 2 years, as the COVID-19 global pandemic has disproportionately impacted women academics with children (e.g., Bowyer et al., 2022; Higginbotham & Dahlberg, 2021) with even greater impacts on mothers who are women of color (e.g., Fulweiler et al., 2021). Institutional support to help academic mothers during the pandemic has varied across institutions, with most support offered addressing immediate concerns, such as teaching online versus in the classroom, rather than addressing potential longer-term impacts on faculty productivity (Flaherty, 2021a, 2021b). Continuing and increasing inequities in the division of home responsibilities exacerbate the gender divide between working mothers and fathers (Gogoi, 2020).

It is reasonable to assume that individuals for whom caretaking duties, either for their children or for their aging parents, are a significant barrier to participation in faculty development would likely not have been in the participant pool to begin with, and even if they did make time for the original

workshop, they would be less likely to volunteer for a multi-interview research study. Future research that more explicitly focuses on faculty who are caregivers might provide helpful insights into specific barriers experienced and what types of supports would be most useful.

Faculty From Underrepresented Identities

In addition to, and perhaps overlapping with, the faculty groups described previously, a final group whose experiences and perspectives are in need of further exploration is that of faculty from underrepresented racial, ethnic, religious, and social identities. Faculty who are Black, Indigenous, Hispanic or Asian, LGBTQ faculty, and faculty with disabilities all likely have different experiences and perspectives to share about their educator identity, their sense of confidence and place in the institution, and how they feel—or do not feel—supported by their institution. This research study did not set out to explore the interaction of intersecting identities on how participants experienced faculty development, but this is an area that I would like to explore in future research.

Discipline Perspectives

Another potential area of research is to approach faculty decision making about their growth as teachers from a disciplinary perspective. Although participants in this study were from a wide range of disciplines, they should not be taken as representative of their discipline. Each discipline has its own way of constructing what it means to be a good teacher, what are important student learning outcomes, and how future faculty are trained within the discipline as researchers and teachers. Further, as Beyer et al. (2013) noted, talking about "generic 'best practices' [does] not always make sense" (p. 9) if good teaching practices are linked to the content that is being taught. It is important that future research continues to be attuned to disciplinary differences to perhaps be able to identify where differences between disciplines occur and how these differences may impact teaching within disciplines. Given that many participants in this study described seeking more opportunities to collaborate with colleagues within their discipline, attention to how within-discipline communities are constructed might help clarify

discipline-specific challenges. A next step should be to investigate how faculty within a particular disciplinary cluster (i.e., STEM faculty) approach the growth of innovative and collaborative practices.

Exploration of Exceptional Faculty Development Cases

To continue to explore what makes an institution a place where faculty feel supported and engaged, I would like to apply a case study approach to identify and explore exceptional institutions. Case study as a methodological approach within scholarship of faculty development has included topics such as perspectives of faculty development program administrators across different schools within a large research institution (e.g., FitzSimmons, 2010; Wilhite, 1990), exploration of institutional change as a result of systematic faculty development (e.g., Steinert et al., 2007), and practice-oriented topics, such as evaluating how a specific development initiative is performing (Chen et al., 2017). Although case studies, perhaps due to their practice-oriented topics, tend to be left out of systematic reviews of faculty development literature (D. A. Cook & Steinert, 2013), I argue that "what works" articles are just as persuasive to a teaching-focused audience as more large-scale research studies. As part of this research, the perspective of faculty developers on their work in supporting faculty would provide an important counterpoint to the perspectives of faculty. The perspective of faculty developers on faculty members' decision making about faculty development participation is one that was not explored in this study and would be an excellent future direction for research.

Limitations

Limitations identify any potential or anticipated weaknesses in a study (Creswell, 2007). As with any research study, some limitations exist. The choices I made as this study unfolded were shaped by the nature of qualitative inquiry, which aims to understand meaning from the participants' point of view and generate new theories about the process (i.e., the how) and causal explanations (i.e., the why) for events and actions (Maxwell, 2009). As a qualitative, interview-based study, the interview data are self-reported. Although I conducted two rounds of interviews, providing participants time to reflect and add

to or revise their responses, these data remain subject to the participants' interpretation of their experience and to my interpretation of what they have told me. Structuring the study with initial and follow-up interviews provided important opportunities to check participants' interpretations of their own perspectives and motivations.

Although the purpose of conducting grounded theory research is to propose a theory of what is happening, the theory I developed does not necessarily represent all members of the population studied. Careful data analysis, however, aims to support transferability from the study participants to similar faculty who did not participate in the study. Thus, the fact that this was a qualitative inquiry is not necessarily a limitation in need of redress, but the foundation that supports the rich data collected over the course of the study.

Another potential limitation concerned the participants. I anticipated that, due to the networked nature of the faculty development initiative through which participants were identified, participants would be more likely to come from institutions with strong support for faculty development and a culture that values teaching, and particularly the pursuit of innovative teaching. As anticipated, participants who volunteered to be interviewed were all interested in engaging in a research study about faculty development, and were inclined to view development activities in general, and this initiative specifically, as significant. They were probably also more likely to reflect positively on their experiences in prior faculty development activities, as their natural enthusiasm could influence how they perceive the activities. This said, participants were not always positive about prior experiences.

The study was limited as well in focusing on full-time faculty with primarily teaching-focused roles in public institutions in one state. As discussed previously in recommendations for future research, future investigations that include faculty who do not have primarily teaching-focused roles would shed light on how faculty with significant research or administrative duties balance those roles against their teaching duties, and whether they approach faculty development with different motivations and goals

than the participants in this study. In addition, because the process for recruiting participants started with individuals from across the state who chose to attend a half-day faculty development workshop, it is also likely that these participants were particularly engaged in their own growth and learning, and in faculty development activities, to an extent perhaps greater than most of their colleagues.

This study is limited also by my expertise and skill in qualitative inquiry and analysis. Although I paid careful attention to the advice of "critical friends" throughout data collection and data analysis, and was diligent in following the constant comparative method as I developed the analysis and eventual theory, as a relatively novice researcher I no doubt made choices that others might have made differently. In particular, although the interviews I conducted were only loosely scripted, participants were still prompted and guided to address certain topics by the questions and probes I posed. Someone more skilled in qualitative interviewing could no doubt have elicited more examples and perhaps deeper exploration of topics from participants.

Beyond the limitations inherent to the design of the study itself, the timing of this study also poses some potential concerns. There was a relatively consistent thread of feeling disappointed and exhausted that ran through many of the interviews. While participants articulated some rationale for their feelings (e.g., institutional priorities conflicting with personal priorities), I cannot ignore the possibility that these feelings of disappointment and exhaustion were heightened by the context in which the interviews took place. Summer 2021 was a time when many people working in higher education felt anxious about teaching, concerned about returning to campus amid increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases, and disappointed or angry about how their institution had thus far handled the pandemic. Participants in this study echoed all of these feelings during interviews. It is possible, if not likely, that some of the negative feelings expressed by participants in this study were heightened by factors outside the focus of the study. The pandemic did not only shape, in ways still being explored, the professional and personal contexts in which faculty work. It also drastically changed how faculty

development happened, and which topics were a focus. Participants in this study addressed some of these changes, noting they had engaged far more frequently in faculty development, and in different types of faculty development, than prepandemic. Some of these changes were positive in the eyes of participants (e.g., more offerings, different topics, opportunities to engage in development remotely) and likely led to more frequent engagement in development activities. Other changes in faculty development were necessary but less exciting (e.g., a strong focus on technology for teaching, preparing faculty for online delivery of courses and greater use of learning technology resources). In general, faculty development work and opportunities for individuals to engage in development stepped into the spotlight, bringing both opportunities and challenges. Overall, despite these limitations, I believe that what I learned from the perceptions and experiences of my participants offers important insights into how faculty approach professional development activities and their growth as faculty members, and these insights guided the development of a theory of faculty growth.

Conclusion

Students, faculty, and institutional leadership will each benefit from a clear understanding of how faculty develop teaching expertise and of the contexts in which faculty operate. The purpose of this grounded theory study was to describe the process by which faculty apply to their teaching what they learned through participation in faculty development. Faculty interviews explored participants' perspectives and experiences as they reflected on how they engaged in faculty development, how they made decisions to apply what they learned from faculty development, and how their teaching practices were impacted. At the most fundamental level, the most significant findings from this research concern faculty development and what faculty need from their institutions to pursue growth opportunities that, ultimately, help them to become more effective and more innovative teachers.

Many faculty members in institutions of higher education want to be excellent teachers, and many dedicate significant personal resources toward their growth. As Beyer et al. (2013) concluded,

"change in teaching [is] pervasive" among faculty in higher education. The pursuit of excellence is complicated by the broader higher education climate in the United States, which can feel unsupportive of higher education and of faculty members, and by the specific institutional climate. A focus on noninstructional responsibilities constrains the faculty member's ability to focus on improving as teachers, limiting time and resources available to support collaborating with colleagues and implementing innovative teaching strategies. To engage in faculty development activities, faculty members need support from their institution. A supportive environment that provides necessary resources (e.g., time, space, peer support, funding) contributes to the faculty member's capacity to engage in innovative teaching. When faculty have strong connections to colleagues in an environment of supportive institutional structures, they are better able to pursue opportunities to engage in collaborative work. Whether faculty felt they worked within a supportive context depended on different characteristics of their local environment (i.e., their department) and their broader institutional environment. The supportive context necessary for faculty to create and implement innovative teaching practices includes having time available to do this work, which proved to be a challenge for participants. Beyond time, other resources include people with expertise to help faculty and provide feedback on teaching-related decisions, tangible resources (e.g., books, software, specialized equipment) and funding, support for a balance between teaching and other duties, and a system that recognizes and rewards innovative teaching.

The theory of faculty growth that emerged from this study posits that the foundational elements of Faculty Identity and Institutional Context impact decisions faculty make in Finding Their Way to becoming a better and more effective teacher. Finding Their Way includes how faculty experience feeling confident about themselves and their teaching, how they make choices about teaching and faculty development opportunities, and their openness to trying new things when

experimenting with teaching strategies and making changes to their teaching practices. As faculty pursue growth, they can experience Community and Collaboration by finding and nurturing community.

While this research study began as an exploration of the process by which faculty make decisions about their own development as faculty, participant interviews revealed that this decision-making process is embedded in a larger context of how faculty rely on peers and other collaborators. Thus, this study contributes to a better understanding of the importance of a supportive community as instructors experiment with new teaching strategies, and how institutions need to take a stronger role in developing this supportive culture. Colleges and universities dedicate time and resources to providing professional development activities for faculty and must be thoughtful about where those resources are deployed. Understanding how instructors experience faculty development and understanding how these activities have the potential to impact their teaching practices, allows institutions to provide appropriate and useful programming for instructors.

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Appendix A
Timeline of Data Collection

Timeline	Note	Mode
May 1–15	- Sent participant referral email to faculty development contacts in the Virginia Education Development Network - Identification of initial participant pool (following selection criteria outlined in Chapter 3) - Emailed invitation to participate to selected instructors	Email --- Email
May 15–30	- Emailed informed consent form to prospective participants	Email
June–July	- Initial interviews with first-round participants - Transcribed interviews - Initial coding of interview transcripts	Zoom
August	- Follow-up interviews with participants - Transcribed interviews - Initial coding of interview transcripts	Zoom

Appendix B
Research Interest Questionnaire

This questionnaire was created by the TILT-VA research team and was e-sent by the workshop conveners to all workshop participants as a link in the first follow-up communication to participants postworkshop.

Dear -----,

Thank you for participating in our workshop, *Creating Equitable Learning Opportunities Through Transparent Assignment Design*, on April 9. We hope you found it informative. To indicate interest in participating in one of the affiliated research studies of student outcomes and instructors' experiences, please answer the following questions.

(1) What is your name?
(2) What is your email address?
(3) Are you interested in participating in a Faculty Learning Community (FLC) this summer as you prepare to implement TILT in your fall classes?

Summer FLCs will be short (2-3 sessions) and focused specifically on helping faculty revise their assignments according to the TILT framework.

a. Yes – only on-campus with instructors at my institution (your contact information will be shared with your campus coordinator, if there is one)
b. Yes – online with instructors from anywhere in Virginia in ANY discipline
c. Yes – online with instructors from anywhere in Virginia in MY discipline
d. No

(4) Are you potentially interested in administering the TILT surveys (pre- and post-) to your students this fall?

Surveys will be completed online, and you will be able to get results specific to your classes and contribute to a state-level and national research to better understand how TILT impacts student success.

a. Yes – I understand that my responses to this questionnaire will be shared with the research team.
b. No

c. Maybe – I would need to hear more information

(5) Are you interested in possibly collecting student work samples for analysis?

Work samples will be evaluated with the AAC&U VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) rubrics to demonstrate, share, and assess student accomplishment of progressively more advanced and integrative learning.

a. Yes – I understand that my responses to this questionnaire will be shared with the research team.
b. No
c. Maybe – I would need to hear more information

(6) Are you potentially interested in participating in interviews about your experience with TILT this summer and then later in the fall?

Individual interviews will take place over Zoom at your convenience.

a. Yes – I understand that my responses to this questionnaire will be shared with the research team.
b. No
c. Maybe – I would need to hear more information

(7) What institution do you teach at?
(8) What is your discipline?
(9) How long have you been teaching?
(10) Are you considered a “full-time” instructor/professor (however “full-time” is defined by your institution) or “part-time” (adjunct or contingent) faculty?
    a. Full-time
    b. Part-time
    c. Other: _____
(11) What is your average teaching load?
(12) What courses will you be teaching in fall 2021? (Course number, title, and brief description)
(13) Do you have any questions, comments, or additional information you’d like to share with us?

Appendix C
Participant Recruitment Email

This email was sent to workshop attendees who responded to the Research Interest Questionnaire and indicated they were willing to be contacted about participating in interviews.

Dear -----,

Thank you for responding to the research interest questionnaire. As promised, I am writing to follow up on an opportunity to participate in a series of interviews as you redesign assignments and as you implement the assignments.

Here's a general timeline of activities I would ask you to participate in:

- an initial interview (via Zoom) of approximately 60-90 minutes before the semester begins about your experience with the workshop and with any other post-workshop activities you might have engaged in (such as a Faculty Learning Community) over the summer
- a final interview of approximately 60-90 minutes at the end of the semester (via Zoom)

The goal of this research is to better understand how instructors experience professional development and the process of implementing a new teaching strategy or method. If you are interested in participating, please respond to this email by XXX [two-week response timeline], 2021.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email (xxxxx@student.mville.edu) or phone/text (XXX-XXX-XXXX) at any time.

Thank you,
Breana Bayraktar
Doctoral candidate, Manhattanville College

Appendix D
Participant Referral Email

This email was sent to faculty development personnel at participating 4-year institutions.

Dear -----,

Thank you for your support of the Virginia Educational Development Network's April workshop, *Creating Equitable Learning Opportunities Through Transparent Assignment Design*. As promised, I am writing to follow up on an opportunity for faculty at your institution to participate in a series of interviews about faculty development.

The goal of this research is to better understand how instructors experience professional development and the process of implementing a new teaching strategy or method. To better understand their decision-making process, I am particularly interested in interviewing faculty who have been at your institution for at least 2 years, are full-time, and have engaged in other faculty development activities prior to the April workshop.

I would appreciate it if you would share my invitation to participate (attached) with any faculty who may meet these criteria.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email (xxxxx@student.mville.edu) or phone/text (XXX-XXX-XXXX) at any time.

Thank you,
Breana Bayraktar
Doctoral candidate, Manhattanville College

Appendix E
Manhattanville College Informed Consent

Consent to Participate in Research

Identification of Investigators & Purpose of Study

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Breana Bayraktar from Manhattanville College as part of my dissertation research. The purpose of this study is to find more about the experiences of instructors as they engage in professional development activities.

Research Procedures

Should you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form once all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. This study consists of two individual interviews and three short email prompts over the course of the semester. Interviews will take place via Zoom. In the interviews and email responses, you will be asked to provide answers to questions related to your experience participating in the transparent design workshop, your experience (if applicable) in a Faculty Learning Community, and your experiences implementing your redesigned assignments in your fall classes. Interviews will be recorded for transcription.

Time Required

Each interview will take approximately 60-90 minutes to complete. Participation in this study will require approximately 2-3 hours of your time from June 2021 to October 2021.

Risks

The investigator does not perceive more than minimal risks from your involvement in this study. The investigator perceives a potential loss of confidentiality as one possible risk arising from your

involvement with this study. We will take steps to minimize these risks. You will be assigned a random identification number and pseudonym if you participate in the study, and after your interview is transcribed, only these identifiers (not your name) will be associated with your responses. Your name and individual responses will never be shared with anyone outside the research team.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits to you from participating in this study. However, by better understanding the experiences of instructors who participate in professional development programs, we hope to learn more about what this population perceives as the benefits and challenges of professional development, which may improve professional development programs in the future.

Confidentiality

The results of this project will be coded in such a way that the respondent's identity will not be attached to the final form of this study. The researcher retains the right to use and publish nonidentifiable data. While individual responses are confidential, aggregate data will be presented representing averages or generalizations about the responses as a whole. All data will be stored in a secure location accessible only to the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all information that matches up individual respondents with their answers, including audio/video recordings and email/text correspondence, as applicable, will be destroyed.

Participation & Withdrawal

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any individual question without consequences.

Questions about the Study

If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final aggregate results of this study, please contact:

Breana Bayraktar
Graduate School of Education
xxxxx@student.mville.edu

Peter Troiano
Graduate School of Education
xxxxx@mville.edu

Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Manhattanville College has approved the recruitment of participants for this study. If you any questions or concerns, please contact the IRB at irb@mville.edu or call the chair of the IRB, George Schreer, at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Giving of Consent

I have read this consent form and I understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this study. I freely consent to participate. I have been given satisfactory answers to my questions. The investigator provided me with a copy of this form. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age.

☐ I give consent to be video/audio taped during my interview. _____ (*initials*)

_____

Name of Participant (Printed)

_____ _____

Name of Participant (Signed) Date

_____ _____

Name of Researcher (Signed) Date

Appendix F
Table of Memos

Created	Category	Title
May 6	participant	Paula
May 11	participant	Becky
May 19	participant	Taylor
May 20	participant	Allyson
May 26	participant	Nora
June 2	participant	Alberto
June 3	participant	Denise
June 7	participant	Jane
June 10	participant	Jack
June 10	participant	Jolie
June 11	participant	Maria
June 14	participant	Willa
June 17	participant	Carla
June 22	participant	Jennifer
June 24	code	external motivation
June 24	code	concerns with questions
June 24	code	synthesize FD
June 24	code	decision & students
June 25	code	faculty-driven
June 25	code	charettes/peer groups
June 25	code	new faculty

Created	Category	Title
June 25	code	decision based on leadership
June 25	code	decision based on non-$$ incentives
June 25	code	potential follow up questions
June 25	code	trust
June 25	code	critical of own ability to implement
July 2	code	origin story
July 2	code	student focus
July 2	code	audience for FD
July 2	code	institutional culture
July 2	code	taking advantage of opportunities
July 3	code	needs in FD
July 3	code	perceptions of FD
July 3	code	free memo
July 3	code	implementing
July 25	code	how FD counts
July 28	code	effective leadership
July 28	code	workload
July 28	code	TT vs. NTT
July 28	code	being a mentor to others
July 29	code	implementing/experimenting
August 3	code	FD follow up
August 9	code	decision-making

Appendix G
Participant Profiles

Alberto

Alberto worked at LCC, teaching in the physical sciences. He had been teaching for 10 years, four of them at his current institution. Because he was at a community college, his average teaching load was 15 credit hours per semester. Over his time at LCC, Alberto transitioned from teaching as a part-time instructor to full-time. He spoke about how at the beginning of his career, he would participate in all the possible professional development that was offered, after which he ended up getting a little bit burned out. He had since become more discriminating about the opportunities he pursued. Alberto was incredibly thoughtful about his learning and would carefully reflect on each question before answering. It is from Alberto that the idea of "practice-able" faculty development emerged. He spoke about how important it was to him that development opportunities be something that he could put into practice, and he noted that he has struggled with trying to understand how to apply strategies from some of the recent workshops he had attended. He described attending a lot of short, one-time online workshops during the COVID-19 pandemic but finally stopped attending, noting that: "I always left going, yes, but how exactly? What do I need to do?"

Allyson

Allyson taught in the social sciences at SSC, where she has been for 9 years. She had a total of 20 years of experience teaching in K–12 and higher education. Allyson was transitioning from full-time teaching faculty to an academic administrator position where she would be teaching only two courses a semester. Because of this change in role, her perspective was shifting from her own development as a teacher to her new role of working with faculty in her department, particularly adjunct faculty. Allyson was one of the few who talked about external barriers to engaging in the campus community and faculty development, such as having young children and living far from campus. Allyson also talked a fair

amount about how change has been a challenge at her institution. She characterized it as “a chaotic climate in general” and noted how expectations had shifted frequently over her time at the institution.

One particularly impactful development activity came early in Allyson’s time at SSC. She was encouraged by her supervisor to participate in a cohort-based technology program, which connected her to colleagues in different departments who were at different stages (i.e., post-tenure) and who helped to form a supportive network. This cohort experience took place during a time when she saw several colleagues in her department leave, which she attributed at least in part to a lack of leadership at the institution level. Allyson noted that it was quite possible that she would have left around that same time as well without the benefit of her cohort helping her to feel connected to the institution and helping her see a path for her to stay. Her experience pointed to the importance of these collegial networks not only in supporting instructors in their work but in knitting them to the institution.

For Allyson, the early activities she participated in that were cross-disciplinary were faculty development opportunities that she saw as impactful. These opportunities were suggested to Allyson by her superiors, and her participation was encouraged by them. She found these valuable networking opportunities that she probably would not have engaged in without the support of her dean. This really speaks to the importance, particularly for new faculty, of feeling supported by the administration in pursuing non-research or less-traditional development opportunities. Despite a somewhat bumpy path through her first years at the college, Allyson felt fortunate to be in a place where “there are a good chunk of people who are into [faculty development].”

Becky

Becky taught in the social sciences at MRC, where she had been for 7 years. She had taught for 10 years in higher education but also had K–12 experience. Of all the participants, Becky probably most strongly self-identified as a teacher, first and foremost. Becky’s significant professional development experiences centered on better understanding the diversity of students and how to create more

equitable and inclusive classroom spaces. She appreciated diversity, equity, and inclusion focused events she attended because they allowed her to seek out nationally known experts in these areas and listen to them talk. It was clear from talking with Becky that her expertise in the area of education met or even surpassed that of the faculty development offerings at her institution, and she ended up being a leader in that area. Of all the participants, Becky was the most critical of what she views as "higher ed drama," or the politics of working within a university. She recounted some negative experiences with other university offices not acknowledging or appreciating her and her department's contributions to the institutional mission or goals. She also expressed a significant amount of concern about repercussions to participating in faculty development, in the sense that reaching out for help would be seen as admitting that you are not doing things well in the classroom. She felt very firmly that trust was necessary for the type of collaboration that is needed for good faculty development to occur. Becky stated,

> You know when you lack trust—there's a collaboration piece for you—if you don't have trust, it is really hard to collaborate with people. The more I think about this, the more I think trust is really a huge issue. Huge.

Becky was also among the most skeptical about whether her institution wants to know what faculty need. This connected back to her concern about the "drama" of higher education; her perception was that the institution would always ask what people need or want but very rarely follow through on any of the suggestions. She viewed it as a more pro forma act of asking for input without attending to the input in any meaningful way.

Carla

Carla taught in the social sciences at LSU. She had been teaching for 10 years, but only at the institution for 2. Like many other participants, as a term (non-tenure track) faculty member, she taught four classes each in the fall and spring semesters. She also had a significant role in helping other

members of her department, both officially with graduate teaching assistants and unofficially with tenure track faculty, think about new teaching strategies. She noted that tenure-track colleagues with large research demands had traditionally been less inclined to embrace experimenting with different teaching methods or strategies. Carla worked thoughtfully to help teaching assistants improve as instructors, and in doing so, contributed to a culture that was a little bit more focused on high-quality teaching than was the culture in the years prior to her joining the department.

A particularly impactful opportunity for Carla's development was her experience working with an instructional designer at LSU to redesign one of the department's major courses. She noted in our first interview that she was very optimistic about the work, which she was just beginning. For Carla, this was an opportunity to get paid for the work but also to contribute to the department by creating a course that other people will use. She saw this work as contributing to a culture of collaboration in her department, a culture she was interested in fostering. In our first interview, Carla was enthusiastic about the idea of having paid time to dedicate to course development; by the second interview, however, her enthusiasm had waned as she discovered that the instructional designer assigned to help her was not the source of expertise Carla had hoped.

Like Alberto, Carla noted that earlier in her teaching career at a community college, she tended to participate in all the available faculty development opportunities. Carla explained: "During that time, I spent a lot of time on professional development. I had no idea what I was doing, and I wanted to be good at it . . . so I took advantage of everything I could."

Denise

Denise taught large sections of natural science courses at MUU, where she had been for 10 years. Her teaching experience was very different from many of the other participants, teaching large enrollment courses and overseeing multiple graduate teaching assistants. She saw herself as responsible not only for the learning that happened in her large lecture sections but also in each of the labs taught

by graduate students. Supervising and mentoring these graduate students was part of her work, and her thinking about teaching reflected this focus. In comparison to the other participants, Denise presented more unique concerns. Denise was very concerned about a lack of professional development for instructors who teach large enrollment sections; she recounted repeatedly asking for more help from her institution in addressing the concerns of instructors who teach these courses and remained unsatisfied with the development offered. She also did not feel that she had ever been asked about what types of professional development she would have liked to see; after 10 years teaching the same course, she had very definite ideas about what was and what was not offered by her institution in terms of development for instructors.

Of all the participants, Denise was most interested in cross-institutional collaboration. Denise's example of a particularly impactful professional development was an all-day conference dedicated to teaching large classes, which brought together instructors from a wide variety of institutions nationally and internationally to explorer emerging and innovative practices with large classes. Her almost single-minded focus on improving teaching in large enrollment courses pointed both to a significant gap in faculty development at her institution and across the state and to her narrow professional and teaching experience.

Jack

Jack taught in the natural sciences at SRC. He has been there for 7 years and has been teaching for 12 in total. Like most other participants, he taught four classes a semester. Jack was one of the participants who tended to be more critical of his faculty development experiences. For Jack, a repeated theme was a lack of time to engage in faculty development. He talked about wanting to be at SRC because of the strong teaching focus and wanting to avoid the pressure of research and grants that would be typical in the sciences at a larger, more research-focused university.

Jack also noted the tension between trying to stay current in one's own discipline while trying to stay up to date in the SoTL. He explained that it was challenging to stay current in the literature and practice of teaching when the primary focus for most faculty is their own discipline. He used this tension to explain why he thinks the assistance of a CTL to bring forward some of these SoTL issues was so important.

Beyond the issue of time, Jack also noted a missed opportunity at his institution to provide for some more advanced faculty development opportunities. Several of his examples of mediocre development centered around the repetitive nature of some of the talks or events he had attended. He particularly called out development that was related to or in support of college-wide initiatives, as being speakers who tended to share the same information several semesters in a row. Jack explains that he felt like these events were always designed for the newer instructor rather than someone who had attended the events before. As Jack put it, "once you've gone to those one time, you've seen it, and you don't need to keep going."

Jane

Jane taught in the Humanities at LUU. She was a tenured professor with 20 years of teaching experience and 14 at her institution. As a tenured faculty member, her teaching load was less than many others, teaching five courses over an academic year rather than the eight to 10 courses more common for term and community college faculty. Jane's long experience at her institution gave her a unique perspective on seeing change across the years, particularly on administrative turnover, and she spoke about the challenges of changing expectations of administrators. Workload issues were a particular concern for Jane, and she described her efforts on behalf of the instructors at her institution who were doing "a tremendous amount of invisible labor as teachers." Jane had recently spent time in administration and was very eager to get back into the classroom to spend more time teaching. To better prepare for this shift, Jane specifically sought out professional development that she believed

would help her better meet the needs of students in her classes. Jane also saw application for what she learned working in administration to her work supporting students and hoped that the cross-disciplinary connections she made as an administrator would carry over into her teaching. She was one, like Taylor, who chose to engage in a multisemester faculty development cohort looking specifically at SoTL and applications to teaching. Jane also noted that, from her perspective as a tenured faculty member, there were issues with how and whether faculty development such as faculty learning communities counts for promotion and tenure. Jane cited the strong leadership of her institution's CTL as a reason for selecting specific faculty development activities. Jane was a little bit less able than some of the other participants to reflect on changes to her teaching practices or needs that she had, noting that she had not been in a classroom in several years. Jane talked more about what faculty need in general than what she specifically would benefit from.

Jennifer

Jennifer taught at SRU in the natural sciences, where she had been for 13 years. She taught 15 credit hours a semester and was a non-tenure-track faculty. Jennifer was also the only participant without a doctoral degree but has extensive industry experience. Jennifer explained that she was "always signing up" for faculty development but also acknowledged that her engagement was partly because of the ongoing field-specific continuing education that was expected. So even though the faculty development activities she did were separate from that group of activities, it all contributed to her ongoing desire to make professional development a priority.

One thing that emerged from conversation with Jennifer was the need for structure: both for her and for her students. She talked about really appreciating development opportunities that focus either on providing structure for instructors to use or being structured in a way that makes it easy to implement or gives structure to what students do. Jennifer, like other participants, was extremely student-focused and appreciated learning about how to make changes that will benefit students. She

reported attending trainings offered by state partners and other universities in her geographic area, noting that she frequently brought these ideas back to faculty at her institution. Another theme that was strong with Jennifer was the desire to have research-based faculty development. She really appreciated knowing that what she was being asked to do had a strong base in research, and she particularly appreciated when that base or foundation was clearly communicated. She acknowledged that this probably was an influence of her science/medical background, where evidence-based practice is very important and pervasive. Jennifer acknowledged that there are some initiatives she has tried without that research base and has kept an open mind because she perceives them as working:

> I can't say that they've necessarily done any research to back what they're doing. It certainly works, but we didn't have any research presented to say why or how they came up with those concepts. Like they make sense and everything, but sometimes, actually after going through that training, I feel more like it was a bunch of people in a room coming up with these things, but has it really been tested?

Jolie

Jolie taught at SSC in the social sciences. She was a tenured faculty with 13 years of experience at her institution and 20 years overall. She most commonly taught three courses each semester. Despite her status as a tenured faculty member and her many years of experience at her current institution, a major theme that emerged from conversations with Jolie was a lack of comfort with risk-taking. She clearly was hesitant about trying new instructional strategies and needed encouragement to take risks in the classroom and try something outside of her comfort zone.

Jolie also talks about feeling much freer to experiment and take risks once she was tenured and noted that for many of her more recent examples of interesting and new teaching strategies she tried, she would definitely not have felt comfortable attempting them pretenure. Part of Jolie's interest, too, was in figuring out ways to support colleagues. Jolie found her colleagues to be motivation to

participate, explaining, “if there’s more research that backs that and there are ways in which I can share with my colleagues how to do it better, I thought those would be good reasons to spend that time at the workshop.”

Jolie’s example of particularly impactful faculty development was a multiweek, cohort-based course development workshop. She noted that the reason this opportunity was so impactful was a combination of the intensive nature of the workshops (there were multiple workshop sessions a week and the expectation that she would complete “homework” in between workshop sessions) and her interest in the content that helped her to engage and create a final product, a redesigned course, that she then was able to immediately implement.

Maria

Maria taught in the sciences at MCC. She has been at her institution for 7 years, her entire teaching career. Maria was very practical about how she views the professional development that she wanted to implement. Time was a recurring theme for Maria, who repeatedly noted that what she really needed was time to just implement some of the new ideas she has working on. Maria, like Alberto, also saw herself as needing time in professional development workshops to actually workshop her ideas rather than listen to presenters. Maria explained, “I think what would help me more at this point is maybe not so many presentations but also time to just implement.” Maria returned more than any other participant to the issue of time and not having enough time to do everything she wanted to do, putting this feeling of not having enough time in the context of many changes in the community college system.

Nora

Nora taught at LSU in the humanities, teaching writing-intensive courses. She had been teaching for almost 30 years and at her institution for nearly 20. Nora also had administrative duties related to the adjunct faculty in her department and so had a view on faculty development that was informed as

much by this work mentoring and supporting instructors in her department as it was by reflection about her own development. As such, her example of impactful development centered primarily on what was provided to other faculty, and particularly faculty resistance to development. One theme that recurred during our conversations was concern about the workload being expected of faculty.

At Nora's institution, changes to how faculty are evaluated had prompted a lot of discussion about not only faculty workload but what motivates faculty to make changes in their teaching. She said the administration was hopeful that changes in instructor evaluation processes would provide the necessary external motivation for faculty to do the hard work of changing their courses and teaching practices. Without the "stick" of revised faculty evaluation processes, Nora doubted that most faculty she worked with would take the time to make extensive changes and considered it an issue of workload: instructors cannot be expected to do extensive amounts of unpaid labor in changing their courses. Most instructors in her department taught five courses each semester, a course load that limits time outside of teaching to dig into course redesign or other SoTL work.

Paula

Paula taught writing-intensive humanities courses at LCC. She, like Nora, had a role mentoring adjunct faculty and typically provided one or two professional development workshops for these instructors each semester. A major theme running through conversations with Paula was a focus on students, particularly student-instructor relationships and the affective domain of teaching. Paula was another instructor who did a lot of professional development as a new instructor and had become more discerning over time with what she can do. Paula was highly self-reflective, spending a lot of time thinking about her teaching and incorporating new or different ways of teaching into her practice. For Paula, this reflection connected strongly to centering her work on students. Paula also talked about the affirmation or validation that she got from attending professional development as another motivating factor in her decision-making:

> A lot of times, when I'm choosing sessions, I think about both not just how it will affirm my practice, but also kind of start with that, you know, with what you already do, and how we can continue to grow in a particular way. So I always think about what's important to me as an instructor and then what kinds of sessions will help me to continue to grow in that particular area.

When we talked about what content Paula would like to see in future professional development, she kept returning to the idea of students, who the students are in the classroom and what they need from her as an instructor:

> I feel like it might be kind of difficult to answer that question because how do we know what students are going to need in a year or two? There are a lot of different moving pieces . . . I feel like we always need to be prepared for what are the challenges that students are going to have, and those are the sessions that I'm always the most interested in participating in.

Taylor

Taylor taught in the arts at Small Suburban College (SSC), where she had been for over 10 years. Because SSC was a teaching-focused school, she had a similar teaching load as many of the other participants, four courses each semester. Community, and building community with other instructors in her discipline, was an important theme for Taylor. Taylor taught in a discipline (the arts) that was particularly challenged by the pivot to online teaching, and she found inspiration and commiseration in weekly online meetings with discipline-based colleagues at other institutions. While the inspiration and ideas were an important piece of these meetings, what stood out most from Taylor's description was the emphasis on community: "I just kind of went all in because it just made a difference to me . . . we were creating community by doing that, right? And so that was important."

Another recurring theme with Taylor was her frequent participation in professional development events. In addition to her need for community, she noted that it's "a personality thing" that made her want to do more:

Taylor was also very enthusiastic about the changes she has made for students, saying that she did some of her best teaching ever in spring 2021, and explained that her positive energy was important to creating a sense of community for students:

> It took a lot of energy; it took a lot of positivity—I made a really strong and active effort to have extra positive energy for students. I did my absolute best to make that a core community that was a positive space for the 75 minutes that we had.

A big piece of what made her feel that the year had been successful for her was her openness to experimentation. Her willingness to "toss anything" was particularly striking because she, the most of any participant, talked about feeling the pressure to make her fall 2020 classes much better than spring 2020. In her view, spring 2020 was full of "wiggle room" because of the drastic and sudden changes mid-semester; in fall 2020, she stated that she knew going into the semester that there was not going to be the same "wiggle room" in terms of student expectations, parent expectations, and university expectations. Despite these pressures, Taylor remained open to constant adaptation:

> I do look at course evaluations, but **I also look at what is working and what is not working as well and I adapt constantly** because, if I look back at how I started, how I taught some of these courses when I began versus now, it's drastically different. Some of that is our student body being different, some of that is me just thinking, "What I thought that assignment did is not what it does, and it has to go." Or "this is not meeting the needs of our students anymore."

Taylor's example of powerful faculty development was a three-semester cohort looking at SoTL and potential applications in their own disciplinary perspective. This project—studying SoTL and

applying a research lens to her own teaching—represented a significant branching out into different types of scholarship activities for Taylor.

Willa

Willa taught in the humanities at LUU, where she had been for 15 years. She taught four courses each semester that are cross-disciplinary and humanities-focused. Willa's number one recurring theme was her belief that opportunities for peer collaboration and review are the most important type of faculty development that an institution can offer. Throughout our conversations, we returned to her experiences both leading and participating in ongoing small-group development that gathered instructors across disciplines to critique assignments, syllabi, and activities. She also noted that consistent institutional support for these cross-disciplinary groups was a way for an institution to help create a culture where "faculty are more interested in doing [faculty development], maybe a culture where those activities are more valued and more visible."

Willa, like Jack and Becky, was strongly critical of the development opportunities her institution provided. Willa saw herself as an experienced instructor and one who was personally very dedicated to improving the instruction she provides to students. She had very definite ideas about the types of development that would help her to meet her goals and the development needed to help other instructors rise to the level she would like to see them reach. She also expressed the sharpest critique of all participants about how development offerings were geared toward inexperienced instructors or instructors who do not have much interest in improving their teaching. She drew a distinction between instructors like herself, already very solid teachers, and instructors who were not very good teachers, acknowledging that while she would have liked to have more opportunities to improve, it made financial and logistical sense for the institution to prioritize the lowest-performing instructors:

I want there to be lots of faculty development stuff for me, but **probably the university shouldn't be spending a lot of time developing me as a faculty member**. Does that make sense? Do you think I'm crazy? [laughs] It's depressing to me. [laughs]

Appendix H
Instructor Semistructured Initial Interview Protocol

These interviews took place after participants attend the initial workshop (April 2021). Although grounded theory requires that interviewers are responsive to interviewees during the interview, questions followed a broad framework of (a) initial open-ended/rapport-building questions, (b) intermediate questions, and (c) ending questions (Charmaz, 2014). Charmaz explains that grounded theory interview questions help researchers focus "on learning about participants' views, experienced events, and actions" and notes that the questions "are intended to study individual experience" (p. 65).

Interview Introduction & Explanation of Study

Good morning/afternoon! I am Breana Bayraktar, a doctoral student at Manhattanville College. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. My goal is to learn more about faculty development and how instructors make decisions about their development as teachers. During this interview, I'll ask you about participating in faculty development activities. I hope that you will find it interesting to have an opportunity to reflect and share about your experiences, and that you might enjoy learning more about yourself as an educator. There are no right or wrong answers. I want you to be comfortable talking to me and sharing what you think and how you feel.

To be sure I have an accurate record of our conversation today, I'm going to take notes and also record our interview, if that is okay with you. I would like to do this so that I can remember all the details and be able to carry on a conversation with you. As was noted in the consent form, all of my notes and recordings will only be used for this study, and when the study is finished the recordings will be erased and all notes destroyed. During the interview, I'll address you by your first name, but you'll be able to choose a pseudonym for the study later. In the same way, I will change your institution's name,

the name of your department, and any other personally identifiable information. If it's okay with you, I'll start the recording now. Is that okay?

[Start recording]

You received and signed the informed consent form electronically earlier this week. As a reminder, you may choose to not answer any questions, and you may end the interview or drop out of the study at any point, without any consequences. Your participation in this study will help inform my understanding of faculty development, and potentially help other instructors and people who work in faculty development. I hope, too, that you will benefit from the opportunity to reflect on your own professional development experiences. Do you have any questions for me about the study or about the consent form you signed?

I will be taking notes during the interview so that I can make sure to ask follow-up questions when needed. I will also transcribe the interview recording and will share a copy of the transcript of each interview with you, if you would like to read it to be able to reflect on anything we discussed.

Initial/Rapport Building Questions & Probes

- This interview is to help me understand you as a teacher and your experience with faculty development. Please describe your academic and teaching background and your current role at _____ [*institution*]?

  Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - How long have you been in _____role?
  - Can you tell me more about _____ [teaching experience, preparation to teach, experience with development activities, etc.]?
  - How did you decide to _____ [go into teaching, complete a teaching-focus preparation program, etc.]?

Intermediate Questions & Probes

- I would like to know more about how you have developed as a teacher [instructor?]. Tell me about your previous involvement in faculty development.

  Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - How did you make the decision to do _____ [*faculty development opportunity]?*
  - After _____, did you change anything in your teaching? [*If yes*] Can you describe what was different? [*If no*] Can you tell me more about that?
  - It sounds like _____ [reflect back to the participant something they noted about faculty development activity that was important to them]. Can you tell me about the decisions you made at this point? [decisions to implement, to not implement, to share ideas with colleagues, to seek out more development, to seek out a mentor, etc.].

- I would like to know more about your decision to participate in the faculty development workshop this spring. Why did you decide to participate?

  Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - Can you tell me more about how _____ [*institutional support, individual support, personal motivation, etc*.] impacted your decision?
  - If they mention supports from a specific source: Can you tell me about the support you received from _____ [institution, colleague, administrators, etc.]?

- I would like to ask you about how you made (or are making) decisions about implementing the teaching initiative. What guided your thinking about what are you implementing or not implementing?

  Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - What from the workshop do you plan to use in your classes this fall?
  - What have you decided not to use?
  - Can you describe a moment during the workshop when you had an "a-ha" moment about your teaching?
- What are your next steps for implementing what you learned?

    Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - Can you describe a specific example of a 'take away' from the workshop that you are incorporating into your class?
- What resources have you drawn upon (or sought) as you think about changes to your fall course (or teaching in general)?

    Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - Such as _____? [campus or college financial support, mentor support, etc.]
  - What has been most helpful so far in supporting you?
- What are some of the challenges you anticipate? How might you deal with these challenges?

    Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - What piece of what you learned in the workshop do you expect will be challenging to implement?
  - How will you resolve that challenge?
  - How will you adapt what you've learned for your use of [transparent assignment design] in your teaching?
- How is what you have described about this faculty development experience different or similar to previous faculty development?

    Possible prompts for follow-up:

- You've described how you've decided to use pieces from this workshop in your fall teaching. When have you done this before, and how is this experience similar/different?
- When have you not used what you learned, and why?

Ending Questions & Probes

- Given your experiences, do you have any suggestions as to how we could better design a faculty development program to meet your needs?
- Is there something else you think I should know to better understand faculty development and how faculty make decisions about their growth as instructors?

Appendix I
Instructor Semistructured Follow-up Interview Protocol

Follow-up interviews took place 6-8 weeks after the initial interview, before the fall semester began.

Interview Introduction & Reminders

Good morning/afternoon! Thank you for taking the time to speak with me again. During this interview, as in the first interview, I'll ask you about your experiences participating in faculty development activities and preparing to implement what you learned from faculty development. There are no right or wrong answers. I want you to be comfortable talking to me and sharing what you think and how you feel.

As I did during our first interview, I'm going to take notes and also record our interview, if that is okay with you. As was addressed in the consent form, all of my notes and recordings will only be used for this study, and when the study is finished the recordings will be erased. If it's okay with you, I'll start the recording now. Is that okay?

[Start recording]

Initial/Rapport Building Questions & Probes

- I wanted to see if you had any thoughts you would like to share about faculty development or your growth as a teacher, or any of the topics we talked about last time we spoke, that you'd like to expand or elaborate on?

Intermediate Questions & Probes

- I'd like to talk a little bit about **institutional & departmental culture** around teaching and faculty development. In our last talk, you mentioned that you see [institution] as being (as not being) particularly teaching-focused or FD/improvement focused.

  Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - Can you think of an example of something that makes you think your school does (does not) have a culture that supports teaching growth & development?
  - What messages about FD do you get from your institution? Administration? colleagues?
  - Can you tell me about how institutional priorities encourage FD or are in competition with FD?
  - Is there anyone at [institution] who has encouraged you in your development?

- I would like to ask you about the idea of "**lifelong learning**." I'm interested in following up with you about the idea ongoing development or life-long learning?

  Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - Can you give me an example of something you do that you think represents or enacts this value?
  - What helps you to be open-minded and willing to experiment or take risks?
  - Have you had the chance to **take on an "expert" role** with colleagues?

- I'd like to talk a little bit more about the idea of **change**. Change in administration can have impacts on our work. Have you experienced change in president/provost/deans etc. at [institution]?

  Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - Can you describe a little bit whether (and if so, how) you see these institution-level changes impacting your teaching and your own development?

- One idea that has come up a lot is **the importance of being able to collaborate with colleagues**. I'm interested in hearing what you think about collaboration.

  Possible prompts for follow-up:

- We talked about issues of workload related to instructors in your department. Can we talk about how you see workload issues impacting FD?
- Is there someone whose role whose role it is to support FD? Could you tell me about your interactions with [person/office]?

Ending Questions & Probes

- As you are getting ready for fall semester, I would like to know about how you are preparing. Could you tell me about what you have decided to try this semester?

  Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - How did you decide to do _____?
  - Can you tell me about your decisions to try _____ [*new strategies or methods, etc*.]?
  - What kinds of follow up support might be useful?
- What has supported your decisions/plans for fall teaching?

  Possible prompts for follow-up:

  - What did _____ help you with?
  - How has it been helpful?
- I asked you this last time we talked, and I'm interested in hearing if your thoughts have changed. Do you have any suggestions as to how we could better design a faculty development program to meet your needs?
- Is there something else you think I should know to better understand faculty development and how faculty make decisions about their growth as instructors?

Appendix J
Interim Figures

Figures J1 through J8 are a few examples of the many figures I created as I worked through data analysis and writing up the findings and discussion sections.

Figure J1

Decision-Making, Version 1 (Aug. 2021)

Figure J2

Physical Whiteboard (Sept. 2021)

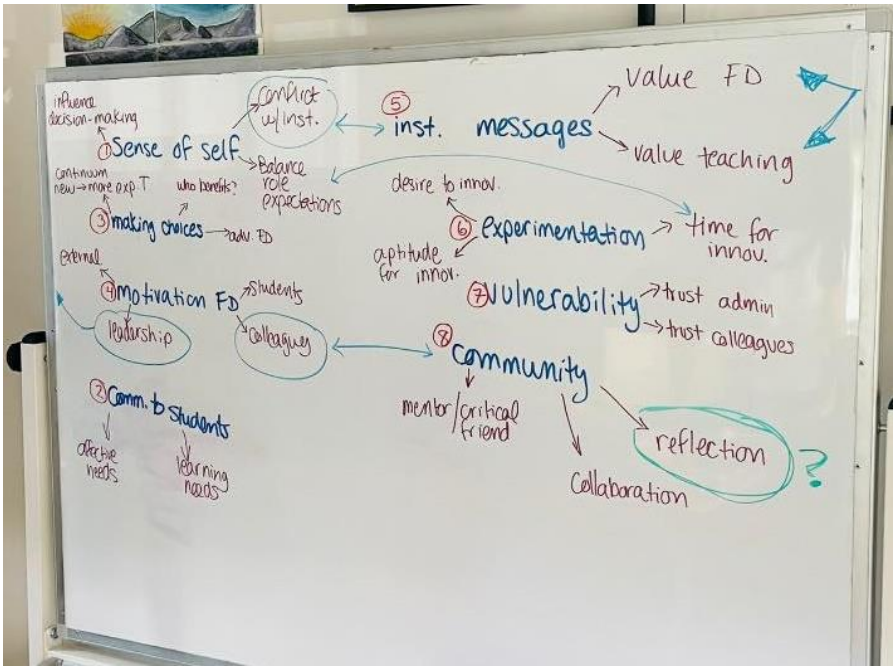


Figure J3

Decision-Making, Version 2 (Oct. 2021)

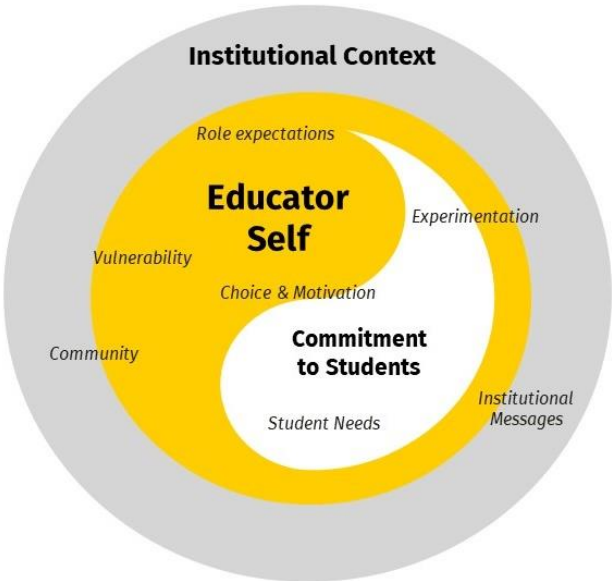


Figure J4

Growth, Version 1 (Oct. 2021)

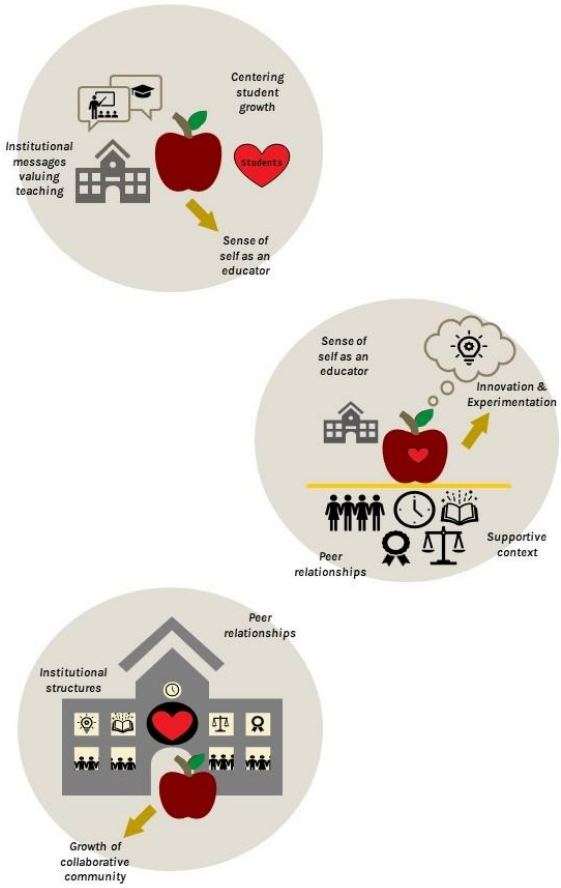


Figure J5

Growth, Version 2 (Nov. 2021)

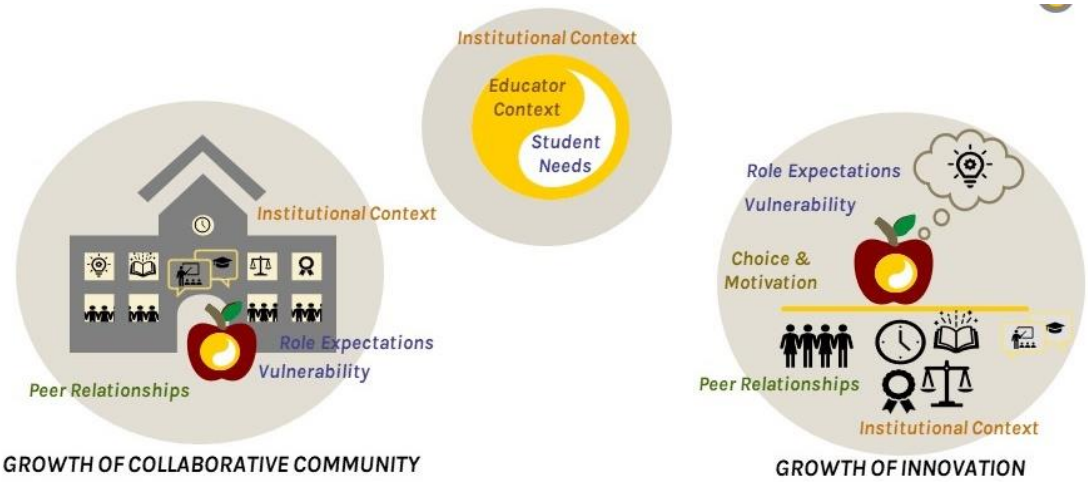


Figure J6

Whiteboard, 2 (Nov. 2021)

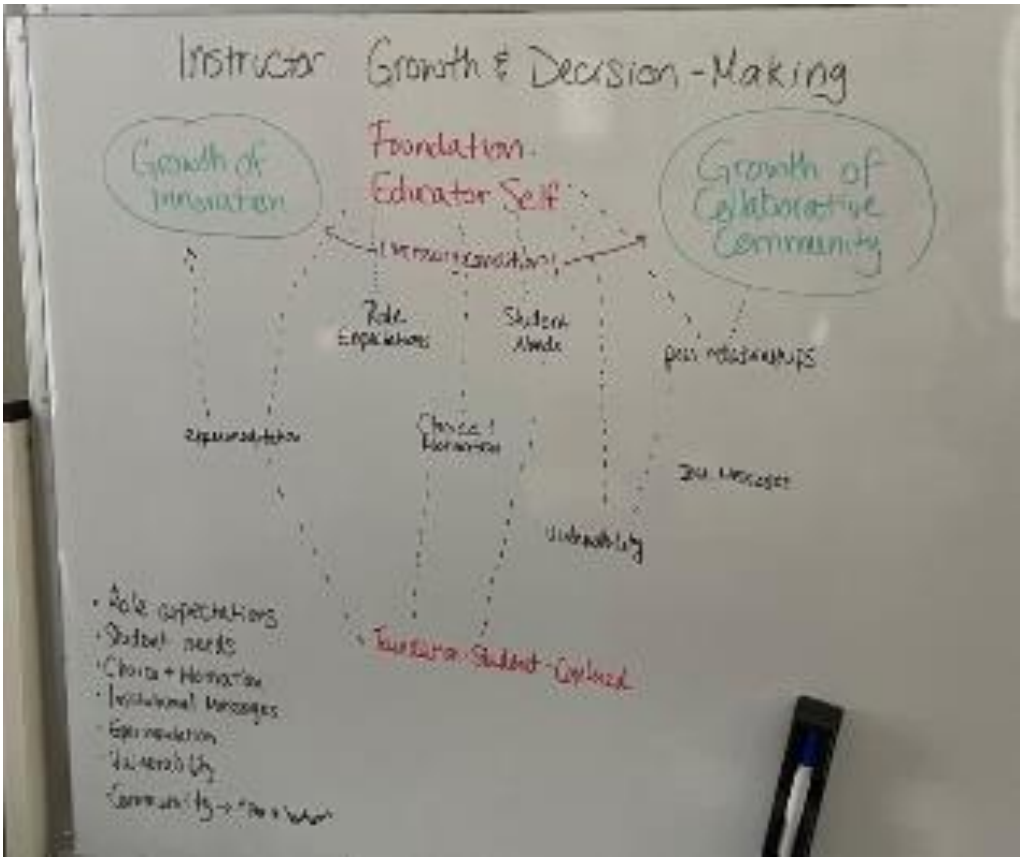


Figure J7

Growth and Decision-Making, Version 1 (Nov. 2021)

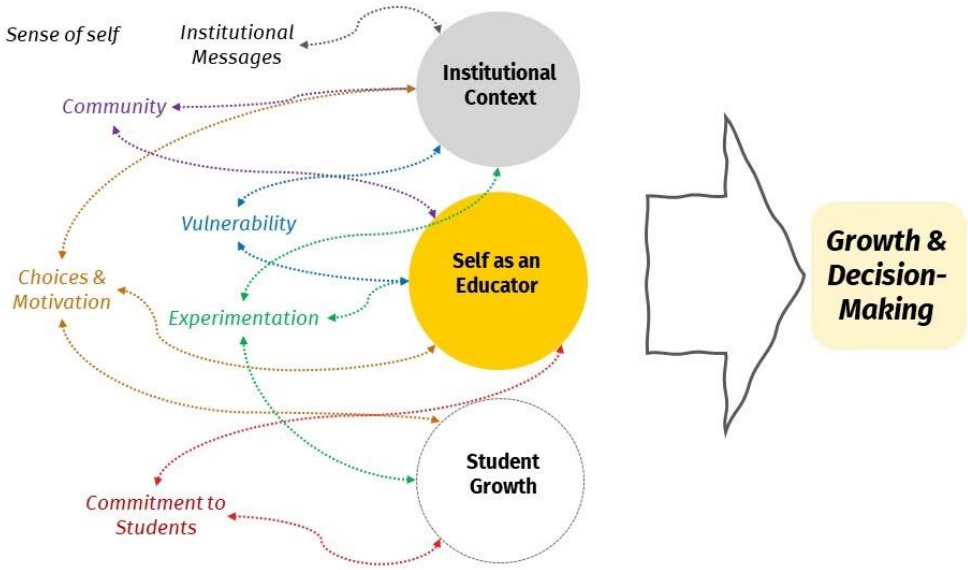
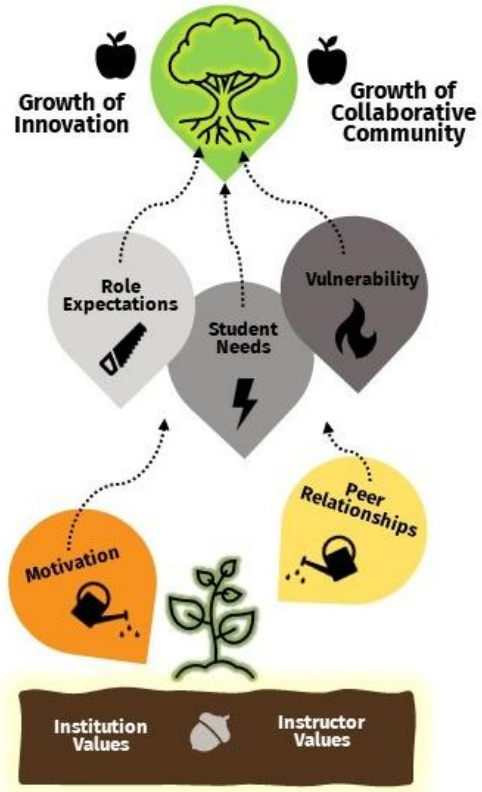


Figure J8

Growth, Version 3 (Nov. 2021)



Biography

Breana Bayraktar started her teaching career at the urging of her college French advisor, moving to Picardie, France, to teach English to middle and high school students and teach business English courses at the École Supérieure de Commerce d'Amiens. She has been teaching adult English language learners and working in curriculum development, assessment, and teacher preparation for over 20 years. Breana earned a Bachelor of Arts in French and history from the College of William & Mary and a Master of Education in adult education from George Mason University. Her research interests include faculty professional development, supporting second language learners, integrating reading and writing across the curriculum, and exploring how small but meaningful instructional changes can impact student success and persistence.