IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS WITHIN A FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE COURSE: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Traditional measures of student success like retention and graduation rates are dismally low among community colleges. One of the most commonly used strategies to increase these bleak success rates is through the incorporation of first-year experience (FYE) courses. However, data indicate that their impact on such measures of student success are mixed and what's more, many of these studies are limited by their use of predominantly quantitative methodologies that aggregate outcomes across students, masking the features of the FYE that may be more and less effective in promoting academic success among diverse students. Application of identity theories can help to fill this gap in understanding by offering theoretical frameworks from which to study this diverse population and deepen our understanding of their experiences. However, studies of identity with community college students are even fewer in number and often focus only on one narrow aspect of identity, such as racial and ethnic identity or age. Thus, they fail to fully capture the dynamic, complex, multifaceted, and context-dependent construct of identity.

In this dissertation, I explore the unique experiences, challenges, and needs of four community college students taking the same FYE course at a large metropolitan community college in the Northeast United States and offer information about the course's features that most promoted development adaptive college student role identities (CSRIs) among participants. In this study, I conceptualize students' experiences in the FYE course as based in their emerging identities as community college students and adopted two theoretical frameworks to guide this study. The PRESS model designates the

professor as an agent for prompting identity exploration among her students by creating triggers the students designate as self-relevant, creating a sense of safety in the classroom, and scaffolding exploratory activities while the Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity (DSMRI) explicates the content, structure, and formation processes of identity and how they relate to experiences and actions. Utilizing a case study approach, one section of an FYE course was selected, and from it, four participants, and the professor, were interviewed. Course artifacts, such as homework assignments, were also used for data analysis. The findings from the PRESS analysis showed that many aspects of the course organically promoted many of the model's four principles; however, some were observed more often than others and they were not as meaningful for all participants equally. The findings from the DSMRI analysis revealed some commonalities among the four components of the model across participants but more so, the data revealed variations and divergence in their CSRI exploration and formation in the FYE context. The study ends with implications for theory, practice, and future research.

DEDICATION:
To Ma

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

First-year experience (FYE) courses in community colleges are one of the most commonly used pedagogical strategies to both facilitate students' acquisition of skills and knowledge necessary for academic success and improve the bleak graduation rates for students at such institutions (Center for Community College Student Engagement [CCCSE], 2012; Koch, Griffin, & Barefoot, 2014). Yet, despite their label as a "high impact practice" by both the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the Center for Community College Student Engagement, data indicate that the effectiveness of FYE courses on various measures of student success is rather mixed (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015; Hatch, Crisp, & Wesley, 2016). Moreover, most studies that have found positive associations between FYE courses and desirable student outcomes have applied quantitative methodologies that aggregate outcomes across students, thus potentially overlooking the diversity of challenges among students with different characteristics, and essentially leaving no understanding about why some students are not successful (e.g., Barnes, 2012; Crisp & Taggart, 2013; Derby & Smith, 2004). Such aggregate quantitative methodologies also mask the features of the FYE that may be more and less effective in promoting academic success among diverse students (Bailey & Alfonso, 2005). Lack of knowledge of the different factors and processes that may be operating among different students in the same FYE course, and the course features that are most contributing to different students' success, makes the implementation of this pedagogical strategy less effective than it could be. In this

dissertation, I investigate the unique experiences, challenges, and needs of four community college students taking an FYE course at a metropolitan community college and offer information about the course's features that most effectively addressed students' diverse needs to develop adaptive college student role identities (CSRIs).

In this study, I conceptualized students' experiences in the FYE course as based in their emerging identities as community college students. Furthermore, I focused on the role of personal and contextual factors in supporting or hindering the development of productive student identities among different course participants. The theoretical frameworks I adopted to guide this study were the PRESS model (Kaplan, Sinai, & Flum, 2014), which explicates features of educational environments that promote adaptive identity exploration and formation and the Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity (DSMRI; Kaplan & Garner, 2017), which explicates the contents, structures, and formation processes of identities and how they related to experiences and actions.

In the following chapters of this dissertation, I begin with an overview on the current state of affairs at community colleges and their unique challenges along with a critical review of the literature on first-year experience courses, which constitutes a commonly used intervention at community colleges to meet the needs of these diverse student populations and improve various outcomes of student success. Next, I provide a review of the literature regarding the application of identity theories to community college students to offer a justification for using identity exploration as a mechanism to achieve this goal and then describe the PRESS and DSMRI models that provided the theoretical framework for this study. This chapter ends with my research questions about the role identities of community college students in an FYE course and the course features that

support the exploration and formation of adaptive student identities. In chapter 3, I discuss the methodologies employed to address my four research questions, including details about my participants, the data sources used for my analysis, and rational for the case study approach. The next chapter covers my findings and provides the in-depth data analysis guided by the PRESS and DSMRI models. Finally, I summarize my findings and discuss their implications for policy, practice, and research, as well as consider the study's major limitations and avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Unfulfilled Promise of Community Colleges

Community colleges provide an attractive and increasingly popular option for many students seeking post-secondary education (Provasnik & Planty, 2008). The attractiveness of this post-secondary alternative is evidenced by the historical growth of enrollment at community colleges. There was a 741% increase in enrollment at community colleges from fall 1963 to fall 2006; more recent estimates indicate a 9% increase of student enrollment from fall 2000 to fall 2006 (Provasnik & Planty, 2008). According to the American Association of Community Colleges (2014), nearly half of all undergraduate students (45%) in the United States were enrolled in college credited courses at two-year institutions in fall 2012, equaling 7.7 million students.

There are several reasons for the popularity of community college. First, admissions criteria for community colleges are often open, meaning there are no minimum academic standards necessary for entry (Bailey & Alfonso, 2005; Provasnik & Planty, 2008). In addition, lower tuition rates provide students with significant savings to achieve their goals of earning credits for transfer to four-year institutions, gaining employment skills, or exploring personal interests (Horn & Nevill, 2006). Finally, two-year institutions provide a point of access for many students from groups that are underrepresented in higher education, such as people of color, first-generation students, immigrants, and students from lower socioeconomic background (Bailey & Alfonso, 2005; CCSE, 2012; Horn & Nevill, 2006; Karp & Bork, 2014; Kim et al., 2010).

However, despite their growing popularity and increasing access to college for many underserved students, community colleges, by most standard measures of success, including retention and graduate rates, are failing (Bailey & Alfonso, 2005; Clotfelter, Ladd, Muschkin, & Vigdor, 2013; Goldrick-Rab, 2010). The numbers of students at such institutions who obtain credentials or even persist in their post-secondary pursuits are low (Bailey & Alfonso, 2005; Clotfelter et al., 2013); some reports indicate worsening rates in recent years particularly among certain racial and ethnic groups (Causey et al., 2020). According to the National Student Clearinghouse (2011), both rates of persistence - defined as continued enrollment at any post-secondary institute - and retention - defined as enrollment at the same post-secondary institution - decreased 2.3% and 1.1%, respectively, for students who began at a two-year college. Respondents to CCCSE's Survey of Entering Student Engagement survey (2012) showed that, while 79% of students responding reported a goal of earning an associate's degree, many fail to do so. The National Center for Education Statistics reports that only 16% of students who started at a community college during the 2003-04 academic year had earned a degree or certificate and nearly half (45%) left the institution without earning any credentials by 2006 (Provasnik & Planty, 2008). According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (Shapiro et al., 2017), only 26.5% of students who began at a community college in 2011 earned a degree from the two-year school within six years of enrollment.

These dismal outcomes are disconcerting to all stakeholders, and considerable attention has been given nationally and institutionally towards improving success rates for students at community colleges (Achieving the Dream, 2005; Bailey & Alfonso,

2005). Investigations into interventions and practices that might improve the discouraging student outcomes at community colleges have included a focus on macro-level aspects, such as governmental policies; institutional qualities and procedures; and characteristics of the students themselves (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Yet, the research remains exceptionally limited in volume and scope.

Research on Community College Students

Despite the increasing national and government attention given to community colleges, scholarly endeavors on colleges have disproportionately focused their attention on four-year universities (Baily & Alfonso, 2005; Barnes, 2012). A review conducted by Townsend, Donaldson, and Wilson (2004) of five major higher education journals over a 13-year period found that out of more than 2,300 articles, community colleges were referenced in just 8%. While a large part of reporting on the state of education focuses on K-12 institutions relative to higher education, attention to four-year institutions was over four times (12.5%) that given to two-years institutions (2.9%), despite the fact that the number of students enrolled in four-year institutions (11.2 million) is less than double the number enrolled in community colleges (6.7 million) (West, Whitehurst, and Dionne, 2009).

Importantly, community college stakeholders note that findings from four-year schools are not applicable to the students they serve because of meaningful differences in the demographic and academic characteristics of the student body (Bailey & Alfonso, 2005; Bers & Younger, 2014; O'Gara, Karp, & Hughes, 2009). Community college students tend to be older and more racially and ethnically diverse; they are also more likely to attend school part-time, live off campus, be employed, and have familial

responsibilities (Bailey & Alfonso, 2005; CCSE, 2012; Horn & Nevill, 2006; Karp & Bork, 2014; Kim, Sax, Lee, & Hagedorn, 2010). More often than their four-year counterparts, these students are poorer (Horn & Nevill, 2006), are required to take one or more non-college credit developmental education courses and are the first in their families to attend post-secondary education (Goldrick-Rab, 2010).

The low success rates among the heterogeneous student bodies in community colleges, coupled with tightening budgets and increasing calls for accountability to improve student outcomes have prompted two-year institutions to act. The literature review in this dissertation identified a number of commonly used strategies; these include learning communities, whereby students take multiple classes in a cohort-model; early alert systems, to identify at-risk students early enough in a semester to provide meaningful interventions; intentional and intrusive academic advising models; supplemental instruction, when peer tutors provide scheduled support beyond the classroom; and pre-semester orientation workshops, to give students key knowledge to help them acclimate to college life (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015; Bers & Younger, 2014; Crisp & Taggart, 2013; Goldrick-Rab, 2010; Koch, Griffin, & Barefoot, 2014).

One of the most prevalent interventions that aims to address the relatively low college-readiness of community college students is a First-Year Experience course (FYE) (Bers & Younger, 2014; Crisp & Taggart, 2013; Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Although FYE courses are the strategy that has been studied the most (Bers & Younger, 2014), the literature base remains exceptionally scant, particularly among community college students. More, the number of studies that employ qualitative methods is remarkably low, meaning the literature base lacks the rich, “thick descriptions” and deep “thick

interpretations" that these types of studies often provide (Ponterotto, 2006). What makes FYE courses particularly worthy of study is their ability to incorporate many of the other interventions often employed to improve student outcomes (e.g., intrusive academic advising or a context in which to make an early alert referral), making them a potentially powerful source for addressing the diverse needs of community college students; thus, they are in dire need of more investigations into their impact on student success.

First Year Experience Courses in Community Colleges

The "First Year Experience" movement in higher education includes a "multiplicity" (Koch & Gardner, 2014, p. 12) of interventions, including FYE courses, that are designed to help first-year college students successfully adapt to the demands and culture of post-secondary education. It is not one singular entity but instead, the totality of an integrated, intradepartmental, co-curricular programming that an institution coordinates and executes to serve the academic and social needs of its incoming students. FYE programming aims to increase access to post-secondary education to historically underrepresented groups as well as improve retention rates and increase degree attainment. Although FYE courses are one just one aspect of First Year Experience programs, they are one of the most common interventions in the current landscape (Koch & Gardner, 2014).

Koch and Gardner (2014) report the first FYE-type course was a seminar course offered in 1911 at Reed College in Oregon; by the late 1930's, 9 of every 10 first-year college student in the U.S. was required to take some version of the course. Soon after, however, faculty began to reject the notion of students earning college-level credit for a "life-adjustment" course that was "too remedial and non-academic" (Koch & Gardner,

2014, p. 16) in nature. Thus, their popularity and offerings waned so much that in the 1960s, they practically disappeared.

Interestingly, it was a riot on the University of South Carolina's campus that would be the impetus for the course's return to that particular campus, whereby the College President reported offering University 101 as way to "teach students not to riot" (Koch & Gardner, 2014, p. 17). In the mid-1970s, faulty member John Gardner was appointed as the director of the course, and he set out to standardize the course, increase enrollment, and offer empirical evidence on the effectiveness of the University 101 course. He was not only successful in these endeavors but would later propose and open the National Resource Center for the Freshman Year Experience and Students in Transition in July 1987, followed by the initiation of the *Journal of The Freshman Year Experience*, a scholarly publication that included blind reviews. This Center has continued to grow and offer new initiatives and is considered a seminal resource for colleges deploying First Year Experience programming. Within such programs, Koch and Gardner (2014) claim FYE courses are the most common curricular intervention for Freshman on college campuses.

Surveys suggest that currently, upwards of 83% of two-year schools offer some type of FYE course. The name, magnitude, and format of these courses vary across institutions, with titles such as student success seminars, college skills courses, academic success, college 101, and freshman orientation, and different formats, from one-credit to three-credits and mandatory for all students or only select subgroups (CCCSE, 2012; Goldrick-Rab, 2010; Koch, Griffin, & Barefoot, 2014; Tobowlsky, 2006). The main purpose of FYE courses is to orient students to college expectations and teach them skills

related to academic success (CCCSE, 2012; Koch, Griffin, & Barefoot, 2014). Organizationally, some colleges house the course within their division of academic affairs while others place it within the purview of student affairs (Tobowlsky, 2006). Topics covered in such courses typically include time management, academic goal setting and planning, study skills, campus resources, and career counseling (CCCSE, 2012).

Although limited in number, research suggests a positive association between enrollment in an FYE course and student success outcomes. In this next section, I present an overview of the tiny body of quantitative research on FYE courses in community colleges on the most common measures of student success. This section starts with a discussion on FYE courses' influence on persistence and retention, the most prevalent outcome measures studied in the literature, followed by an overview on the impact of FYE courses on progression towards a degree, namely GPA and earning credits in other coursework. Next, I discuss the research on how FYE courses affect degree attainment and in one study, transfer to a university. Finally, I transition to a review the even fewer published qualitative studies that complement the quantitative work through the addition of students' voices and perspectives on FYE courses. I end with a summation of the limitations of this body of literature related to FYE courses in community colleges.

The Impact of FYE Courses on Common Measures of Student Success

Persistence and Retention

One of the most common measures of student success found in the literature relates to persistence, defined here as continued enrollment from one semester to the next (often fall to spring), and retention, which is continued enrollment from one year to the next. A study by Barnes (2012) over a two-year period compared the retention rates

between 148 students from two cohorts who had participated in a comprehensive, multi-faceted, optional first-year experience program with 148 students from two cohorts who did not participate in such a program. Those students who were engaged in the FYE programming were required to take a course entitled “Personal Growth” taught by counselors, which was the “cornerstone” of the FYE programming. Students who participated in the FYE programming had statistically higher rates of persistence from fall to the subsequent spring than did students who were not in the program. When disaggregated by ethnicity, the findings demonstrated that Latino FYE program participants persisted at a higher rate than Latino students who did not participate in the FYE programming; however, this was not the case for African American students or those in the “all other ethnicities” category (Barnes, 2012).

Similarly, a report by the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) (2012) which outlines several promising practices for attaining student success at two-year colleges, including FYE courses, describes a case study of a two-year college in North Carolina. This institution saw an increase in student persistence from their first to second semester after students were required to take both an orientation seminar before enrolling in classes and an FYE course focusing on college success (CCCSE, 2012). While these results are promising, the major limitation to both studies is they do not disaggregate the impact of the actual FYE course on student persistence, making it difficult to interpret which aspect of their intervention was most impactful on retaining students.

Other research has provided a more direct link between FYE course to a student’s continued enrollment. In the same CCCSE (2012) report above, a second case study

about a community college in Texas indicated that those who took their FYE course experienced higher rates of persistence from fall to spring than those who did not take such a course. In similar fashion, Kimbark, Peters, and Richardson's (2017) study, utilizing results from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) with 432 students (197 who took an FYE course and 235 who did not take the course), showed a statistically significant and positive relationship between taking an FYE course and both persistence and retention.

Using logistic regression as a predictive method, Windham and colleagues (2014) investigated how certain demographic data as well as completion of an FYE course that focused on study skills predicted fall-to-fall retention. Their findings indicated that participation in the FYE course was highly predictive of retention: students who took the course were 64% more likely to enroll in courses one year later than those who didn't take the course; what's more, students who did not successfully complete the course either because of withdrawal or failure were 81% and 67%, respectively, less likely to be retained compared to students who did not take the course (Windham, Rehfuss, Williams, Pugh, & Tincher-Ladner, 2014).

Similar to the Windham et al. (2014), Cho and Karp (2013) also utilized logistic regression to investigate the impact of enrollment in an FYE course on retention in year two; additionally, they investigated its impact depending upon the students' placements into one of three levels of developmental-level mathematics as well as the timing of enrollment in the FYE course (either enrolled in the student's first semester or within the first 15-credits). Their findings indicated that, regardless of the timeframe for taking the course, students enrolled in an FYE course were retained at higher rates into their second

year compared to those who did not take the course. What's more, when comparing the impact of the course across the institution's three levels of the pre-college mathematics courses, taking the FYE course in the first semester was positively associated with retention in the second year among students in the middle and highest levels of developmental math (Cho & Karp, 2013).

Extending the literature related to persistence and retention, Derby and Smith (2004) looked at enrollment beyond one year. In this study, the researchers followed three cohorts of nearly 7,500 students for two to four years to determine the relationship between enrolling in an FYE course and several different outcomes that classified a student's enrollment as follows: dropped out, defined as earning less than three semesters of coursework in total; retained, defined as completing four semesters of coursework without earning a degree; or stopped out, defined as completing more than 3 semesters of courses but also stopped for 1 to 3 semesters before reenrolling. Across all three cohorts, those students classified as new (meaning they were not "reverse transfers" coming from a four-year school) who enrolled in the FYE course were more likely to meet their definition of retention relative to students who did not take such a course. Additionally, students who took the course were less likely to be classified as a drop-out and more likely to meet the criteria as a stop-out, in sum, more likely to return after a break from school compared to those who did not take the course. Finally, one study, conducted over a total of 17 terms, studied the longer-term effects of enrollment in an FYE course, called Student Life Skills (Zeidenberg, Jenkins, and Calagno, 2007). In contrast to Windam and colleagues' (2014) focus on the successful *completion* of the course, Zeidenberg, Jenkins, and Calagno (2007) studied a student's *enrollment* in the course to reduce bias towards a

favorable outcome that might be inherent when studying students who completed the course successfully (i.e., they are likely to complete all courses). After controlling for several confounding variables (e.g. gender, age, and placement test scores), their findings indicated a positive relationship between taking an FYE course and being enrolled at the college five years out.

Progression Towards a Degree

Critics argue that outcomes such as persistence and retention are only short-term measures of success and while necessary, they are insufficient to demonstrate longer-term positive outcomes, such as success in future coursework and GPA. Several studies have begun the foundation for such evidence. For example, Cho and Karp's (2013) study indicated that, in addition to increased persistence, students enrolled in an FYE course earned more credits in their first year, including more college-level credits, regardless if the student enrolled in their first semester or their first 15-creidts; the study also found that across all three levels of the institution's pre-college mathematics courses, taking the course in the first semester was positively associated with students earning credits in their first year. After requiring their students to take an FYE course starting with the fall 2007 term, data from a two-year school in Texas demonstrated a positive relationship between taking an FYE course and earning passing grades in select "gatekeeper" courses such as writing and mathematics (CCCSE, 2012). Similarly, the survey results with 432 students discussed in Kimbark, Peters, and Richardson (2017) supported the CCCSE's report and found that students who took the FYE course were statistically more likely to earn an A, B, or C in their English Composition and algebra courses.

However, the research exploring the impact of FYE courses on GPA is less

compelling. Stupka's (1993) quasi-experimental study at a large urban community college in California compared first-time students who took an FYE course and matched them to first-time students who did not take the course. The results revealed a non-significant difference in GPAs between these groups. A report from the National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Student's in Transition (1998) summarizes research from multiple institutions about the impact of FYE courses various measures of student success. In all but one case, there was no statistically significant difference in GPAs between students who took an FYE course and those who did not. However, one study did report a significant and positive correlation between the grade a student earned in their FYE course and GPA.

Degree Attainment and Transfer

Finally, many students set a goal of earning a degree or credential; indeed, those agencies that govern, accredit, and finance two-year schools require the tracking of degree attainment rates, a final measure often used to measure student success. Like the literature about the impact of FYE courses on a student's progression towards a degree, pioneering studies show a favorable impact on actually earning that degree. The study by Derby and Smith (2004) of nearly 7,500 students over a period of two to four years found a statistically significant relationship between taking an FYE course and earning degree. In similar fashion, Zeidenberg and colleagues (2007) demonstrated a positive relationship between taking an FYE course on both earning a credential and transferring to the state system. Finally, Derby (2007) utilized logistic regression to investigate if participation in an FYE course predicted degree attainment within a timespan of four years. The findings revealed that students who took an orientation course were 72 times more likely to earn

their degrees than those who did not take the course. In addition, White students who took the FYE course graduated at higher rates than those not enrolled in the course; however, there were no such significant effects among African American or Hispanic students (Derby, 2007).

Randomized Design Study Measures Multiple Outcomes

One case study is worthy of note specifically due to its use of randomized assignment to treatment and control conditions, which allowed a more rigorous investigation into the effect of the FYE course on common student success outcomes while accounting for alternative explanations for the difference between the groups (Rutschow, Cullinan, and Welbeck 2012). The college under investigation developed a two-credit hour FYE course for developmental education students and randomly assigned a select number of students to take the course. After tracking the students for multiple semesters, the findings indicated that compared to the control group, students who were randomly assigned to take the course displayed an increase in several desirable psychosocial attributes, such as engaging in the college community and improved self-awareness; however, neither these attributes nor random assignment to the FYE course translated to improving pass rates in select courses, such as developmental English or mathematics courses, increasing the number of credits earned, increasing GPA, or reducing withdrawal rates (Rutschow, Cullinan, & Welbeck, 2012).

Student Voices in Research on FYE Courses

Recent years have seen a slight increase in qualitative studies on students' experiences in FYE courses, albeit small in overall number. O'Gara, Karp, and Hughes (2009) used student interviews at two community colleges to investigate the impact of

support services on student persistence. Using a grounded theory approach to develop common themes about all the support services available to students, their findings revealed a reoccurring theme that specifically pointed to the value of the FYE course and how those who took the course benefited. First, students in the course developed knowledge on college resources important for college success, such as academic advising, because of the course's organized, coordinated, and coherent presentation of material. Second, students cultivated their college success habits, including time management skills and study strategies. Finally, the relationships created with classmates and professors lead to more comfort and confidence among students; these relationships increased their participation in other classes, promoted student engagement with certain aspects of the college community, and offered a larger social network from which to glean information and college know-how (O'Gara, Karp, & Hughes, 2009).

Similarly, nearly every focus group participant, 16 in total, in Barnes' (2012) study expressed a positive reaction to their FYE course, called Personal Growth. Many participants felt that having a counselor teach the course was invaluable, who then helped advise students with course selection and provide them with a consistent source of emotional and academic support and validation. Consistent with O'Gara, Karp, and Hughes (2009) findings, the Personal Growth course also facilitated the development of positive peer relationships that offered students another avenue of support and encouragement. Students expressed excitement hearing from guest speakers in the course who shared stories of their success transitioning to the workforce. Finally, students felt the course helped them develop study habits important for success, such as time management skills (Barnes, 2012).

However, not all students tout such positive experiences in their FYE courses and for some students, the benefit of these courses may not be immediately apparent. For example, the FYE course students interviewed in Kimbark, Peters, and Richardson's (2017) study reported that at the start of the semester they did not understand the purpose of the course and undervalued its importance. Eighty-three percent initially described the course as "a blow off class" that yielded an "easy-A" and could serve to improve their GPA. However, their valuations of the course changed dramatically by the end; the researchers reported the students felt that the course gave them motivation and inspiration to achieve their goals, and 50% reported that the course "significantly helped them." Like the students in O'Gara, Karp, and Hughes (2009) and Barnes (2012), students felt that the course helped them to develop both social support systems and study skills, such as time management, note taking, and decision making, that influenced their success (Kimbark, Peters, & Richardson, 2017).

While some studies found students reporting a benefit from the FYE courses, other qualitative studies reported less positive opinions. In fact, a study by Rhodes and Cairo (1999) was prompted because of great dissatisfaction expressed by many faculty members, administrators, and students regarding the FYE course at one particular institution. To gain insight into this dissatisfaction, the researchers conducted interviews with 15 students who were enrolled in one of the three sections of the FYE course selected for inclusion in their study. Interview questions served to gain insight on the student's thoughts about the most and least useful aspects of the course, the value they gained from the course, and their reactions to the course. More specifically, Rhodes and Cairo wanted to understand the reasons that some students rejected obtaining any sort of

value from the course while others found support from it. In two out of the three sections, the number of positive and negative comments were approximately equal. Interestingly, students in the third section expressed greater dissatisfaction: negative responses were given seven times more often than positive statements for all questions asked. When asked about their perceptions on the value of the course, two-thirds of all the participants (10 out of 15) offered a negative response while of those in section three, all provided a negative response to this question. The researchers concluded that the greater dissatisfaction among students in the third section was likely due to the instructor's pedagogical strategies being "overly prescriptive" (Rhodes & Cairo, 1999, p. 518). Finally, 87% of all the participants (13 out of 15 from across all three sections) took exception to the mandatory nature of the course, many stating that their age, prior work experiences, skills, and abilities gave them the tools needed for success (Rhodes & Cairo, 1999).

Similar to the participants in Rhodes and Cairo (1999), those interviewed and surveyed by Duggan and Williams (2010) were also mixed in their opinions of their FYE courses. Questions focused on gaining insight into students' perceptions of the course's delivery method and teaching strategies, as well as the usefulness of topics covered in the course using a rating scale of 1 (not useful) to 3 (very useful). Students' perceptions of the course's usefulness were mixed, with some students noting the course as beneficial to their college endeavors while others feeling they already had the skills and knowledge covered in the course. More specifically, some students rated certain topics as very useful, such as balancing work, life, and school; conversely, other topics were deemed not useful for some, such as the library and material on study skills. Others wanted the

course to contain additional lessons, and not just for students. For example, some students suggested lessons for the students' family members to help them understand the struggles of college (Duggan & Williams, 2010). Overall, students in the study overwhelmingly suggested that incoming students take an FYE course, but similar to the participants in Rhodes and Cairo's (1999), some felt that enrollment should be optional rather than required (Duggan & Williams, 2010).

Limitations of the FYE Course Literature

While the aforementioned studies lay a promising foundation of preliminary empirical evidence for the positive impact that FYE courses can have on different measures of student success, there are several limitations within this body of literature that reveal large gaps of knowledge. These flaws include those that are inherently found in such an extremely limited body of literature whereby quantitative and correlational research design methods dominate as well as the conflicting findings regarding the different impacts the course had on diverse groups of students. These limitations leave large gaps to be filled, particularly with qualitative studies that can more deeply explore and uncover the nuanced ways that an FYE course might impact the unique and diverse community college students who share the context of the classroom. Greater numbers of studies, especially those that employ varying analytical frameworks that are more appropriate for community college students, will create a more intricate web of knowledge and deeper understanding of the unique challenges faced by these students and how FYE courses can best meet their various needs.

First, there is simply a paucity of research on FYE courses in the community college context and that which does exist is mostly quantitative and correlational.

Although useful, quantitative studies aggregate results into a simplified numerical expression, which can then gloss over the deeper understandings and rich data gained from qualitative data collection methods. This dominance of quantitative analysis was a key point to Crisp and Taggart's (2013) "narrative review" which was based on 15 studies they found regarding the impact of FYE-type courses on students at community colleges. Even though the authors expanded their search of the literature to include both published and non-published articles, they revealed a body of research that was predominantly quantitative in nature.

Second, multiple studies have demonstrated a correlation between the FYE course and outcome measures such as persistence, retention, and degree attainment. However, correlation is not causation (Derby & Smith, 2004; Zeidenberg, Jenkins, & Calcagno, 2007). Moreover, the study by Rutschow et al. (2012) that utilized randomized assignment to the control and treatment conditions did not show that students assigned to the FYE course had improved outcomes, such as higher GPAs or lower withdrawal rates. The use of randomized assignment can help researchers make potential claims of causality between the course and any outcomes; as stated by Bailey and Alfonso (2005), "As long as there is some non-random process by which students enroll…it may be that any differences between participants and non-participants result from the selection process, not from the program itself" (p. 8). In other words, students who self-select into FYE courses may possess certain traits that would lead them to better success outcomes anyway, regardless of the intervention – they are different in some way that affects their success.

Third, the quantitative research itself has revealed mixed results. In Crisp and Taggart's (2013) review 80% of the studies found on FYE courses explored how the course affected retention or persistence and all but one indicated a positive relationship. Yet, the review also noted that findings about the relationship between FYE course and other measures, such as GPA, course completion, and graduation rates were mixed; some studies found a positive correlation while others demonstrated no relationship. From this, Crisp and Taggart (2013) concluded that researchers need to uncover the mechanisms by which certain interventions work for certain students and the components that lead to improved student outcomes, especially among various groups of students (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity).

This segues into the next limitation evident in the reviewed literature: students are inherently different from each other, and arguably even more so at community colleges who enroll students who are diverse in many more ways than their four-year counterparts (e.g., Bailey & Alfonso, 2005; CCSE, 2012; Goldrik-Rab, 2010; Horn & Nevill, 2006; Karp & Bork, 2014). Thus, in spite of correlational findings that indicate favorable outcomes from the course, it may not be equally impactful for all groups of students. A number of studies revealed such findings whereby the impact of the course was differentiated by students' memberships to certain groups, such as placement level for developmental level mathematics students (Cho & Karp, 2013).

In the study by Derby and Smith (2004), for reverse transfer students (those who entered the two-year college from a four-year school with fewer than 16 credits), taking the FYE course was unrelated to earning a degree or persistence, despite the positive effect shown for new students. Duggan and Williams (2010) would agree, noting that

reverse transfer students who have already earned a bachelor's degree and enter a community college likely have different needs from the reverse transfer student who has not obtained a four-year credential.

Turning to demographic differences, Derby's (2007) study found that White students who took the FYE course graduated at higher rates than those not enrolled in the course while no such relations were found for African American or Hispanic students. In contrast, Barnes (2012) found that Latino FYE participants who enrolled in the college's Personal Growth course persisted at statistically higher rates than non-FYE program participants.

Age is also likely to matter. Older students are different from younger students in many ways, including in life experiences and responsibilities, and work histories, and conceivably require a different FYE experience to support their college success. For example, about half of the students in Rhodes and Cairo's (1999) study reported gaining no value from the course, all of whom were older. Students reported several aspects of the course that were not useful to them, such as note-taking, goal setting, learning styles, among others, which the authors attributed to the students' age that resulted with a solid grasp on these topics. But age may also be a liability for college students. Duggan and Williams (2010), for example, contend that relative to younger students, older, nontraditional students could be lacking in technological competencies and may need supplemental instruction to learn software and the learning management system that are utilized in most college settings.

One key discussion point on which many scholars then agree is the need for more qualitative studies of community college students' experiences in FYE courses (Crisp,

2016; Crisp & Taggart, 2013; Derby & Smith, 2004; Karp et al., 2012). This is especially important when studying a diverse student body with individualized needs and unique challenges that can easily be overlooked in aggregated quantitative data. The implication here is that a common FYE course taught to all students may not work; it is not a case of "one-course-fits-all" (Duggan & Williams, 2010, p. 130) and that the greatest tragedy is when a course is "…trying to be all things for everybody and it [ends] up not being anything to anybody" (Karp et al., 2012). One of Crisp's (2016) conclusions is that much of our knowledge has been gained from survey or questionnaire-type data that do not allow space to explore "students' voices or what their experiences mean to them in the broader context of their goals and educational pathway" (p. 107).

Finally, the small number of research studies on FYE courses in the community college context inherently means that very few theoretical lenses have been applied to understanding the factors that contribute to these students' experiences. Moreover, the theoretical frameworks that have been applied were often developed for traditional students at four-year schools. Thus, the domain would benefit from studies framed by theoretical perspectives that consider the integration of the unique context with students' personal characteristics and acknowledge the dynamic change in the community college students' experiences as they learn, develop, and pursue their higher education goals. In the current study, I have anchored these experiences in the concept of students' emerging identities in the community college context. Exploring the construct of college student identity provides an avenue to explore the multiple facets to a community college student's unique situation, needs, and potential barriers to success, and the role of the particular context in these processes.

Identity Theories Applied to Community College Students

Currently, most strategies and interventions that aim to address the needs of diverse community college students have focused on macro-level aspects, such as governmental policies, institutional qualities and procedures, and stable characteristics of the students themselves (e.g., demographics) (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Only scant research addresses the micro-level of the student, and few, if any, considered processes that bridge the micro- and macro-level processes. Theory and research on identity processes and development that consider identity as emerging in context provide promising avenues for investigations (Flum & Kaplan, 2012; Schachter & Rich, 2011; Watson, 2009) and are particularly well-aligned for application to research studies on the heterogeneous study body often found at community colleges (Horn & Nevill, 2006; Karp & Bork, 2014; Kim et al., 2010).

Identity is one of the most commonly studied constructs in social science research (Vignoles, Luyckx, & Schwartz, 2011). Erik Erikson is often credited with first introducing the term to the scientific community in the 1950s (Kroger, 2007). According to Erikson, identity is a person's subjective perception of who they generally are across different time spans and contexts. Stemming from both conscious and unconscious processes, one's identity is "a configuration gradually integrating constitutional givens, idiosyncratic libidinal needs, favored capacities, significant identifications, effective defenses, successful sublimations and consistent roles" (as cited in Kroger, 2007, p. 8). More, one's identity manifests from the interaction of biological, psychological, and sociocultural forces. While many researchers have expanded Erikson's initial view of identity, there seems to be a general consensus among researchers that identity is the

answer to the question, "Who am I?" (see Kroger, 2007; Vignoles, Luyckx, & Schwartz, 2011). This can include a variety of facets, such as age, gender, career, among others.

Flum and Kaplan (2012) maintain that one's identity develops from the dynamic interaction between the person and his environment and that the collegiate experience provides a context that is ripe for identity exploration and formation. They further assert that identity is unequivocally "intertwined with motivation, learning, and knowledge construction" (p. 240), as learning is inherently connected to a student's values, educational goals, interests, and motivation. Watson (2009) cites various studies to bolster his claim about the importance of identity research to students' experiences, stating that this "nonacademic variable" is a stronger predictor of adjustment to the collegiate context than is academic ability. Further, some argue that preparing students for 21st century professions demands that educators transcend attainment of knowledge as the primary goal of college in favor of identity education (Gee, 2001; Kaplan & Flum, 2012; Schachter & Rich, 2011); indeed, Flum and Kaplan (2012) proclaim that identity is so vital to our existence that, "education cannot afford to neglect it" (p. 244).

In the next sections, I review literature that concerns different definitions and operationalizations of identity among college students. Because of the paucity of studies specific to community college students, I included several studies with participants from four-year schools who are demographically similar to those found at two-year schools. I begin the section with an overview of studies that focus more narrowly on one particular aspect of identity, such as status as an adult learner or first-generation American, identification with a particular racial or ethnic group, or a declared major or career pursuit. Next, I note the slim literature (only two published articles) about identity as a

community college student. I end with a critique and discussion of limitations of this small literature base related to the identities of community college students, which provide the rationale for selecting the PRESS and DSMRI models as the theoretical frameworks for my dissertation.

Age-Related Identity

Addressing the needs and experiences of older adult community college students, Kasworm (2005) investigated the nature of student identity via interviews with older students to explore how a student's age informed his/her identity development and expression; from their data, they extrapolated two major themes. First, students' self-perceptions were influenced by how they positioned themselves in relation to their age. For example, some participants felt that it was age-inappropriate to be in college at a later stage in life because college was meant for younger individuals, seemingly seeing their age as a barrier because it contradicted the contextual norms set forth in a higher education. Other students noted how their age and life experiences bore advantages in the classroom and perceived their age and maturity as a strength. Second, participants discussed their perceptions of how their age impacted interactions with their professors and peers, again some noting a benefit to and others a barrier from their age. Many discussed, for example, the positive, respectful relationships they developed with their faculty members and perceptions of being held to higher standards than their younger classmates directly due to their age while others felt that at times, younger students resented their presence in the learning environment. The author concluded that students' identity processes and expression were complex, individualized, contextualized, and influenced and were influenced by the learning environment's norms and its

"intergenerational" nature. However, despite their assertion about the complexity of identity, they operationalized identity based on one aspect of student identity: age.

Racial and Ethnic Identity

A student's membership in a particular racial or ethnic group has also been used to explore college student identity. For example, Alessandria and Nelson (2005) compared the identity development and levels of self-esteem of first-generation American (FGA) college students to non-first generation American (NFGA) college students, hypothesizing that FGA students would have lower levels of identity development and self-esteem compared to NFGA students. The researchers administered two instruments: one to determine self-esteem and the other to measure identity development. Contrary to their hypotheses, the results indicated that the FGA students had statistically higher levels of self-esteem than NFGA students and scored higher than NFGA students on their measure of identity development, although the difference was not statistically significant. The surprising nature of their results led the authors to conclude that the results were "not readily interpretable" (p. 9) other than to state that quantitative grouping of so many different ethnic groups under the one FGA umbrella may not be appropriate in highlighting more nuanced individual differences related to a particular student's contextual and situational factors. For examples, FGA students who are also first-generation college students or those forced to emigrate because of war would likely experience different levels of self-esteem and identity development, and therefore have different needs than other types of FGA students. This study highlights the need for a more comprehensive framework to explore identity beyond just one aspect

(race/ethnicity) that also allows for a detailed investigation into the unique experiences of students from diverse backgrounds.

Watson (2009) surveyed Native American students attending a rural two-year community college to investigate the relationship between racial identity development and adjustment to college. The author administered an instrument designed to measure the strength of an individual's racial identity by providing scores on four difference subscales, each representing a different level of racial identity development as follows: Conformity (adhering to the "racial status quo"), Dissonance (recognizing the confusing interplay of race), Immersion-Emersion (limiting interactions to members of one's own racial group) and Internalization (accepting aspects of self that stem from both their own racial group and the dominant culture). The author posited that those with healthier racial identities (e.g. higher internalization scores) would more easily acclimate to their collegiate experience, measured by an instrument with the following four subscales: academic adjustment, social adjustment, personal-emotional adjustment, and institutional attachment. The findings indicated that students' scores on the measure of racial identity was a significant predictor of their acclimation to college. Specifically, there was an inverse relationship between the Dissonance subscale and all four measures of adjustment and a positive association between the Internalization subscale and three measures of adjustment (academic adjustment, social adjustment, and institutional attachment). The author concluded that a student's lived experience as a member of a racial or ethnic group influenced their acclimation to the collegiate culture which ultimately affects their ability to succeed, furthering the need for more studies to explore these nuanced students' lived experiences in richer detail.

Athletic Identity

Rather than racial or ethnic identity, Kissinger, Newman, Miller, and Nadler (2011) focused on athletic identity, surveying community college athletes from across the United States in order to describe a "profile" (p. 579) of community college athletes. Students were asked about basic demographic information and athletic participation and completed the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS), which measures the strength to which they identify as athletes. The findings indicated that fewer than half planned to continue their athletic participation at a four-year college and only about one-third planned to become a professional athlete, yet nearly 90% would leave college early to become one if the opportunity arose. Caucasian students playing football scored highest on AIMS (with higher scores indicating a stronger athletic identity); while African American students scored highest for basketball and multi-ethnic/Hispanic athletes scored highest for baseball. Although the authors claim one aim of the study was to explore the counseling needs of student-athletes at two-year institutions, it is unclear how such extrapolations could be made by the survey data collected. The study essentially provided demographic information related to student athletes but very little about how this knowledge would actually benefit students.

Career Identity

Other lines of identity research have explored identity through an occupationally oriented framework, investigating collegiate major or career identity development. For example, Woodcock et al. (2012) investigated the implications of long-term, repeated perceptions of stereotype threat on the attrition of minority students from science domains at four-year institutions. Students were surveyed over a period of three years in

areas such as academic performance, identification with science, and perceptions of stereotype threat. Results indicated that scientific identity was significantly and positively correlated to pursuit of a science career for both African American and Hispanic/Latino students, with each group also reporting stereotype threat during all three years. However, only for Hispanic/Latino students did the perception of stereotype threat negatively correlate both directly and indirectly, mediated through scientific identity, with disidentification with the science domain. Similar to the studies by Alessandria and Nelson (2005) and Watson (2009), this study highlights the impact that one's racial or ethnic identity can have on one's college student identity.

Contrary to Woodcock et al.'s (2012) emphasis on disidentification with one's major for students at a four-year college, Stringer and Kerpelman (2014) explored identification with a career path in community college students. Based on a similar studies with students attending a four-year institution, Stringer and Kerpelman (2014) hypothesized that for community college students, work history (i.e., number of jobs held and relevance to career pursuits) and parental support for one's career would positively correlate to career-decision self-efficacy (CDSE), and further, that all three of these variables would positively relate to career identity evaluation (i.e., identifying with one's career choice and engaging in career exploration in-depth). As expected, they found that parental support did in fact relate to CDSE, which in turn was related to career identity evaluation. Surprisingly, however, their findings indicated that parental support for career was not directly correlated to career identity evaluation, and that work history had no relationship with either CDSE or career identity evaluation despite evidence to the contrary with students at four-year schools. From this, they concluded that community

college students are inherently different from students attending four-year institutions and, thus, warrants further investigations that utilize samples of students who attend two-year colleges.

Babineau and Packard (2006) also studied students' career identity processes, with a specific focused on older community college students. They wanted to assess if the identity processes they observed differed for non-traditional older students who had previous college experiences or career goals during adolescence versus those with no such adolescent experiences. This study identified four processes of identity development among participants: constructing a new identity (34%), expanding a current identity (30%), rejecting the past before constructing a new identity (24%), and reclaiming a past identity (12%). The study revealed that 50% of the students with prior college experiences in adolescence indicated a rejection of an original identity most often due to the lack of feasibility of continuing their earlier goal and 27% reported an expansion of a current identity. Those with no prior college experience more often reported constructing a new identity (45%) or expanding a current one (39%). More students with prior college experience reported reclaiming an earlier version of self (19%) than those without prior experience (7%). The authors highlight the importance of college personnel, such as counselors, be aware of the different career identity processes that may be operating for different students.

College Student Identity

The vast majority the studies on community college students' identity focused on some particular facet of identity (e.g., career, age, ethnicity). Only two studies defined identity as centered in the specific role of college student. One study by Karp and Bork

(2014) specifically focused on the role of community college student by interviewing faculty, staff, and students with the aim to explicitly describe the often implicit expectations of behaviors and attitudes from this role that are required for success. The research team conducted semi-structured interviews with 97 students solicited from a mandatory college success course and 72 faculty and staff from three community colleges in Virginia. The findings revealed that the role of student was invariably different from other roles in two regards, namely that the community college student role was more flexible and required a deeper level of self-awareness. Next, the authors identified four central facets related to the role of community college student: academic habits, cultural know-how, balancing multiple roles, and help seeking. For each of these four themes, the authors noted the role's fluidity by providing a list of strategies that students could choose to utilize and asserted that self-awareness was a requirement across all four facets. The authors concluded by citing the study's contribution towards explicitly describing the "nonacademic" attitudes, behaviors, and tactics that are important for success specific to the role of community college student. Furthermore, they emphasize the need to consider the individualized and contextual factors that influence a student's success, such as having multiple roles to manage in addition to that of college student.

In the second study that focused on the community college student role identity, Kim et al. (2010) specifically focused on the multiple roles a student likely holds. While many scholars use age as the criteria to label a student as non-traditional (usually over age 25), Kim et al. utilized a more unconventional criterion: a student's own self-labeling as a non-traditional student. The study utilized survey data collected from 5,000 students attending nine community colleges in Los Angeles. The survey asked students to

categorize themselves by their primary roles, for example, as a parent who is attending college or an employee who is also a student, as well as answer questions related to demographics, educational barriers, goals, and beliefs. Using discriminant analyses, the researchers determined that using the students' self-definitions to define then as non-traditional students did in fact result in groups that were statistically different from one another then when using the convention of age. Specifically, the authors found that certain variables were more salient when using the students' self-definitions. For example, those who self-identified as students who were also employees had completed the most credits while those who self-identified as parents who attended college more often viewed family responsibilities as a barrier to their success. The authors determined that utilizing unconventional standards to define a non-traditional student at a community college is valuable, as many students under 25 self-identified into a category that many would consider non-traditional, i.e., a parent or employee. This study highlights the need to consider the ways that multiple facets of identity are interconnected and dynamically related; for example, how the roles of parent and employee influence and are influenced by the college student role.

Limitations of the Identity Research

Similar to the body of research on FYE courses, the identity research specific to community college students is extremely limited in scope and volume which creates large gaps in knowledge. First, more often than not, these studies focus narrowly on one aspect of identity, such as age (Babineau & Packard, 2006;), athletic participation (Kissinger et al., 2011), racial or ethnic identity (Watson, 2009), and declared major (Stringer and Kerpelmen, 2014). This divergent focus of different aspects to identity highlights how

broad and multifaceted this construct is and reveals another limitation of this literature. Community college students are not either-or any of these facets; their identities incorporate all of these aspects to make up who they are. Thus, what is required is a theoretical framework on identity that is able both to capture variety of the identity dimensions and allow different aspects to manifest as prominent depending on the personal and contextual features.

Second, this line of research does not make explicit connections between the construct of identity and improvement of student outcomes, such as increasing community college student retention and graduation rates. None of the studies in this literature review empirically investigated how a focus on promoting identity development might lead to actual improvements in the dismal outcomes for students at community colleges. Thus, what is required is a theoretical framework on identity that connects identity processes with the knowledge, attitudes, motivations, and learning and achievement behaviors that are associated with those desirable academic outcomes.

Third, it was rare for any study to explore the specific role of community college student and even rarer that it looked to consider the multiple roles that students often juggle while attending college. Several authors acknowledged that the construct of identity is dynamic, complex and multifaceted yet very few actually explored the complicated nature of identity nor the specific role of student. Thus, the research is in need of a theoretical framework that allows to focus on the community college student role identity, while at the same time addresses the other relevant role identities that the student has and that intersect with and influence the student role.

Finally, like most educational research, students at community colleges are often overlooked in the identity literature (Karp & Bork, 2014; Pascarella, 1997; Stringer & Kerpelman, 2014; Watson, 2009). As discussed, community college students are often more heterogeneous than student bodies at four-year institutions (Horn & Nevill, 2006; Karp & Bork, 2014; Kim et al., 2010); as such, they are likely to have different identity processes than their four-year counterparts. This bolsters the necessity for educational researchers to explore identity processes and development specific to community college students in their lived contexts. Thus, a theoretical perspective that conceptualizes identity formation as contextualized, and that can shed light on the way features of the context manifest in students' identities and their formation is needed.

The Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity

The Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity (DSMRI; Kaplan & Garner, 2017) is a complex "metatheoretical" (p. 2040) model of motivation and identity that addresses the lack of a comprehensive and integrative framework for conceptualizing and investigating the individualized and heterogenous community college students' role identities (RIs) and motivations within a specific context. Contrary to much of the empirical research on community college students' identity, which focuses on the unit-of-analysis of groups of individuals, thereby emphasizing a homogeneous identity across individuals, the DSMRI focuses on the individual-in-context unit-of-analysis. This allows for a more nuanced framework from which to explore the unique, heterogenous, complex and emerging community college student identities in the context of an FYE course, which in turn supports the constructivist-developmental approach of this proposal.

Specifically, the DSMRI (see Figure 1) posits that an actor's motivation for behavior and identity is based on the salient role they occupy in a particular setting, and more specifically, on their unique personal "interpretation" of that role—their "role identity" (RI). This RI continuously unfolds in a not-fully-predictable, non-linear fashion through the dynamic interdependence of four components, all which emerge within the context: 1) Purpose and goals in the role; 2) Ontological and epistemological beliefs related to the role; 3) Self-perceptions and self-definitions in the role; and 4) Perceived action possibilities in the role. These four components are conceptualized as mutually influencing facets that emerge iteratively as the actor interacts with cultural artifacts and people through engagement in cultural practices (e.g., course activities) within the socio-cultural context.

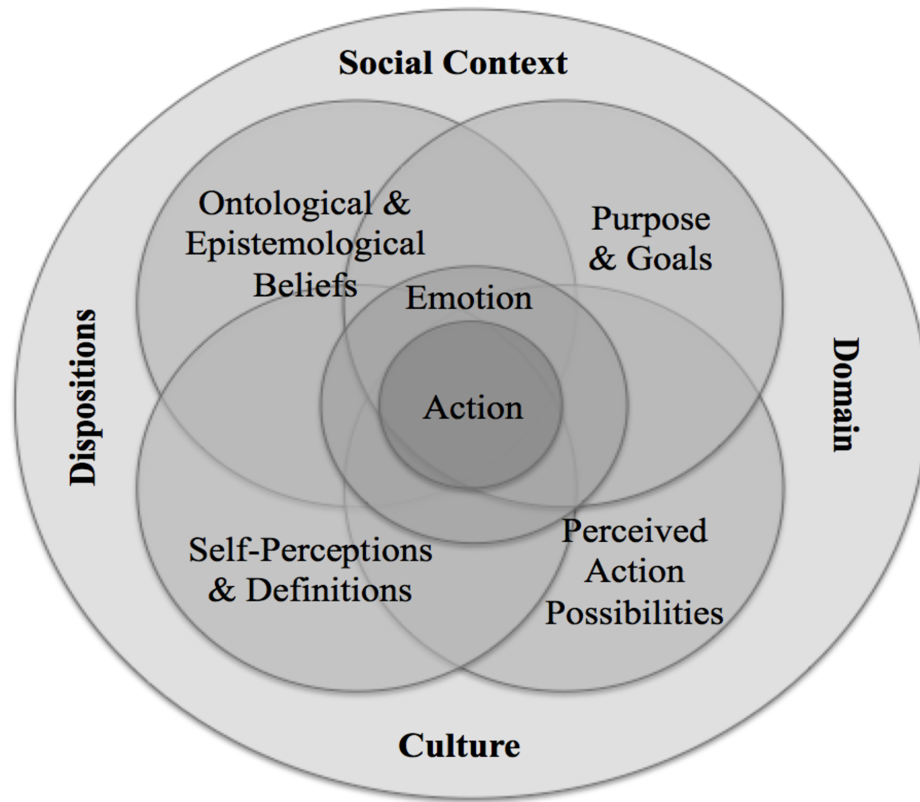

Figure 1: The Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity (DSMRI)

Purpose and goals are related to an individual's endorsement of a purpose for the role and pursuit of relevant goals. This component also concerns the emotions that the actor experiences about these purpose and goals. For example, this component can reveal the broader purpose community college students hold regarding their role identity, such as career advancement, as well as more micro-level goals they have for engaging in certain behaviors, such as getting a high grade in the FYE course or acquiring a particular academic skill.

Ontological and epistemological beliefs refer to a person's knowledge and beliefs about the nature of reality in a particular role as well as the beliefs that one holds about what is real and true regarding knowledge; in other words, what can actually be known about the world. Collectively, these beliefs include an actor's causal interpretations about the world, evaluations regarding the reliability and depth of sources of knowledge, and the affective characteristics related to these beliefs. Specific to this proposal, this aspect of the model highlights the assumptions that community college students hold to be true about the college context, the process of teaching, learning, and performance, about what it means to be a community college student, about the personalities of other people in the community college, as well as their level of confidence about their assumptions, and the related emotions of these assumptions.

The self-perceptions and self-definitions concern knowledge and beliefs the person holds about themselves. This component of the DSMRI includes aspects such as an actor's self-concept, group memberships, and perceptions of personal characteristics, values, and abilities that are important in the role. For example, community college students may hold certain beliefs about their academic abilities in the student role, which

can in turn relate to emotions about being a student. Similarly, beliefs about other aspects to their identity, such as age or racial/ethnic identity, can be impactful.

Finally, action possibilities refer to the behaviors that a person deems as appropriate, effective, and possible for him or her for pursuing their purpose and goals in light of their beliefs about themselves and the nature of reality. This aspect includes all the possible courses of action that may be taken as well as those deemed inaccessible or impossible in the role and the related emotional ramifications. For example, community college students might seek tutoring to support their goal to pass a specific course in light of a self-perception that they lack certain abilities and an ontological/epistemological knowledge that tutoring is available and the belief that learning requires both initiative from a student and support from others.

The DSMRI explicates that the role identity of community college students is situated within a specific context and exists alongside other role identities that together create a larger identity system. Each role identity, and the identity system as a whole, can be understood to have facets of content, structure, and process of formation. The four aforementioned anchors of the DSMRI allow for an investigation into the individual make-up (content) of each component for each research participant, the dynamic, iterative structural relationship among components and between different role identities, and the processes by which this iteration proceeds. Important for the current study, this model allows investigation of the motivations to act in the community college student role identity that emerge from the dynamic interplay of the role identity components and their continuous emergence in the community college context.

The ontological and epistemological beliefs, purposes and goals, self-definitions and self-perceptions, and action possibilities related to any given role will vary among students and between contexts, and also between multiple roles held by students, which provides an avenue to explore and investigate the structure of the role identity. Specifically, researchers can explore the harmony within components, the alignment between components, and integration of multiple roles (or lack thereof) among a student's identity system to better understand their motivation. Harmony refers to how well elements within any one of the four components are synchronized; for example, does a student hold multiple goals that conflict to create tension or support one another to produce harmony? Alignment refers to the level of coordination across the four components. For example, alignment exists when a student's goal to pass English is coupled with a low self-efficacy for writing and a belief that learning to write takes effort, which prompts her to visit the writing center. Misalignment would manifest if the student cannot align any perceived action possibility with the goal of passing English in light of the low perceived efficacy. Lastly, integration refers to the level of accord across the multiple roles an individual occupies and that are salient for them in a particular context. For example, integration is reflected when a parental role identity involves beliefs, goals, self-perceptions, and perceived action possibilities that are perceived to allow a student the time needed to engage in actions to pursue goals in the role of student; conversely, disintegration reflects the state of experiencing these two roles to be in conflict and to compete over time and resources. Finally, similar to the variability that may be observed among the content and structure, the process of identity formation also varies. Any harmony/discord, alignment/misalignment, or integration/disintegration frame feedback

loops to the formation of identity and motivational processes as iterative, dynamic, and constantly emerging. Processes of identity formation may be more agentic or more externally regulated, be oriented towards integration, manifest in rumination that only serves to maintain disintegration, or manifest avoidance of engagement in identity content that maintains fragmentation of the identity system.

The PRESS Model of Environmental Support for Identity Formation

Identity development processes emerge from the interaction between the person and her environment. To that end, the collegiate experience, generally, and an FYE course, specifically, each provide a context that is ideal for identity exploration, defined as "the deliberate internal or external action of seeking and processing information in relation to the self" (Flum & Kaplan, 2006, p. 100), which in turn serves as a key process for identity formation. The objectives of the FYE course, including its learning outcomes, pedagogical strategies, course materials, learning assignments, and assessment measures are particularly aligned with encouraging students to explore and solidify their college student role identities. Kaplan, Sinai, and Flum (2014) proposed a theoretical model that aims to promote adaptive identity exploration within a specific curriculum. The model specifies four overlapping curricular design principles that complement the DSMRI in characterizing educational contexts that are most conducive to desirable role-identity formation processes: ***P***romoting perceived self-***R***elevance of the curricular content, triggering identity ***E***xploration, facilitating a sense of ***S***afety, and ***S***caffolding exploratory actions (PRESS; see figure 2). The PRESS model emphasizes the role of the teacher and the pedagogy as facilitating students' identity exploration and formation. Below, I describe each aspect of this conceptional model.

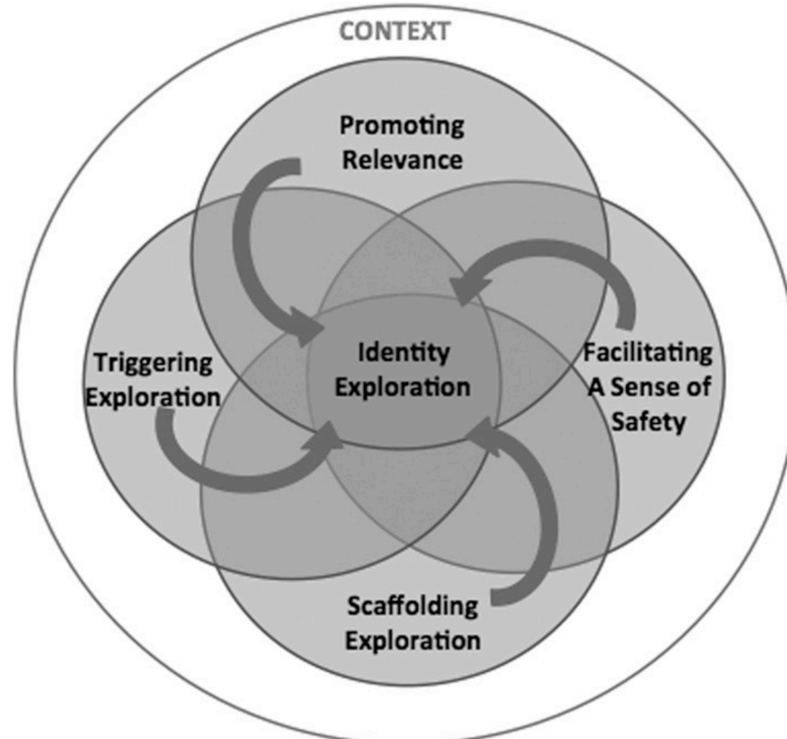

Figure 2. The PRESS Model

A common challenge that students in college can experience is a failure to see course content or curricular requirements as relevant to themselves and their goals. This could be particularly salient in a "non-content" course like FYE that often exists and operates as an entity separate from domain- and major-specific courses, where students may bemoan the required nature of the course. Previously, the responsibility of making a course relevant to students' lives was placed upon the professor. However, critics rightfully argue that what is self-relevant is subjective in nature, and thusly, best determined individually by the many different and unique student-selves that comprise the classroom. More, the teacher-driven approach to promoting relevance may impede a student's identity exploration by subverting the student's sense of independence, abilities, and relatedness. Thus, promoting self-relevance relocates this teacher as identity agent to

serve as the "guide on the side" who encourages students to make their own connections among the course content, their own lived experiences, and their self-concepts.

In addition to prompting students to formulate their own perceived self-relevance with the material, the teacher as identity agent must also invoke exploration triggers, which encourage students to investigate those aspects of identity that were prominent when making the curriculum relevant to self. These exploration triggers serve to elicit "relevant differences" or discrepancies between a student's current identity structures (i.e., self-perceptions/self-definitions, ontological/epistemological beliefs, purposes and goals, and perceived action possibilities) and a new, emerging identity borne from the student-driven identification that connected self to the curriculum. Oftentimes, these exploration triggers may involve innocuous situations or events that are unique, novel, or ambiguous; however, they might also at times instill feelings of uncertainty, confusion, or even duress if one feels threatened or vulnerable. This then necessitates that exploration triggers are coupled with activities and behaviors that promote a sense of safety, discussed next.

The exploration triggers can incite a number of responses from students, including excitement, anticipation, anxiousness, or defensiveness. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the teacher as the identity agent to promote an atmosphere where students feel safe and secure during their identity exploration processes. What each student needs to feel safe during their identity exploration process is likely to be individually subjective; however, teachers as identity agents can develop secure environments that are safe for exploration by demonstrating unconditional positive regard, maintaining a climate that espouses mutual respect, and giving credence and value to students' beliefs and emotions.

A student may experience prompts to make material self-relevant and triggers to engage in identity exploration both in the context of a safe and secure context; however, may not have the skills or knowledge necessary to engage in exploratory behaviors. Therefore, the final component to the PRESS model requires the teacher as identity agent scaffold developmentally appropriate activities to help students engage more effectively in the identity exploration process. These activities might include reflective questions, journal entries, small group discussions or role plays, among others (Kaplan, Sinai, & Flum, 2014).

Justification for Study and Research Questions

As discussed, the literature about the impact of FYE courses on student success measures is mixed while research about student identity is fragmented and disparate. The exploration of student motivation and identity within an FYE course is a promising avenue to gain a better understanding of why such a course is not "one size fits all." The application of the DSMRI framework allows for a deep investigation to develop rich, "thick descriptions" about the community college students' role identities while the PRESS model provides a structure from which to understand what aspects of an FYE course are relevant and important to fostering identity exploration to promote development of adaptive and healthy student identities. To this end, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1) What is the nature and development of community college student identities within the context of a FYE course at an urban community college?

2) How can the design of the FYE course attend to diverse students' experiences in ways to promote the formation of adaptive college student identities?
3) What are the aspects of the FYE course that students report as most valuable and beneficial to the development of their college student identities?
4) How can these results inform future iterations of the course?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the methodologies carried out to answer the research questions about the nature and development of students' college student role identities in the context of an FYE course and how the PRESS principles manifested in the course. First, I provide background information about Northeast Community College (NECC, pseudonym) and how the FYE 101 course came to be to offer context for the study; this is followed by a discussion of the current state of the course, including the course document to which all sections of the course must adhere and preliminary descriptive quantitative data about the course. Next, I include a discussion of the positivist and constructivists paradigms to offer justification for the case study approach I used to achieve the goals of this paradigm. The subsequent section is a discussion of the study's participants, including recruitment and IRB protocols. After introducing the participants, I discuss data collection methods, including interviews and course artifacts, and how I analyzed these data using the PRESS and DSMRI models. Finally, I end briefly with coverage of the methods used to increase trustworthiness in the findings.

Context for the Study

Northeast Community College is the only community college located in city limits; it is an open-admissions institution that grants certificates and associate degrees. Data reported to the National Center for Education Statistics (n.d.) show that in the Fall 2017, there were 17,296 degree-seeking students enrolled in credit-bearing coursework (this includes developmental courses but excludes students in non-credit courses taken

for personal development, for example, through the College's Center for Business and Industry). Of these students, nearly 5,100 (29%) were enrolled full-time and just over one-fourth (28%) of the students were new to the college during this semester (Tableau Public, 2018). Demographically, two-thirds of these students (63%) were female and almost the same number (62.7%) were 25 years of age or younger. The institution also enrolls a racially diverse student body as follows: 46% Black/African American, 22% White, 14% Hispanic/Latino, and 8% Asian. The remaining 10% were near evenly split between the categories of two or more races (3%), unknown (4%), and non-resident alien (3%) (Tableau Public, 2018).

During the 2016-2017 academic year, 85% of all new full-time students received some type of financial aid, whereby 69% received federal grants and 45% secured federal student loans. Of all degree-seeking students enrolled in credit course during this time, 61% received federal Pell grants and 43% obtained federal student loans (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.). As an open admissions institution, NECC utilizes a placement test to determine the level of English, reading, and mathematics in which students will begin. During the Fall 2015 semester, 49.8%, 24.7%, and 44.7% of the entering students needed a developmental level English, reading, and mathematics course, respectively (D. Sinnott, personal communication, August 14, 2018).

Finally, like many community colleges, data on common outcome measures of student achievement at NECC such as retention and graduation rates are bleak; in many instances these measures are lower than either national averages or rates from a comparison group comprising 29 associate-degree granting institutions that are similar to NECC (public, large, and urban). The fall 2015 to fall 2016 retention rate for first time,

full-time degree seeking students at NECC was 55% versus 62% among the comparison group (Sinnott & Morris, 2018). This same report cites the three-year graduation rate of 12% for students at NECC while the rate among the comparison group was four percentage points higher. Data from the National Clearinghouse indicated a six-year graduation rate of 26.7% among all community college students, while this rate is only 20.8% at NECC (Sinnot & Morris, 2018). In response to these dismal numbers related to student achievement measures, NECC continuously implements new initiatives to improve them. One such initiative was the development and implementation of a first-year experience course.

The FYE Course

For many years, NECC offered a 1-credited hour course called COL 101 that aimed to increase student success through emphasis on successful college student behaviors (e.g., time management). However, the course was not required and worth only 1-college level credit hour; therefore, it often did not fit well into students' schedules, which resulted in few sections meeting enrollment limits to run each semester.

Meanwhile, the division of Liberal Arts began to revise two curricula: Liberal Arts and Liberal Arts/Social and Behavioral Sciences. There was agreement about including an FYE course as a 3-credit hour requirement based on its designation as a "high-impact practice" by the AACU and the Achieving the Dream initiative. As the course was not yet created, the curriculum development team included a placeholder for it in the form of a General Education elective.

Concurrent to this time, the College was taking steps to introduce Guided Pathways, based on the book, *Redesigning America's Community Colleges*: *A clearer*

path to student success. One major premise of this book is that community colleges often confuse students with curricula that are "cafeteria-style" whereby students have too many complex choices with little guidance. The initiatives to improve this status quo include curricular revisions that are coherent and concise to present a clear and direct "pathway" towards graduation and a mandatory student success course, coupled with improved student support services and effective instructional strategies (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015).

To this end, the college offered its first sections of FYE 101 in Fall 2016. Students in the Liberal Arts and Liberal Arts/Social and Behavioral Sciences majors were required to enroll in the course within their first 12 credits for students; a similar course was included in two other pathways, Allied Health (AH 101) and Business (BUSL 101), while another was under development for the STEM pathway. Non-matriculated students (called "guest" students) and transfer students with more than 12 college level credits were not required to take the course.

All sections of the course must adhere to the course document that was approved by the College's governance structure (see Appendix A) and sets forth the following Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate college preparedness in areas such as time management, note taking, study methods, test taking, wellness, information literacy, and academic integrity
2. Demonstrate cultural competence in areas such as diversity, civic engagement, media literacy, and financial literacy

3. Describe and/or locate institutional policies, campus resources, and student organizations
4. Identify and employ strategies for effective oral and written communication
5. Apply critical thinking in the areas of college preparedness, problem-solving, data interpretation, and institutional knowledge
6. Develop an academic plan, a financial plan and a career/transfer plan based on the student's individual academic and career goals

Cross-departmental and intentionally collaborative efforts were taken to standardize the course to ensure that all students in every section received the same experience. Other than faculty name and contact information, syllabi were uniform. Faculty teaching FYE 101 were required to cover 14 topics in a predetermined order, although the exact pedagogy an instructor used to teach any of these topics could vary. A standardized set of reading materials and assignments was required across sections; every semester, a master Canvas course shell was updated to include all reading materials, assignments, and documents related to the course, which was preloaded into each FYE section's Canvas course shell. Faculty who teach FYE 101 generally do so over multiple semesters; new instructors wishing to teach the course must attend a workshop to receive training on the pre-loaded Canvas shell, an instructor's guide, and an introduction to the FYE instructor's resource site on Canvas, where they could ask questions on a discussion board and access teaching activities created and shared by other faculty.

Towards the end of the semester, students were provided two opportunities to evaluate the course and instructor. The first was the College's standard Student Evaluation of Teaching form that all courses contractually must administer. However,

results of this evaluation were not made available to faculty until after a subsequent semester begins. The second evaluation was a survey created via Survey Monkey specific to the FYE 101 course, which provided the course developers with immediate feedback in time to make changes for the upcoming semesters.

In addition to eliciting feedback from students about their experiences in their FYE courses, the College's Office of Institutional Research collected data about the effectiveness of the course. Preliminary data using benchmarks of "academic momentum" co-developed by the Community College Resource Center (CCRC) at Columbia University and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) was promising. These data compared full- and part-time first-time in college (FTIC) students who took an FYE course in Fall 2016 to a cohort of FTIC students who did not take the FYE course and are presented in Table 1 (D. Sinnott, personal communication, June 4, 2018).

Table 1

A comparison of benchmarks between FTIC students who took FYE 101 in Fall 2016 and FTIC students who did not take FYE 101

Benchmark Measured	FYE 101	FTIC
Attempted 12+ College Credits in First Term	8.4%	3.7%
Fall to Spring Retention	83.9%	73.7%
Attempted 15+ College Credits in First Year	10.8%	5.8%
Completed College Math in First Year	33.0%	24.0%
Completed College English in First Year	61.4%	43.8%
Completed both College Math and English in First Year	28.9%	17.1%
Fall to Fall Retention	64.7%	49.1%

These data provided preliminary evidence regarding the effectiveness of the FYE course; however, they were limited in two ways. First, further statistical analyses, such as t-tests, were necessary to determine if there were statistical differences on these benchmarks between students who took the course and those who did not. Second, these data were aggregate in nature and therefore, did not allow for an in-depth investigation into understanding the unique experiences of diverse community college students in the context of their FYE 101 course. These two issues are more deeply explored from two of the major paradigms in educational research: positivism and constructivism, described next.

The Positivist and Constructivist Paradigms in Educational Research

There has been an evolution in educational research about the differing, and sometimes competing, paradigms that can most effectively guide the process of scientific inquiry. The paradigm to which a researcher aligns is important because it informs beliefs and assumptions regarding ontology (what is the nature of reality), epistemology (what knowledge can be acquired by the inquirer), and methodology (what means are possible for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data to obtain an answer to the research question; Lincoln & Guba, 2013). The beliefs and assumptions related to these three aspects are collectively called a paradigm, or worldview, and they influence a researcher's decision-making process during the scientific inquiry process (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mack, 2010). Although four major worldviews are often debated in educational research, I limit this discussion to the positivist and

constructivist/interpretivist paradigms to highlight their complimentary relationship to informing the literature, which helps provide rationalization for the design of my study.

The positivistic paradigm, sometimes referred to as the “scientific paradigm”, is centered on hypothesis testing whereby a researcher sets out to “prove or disprove a hypothesis” (Mack, 2010, pg. 6). The major ontological assumption is that there is a real and true reality that can be objectively studied and known. Positivists often employ statistical analysis to quantify this true reality and the “way things are” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109) with the ultimate aim to generalize their results to the larger population. From an epistemological stance, positivists hold that knowledge can be acquired in an entirely objective fashion by an unbiased researcher, whereby they and the subject of study are “independent entities” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110). This means neither the researcher nor the research participants should affect or should be affected by one another. More, positivists often claim a bias- and value-free inquiry process on part of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Methodologically, educational researchers who hold a positivist worldview employ a prescribed set data collection and analysis methods like those used in the natural sciences, such a chemistry and physics, in order to uncover what is true and real about reality. These specific methodologies often make use of experimentation or manipulation and carefully controlling extraneous variables in order to accept or reject the proposed hypothesis, reveal causal relationships to predict and change human behaviors, and uncover knowledge that “can be accepted as facts or laws” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 113). Finally, the quality of positivistic research findings is judged against traditional standards of rigor, such as objectivity, validity and reliability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Returning to the data that had been gathered by NECC, the research on FYE courses clearly fell into the positivistic paradigm by its use of quantification of data and an objective researcher collecting "knowledge" to demonstrate what is "true" about students who take FYE 101. And similar to much of the literature on FYE courses in general, FYE 101 at NECC specifically seemed to demonstrate promising, albeit preliminary, evidence for its effectiveness. However, some scholars correctly argue that using only the positivistic worldview is "reductionist and deterministic" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109). Knowing that more students who take FYE 101 meet select benchmarks at a higher level than those who do not take the course still leaves gap in our knowledge, namely, what about those students who took the course but did not meet the measured benchmarks? It is possible, and probable, that the course, and even its more nuanced subcomponents, are not as equally effective for everyone, but why?

To help guide the exploration of these questions, a constructivist paradigm, sometimes called interpretivism can provide researchers with a framework to guide and inform the process of scientific inquiry that is different from the positivist worldview. Ontologically, constructivists hold that there are multiple realities that exist across unique individuals who construct idiosyncratic meanings of their experiences within a specific context (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In other words, the idea of an exact reality shared by all that is true does not exist; instead, there are multiple experiences of reality because different people interpret and perceive their worlds and events differently. One event or FYE classroom can have as many interpretations as there are people. From an epistemological sense, subjects and/or phenomenon can therefore never be studied completely objectively by an outside researcher but instead must be "observed from

inside through the direct experience of the people" (Mack, 2010, p. 8). This creates an interactive and dynamic relationship between the researcher and the study's participants, opposite of the positivist's stance of an objective "disinterested scientist" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 112). The knowledge obtained cannot reveal causal relationships as each person involved in the specific phenomenon under investigation creates their own meaning in a manner that is individualized to both the person and specific context (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). It is the responsibility of a researcher in this paradigm to "understand, explain, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants (Cohen et al., 2007, as cited in Mack, 2010, p. 8). Thus, the researcher attempts to "understand rather than explain" (Mack, 2010, p. 8) in a causal fashion the participants' experiences as constructed by each person at a specific time in a specific context. As these experiences are idiosyncratic and distinct, they are therefore, not generalizable to other samples. The methodologies by which a researcher provides an explanation of their understanding of individuals' social realities takes on the properties of hermeneutics and dialecticism (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). In other words, this hermeneutic/dialectic methodology brings together researcher and participant as equals to iteratively construct and reconstruct an understanding of the participants' experiences. The traditional standards of rigor and quality used in positivism are replaced by the qualities of trustworthiness, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Some scholars argue these two aforementioned paradigms are competing and by nature of their ontological, epistemological, and methodological viewpoints inherently occupy different ends of a dichotomy. As examples, reality is either true and exists in a

“real sense” or it does not; scientific inquiry is either value-free or value-laden. More, constructivists have seemingly had to argue to earn respect and credence as a legitimate paradigm to guide and inform scientific inquiry against a long withstanding predominance and favoring of the positivist worldview. However, Guba and Lincoln (1994) have called these “paradigm wars…overdrawn” (p. 116). Furthermore, these paradigms do not need to compete as opposite ends of a continuum; rather, they can complement research pursuits to provide a more comprehensive and inclusive knowledge base. Again noting the quantitative data already collected by NECC’s Office of Institutional Research reminiscent of the positivistic paradigm, this qualitative dissertation adopted the constructivist paradigm to complement this Offices’ efforts and more fully inform future iterations of the FYE 101 course to aim for greater inclusivity of all students’ experiences.

Methodological Approach: A Case Study

Qualitative scholars ascribing to a constructivist paradigm may opt for several methodological approaches to study their topics of interest. Creswell and Creswell (2018) identify the following as the five most common approaches used in social sciences: narrative, case study, grounded theory, phenomenology, and ethnography. Of these, the case study approach is one of the most commonly used options (Stake, 2000; Yazan, 2015) particularly when exploring processes in one or more persons (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), whereby a researcher focuses an investigation on “one or a few instances of some social phenomenon” (Babbie, 2007, p. 298). In this approach, a researcher conducts a systemic empirical inquiry to provide an in-depth or “thick description” of a phenomenon that is situated within a specific context utilizing data

drawn from multiple sources (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Yazan, 2015). Researchers who utilize this approach hold the position of “interpreters, and gatherers of interpretations which require them to report their rendition or construction of the constructed reality…” (Yazan, 2015, p. 137). In other words, a researcher conducting a case study provides a “richly descriptive” (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 16) reconstruction of each participant’s own construction of reality in an interactive manner – a dynamic process of interpretation of another’s interpretation - making it an approach that aligns well with the constructivist paradigm.

Baxter and Jack (2008) offer four conditions under which a case study approach is suitable:

1. The research questions ask “how” and “why.”
2. The behaviors of the research participants cannot be “manipulated.”
3. The contextual factors are critical to the phenomenon under investigation.
4. The boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not easily distinguished.

One important consideration when designing a case study is to determine the exact unit of analysis. At times the unit focuses on just one individual; but, more often than not it involves investigations of units that extend beyond an individual to as an event, program, or social group (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). Determining the unit of analysis will help to answer the question, “What is the case” under investigation (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545)? Equally important is “binding” the case, whereby the researcher pinpoints the exact boundaries of the case; otherwise, the process of inquiry can become

unwieldy and far too broad in scope. Baxter and Jack (2008) suggest this binding may be done by “time and place; time and activity; and definition and context” (p. 546).

After delineating the boundaries of the case to determine what the case is and is not, the next consideration is for the researcher to decide on the type of case study to use; options include exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). An exploratory case study is a like a prequel to a study, whereby data is collected to better inform or refine the research questions or determine a study’s feasibility. Explanatory case studies aim to uncover causal relationships between events and outcomes. Finally, descriptive case studies are “used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 548).

It is this last type, the descriptive case study, that aligned best with the aforementioned research questions and participants in this study. The research questions I identified sought to explore the identity development processes of one or more persons - community college students - to provide a “thick description” of identity-related phenomena situated within the context-specific FYE classroom utilizing multiples data sources. Furthermore, descriptive case studies help explore interventions to ask “how” and “why” questions about a phenomenon in a certain context; for example, in this study, *how* did an FYE 101 course (the intervention) attend to the diverse needs of students at an urban community college? Thus, the case under investigation was one section of FYE 101 that met for one hour on three different days of the week. The proposed units of analysis are the identity processes of community college students

(using the DSMRI model) and identity-related aspects of the course (using the PRESS model) within the context of this specific section of FYE 101.

Participants

A total of 12 sections of FYE 101 were offered in the fall term when this study was conducted; ten of these sections met on the College's main campus (three of these ten were reserved for a special pilot program with a local high school), one section was held at the Northeast Regional Center, and one section was online. Out of the seven sections on the main campus, the section chosen for this study was selected for several reasons. First, a liberal arts section, e.g., the FYE 101, was utilized to invite greater diversity among students than would be found in another section, e.g., BUSL 101. Next, one that met on the main campus was purposely selected rather than one offered online or at a regional center, again to be inclusive of a wider range of diverse students as those who take online courses or at a regional center might be more homogenous. Third, the professor of the selected section, Professor Elora (pseudonym), was heavily involved in the development of the course, adhered closely to all aspects of the course document, and provided ongoing updates and professional development to other faculty. In other words, there was a strong likelihood that this section of the course aligned with the intended goals and outcomes of the course; this allowed for a more focused and unbiased investigation into the actual course as it was intended. Finally, this section met on three days that best avoided scheduling conflicts on my behalf to allow for periodic class visits to recruit participants and conduct classroom observations.

After obtaining IRB approval from both Temple University and NECC, I began recruitment. The maximum number of students allowed in any given section of an FYE class is 36, which was the number enrolled in this section. All students over 18 years of age in the identified section were invited to participate in the study. During one course session, I presented a short overview of the study to students and provided copies of the consent and FERPA forms to obtain permission for release of the select course artifacts outlined below. This first round of recruitment did not yield many participants; thus, with the instructor's permission, I emailed the class with a second request asking for help on the project, to which I obtained a greater response.

Nine students in total completed consent forms and agreed to participate in the study. All of them were invited to two interviews and their course artifacts archived. However, out of the nine who replied, five were missing major data points and thus were excluded from the study. See table 2 for the demographic information of the study's four participants. Students who attended the interviews received a $25 gift card at each one, upon arrival, as completion of the interview was not a condition to receive the incentive.

Table 2

Participants' Demographic Information

Name	Gender	Age	Race
Camila	Female	18	Hispanic
Gregory	Male	19	White/Non-Hispanic
Ashanti	Female	18	Black/Non-Hispanic
Bella	Female	21	Hispanic

Data Collection Methods: Artifact Analysis and Interviews

A descriptive case study that adheres to a constructivist paradigm has several options from which to gather data. These include observing participants in the natural setting where the phenomenon occurs, analyzing artifacts, documents or digital content, hosting focus group sessions, and conducting interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). More, it is desirable, if not necessary, that the researcher use multiple sources of data (Yazan, 2015), which allows for a synergistic and comprehensive analysis. Each source serves as “one piece of the ‘puzzle’” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 554) that cumulatively converge to provide a more complete understanding of the phenomenon under investigation and stronger credence to the findings. As such, data for this dissertation included two of the most commonly used sources in qualitative studies: interviews and naturally occurring materials (Peräkylä, 2008).

Interviews are one of the most common and “powerful” (Fontana & Frey, 2008, p. 119) strategies for understanding the human experience and serve many purposes (Lamont & Swidler, 2014; Weiss, 1994.) In addition to being cost-effective, they can offer researchers richly detailed information about a person’s complex and multi-faceted lived experiences and provide multiple points of view about a phenomenon that allows for comparisons between participants (Fontana & Frey, 2008; Galletta, 2013; Lamont & Swidler, 2014; Weiss, 1994). Interviews can uncover participants’ affective mechanisms that are not always readily observed in their actions (Lamont & Swindler, 2014) and provide insight into a person’s experiences that might otherwise be unavailable, such as past events (Peräkylä, 2008).

Interviews range in how much an interviewer may deviate from protocol, from structured to semi-structured or unstructured (Fontana & Frey, 2008; Galletta, 2013). At one end of the continuum, structured interviews follow a strict, pre-determined protocol from which a researcher cannot deviate whereby participants are asked the exact same questions in the exact order given. More, they infrequently use open-ended questions, instead often limiting the number of responses from which a participant may choose (Fontana & Frey, 2008; Fontana & Prokos, 2007). Conversely, in unstructured interviews, the questions asked, which are still relevant to the phenomenon under investigation and theoretical underpinning of the study, unfold during the interview process and “flow naturally from what preceded” (Weiss, 1994, p. 207). With this format, researchers have a predetermined focus of study; however, questions are more open-ended and even less formal (Fontana & Prokos, 2007). Although sometimes overlooked among researchers, the semi-structured interview is a combination of these two extremes and is an appealing methodological choice because of its “unique flexibility” (Galletta, 2013, p. 1). With semi-structured interviews, a protocol is developed that provides an adequate framework of questions guided by the study’s theoretical structure while also allowing for the participants to contribute additional information through follow up probes.

For this study, students participated in semi-structured interviews in the spring term after the course ended; each lasted approximately 30 minutes. To assist with data analysis, all interviews were recorded and transcribed. Participants were asked pre-determined questions informed by the proposed study’s research questions and theoretical frameworks (see Appendix B) to gain an understanding into their lived experiences in the

course. However, the semi-structured nature allowed flexibility to deviate from this protocol and give space for the student's own "narrative to unfold" (Galletta, 2013, p. 2), for example, through use of probes or follow up questions.

In addition to interviewing students, I interviewed the College's coordinator of curriculum development and Professor Elora for approximately one hour to gain background information about the course. Finally, I interviewed the professor of the course using a semi-structured protocol developed with the research questions and analytical models in mind (see Appendix E); this interview lasted approximately one hour and was transcribed for coding.

A second common source of data for qualitative studies are artifacts that occur naturally in the study's setting, which Peräkylä (2008) says puts "the researcher in more direct touch of the very object" (p. 351) that is under investigation. The use of such artifacts and other documentation is especially beneficial because of their ease of access and low-cost. Moreover, they differ from verbal information in that they are a long-lasting, permanent records that live past an event's ending (Hodder, 2000). Hodder furthers that people's words and actions do not always align, concluding that a comprehensive analysis of any kind cannot be limited to interviews alone but must be supplemented by "material traces" (p. 705).

To this end, the second component of the data collection process included a review of the course syllabus (see Appendix C) as well as the following assignments that students submitted as part of the course requirements:

- Mindfulness Portfolio: This task involved students completing a worksheet every week with prompts about a variety of topics, such as future goals and

emotional well-being. After completing the worksheet in class, the professor allowed students to verbalize any thoughts stemming from the task. At the end of the term, students submitted all 14 worksheets in a folder for a grade.

- Academic, Career, and Transfer Plan: This multi-part plan involved students taking career related assessments on a computerized software, reviewing their results under the direction of a counselor, planning out their coursework for each term to meet all curricular requirements, and comparing two potential transfer institutions.
- Financial Plan: This assignment asked students to propose how they would fund their education each term.
- Scholarship Reflection: This task asked students to reflect upon two scholarships for which they qualified, after submitting their scholarship application; however, this assignment was removed from the course as discussed above.
- Snapshot Presentation: This project came towards the end of the term almost as a "capstone" project. Students had to reflect on several questions, such as their greatest educational influence and ways to manage problems in college, and submit the answers in one of several ways, such as a video recording or animation.

These assignments were helpful in complimenting the interview data and helped capture the content, structure, and processes of students' role identities using DSMRI model as well as aspects of the course that align with the principles of the PRESS model.

Finally, I conducted three separate classroom observations of the course. These observations occurred towards the end of the term in late November and early December. Students had already heard my recruitment speech and were familiar with my objectives. They generally ignored me and interacted with their peers and professor. During the observations, I took notes and recorded general observations.

All data collection methods have their merits and limitations, and none are inherently good or bad. Instead, some methods are deemed better or more suitable for the questions being asked. In accordance with Lamont and Swidler's (2014) recommendation for "a pluralistic and pragmatic" (p. 154) approach to data collection, this study's use of interviews and course artifacts provided rich sources of data for analysis utilizing the PRESS and DSMRI models, described next.

Data Analysis: PRESS and DSMRI Models

Data analysis for the project followed the recommendations set forth in the DSMRI Analysis Guide and Codebook (see Appendix D). Before analyzing the transcribed interviews and course artifacts using the DSMRI and PRESS theoretical frameworks, I reviewed each source several times to gain familiarity with their content, noted any preliminary themes that emerged, and identified any prominent role-identities expressed. Next, I analyzed each participant's data through a combined deductive (model-guided) and inductive (data-generated) interpretive analysis; my advisor served as an expert auditor to enhance trustworthiness of my analysis. To aid with the organization of the volume of data and efficiency during analysis, I utilized ATLAS.ti, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). I used the DSMRI framework to identify the contents, structures, and developmental processes of college students' role

identities (CSRIs) while my analysis framed by the PRESS Model explored the aspects of the FYE context that promoted adaptive college student role identity exploration and development.

From the DSMRI framework, each data source (interviews and course artifacts) was analyzed for references to the four components to the model specific to the community college student role identity (CSRI) for each participant: purposes and goals, self-perceptions and self-definitions, epistemological/ontological beliefs, and perceived action possibilities. As individual roles are situated within a larger system of identities that are also dynamic and interdependent, I made note of other role identities mentioned, however, these were not the primary identity understudy and thus, not heavily emphasized in the findings. After identifying the content related to the community college student role identity, the analysis considered structural components related to this role (i.e., harmony or discord within components; alignment or misalignment among components; integration or disintegration between role identities) and any identity development processes that the data revealed. Additionally, I made note of students' conflicts, tensions, and affective experiences observed in each DSMRI components.

Next, I reviewed all data sources to apply the PRESS model as the analytical lens. In this stage of analysis, I noted examples where the FYE course environment enacted one or more of the four principles to promote identity exploration. To offer additional perspectives about how the FYE course manifested the PRESS principles, I analyzed the course syllabus and the semi-structured interview with the professor. Again, the analysis included both inductive and deductive analyses with two models.

Finally, each participant's data was synthesized into a written narrative that was organized around the components of the DSMRI model and PRESS principles. These narratives for each student were compared and reviewed to highlight their similarities and distinctions. As noted by Stake, "Case researchers seek both what is common and what is particular about the case" through their data collection methods (2000, p. 439). The use of cross-case comparisons and multiple sources of data helped ensure rigor and trustworthiness of the study, discussed next.

Rigor and Trustworthiness

Proponents of the positivist paradigm, who preference quantitative methods, judge the quality of research studies and their findings using standards of internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). In response to questions about the rigor and trustworthiness of studies of a qualitative type typically preferred by scholars taking a constructivist worldview, Guba and Lincoln (1986) developed a set of standards that are more appropriate for and applicable to such constructivist-oriented qualitative inquiries. These standards are often paired with the aforementioned quantitative standards as follows: credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability), and confirmability (objectivity) (Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Shelton, 2004). This next section provides a very brief description of each of these standards, followed by the methods utilized to meet standards of rigor and trustworthiness in the study.

Credibility is the standard that addresses the truthfulness of the findings or how well they reflect reality; researchers aim to achieve credibility through a number of methods, such as member checks, triangulation, referential adequacy materials, peer

debriefing, and negative case analysis (Guba, 1981; Shenton, 2004). Transferability refers to the applicability of one study's findings to a different context with different participants; however, Guba acknowledged external validity (generalizability) was a near-impossible feat because of how "intimately tied to the times and the contexts" (p. 80) the phenomena, situations, and people that are a part of the inquiry process are. Dependability signifies consistency or stability that the same findings would occur if the study were repeated with similar participants (Guba, 1981); here, we must accept a certain level of ambiguity in the findings because of the time- and context-bound phenomena under investigation. Finally, confirmability is related to the level to which the findings and interpretations stem from the data collected. While constructivists understand there are a multitude of realities and the positivist's stance of neutrality and full objectivity are unachievable in this type of research, there are methods that can increase the rigor and trustworthiness, described for this study below.

Triangulation is when a variety of data sources are utilized to verify the conclusions drawn, and referential adequacy materials, whereby documents are used as a checks and balance to further test the interpretations, were incorporated. This study used multiple interviews and different course artifacts to triangulate the findings and glean a more comprehensive understanding of the community college student role identity in the context of an FYE course. With peer debriefing, a researcher seeks input from other professionals in order to "test" their interpretations and elicit questions from these peers. For this study, the professor for the FYE course and my advisor helped provided debriefing during the analysis process. Negative case analysis is when a researcher seeks out contradictions and alternative explanations for the findings; this occurred throughout

the analysis and also during debriefing sessions with Professor Elora and my advisor. To improve credibility, a researcher can incorporate Geertz's concept of "thick descriptions" to provide the rich detail needed to draw parallels between two contexts and judge transferability from one context to another. To achieve this standard, I provided thick, descriptive information about the College and the FYE course; my initial set of student narratives were lengthy and exceptionally "thick" in nature that gave rich detail and often quoted the data for evidence. Again, utilizing different sources for data collection, in addition to use of an audit trail helped increase dependability in this study. Lastly, as referenced, my faculty advisor served as an external auditor to help meet the standard of confirmability.

Positionality Statement

In January 2006, I became an employee of NECC. I started as a counselor for a grant-funded program before moving into a full-time faculty position in psychology. As such, my experiences working at the College influences my biases, assumptions, and preconceived notions about students' experiences and challenges that may influence my data analysis and interpretation. In other words, my own role-identities that comprise purpose and goals within these roles, self-perceptions and self-definitions related to these roles, ontological and epistemological assumptions, and perceived action possibilities affect my student researcher identity. To help guard against the influence of the content of my own role identities, my advisor and committee chair served as a checks and balance.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the findings using the PRESS and DSMRI models as the theoretical frameworks. The first section extrapolates the ways the FYE context manifested the four PRESS principles to promote constructive CSRIs in participants. This section is subdivided according to the model's four principles: Promoting Self-Relevancy, Triggering Identity Exploration, Facilitating a Sense of Safety, and Scaffolding Exploratory Actions. Each of these sections with a summation of each individual PRESS principle, followed by a broader synopsis of the PRESS model in the FYE course with consideration for the study's research questions.

The second component to this chapter provides the DSMRI analysis of the data to more deeply capture the nature and development of each student's CSRI and highlight the components of the course that influenced identity exploration and formation processes. These findings are sectioned off according to the four major components of the DSMRI model: Purpose & Goals, Self-Perceptions & Self-Definitions, Ontological & Epistemological Beliefs, and Action Possibilities, as related to CSRI. This second section ends with a cross-case synthesis of the DSMRI framework in relation to the study's research questions.

The PRESS Model of Environmental Support for Identity Formation

For this portion of the dissertation, I utilized the PRESS model (Kaplan et al., 2014) to analyze the data collected in the study regarding the features of the FYE course environment that promoted adaptive CSRI exploration among participants. For each of

the four principles, I give a descriptive analysis of where the course itself and the specific professor addressed each principle, followed by a discussion of deficits or limitations, and subsequent potential solutions. As explained next, the course organically met many of the principles exceptionally well by nature of its learning outcomes and pedagogical design but some also stemmed from qualities and values Professor Elora herself held.

One of these components to her teacher role identity that gels well with an idea Kaplan et al. (2014) maintained is critical before any adaptive identity exploration can occur: the agent driving the identity exploration process must understand the students that they teach. It is clear Professor Elora adopted that perspective, not only with her contribution towards the course's development but also in how she conducted her class. In several instances, she spoke about considering where students were in their academic career (i.e., first versus second semester), contemplating the impact of the developmental levels of students seated before her in the FYE classroom (something she does not experience in her content courses), and her belief she must "follow up more with [FYE] students than I do with my other classes because they're going through more stuff."

Promoting Self-Relevance

Many aspects of the FYE course by nature of its learning outcomes and subsequent design, including work that is standardized across all sections, aimed to give students agency in making the content relevant to their own individual situations. What's more, students in the FYE 101 course designated for liberal arts came to the class with a wide variety of possible careers, interests, experiences, and additional role identities that dynamically influenced their individual CSRIs; for example, the participants in this study had varied career goals from medicine to social work to possibly journalism, making one

faculty member's ability to make content relevant to upwards of 36 possible career paths fundamentally impossible. Thus, the course necessitated that the student's made connections of content to self on their own. Given the learning outcomes for the course, it was unsurprising, then, that the data revealed numerous avenues where this principle of encouraging students to generate the self-relevancy was observed; still, the data revealed some gaps and generated a few questions surrounding this principle. Additionally, the interview with the curriculum office director and Professor Elora revealed that some aspects of the course were standardized across all sections, including the academic, career and transfer plan, the snapshot presentation, and the mindful Monday weekly activities; however, professors decided for themselves *how* to teach the standardized content. Therefore, while some of the required components of the course might demonstrate this PRESS principle across sections, there are some aspects of this particular section of FYE included in the study that were potentially unique to the characteristics and values Professor Elora held as part of her teacher role identity.

Academic, Career, and Transfer Plan

An important component of the course that adhered well with the first PRESS principle was the academic, career and transfer plan, which was a standardized requirement across all sections. One way this assignment adhered to this principle involved the reflective questions students were prompted to answer about their results from a computerized career exploration software that asked about their goals, values, interests, skills, and personality traits to offer career suggestions. Students then selected three careers to reflect upon more in-depth; at least two of these careers needed to originate from the results of their career exploration assessments. Some questions, among

others, asked students to denote the advantages and disadvantages that each of the three possible careers they selected brought for them personally, the steps needed to achieve each career, such as degree requirements, and the skills needed to perform the job well, pushing them to consider the self-relevant aspects of their current CSRIs and future career identities.

In addition to evaluating three chosen careers, the academic, career and transfer plan also asked students to plan for their futures by developing a semester-by-semester academic plan of coursework and exploring their transfer school options. First, the students considered a variety of questions given by the professor that prompted them to thoughtfully consider their projected course load each term based on the relevant circumstances of their life, such as jobs or family responsibilities. Next, students were taught how to use the College's degree audit software to reveal their outstanding coursework and develop their academic plans for each remaining term they had at the college. This particular aspect of the assignment, however, was not experienced as meaningful and self-relevant among all students. For example, for a new student like Camila, it was impactful, whereby in one interview she expressed her appreciation because of how the professor "makes you think…about the future and not just this semester but the upcoming ones. And what's gonna be your, your, like, your schedule, if you're available, how to pick teachers, which is like a really important thing." Conversely, the activity was not meaningful to Bella, a second-year student, who lamented, "I kind of felt like, 'Oh my God I already know this.'"

Other aspects of the course were perceived as self-relevant across more participants, such as the portion of the assignment exploring transfer school options, for

which students had to select at least two to compare. For example, among the reflective prompts given, one was for students to consider the factors relevant to deciding among their two transfer options, such as where it was located, how much it cost to attend, the diversity of the campus community, and funding opportunities. Here, students were able to consider those factors they viewed as self-relevant to their future identities. For Camila, the prompt regarding transportation/location was particularly meaningful as this was a logistical consideration that she identified as a limitation relevant her CSRI, both at NECC and her future four-year transfer institution.

Snapshot Presentation

Another assignment that allowed for students to steer the connection of the course content to their life was in the snapshot presentation. First, the manner in which the assignment could be completed was student driven. While many opted to submit a video recording of themselves talking to a video camera, students were invited to submit other creative projects, such as animations, musical accompaniments, or PowerPoint presentations with voiceovers, giving students agency to choose the design based on their own interests and skills. On this assignment, students were asked to discuss their own educational biographies as well as people they viewed as educational influences. Per the assignment's instructions, though, students selected the questions to answer from a list based on what was most "relevant" to them. All students were required to discuss at least three solutions that they could "use to avoid and/or cope with the pitfalls and distractions" they might face. While all had to address this particular question, how they answered and the solutions given were generated by the students themselves, presumably based on their own lived experiences or knowledge acquired from the FYE course.

Mindful Monday Portfolio

One of the most prominent examples of students steering content to make it self-relevant was on the weekly mindful Monday activity, another aspect of the course that was both a standardized component and highly meaningful to all participants in this study. Although the professor steered the overarching topics via the prompts given on the worksheets (that were often identity exploration triggers and discussed more in the next section), they were typically vague in nature, which allowed students to generate answers about events and challenges relevant to their own lives at that particular time in the semester. After having time to reflect and write their answers, Professor Elora gave students a chance to talk about their reflections. Students often wrote and spoke of aspects that were relevant to their CSRIs, for example, about professors that students did or did not recommend for their classmates, as well as challenges created from their other role identities, such as relationship issues and even past traumatic experiences. Topics varied across the 14 mindful Monday worksheets. One that focused more on the cognitive aspect to their CSRI asked students to do a “brain dump” of thoughts that weren’t serving them by writing down anything that came to mind in a cloud drawn on the paper. Another focused on ways they could increase their own emotional well-being. Yet another one asked students to outline all of their achievements to date and include all future goals they had for themselves. Five of the worksheets that were completed throughout the term involved an identical self-assessment questionnaire that asked students about their level of preparedness for the course that day, including timeliness, and the grade they expected to earn in the course. They were then prompted to reflect on the answers they gave to the previous questions, discuss any obstacles they were facing, and ways to overcome them.

Student Driven Choices

Lastly, two other standardized components of the course enhanced students' agencies in constructing self-relevance of the course content by offering options from which they could choose to best meet aspects of their own CSRI; these were the campus scavenger hunt and the requirement to attend a campus event. For the scavenger hunt task, one that almost all of the students in this study named as a highly valuable aspect of the course, students had to visit various offices on campus and obtain proof of their visit. The list from which students could chose had 30 different areas of the College; while they did not have to visit all of them, the fewer number of offices resulted in progressively fewer points earned. For example, in order to earn an A on the task they had to visit at least 20 areas of the college while visiting fewer than 10 resulted in a grade of 0. In regard to self-relevancy, it is of note that only the students new to the college (Camila, Ashanti, and Gregory) identified this as an important aspect of the course but the more advanced student, Bella, did not name this activity as self-relevant.

The second standardized aspect of the course that encouraged students to construct their own self-relevancy was the requirement to attend a campus event that met certain predetermined guidelines and was "presumably most interesting to them." This task was due at the end of the term, and thus, mentioned by the professor during a classroom observation. Some options of events from which students could choose included a workshop by the counseling department, an event by a student organization, a performance of some kind, or a lecture by the college president.

Professor's Influence

While the previously mentioned assignments were required in all sections of FYE and were standardized in terms of instructions, outcomes, and grading criteria, the classroom observations also showed the style of Professor Elora's lectures drew students in to make the content relevant to each of their own unique CSRIs. For example, when discussing the topic of networking in one class meeting, she called on students, named their career goal, then asked them to state someone who could personally help them in some way achieve that career goal. She asked the class more generally to think who they could ask to write them a letter of recommendation. In another classroom observation, Professor Elora taught students about the idea of an "elevator pitch," a prepared introduction to offer when meeting people who were a potential network. She modeled a structure they might follow, then invited them to take a few minutes and write their own introductions. Afterwards, students teamed up to practice handshakes and gave their elevator pitches to each other. While students worked in teams, the professor circled the room, offering help and providing feedback on strengths and suggested revisions. She asked for a volunteer to read theirs aloud as a model for the class, and one did. In these activities, she took the topic under discussion and asked students to create the relevancy to their own situations.

Summarizing the Promoting Self-Relevance Principle

Overall, applying the Promote Self-Relevance principle to analyze the course environment indicated many opportunities for students to drive making the content relevant to their CSRIs, including several of the assignments required of all sections. However, some gaps were observed in students' opportunities to create self-relevance.

Bella helped to identify one major limitation, when a more advanced student like herself takes a course that is designed for newer first year, if not first semester, college students. In cases of advanced students, they might be limited in how much they can realistically make the content relevant, such as creating an academic plan for each term and the campus scavenger hunt, activities a second-year student would likely to have done. Additionally, it was uncertain whether all sections of the FYE course provided students the same opportunities to create self-relevancy during class meetings or was it that the extent it was observed was unique to Professor Elora's section. For example, for each lecture, she had a detailed, interactive, engaging PowerPoint presentation, with prompts for students to take agency in creating the self-relevancy of the course already included. However, as noted in the interview with the curriculum office director and Professor Elora, each FYE professor had discretion to select *how* they were covered each of the required 14 topics. Thus, whereas one professor might ask students to analyze a case study to cover one topic, another might invite students to apply the content in their own uniquely, meaningful, relevant ways. Therefore, it is uncertain if this principle would be observed in lectures outside of this specific section taught by Professor Elora.

Triggering Identity Exploration

As was the case with the first principle, the nature and design of the FYE course included components that organically triggered CSRI exploration among students. While Professor Elora stated in her interview that identity exploration was not particularly at the "front and center" of the course design, the students offered a differing perspective. Ashanti explained in her interview, "The most valuable parts of the course…was identifying who we were…as people and recognizing our own talents and, like, strengths

and weaknesses." Gregory agreed, stating that he would explain the course to someone unfamiliar as, "Basically…it's you finding yourself in the beginning of college." One of the most prominent ways this PRESS principle was observed in the course was through revelation of the various "relevant differences" between students' current and future identity structures, namely gaps in their knowledge and skills identified as self-relevant. Many of the assignments that promoted the first PRESS principle also triggered CSRI exploration, including the scavenger hunt and campus tours; the academic, career and transfer plan; the snapshot presentation; and the mindful Monday activities. While the course offered many instances of triggering identity exploration in students, there were several areas of potential improvement; for example, more intrusive interventions for students who learn of relevant differences between their current and future identities but remain stagnant in resolving them.

Gaps in Knowledge and Skills

One of the primary ways that the FYE course triggered identity exploration was helping students identify gaps in knowledge and skills that were important to their developing an adaptive CRSI, such as information about campus resources and College policies and procedures. One of the most oft mentioned aspects of the course that filled gaps in their knowledge were the scavenger hunt and class-wide tours of the campus, mentioned by all of the first-year students (but not Bella, the second-year student). As Camila explained, the class' various tours of the campus, led by the Professor, were "really helpful because I didn't know where, where was which rooms;" the knowledge she gained from this aspect of the course was later meaningful when she filed her income taxes with the help from the Single Stop. For Gregory, the self-relevant gap he identified

was the location of the gymnasium, important to the fitness regime he faithfully maintained and valued.

The course also helped students identify lapses in knowledge about certain policies and procedures important to the development of their CSRI, such as how to apply for financial aid and register for courses. Relatedly and informally, the course offered students a channel to identify those professors that they felt would be a good fit for their CSRI based on the qualities they had identified as important; this was particularly important to Camila, who spoke often of an ill-fit with her English professor. One of the more confusing aspects of the course, mentioned by most of the students (Gregory, Bella, and Camila), along with Professor Elora, was the unit on financial aid, which she described as the course's weakest component. The federal governmental rules and regulations changed often and were not easy to understand, she explained. Students found the FAFSA form confusing, along with the policies surrounding maintaining good academic standing to continue receiving federal funds. Bella specifically identified this last point meaningful; specifically, how withdrawing from courses affected federal financial aid, presumably because she struggled in her English courses and perhaps contemplated dropping them from her roster. Camila expressly told Professor Elora, "Thanks for letting us know about scholarships! It is greatly appreciated," who then included them in her financial plan for future semesters. Next, several students mentioned the course's instruction in registering for courses as an important skill they gained. What's more, beyond just what classes to take and how to register for them on the online platform, the course also was meaningful in helping students identify professors to take in subsequent terms through informal dialogue with classmates. This idea was key for all

participants in the study, emphasized by Camila here: “It made me realize that for upcoming semesters I just need to be careful to.... Like what teachers to choose” and later emphasizing it was “a really important thing.” Others noted learning of web sites such as RateMyProfessor.com to evaluate and select future professors.

Academic, Career, and Transfer Plan

The next aspect whereby this principle was observed was in several areas of the academic, career, and transfer plan. Obviously, an assignment that asks students to explore a variety of aspects about themselves to offer career suggestions was designed to trigger identity exploration in students, more specifically career identity. The software utilized in the course asked students dozens of questions on a variety of topics, such as the personal values they espoused that were most important to them; the subjects in which they performed the best; any special skills or talents the student had; and their personality traits. These questions were designed to trigger identity exploration by considering the self-relevant aspects to their career identities (e.g., among values, is helping others or working independently more important in a career?). As many of the students in the study had predetermined careers in mind prior to the FYE course (Bella, Camila, and Gregory), this part of the assignment helped more to reinforce their choices and offer deeper exploration of steps necessary to obtain their goals; i.e., the major to declare at NECC. For an undecided student like Ashanti, who was not as far along in her career identity exploration, the assignment was more meaningful in an earlier objective to identify potential careers; while this task did not result in her actually identifying a more concrete major or career path, it did help her identify interest areas and then select related coursework (discussed later).

Another part of this plan that triggered identity exploration among students was the lesson related to the degree audit software. During this session, students learned how to use the software to conduct a "what-if" analysis; this revealed to them how changing their majors would affect any new curricular requirements. Students were prompted to consider various consequences of changing majors, such as what requirement the FYE 101 course might (or might not) satisfy, changes to their mathematical course sequencing, and the benefits and drawbacks to changing their major. As mentioned previously, students answered questions about their availability, time commitments, and other responsibilities, to which Ashanti highlighted one way the assignment triggered students to consider their preferences by stating, "If you're a morning person, then go to class by morning, but if you're not then try afternoon when you know you'll be awake."

In addition to the reflective questions, students created their academic plans and laid out their intended coursework each term using the degree audit software to first identify the curricular requirements still outstanding. This aspect of the assignment triggered identity exploration to reveal "relevant differences" among students, particularly Gregory and Ashanti. For Gregory, the academic plan revealed a need to take summer classes in order to meet his goal to graduate in two years. However, he also noted challenges to taking summer courses, such as their being cost-prohibitive, and seemed to conclude they were not a viable option for him. However, the FYE course did not help him resolve the conflict of this "relevant difference" that term. For Ashanti, the course helped her identify creativity as an interest of hers as well as a goal to improve her research and writing skills, which in turn helped her select courses for spring. However, she did not complete her academic plan to include all 61 required credits and only listed

courses for the subsequent spring term. Both Professor Elora and the academic advisor alerted Ashanti to the incomplete submission; however, she did not turn in a corrected version of her plan and ultimately did not earn a degree. Thus, for Ashanti, the course was not able to help her resolve her revealed differences in her CSRI.

Snapshot Presentation

While Professor Elora did not feel identity exploration was at the front and center of the course design per se, she did believe it was a primary objective for the snapshot presentation assignment. When asked about it in our interview, she stated, “I think they get a chance to explore identities and tell a little bit about themselves. So I've always liked that in terms of getting a little insight into them. Um, in some of the assignments as well as, some of them are deeply personal.” The questions from which students may select are all aimed towards triggering exploration of their CSRI identity. For example, they might consider discussing someone who was their greatest educational influence, what they learned from them, and why they were an inspiration to them. The second question asked about their educational autobiographies, where they could talk about their greatest challenges to their educational success, fears they had related to being in college, how college was different from their high school experiences, among others. Students are encouraged to consider the influences and experiences that shaped formation of their current CSRI using self-selected relevant questions for guidance.

Mindful Monday Portfolio

Like the prompts given in the snapshot presentations, those offered in the weekly Mindful Monday worksheets were also aimed towards triggering adaptive CSRIs. For example, one worksheet was about students’ emotional well-being and on it, it asked

students to consider “items that you need or want for increased emotional wellbeing.” This was followed by action steps they could take to obtain items they listed. Another worksheet asked students to write down the goals they had achieved to date and include future goals they set. Finally, another one asked students to “check in” with their thoughts and feelings they were experiencing in that moment, describe any emotions they felt in the body, and reflect on how comfortable they were with this check-in activity. The mindful Monday activities were meaningful identity triggers for all participants. In fact, for Gregory, the information he gleaned from his cumulation of 14 worksheets was impactful for his CSRI. When he reflected on how the course affected him in our interview, he named these weekly journal prompts stating, “Looking at it, like, that's a good idea because you write everything you're thinking and if you're being honest, like you're going to know where you need to improve,” suggesting that for him, the relevance of these weekly tasks was through triggering “relevant differences” that he viewed as areas for potential growth.

Summarizing the Triggering Identity Exploration Principle

Unsurprisingly, a course like FYE, with its accompanying learning objectives and subsequent pedagogical design, naturally had many pathways that triggered students to consider their current and future CSRIs, take note of the “relevant differences” observed, and create resolutions to merge the two identities. For students, key components of the course included learning about the policies and procedures important to successfully manifest their CSRIs surrounding topics like financial aid, course registration, and simply navigating the campus to find offices and resources. Informally, students were able to explore and identify future professors they felt would best fit with their current CSRI

based on self-relevant factors. And many of the assignments under investigation in this study, including the academic, career, and transfer plan, the capstone-like snapshot presentation, and weekly mindful Monday worksheets, encouraged students to explore many aspects of their CSRIs such as past and future goals and emotional health. Furthermore, these activities at times encouraged students to rectify any relevant differences they discovered, albeit were not always successful in doing so; for example, neither Gregory nor Ashanti created viable solutions to the barriers they uncovered when their CSRIs were triggered. More, we might use Ashanti's case to identify characteristics of students who are potentially at risk for not successfully completing the course, or subsequently a degree, such as lack of an explicit career goal at the course's end or incomplete academic plan upon completion of the assignment.

Facilitating a Sense of Safety

The data indisputably revealed this PRESS principle in effect in the FYE classroom. Creating a "safe space" was an intentional goal for which Professor Elora was thoughtfully cognizant to promote, and every student offered their highest regards in her achievement. Both the atmosphere, including one of safety and mutual respect in which all student experiences were honored, and her warm, compassionate demeaner were one of the most valuable and oft mentioned aspects participants discussed. It truly cannot be overstated how tirelessly and deliberately this professor worked towards creating a safe space for all students and thus, the numerous instances that this aspect of the PRESS model was observed. It began with the absolute respect and reverence she demonstrated for her students, and the values and beliefs regarding her teacher role. These in turn influenced choices she made about the course's activities and the manner in which she

conducted her class. In turn, participants sung her praises in all respects; they all reported a positive student-teacher relationship, some noting the adaptive peer support networks they formed in FYE; these budding relationships are all indicative of these sense of safety students felt in the classroom. The overwhelming manner in which this principle was manifested in this FYE section leaves the few possible considerations for improvement more related to administrative functions and logistics.

The Influence of Professor Elora's Traits and Values

In our interview, Professor Elora radiates warmth, compassion, and respect for her students, both through her words and the emotion she shows when discussing different "cases." Although she simplistically stated in our interview, "I do care about my students a lot," it is actually quite an understatement for it seemingly was much more that just "care" or concern, as will be demonstrated throughout this section of the analysis. For example, later in our interview, she described a student from the FYE class that fall term that captured the effervescence that she radiated when discussing her students, almost like a proud mother, with phrases like, "I absolutely adore [him]" and "I love, love, love this student" and "He's like the sweetest, nicest. I just love him." In another instance, she was clearly upset recounting one of the most traumatic "cases" she had ever faced that "broke her heart," later correcting herself saying, "I mean I call it a case, I mean it's not a case. It's a life." She also described times she had gone far beyond the teacher role to help with things like secure housing or transportation.

This self-corrected statement - from "case" to "life" –highlighted the underpinnings of the unconditional positive regard she demonstrated for her students as stemming from the values and beliefs she held about her teaching RI, all which

influenced choices she made about the course and how she facilitated students' perceptions of safety. She described her job as "70% teaching, 30% social work," which was noted in her discussion of a student potentially showing signs of PTSD following her witnessing a fatal mass shooting. She added to list of role identities inherent in her teaching to include a parent as well, stating, "I increasingly see my role as a, in FYE, as kind of almost like a mother hen...that keeps them supported through that journey." This support extended far beyond the classroom, however. In reference to the aforementioned student that she "adored," she explained that he invited her to attend an awards ceremony and she enthusiastically explained, "And so I went!! Yeah, I go! I go to these things. If students ask me to do something like that, if I'm, if I'm free, I will go. So I go to weddings, I go to Christenings, I go to award ceremonies, I go to their plays. I go because I think that is important." She also recognized the complexities inherent to students' lives and how other roles and outside factors can deeply affect their CSRI, offering empathy that facilitated students feeling safe in addition to resources to help students cope, such as counseling and victim services when students revealed traumas. She was noticeably adamant about the importance of her investment into her students and consideration for their multitude of identities, naming many various roles she believed were inherent to her teacher RI that affected how she created a safe space, all of which is time consuming and demands a tremendous amount of human capital to sustain.

These values and beliefs that Professor Elora espoused, and their influence on choices she made regarding how she conducted her course, contributed to students feeling a sense of safety in the classroom. From day one she communicated her respect for and to all students simply and intentionally by learning their names; she explained

how she took a picture of them all holding name tags, explaining, “I’m committed to learning everybody’s’ name so I study those bad boys.” Additionally, she communicated allyship to members of the LGBTQ+ community and solicited the students’ “preferred names” and “preferred pronouns” in a “low stake’s way.” She later discussed how she was intentional in talking “about the supports that are built into community colleges” in terms of resources that can provide “wraparound” support to all students during class meetings. This obviously also included discussions of counseling when students revealed traumatizing situations, such as the mass shooting tragically experienced by one student. More generally, when trying to engage a student who was disengaged from a lecture, she aimed for kindness and subtlety over shame; explaining, “For the sleepy students, what I do, my strategy, is to go over to them, tap them on the shoulder, and just ask if they are okay, rather than chastising, just starting that conversation of you know, what's going on?”

Professor Elora also extended the requirement that students visit their FYE professors during the term by requiring that all students visit her a second time at midterm and then an optional third visit for extra credit towards the end of term because, “I really want to hammer home that I'm there for them.” She invited students in, and with “big pile of candy” used the “one-on-one time” to “talk about life” and build relationships with each one. In addition to building in requirements for seeing her in office hours, she organically connected with students in the classroom, particularly those showing concerning behaviors like missing work or attendance issues. She explained, “I try to catch students after class; I have a little cupboard in my classroom. It's great for kind of like luring them in” to talk behind closed doors. She furthered that in this “private space”

she does not begin by asking about their behaviors or else she would become their "enemy" but instead would ask, "Are you alright, like, what's going on?" She felt this let students "control their narrative" and "shows you care." Both the required and optional office visits and check-ins before or after class were because, "I really more than anything, I want to build those, that rapport, with students" so that when they face a challenge, "They've got one person to come to."

Once again connecting her values and beliefs to how she conducted her classroom and connecting to the "wraparound" support she referenced particularly for marginalized communities, she added, "I also try and make my classroom a safe space; safe for all races; safe for LGTBQ students; safe for different religions, like as much as I've got a handle on that, safe for my students who have other abilities." The creation of this safe space was critical to Professor Elora because of the "different, diverse identities in the institution." For her, it was "really important that they feel valued and that they feel that they're respected." For these reasons she is well-versed in connecting students to the resources that serve those with "identities that might not fit the mainstream," such as the centers for LGBTQ+ students and African American men.

In addition to referring students to these resources and discussing them in class, Professor Elora also created the rule that "the students have to respect each other." She described the "spiel" she provided before discussing topics like gender and sexual orientation that might elicit "hate." She also explained that she will "challenge people who say very ignorant things" and discussed a time a student made a gendered, offensive, statement about same-sex couples. She elaborated, "My responsibility…to kind of check them gently." She discussed the delicate balance she must strike when these situations

occur, stating, “If you don't appear to check it in classroom, you lose the people that might feel offended by that comment” and then, “The transitioning student is never going to feel safe in my class, is never going to feel like I have their back.” Conversely, “I think sometimes you have to be gentle” because, “if you're too harsh, no student would ever speak again for fear of being chastised. But if you don't say anything, you're complicit so finding a way to gently push students” in these types of situations is often the route she took.

Students’ Perceptions

To this point I have predominantly focused on Professor Elora’s perspective on the sense of safety manifested FYE classroom and every participant verified her assessment. First, the adoration and respect she felt for students was by and large mutual on their part. Each provided unwavering and overwhelmingly positive reviews of Professor Elora, describing in her glowing terms, figuratively and literally. The manner in which students talk about the course and Professor provides support for and credence to her statements about creating a safe classroom safe for every student. While all four students spoke about qualities Professor Elora espoused that contributed to how the classroom felt safe for them, Gregory and Ashanti spoke more generally on their sense of the teacher and atmosphere she created while Bella and Camila spoke of more specific distressing circumstances that the course and Professor Elora helped them navigate. Additionally, a lack of awareness to navigating the campus was especially triggering a lack of safety among new students, to which the course helped to rectify.

Gregory agreed with her self-described parental role, stating she “definitely was a mother figure.” He stated that they were able to talk about “personal life” and “whatever

we were going through" in class and with her because she was "really understanding." He described the weekly mindful Monday discussions as "therapy" for "people are going through struggles." Ashanti concurred and stated, "I always felt good in that course" and "I was always happy to like go there." When asked about improvements that could be made, she said, "Like, I didn't really have any bad days in that course…everything was really pleasant." This, she explained, was because of the "cheerful atmosphere" whereby "you could say anything…[and] be free to speak your mind." Moreover, Ashanti commented how people were made to feel comfortable; "It was easy to talk to other people. It was easy to approach somebody. Everybody felt really approachable," she said; in fact, this sense of comfort helped Ashanti overcome her shyness to become "sort of outspoken."

Camila and Bella spoke more in-depth about how the course helped each of them process specific scenarios that were upsetting and stressful for them. It's clearly obvious in each story they felt safe both with the Professor and for Bella, in the classroom environment. Camila was struggling with her decision to stay in the U.S. or return to the DR; this decision caused her a great deal of duress. Further complicated by panic attacks and other heath effects stemming from her English class, Camila met with Professor Elora for help, which she gratefully received. Not only did the Professor offer socioemotional support but also helped Camila by giving her "the option of thinking what were my, what were my options" in order to develop a plan based on each option identified. Camila clearly felt safe approaching Professor Elora for guidance when under duress.

Sadly, Bella's situation involved a traumatic sexual assault (SA) that occurred a few years prior to College. However, the sense of safety Professor Elora developed provided an avenue for Bella to begin to process her assault and heal; in fact, she referred to the course as "therapeutic." In our interview when asked about a time she felt good in the class, she explained that the day the topic of trauma was covered in the course, she was able to discuss her own experiences "for like the first time." This day provided her with "closure to that trauma… cause I never got to see a therapist about it and it was like the very first time I had to talk about it. So…it made me happy because it was a weight lifted off my shoulder." In fact, Professor Elora also referenced this day in our interview, and stated that a number of other students came forward to talk about their own histories of SA was essentially horrific and involved "a lot of crying" by her and others (also noting her lack of training to deal with this, a challenge discussed below). Bella also referred to her SA in her snapshot presentation, along with her feelings about the FYE teacher, stating that she "has been a major support. I don't have that many people to lean on. I have very small group to lean on and I feel like if I needed to, she would be there for me." In our interview, she furthered her sentiments about Professor Elora, and what makes her so incredible. She described her "energy" as "welcoming," adding, "She actually…. asks you about your day. If she feels like while she's lecturing and she feels like something's wrong with a specific person, she'll stop and she'll, like, ask the person that, are you okay? Do you feel good? Do you need to talk to me? Like, she worries and I kind of like people like that." In additional to the Professor's verbal expressions of care and concerns, Bella added there was something in her "facial expressions" and how she was "smiley and glow-y" that made her feel comfort and safety.

Lastly, for all students, the lack of awareness and comfort with navigating the campus was triggering and created anxiety and angst that was remediated in the safe and secure classroom environment and its activities. Camila acknowledged, almost with disbelief, "[Professor Elora] actually takes her time and shows you around campus. Like she takes, like, her class; it's not just lectures. Like some days she took us out to the library, to Single Stop, to the Student Life building. Like, for us to familiarize ourselves with the campus." While Ashanti gave a more general nod of approval about the utility of these activities, Gregory specifically and unsurprisingly, named the visit to the gymnasium as most important to him. Thus, unfamiliarity with the campus, a self-relevant aspect to Camila, Ashanti, and Gregory's CSRIs, triggered anxiety and highlighted a gap between current and future CSRIs that the course's sense of safety helped alleviate.

Peer-to-Peer Connections

Finally, the positive, healthy relationships developed between the students and Professor were also mimicked in those developed between students in the class, which Camila and Bella both directly contributed to the atmosphere Professor Elora created. At the very least, students were highly interactive with each other, which supported a sense of safety they felt in the space Professor Elora created. For example, before a class begins, it is not uncommon to see students looking down into a cell phone, shutting out others around them. Generally speaking, this was not the case in Professor Elora's class; the days of the classroom observations were abuzz with energy and interaction prior to the lesson starting. Of course, the observations occurred at the end of the term where relationships had had time to materialize; yet, it was not difficult to see the smiles, hear

the bursts of laughter, and interpret these expressions of delight as happiness and comfort in the classroom.

Other data sources also hinted to the positive relationships that students developed with each other. For example, Bella noted that of the few classmates she kept in contact with were predominantly from her FYE class. At first, she stated it was, “For some reason…I never understood why. I don't know” but she later concluded, “I guess in a sense that environment was kind of - what's the word - like kind of comfortable and at ease, that everybody got to talk with each other.” Camila directly attributed the professor to her continued friendships, four from FYE, compared to the atmosphere she experienced in her English class, “No one was in the mood to talk in that class.”

In her interview, Professor Elora commented on this topic several times. She stated that one explicit goal she had was to foster relationships between students; she encouraged them to exchange contact information to create “peer networks.” She said she believed, “Peer to peer feedback is really nice” but more, stated told them unambiguously, “I expect them to be supportive” of each other,” adding, “It's been fantastic to watch them become friends.” From the fall term, she commented about several different “supportive” groups forming that coalesced on some of the previously mentioned traumatic life circumstances. She explained, “When I think about my dream FYE class, that's what I would hope would happen. That they form these, they form these little clusters that are supportive and…they have someone. Having someone makes you feel like you belong here.”

Summarizing the Facilitating a Sense of Safety Principle

Unequivocally, the classroom ambiance that Professor Elora intentionally designed created a sense of safety for students in the FYE class. Because of the success here, the challenges or deficits, and resultant recommendations, are less about pedagogy and more about administrative aspects. First, the qualities and values of professors assigned to teach the courses should be considered, as clearly these were components that influenced how Professor Elora created a safe classroom space. Additionally, thought should be given to the human capital that is required to create this type of atmosphere and healthy student-teacher relationships; each section of FYE can up to 36 students and full-time faculty might have upwards of 4 other sections of content coursework, again up to 36 students per section. As Professor Elora commented about a student who had stopped responding to her multiple attempts to intervene, “Once she's kind of moved on and she's not responding to texts anymore, emails, there's another 10 that need help.” More, faculty of the FYE course will be faced with converging student identities that can include traumatic histories. As Professor Elora reminded me, “I've got no training in that. That's the funny thing - You don't get trained in this stuff” and even, “That’s not on the job description.” She noted how students are “in absolute crisis every single day” and at times she felt “burnt out.” She also acknowledged that for some students, “It doesn't matter how much I reach out. Doesn't matter how much, uh, kind of, um, social work as you call it, I do. I just can't get them on track and then I feel terrible. I don't want them to fail.” Here we see the individualized approach she tried to take but unsurprisingly, one faculty member cannot be teacher, social worker, mother, and cheerleader to all her students in all her courses. Thus, consideration should be given to the resources such as

time and mental fortitude it takes for an FYE professor to main this intense level of interaction and intervention. Although she stated her workload felt like "70% teaching and 30% social work," it could be viewed more as 100% teaching and the other roles Professor Elora mentioned piled on.

Scaffolding Exploratory Actions

Applying the last PRESS principle to analyzing the FYE course suggested that this manifested the least in the FYE context, due in part to the deficits that were most recently addressed in the section above. Kaplan et al (2014) provided a visual presentation of the PRESS model and the complex interplay of the four PRESS principles (see figure 3) that helps to explain why this particular principle was most absent in the FYE classroom. When discussing this fourth PRESS principle, the authors suggested, "Educators should employ scaffolds that are appropriate for **students' backgrounds and capacities** [emphasis added], the social relationships in the setting, the subject matter, and the characteristics of the particular context" (p. 253). Although at times scaffolding manifested in the course, it was more so in a "one size fits all" manner; for example, the requirement that all students take the course within their first 12-credits was a generalized attempt at scaffolding. However, the FYE course could not promote adaptive, constructive identity exploration for every student due to the virtual impossibility of considering each one's individual history and capabilities. Additionally, as observed in other sections of the PRESS analysis in this study, sometimes the scaffolding was intrinsic to all sections and other times it was attributed to activities that perhaps only Professor Elora utilized.

One-Size-Fits-All

As was already discussed, the nature of many of the assignments students were required to complete were often the type that Kaplan et al. (2014) suggested to appropriately scaffold identity exploration, such as the reflective questions in the academic, career and transfer plan and the journal prompts found on the mindful Monday worksheets. In fact, Gregory specifically mentioned these weekly assignments as a constructive component to his CSRI that developed from the FYE course, stating that you can see how you "change from week one to week 15 as a person" so "you just better yourself." The application of this scaffolding principle was also observed in a few other places. According to Professor Elora the different types of assignments were intentionally designed to honor the abilities of different students and "give everyone a shot at doing something really well." She furthered, "A student that might struggle to write is actually really good at problem solving or, you know, there's different ways for them to shine."

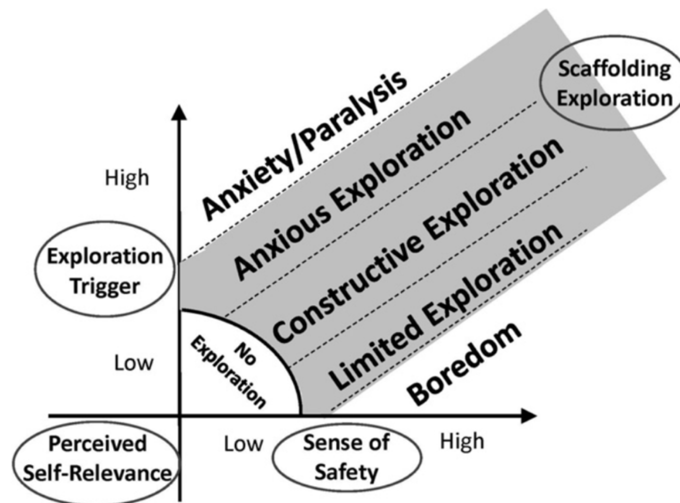

Figure 3. *A visual representation of the PRESS principles*

In addition, the prompts and level detail given in some of the major assignments, such as in the snapshot presentation, explicitly laid out what the students needed to do to successfully complete the assignment. The directions would often explain the purpose of the assignment in clear, simple language, the knowledge students would gain from the task, the course learning outcomes the assignment addressed, and the skills the students would practice and/or gain. Sometimes they offered ideas to help students complete the assignment in steps; as in the snapshot presentation they were prompted, "First, do some pre-writing to answer these questions, and then create an outline for your presentation. If you notice, the sequence of topics can help you organize your presentation." This assignment also included two videos with instructions of how to upload a video to You Tube and how to edit the auto-captions to honor to ADA standards. Students were given tips to present a higher quality video, such as maintaining eye contact with the camera. Finally, Professor Elora modeled a successful project by submitting her own snapshot presentation.

There was also some thought about the order of topics presented in the course, which was standardized across all sections, although some factors dictated when things were covered. For example, certain college success skills, such as note taking and time management, were covered early in the course as these skills are needed earlier in the students' college careers. Also, more difficult topics, such as trauma and racism, were after midterms in Professor Elora's syllabus. However, when counselors and academic advisors were introduced to the class depended on their schedules and other job responsibilities. Meanwhile, the snapshot presentation specifically was envisioned to serve as a capstone project for the course, thus assigned towards the end of a term.

Summarizing the Scaffolding Exploratory Actions Principle

All of these aspects discussed to this point were more preliminary steps necessary for a classroom to manifest this principle; thus, we hit what seems to be the biggest obstacle. Sometimes when trying to be everything for everyone, a course might get watered down; understandably, there oftentimes must be a sacrifice of depth for breadth. For example, Ashanti might have needed something much more individualized or even intrusive scaffolding to fully explore her career identity to create an adaptive CSRI, complete with major. For Bella, she fell to the area of boredom when looking at the schematic representation of the PRESS model regarding her with academic plan. If more individualization in terms of one-on-one time to more effectively scaffold identity exploration is not feasible, one option is to offer individualized components to assignments, almost a 'choose one's own adventure' depending on where they were in their identity exploration. For example, Ashanti, and others like her who have not major declared or career path identify, might complete a different version of the career plan than those with their decision made to help shift her CSRI more meaningfully. Other considerations might be developed for the more seasoned college students, such as Bella.

Summation of the PRESS Analysis

Clearly, the data show evidence for the multitude of ways that the FYE course manifested all four PRESS principles, albeit not equally. Additionally, the question remained if these principles were observed in all sections of FYE or serendipitously in this section with Professor Elora. By design of the course and its learning objectives, the course promoted self-relevancy often, sometimes inadequately, as in the case of a second-year student like Bella. Similarly, there were many opportunities intentionally created

that triggered exploration of many of the students' identities, including their CSRIs. The challenge here was that sometimes the relevant differences between a students' current and future identities were not always merged. The principle that this professor most undeniable promoted was creating an atmosphere where students felt safe, respected, and comfortable exploring their CSRI; however, this came at an expense: Professor Elora often extended her role far beyond teacher, which is both time-consuming and at times exhausting. Finally, the principle that exhibited the least in the FYE context was in regard to scaffolding identity exploration experiences. In courses with larger class sizes, it is impossible to achieve a perfect homeostatic balance whereby the exact amount of each component needed for each individual student to undergo a successful, healthy adaptive CSRI exploration is not possible.

There are several recommendations offered that might help the course designers and teachers better achieve these principles in future iterations the FYE course. First, identifying different facets to the students' identities that might shape their altering experiences of the course (i.e., first-year versus second-year students, undecided versus decided majors, or science-intended majors versus social science-intended majors). Next, the assignments might then be differentiated further according to these varying students' identities. For example, it might help some students, like Ashanti, to conduct occupational interviews to gather data when utterly undecided on a career path. Relatedly, students bring to the classroom a multitude of identities, some that involve traumatic pasts such as domestic violence and sexual assault. Faculty must be trained to address these difficult experiences in the classroom; this is not to say become leader of a

group therapy session but does include how to respond when these things are likely to come up.

Case Analyses: DSMRI Model

Camila: Self-Doubting Latina Believes Teachers Critical for Student Success

Camila was a first-time Freshman in the fall term. She graduated from high school the spring prior and our interviews occurred towards the end of her second term, in mid-April. She began her college career in the Liberal Arts/General major but aimed to pursue an Associate's in Science (A.S.) degree in biology. According to her academic plan, Camila planned to graduate in spring 2021 to pursue pre-medicine at a four-year school. During the fall term, she was enrolled in 12-credits, including FYE 101, a developmental-level English writing course that was paired with a college-level reading course, and the first course of three in the College's developmental-level mathematics sequence.

Camila was born in the United States but raised in the Dominican Republic (DR). Her family spoke Spanish at home, making English her second language. During summers and some holidays, she would spend long stretches of time in the city where NECC was located. Around the time she started college, and extending into her first term, Camila debated if she should stay in the city or move back to the DR, a debate that was "hell" for her but culminated with her staying in the city.

Purpose & Goals

Two themes emerged regarding Camila's purpose and goals related to her CSRI. The first was much more prominent in the data and was related to her academic and career goals; the second less mentioned theme was related to her English skills. Camila intended to change to a science-focused major at the college to best prepare her for a pre-

med Baccalaureate degree at a nearby four-year university to pursue pediatric medicine. Secondly, but much less so, Camila referenced her goal to improve her English skills, something she did not feel she achieved her first term. For Camila, the FYE course did not help her explore her career identity to select a career goal as she already had one in mind; however, it did help to highlight errors in her academic plan that sequenced out her curricular requirements. Additionally, she sought the FYE professors help related to her English skills, although concluded she did not ultimately achieve this goal that term.

Academic and career goals. Camila began the FYE course with a clear career goal in mind: pediatric medicine. To achieve this, the best major to declare at NECC was an A.S. in biology; however, she did not have the necessary mathematical prerequisites met to do so. Thus, she was placed into the Liberal Arts major. However, according to Camila, this placement created chaos that caused her first semester to be "all over the place." According to her academic plan, Camila aimed to complete her associate degree in Spring 2021; yet, her academic plan contained several mistakes, possibly because of this chaos, possibly altering her graduation date. For example, she listed extraneous courses not required for the A.S. degree and missed one biology elective. Both the professor and academic advisor assigned to this specific FYE section made note of the errors, however, Camila did not submit a corrected academic plan. More, the FYE professor suggested they meet to review the necessary edits, but it is unknown if that meeting occurred.

After earning her associate degree, Camila planned to transfer to a four-year university with a keen focus to become a pediatrician. On the career comparison portion, she rated this career as a 9 for interest (on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the least

interested and 10 being the most interested); the two other careers she included were psychologist and fashion designer, for which she rated both as 7 for interest. In one of our interviews, she stated that she adopted these goals because she "[came] from a family of doctors," suggesting this career path was pre-determined to starting college. More, while psychologist was "kind of in the medical field" she felt as a career it did not "really go far." Additionally, she left the pro and con sections on the assignment blank for this career, suggesting it was never a serious consideration for her future career.

English Skills. Another salient goal that Camila noted for herself was regarding her English skills. Early in the term, the FYE professor had students write a letter to their future selves about what they hope they learned and/or achieved that term, to be opened the last day of class at a pizza party. In her letter, Camila wrote that she hoped her semester would be "worth it" in that she would have "learned English." She struggled in her English class and sought help from both the English professor and FYE professor during the term. Despite her efforts, she concluded this goal "didn't happen because I failed the course." What's more, the outcome "really screwed" her over in the end because she would need to repeat the two-course link another term. This forced her to take "a step back from my academic plan" and incurred financial ramifications.

Self-Perceptions & Self-Definitions

There were several themes that emerged from the data regarding Camila's CSRI related self-perceptions and self-definitions; these were in relation to her Latina identity (the intersectionality of gender and ethnicity), her self-doubts, and her self-described anxious tendencies. Her identification as Latina influenced her career goal in pediatrics and her perceived English abilities, that latter which also demonstrated the many self-

doubts she harbored. Relatedly, Camila described feeling intense anxiety about her English skills and course, and a major life decision she had to make. She was ultimately able to resolve some of her anxieties, in part with help from the FYE professor.

Latina identity. When asked about challenges she faced, Camila stated that one was “being Latin” because medical schools were “mostly dominated by Asians and Indians.” She added this was “fine because they are really smart,” almost as if in comparison to her own intelligence. She expressed feeling doubts from others about this goal, stating, “When people look at me... coming from a Latin family, they think, ‘oh, she wants, she wants to be a doctor?’ They don't immediately think, ‘oh, that's great.’ They say like, ‘oh, okay, good luck,’” with an intonation that they prejudicially assumed that she could not be successful. Moreover, she believed gender interacted with her Latin ethnicity, stating, “Latin…woman are known for being housewives; I guess since most of us are, are still developing third world countries, a lot of women are stay at home moms, which is fine if you want to do with that. But I don't want to do that.” Later, Camila asserted, “I hate being told what I'm supposed to do,” presumably helping to explain pursuit of a career goals that others doubted she could achieve.

Camila’s ethnicity also influenced her beliefs about her English skills. Although born in the United States, she was raised in the Dominican Republic (DR) and spoke Spanish at home. She explained, “English is not really my first language” and that she had gaps in her writing skills. The self-doubts about her English abilities, which were exacerbated by a reading and writing teacher she later described as ineffective and unresponsive, were underscored by the “dread” she experienced when attending her English classes in the fall that lead to seeking psychological help. Although this

intervention did help her cope, she nonetheless deemed her time in her English courses as a failure because she needed to repeat the 6-credit block of courses another term.

Self-doubts. Like many first-time Freshmen, Camila also exhibited self-doubts in a more general sense, possibly due to the limiting beliefs she had about her Latina identity. This aspect to her CSRI was apparent when asked to name any of her strengths; she insistently replied, “I don't know. Like, I really don't know.” When followed up with asking what friends or family would say she was good at, she similarly answered, “I got no, I have no clue.” She later in passing unknowingly articulated two strengths inherent to her CSRI when she stated she said that it was her own official “rule” to go to class and do the assignments in her “dreaded” English class. Yet, she did not name these as strengths when asked directly. Conversely, Camila readily and easily named subjects at which she was not so good; in addition to the above-mentioned doubts about her English abilities specifically, she emphatically expressed that she was “not good at math like at all.”

Anxious tendencies. Unsurprisingly, feelings of self-doubt can lead to anxiety, something Camila admittedly experienced in the fall term. For example, she felt self-doubts about her English abilities were exacerbated by her English courses in the fall. She would “dread” attending these classes and eventually sought out professional counseling when the anxiety became overwhelming. When asked to elaborate further on her anxiety she felt in the fall term, she explained it was from “being in a new place, talking to people.” Another contributing factor for this feeling was during a time of “hell” when she was trying to decide if she should stay in the U.S. for college or move back to the DR. On one mindful Monday activity she wrote, “Not happy. Stressed. Don’t like

being here. Hate living here. Family problems. No sleep." and rated her sense of calm and centered as a 1 (on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being least calm and centered and 10 being most). She clarified this decision was particularly challenging because it made her question her sense of belongness, stating, "You don't know where you belong really…where you want to be, what you want to do." She remarked on the shift of her identity that would happen if she stayed in the city, from that of visitor "on vacation" where "everything's fun" to that of college student. However, she felt returning to DR, where "things were not good," meant that "things wouldn't get better for me." Camila said during this deciding period she "cried a lot" and experienced health impairments, including panic attacks, asthma issues, and sleep disturbances. Additionally, the stress of the decision caused her to contemplate withdrawing from the college during the fall term. Professor Elora, in fact, helped Camila weigh each her options and create a plan for each one during a tear-filled visit in her office offices.

Ontological and Epistemological Beliefs

By and large, the data revealed the most strongly held and often articulated ontological and epistemological belief related to her CSRI was simply that teachers are critical to student success; it is likely her glowing review of Professor Elora that led to her positive assessment of the FYE course, the second theme the data revealed. Camila offered very few observations about the college as a whole, only that it was "a convenient place if you don't have a lot of money" and that being here was "not the worst thing." While her views about the College were quite general and fleeting, spoken almost indifferently and without much conviction, her beliefs about professors were quite the opposite. She was very vocal in offering a comparison between the FYE professor and

her English professor, saying, "There was a lot of differences that I wish my English teacher had." Her overwhelmingly positive perception of Professor Elora was likely a contributing factor to her positive assessment of the FYE course.

The FYE professor. When asked about the positive features she experienced at the College, Camila immediately stated it was her FYE professor and like others in this study, sung her praises. Camila explained that because she registered for fall classes during "late, late, late registration," she had few open sections from which to choose. She lamented that those available were often taught by "not the best teachers" but she "luckily" grabbed a seat in Professor Elora's section, an outcome that was "the best I could have asked for." She elaborated that this professor "is one of the few people that, like, genuinely cares about her students" and appreciated that she "would really check up on us" to simply "make sure we were okay." Camila particularly felt her care when the professor was supportive during Camila's "transition" period of deciding to stay in the U.S. or return to the DR. Later, Camila commented on the valuable friendships she formed from the FYE course and directly attributed these enduring relationships to the type of atmosphere that the FYE professor created, one that encouraged interaction and networking among classmates, something that was meaningful for her in the FYE course.

The English professor. Camila's glowing reviews of her FYE professor were sharply contrasted to those for her English professor, who taught both her reading and writing courses. She described him as "not the best" and "very unresponsive." She stated his handwritten comments on her papers were illegible to her but when she asked him for clarification or requested a meeting, she received no answer at all or an unsatisfactory one. When she tried to communicate to him that she was "having a rough time," his

response was essentially, “I don’t care.” As discussed already, she felt “dread” going to his class meetings and sought psychological intervention to help cope. Contrary to Professor Elora’s compassion, she felt he “could have been a little more empathetic” to students’ lives. And unlike the lasting friendships that Camila developed during the FYE course, she did not meet any friends in her English courses “because of the really bad teacher…no one was in the mood to talk in that class. Like it wasn't interactive,” further highlighting her strongly held conviction that professors play a key role in the student experience.

The FYE course. Quite likely, her overwhelmingly favorable review of the FYE professor influenced her positive evaluation of the course itself. She stated that she “loved” her time in this course, adding all students should take it even if not required for their degree “because it really puts you off in a good start for your upcoming semesters.” When asked about a time in the course she felt bad or any aspects of the course that were problematic, she said, “There’s nothing the course could do better. I really don't think anything” but readily named aspects of the course that were most helpful. One was creating the academic plan because it forced her to “think outside the box and think about the future.” She noted the tour around campus was “helpful” since she was unsure how to navigate the campus to find certain areas of the college that could help her, specifically naming the Single Stop as one such area. Unsurprisingly, based on her experiences in English, a final benefit of the FYE course was how it helped her carefully “pick better and more understanding professors next semester so that way I could get the help I need when I don’t understand something.” Selecting the right professors was important to

Camila because, "With better and more responsive professors there is a better chance for me to get a B or an A, which would help boost up my GPA."

Action Possibilities

The themes related to the action possibilities available to Camila in her CSRI evidenced in the data were surrounding her financial considerations, transfer school options, transportation, and selection of professors in future terms. The FYE course helped Camila identify funding options for her associate degree and explore costs, among other aspects, at the transfer schools she chose to compare as part of the academic, career, and transfer plan. In addition to cost, transportation was another constraint Camila had to consider, both at NECC and her transfer school. Finally, the course directly and indirectly, underscored the importance of intentionally choosing future professors she should take for several reasons.

Financial considerations. The FYE was particularly impactful expanding Camila's financial literacy and funding options. First, Camila noted how the scavenger hunt activity in the course introduced her to the Single Stop office, which she used to file her income taxes. The course also helped her explore her financial aid options. On her financial plan, Camila noted that for her first term she would use government loans and grants but for subsequent semesters added scholarships as an option. When submitting this assignment, she specifically thanked the FYE professor for alerting students to scholarship opportunities. She planned to apply for several designated expressly for Latinx students, with an expressed intent to use any monies obtained to "help…around the house" and repay her parents for their "sacrifices" so "I could be born and get the education that I deserve and that they couldn't get." Relatedly, the college comparison

assignment (discussed next) also helped her identity funding opportunities at each potential transfer institution.

Comparing transfer schools. The course also had Camila explore and compare two different four-year universities for transfer options, a choice she understood as critical for admission to medical school. Since Camila identified finances related to her CSRI as important considerations, it is not surprising that she addressed cost and funding options on this assignment. Although both universities offered financial aid, her dream school had fewer scholarship opportunities and was particularly expensive. Additionally, it maintained a competitive admissions process; however, was her primary option because, "Its premedical school is one of the best in the United States, going there would be awesome and it would look amazing to any Med [sic] School [sic]." Her second option was a "plan b;" although "a very good school," it was, as noted, less expensive but also less competitive. A potential challenge she named for both options was the distance from her home, as transportation was a constraint (discussed next). This comparative assignment also prompted her to consider the composition of the student bodies at the potential universities; once again referencing the salience of her Latina identity, she stated that while both were lacking in diversity and comprised predominantly Asian and Caucasian students, her first choice was "surprisingly" more diverse.

Transportation. One prominent theme observed in the data that Camila perceived as a constraint was surrounding transportation. Camila lived a bit away from the main campus, where the courses she needed were offered at more convenient times. Commute time ranged from 50 minutes on public transportation to one hour by car. Taking the train added the hassle of walking from the station to the College. Moreover, it was costly; she

estimated a cost of $200 per month for three round trip excursions per week on public transportation. In addition to time and cost, Camila was unable to do homework on the train because she experienced motion sickness when doing so. These issues commuting to campus also seemingly impacted Camila more socioemotionally; for example, when asked about a time she felt good in the fall, she replied that she did not "go to a lot of like campus events because I live all the way in the Northeast… so it was hard for me to come and go."

Choosing professors in future classes. Finally, and unsurprisingly, the FYE course helped reinforce the importance of Camila making proactive selections for future professors. This was done directly through experiences she described about her FYE and English professors and indirectly through learning about RateMyProfessor.com. Her giving consideration to her options was important for three reasons. First, Camila expressed appreciation for how Professor Elora's compassion and understanding when helping her navigation her emotional distress during the term, and a wish that her English professor had shown the same kindness. Second, Camila felt being selective with the professors was important to earning good grades and increase her GPA, presumably to attain medical school admission. Finally, careful selection of professors served as a preemptive strategy to cope with her anxiety, considering her explanation of seeking psychological services due in part to the stress of her English classes.

Summary of the FYE Context on Camila's CSRI

Camila began college with clearly articulated career goals predetermined. As such, the course did not offer her much in way of exploring potential occupations for her future. However, the course did help her create a proposed sequencing of coursework for

her intended curriculum, which subsequently revealed errors in her proposal that were noted by both the professor and academic advisor. This type of early identification can prevent errors in course work that can cost students time and money.

Camila's career goal of pediatrician was influenced in several ways by her self-defined Latina identity. She felt others were skeptical of her abilities to be more than a housewife, a common expectation for Latin women, and she herself expressed doubt about her English capabilities. In addition, Camila was fraught with uncertainties common to many first-time Freshman but also experienced more distressing anxiety and even "panic attacks" that prompted her to seek medical intervention. Several times, the FYE course, and specifically the professor, helped Camila navigate her self-doubts and more intense panic.

It was this compassionate intervention by the professor that helped Camila articulate her belief that supportive and compassionate professors are critical for helping students successfully navigate challenges in both their college and personal lives. While no one interaction can possibly take all the credit for a student's success, the FYE professor was clearly impactful in her choice not to withdraw in the fall term. It is unsurprising given the high praise she sings for Professor Elora that Camila believes, then, that she extends this high praise to the course itself. Further, the FYE course gave Camila agency to choose professors selectively based on who would increase her chances for success, yielded possibilities about financing her education, and prompted consideration of factors important to her when choosing a transfer school, such as cost and diversity.

Gregory: Future Physical Therapist with Self-Doubts uses Brotherly Bond for Help

Gregory began his college career in the fall term; our interviews occurred towards the end of his second semester at the College. He "accidentally" declared a major in Liberal Arts/General option and intended to change to an associate in science degree in biology to better align with a future career in physical therapy (PT). During his first term, he was enrolled in what would be considered a typical first semester, 12-credit course load that included the FYE 101 course, a developmental-level English writing course that was linked with a college-level reading course, and the first course of three in the College's developmental-level mathematics sequence.

Prior to enrolling at the College, Gregory graduated from a local high school known for musical education that required an audition. He played a certain instrument that virtually no one did, to which he attributed his acceptance. Gregory was very fit and led an active lifestyle. He did not seem to have a large network of familial support. Although he was close with his brother, describing him as a major positive influence and role model, he expressed a difficult relationship with his mother, who died during the fall term.

Purpose & Goals

Gregory's data revealed one salient theme regarding his purpose and goals related to his CSRI was a future career in physical therapy (PT); subsequently, Gregory's intended major to best prepare for this career was the associate in science in biology, which he aimed to achieve in quite a short timeframe. Like Camila, Gregory began college with a career path in mind that would necessitate the College's biology focused associate degree; however, he unintendedly selected the incorrect academic major.

Gregory identified some potential challenges to his academic and career goals but he did not resolve them in the FYE course.

Career goals. In several data sources, Gregory consistently asserted his goal to pursue a career in PT. On the career assignment where he selected three careers to compare and provided a self-rated interest on a scale of 1-10, whereby a 10 indicated the strongest interest, he included PT (rating of 9), sports medicine physician (rating of 9), and athletic trainer (rating of 5). Despite his equal interest in the first two careers, Gregory only discussed the PT career in our interviews. He explained he logically came to select this career goal because of his extreme interest in being "healthy and active" and his own experiences undergoing PT after two separate injuries. However, he did express concern about the length of time, in total, to achieve his goal: six years or, as he wrote on his career comparison assignment, "DECADESSSS OF SCHOOL."

Academic goals. Gregory indicated in his snapshot presentation that he had "accidentally" chose Liberal Arts initially but intended to declare biology the following term to better align with his PT career goal. Although in very brief passing in one interview he named both business and nursing as potential majors, he quickly centered the discussion back to PT as his primary objective, clearing indicating these were not serious considerations (and neither which he included on the career comparisons task). For his intended biology major, Gregory, by his own admission, set a lofty goal to graduate from the College in just two years. The academic plan that Gregory submitted indeed set forth the sequence of coursework each term to earn his biology degree, with a projected graduation date that would meet his goal to finish in two years.

However, the plan revealed a couple of challenges inherent to these goals, some that Gregory himself acknowledged and others he did not. First, in his interview Gregory explained one barrier was simply the curricular requirements, noting the number of sciences and mathematics courses needed. Furthermore, because of his placement test scores, Gregory was required to start with the first level of developmental mathematics. This meant he would need a total of six mathematics courses, up to and including calculus, something he admittedly expressed that he was "not ready for." Second, despite including them as part of his academic plan, Gregory expressed concerns about taking summer courses because they were costly. And yet, in order to graduate in his two-year timeframe, they would be necessary. Relatedly, summer courses at the College are condensed to only seven weeks, during which time lab science courses are inherently more difficult in the time-restricted semester, a challenge Gregory did not discuss. Despite the conflict completing his academic plan revealed, Gregory did not present any resolutions.

Self-Perceptions & Self-Definitions

The two primary themes emerged from the data regarding Gregory's self-perceptions & self-definitions were surrounding the emotions he experienced in his CSRI and his academic abilities. Although Gregory was able to name some emotions he felt in this role identity, such as nervousness, he admittedly avoided others. In several data sources, Gregory expressed concerns over his academic ability, specifically related to mathematics. Of note, his doubts and nervousness were reignited in the spring term, despite ending the fall with a 4.00 GPA.

Emotional experience. When asked to describe his time at the College, Gregory said in the beginning he was "very confused" and "extremely nervous." His confusion was about navigating the physical campus to "find all the places" and registering for courses, both concerns the course alleviated. Another contributing factor to his anxiety were the people in his life saying the coursework would be "extremely hard," an implicit insinuation of doubt about his own academic abilities, discussed later. These feelings were highlighted in his snapshot presentation, when he said, "The only thing I fear about college is just not keeping up with my work or not being on top of my classes." However, his doubts proved unfounded by his own admission: when asked about a time in the fall term where he felt good, he pridefully stated he completed the first term with a 4.00 GPA, furthering that seeing how his "work came out to be" was motivating.

Gregory easily named these emotions of confusion and nervousness; however, other emotions he was either unable to name or admittedly avoided. For example, when asked about how he *feels* about being at the College, he replied that he "like[d] it. It's very cost efficient for the education we're getting. And it's pretty easy to get here too." However, nothing in this answer actually addressed *feelings*. Then, on one Mindful Monday activity that asked about his emotions and comfort level checking in with them, he wrote, "Nope. I don't wanna [sic] be reminded of anything. everytime [sic] I think about it, It [sic] makes me feel uncomfortable. Just want to move on."

This avoidance of uncomfortable emotions was evident at one point in our first interview. When asked about a time in the fall when he felt bad, after a 20-second pause, he stated, "I haven't really thought of it like that. Because I normally I go to class, I would go to the library, and I would just go home. Like I wouldn't stay here for that

long." However, other data sources revealed that not only did Gregory have a very difficult relationship with his mother, she died during the fall term, something that would seemingly come to one's mind about a time one felt bad, further highlighting Gregory's self-proclaimed avoidance of negative emotions.

Doubting academic abilities. While Gregory expressed generalized worry about being in college, he also had concerns specific to his scholastic abilities, especially in mathematics. Although he said math was "probably" his best subject, he felt "all the math" required of PT was a barrier, adding, "I'm not ready for that." Additionally, Gregory's placement test results required that he start with the first level of developmental mathematics offered at the College, possibly contradicting his self-perception that he excels most in mathematics. While one explanation might be that he did not approach the placement test seriously and did not work to the best of his ability, it's also possible that he was simply inaccurate in the self-assessment of his mathematical abilities. However, Gregory did not elaborate on nor offer any resolutions for this contradiction or how he would become "ready for that."

Ontological and Epistemological Beliefs

There were two overarching themes surrounding Gregory's CSRI related ontological and epistemological beliefs; the first was about the impact of several significant relationships with family members and the second was his evaluation of the FYE professor, the FYE course, and NECC in general. Gregory spoked of both positive and negative relationships in his life, which included his family, friends, and professors. He spoke highly of his brother and the FYE professor, indicating that both provided him

a source of positive support, growth, and knowledge while the relationship with his mother was very much a source of negativity.

Impactful familial relationships. In his snapshot presentation, Gregory compared the influence of his brother and his mother on his educational journey. He started by describing a negative maternal influence, saying, “I try not to resemble any part of her at all.” Later he elaborated, “The greatest challenge to my education [sic] success was to ignore and forget my mom…for years on end I didn't even notice she existed.” He later stated his mom “wanted to ruin my educational experience, like, all jokes aside” when he applied to the music-oriented secondary school. His response was to get “rid of the negative energy” and to “never really talked to her after that.” He contrasted this difficult maternal relationship to that with his sibling, stating, “…and that's why I have my brother. My brother tells me to persevere and to try my hardest.” He offered faith in his brother’s wisdom because he “graduated high school with all As and he made it through college…with a bachelor's degree.” Again, referring to his mother, he concluded, “We've had a tough childhood and he helped me every step of the way. So from childhood to college to career, I'm going to trust his judgment.”

The FYE professor. Like others in this study, Gregory’s beliefs about Professor Elora were overwhelmingly favorable. He stated that she was simply “the best” and “amazing.” In addition to teacher, he later described her as a “parent” and “mother figure” who helped with many aspects of students’ lives beyond the FYE course. He stated that she was “real” and wouldn’t “sugarcoat” things. He furthered that the “shout outs,” the personalized daily naming of a student for something, that Professor Elora did were “motivating.” Gregory smiled while recalling his “shout out” for being “the biggest

office nerd" for his love of the TV show, *The Office*. He explained that her awards were motivating to him because students "normally get the sense that professors come here to give out work and to go home, like that they're not people or anything, no humor or anything. So it kind of breaks the barrier."

The FYE course. Gregory also described the FYE course in a positive light, calling it "an important class" that should be a requirement in the first semester of college. When asked to describe the course to someone who was unfamiliar with it, he answered, "It's basically, it's you finding yourself in the beginning of college." He valued the course's coverage of the course registration process because he "had no clue" how to do so and navigating the campus to locate offices. Interestingly yet incorrectly, he stated in his snapshot presentation that except for the FYE course, his entire first semester was "a waste of money and time" because of changing his major; however, the change actually meant the FYE course was not necessary while all the other courses - developmental mathematics and English - were regardless of his major.

The college experience. Gregory also discussed his beliefs about his college experience as a whole; generally, his commentary was positive, although he questioned the validity of some work assigned. When asked how he felt about being at NECC, he said he liked it, referencing its cost, ease of commute via public transportation, and the "small" nature of the campus was "easy to get around." When asked about the most beneficial aspects to his college experience, he resolutely answered the professors. He explained how they offered him positive feedback and "their attitudes [were] always positive." He furthered that while professors "don't have to go out of their way…they do," adding, "They are definitely understanding." He provided an example of his English

professor offering flexibility regarding due dates after learning some students had scheduling conflicts with work.

When asked about any problematic aspects, he stated, “I don’t really know,” further stating that he had not experienced anything negative during his time at the College. However, later, he indicated that at times some of the coursework felt like “busy work.” He used mathematics as an example, and explained, “You don't learn doing 500 problems on the laptop away from your professor.” In fact, when stumped on a problem for his mathematics homework, he would simply look up the correct answer to get a 100% rather than work the problem out himself.

Action Possibilities

Finally, for Gregory, the FYE course did not seem to significantly expand his action possibilities related to his CSRI in very many deep or meaningful ways. Although the course did introduce him to a variety of resources available, he rarely utilized them. Sometimes he asked for help, predominantly from his brother and other times, he did not see asking for help as a viable option. On occasion, he accessed a campus resource but did so in a limited fashion as a matter of practicality.

Unused options. Gregory was able to identify several of the campus resources, some introduced to him in the course and others he seemed to bring from his high school role identity. He noted the scavenger hunt was helpful, for example, by showing him the location of the Single Stop. In his snapshot presentation, Gregory stated one of his problem-solving strategies was, “talking to counselors, if I had trouble at home and just to get my mind right;” however, when asked if he used the College’s counseling center,

he indicated he had not, despite the personal challenges and “trouble at home” that he faced in the fall term.

Seeking help from others. Sometimes Gregory sought help from others for challenges and other times he did not. He stated in several data sources that his family, namely his brother, and friends are those to whom he turns for guidance, advice, or help with homework. He expressed that some friendships, including some from high school also enrolled at the College, helped him “get through” his classes and some of his FYE classmates provided valuable information, such recommended professors.

However, he did not always seek guidance when it might have been helpful. When he was faced with a conflict between an assignment’s due date in English and his work schedule, he assumed that he would simply earn a 0 rather than talk to the professor to problem solve (this is the same professor who changed the class’ due date because of conflicts with students’ work schedules). Similarly, upon questioning if his professors offered him any accommodations during the time in the fall when his life was “falling apart,” he seemingly downplayed the circumstances, saying he took off just one day and did not ask for any flexibility.

Practical use of resources. At one point in the interview, Gregory stated that he essentially attended his classes, used the library solely to print materials, and then left the campus. He said outside of printing, the library had not served him any other purpose (i.e., online databases, course reference materials, librarians to assist with research, etc…). This is despite his acknowledgement that a distraction-free environment could be beneficial to his academics; he did not name this as a viable option.

Summary of the FYE Context on Gregory's CSRI

Overall, the course had some influence on the components of Gregory's CSRI. Gregory began college with a career goal already in mind, the FYE course did not help him explore other career possibilities in a meaningful way. Instead, it helped him develop a sequence of coursework to meet his curricular requirements to meet his two-year goals. Although this activity helped reveal barriers to his goals, no solutions to overcome these challenges were offered by Gregory. The course seemed most important to shaping Gregory's self-perceptions/self-definitions, namely pacifying upsetting emotions such as anxiety and confusion. While he ended his first term with all As, a source of pride, motivation, and confidence for himself, however, he mimicked the same anxiety and self-doubts he felt starting his first fall term during his second semester. For Gregory, feeling nervous and doubtful of his abilities was a repetitive occurrence that the FYE course did not seem to alleviate. One salient belief Gregory expressed was about how importance familial relationships, namely the positive influence of his brother and the negative influence from his mom; it was his brother to whom he turned often for support. Relatedly, Professor Elora fulfilled some of the maternal role for Gregory and he conveyed a positive evaluation of her, the FYE course, and the college as a whole. Gregory learned about several options that were available to him in the FYE course; however, he rarely used them. This was true even in instances that he himself noted might be of benefit; i.e., counseling services during difficult life circumstances. Instead, he referred to sources with which he was familiar, including human capital, or those that offered a very practical purpose – printing.

Ashanti: Self-Reflective Undecided Student with Unresolved Career Goals

During the FYE course in fall term, Ashanti was enrolled in her first semester at the College after graduating high school earlier that year. She was unsure of an exact major or career goal; thus, declared the liberal arts major intended for such undecided students. In addition to FYE 101, she was enrolled in 9 other credits: the second course in the College's developmental-level mathematics course sequence and a 6-credit hour block of linked English courses comprised of both a developmental-level and college-level writing course combined into one semester (thus, she did not require the supplementary reading course other participants needed).

Ultimately, for Ashanti, the course did not significantly alter many aspects to her CSRI; it is possible this stemmed from her lack of full engagement with the course. Ashanti did not submit several assignments for the FYE class (e.g., the assignment comparing potential transfer colleges). In the case of her academic plan, what she submitted was incomplete. Ashanti ultimately earned an F for the FYE course. Thus, the analysis presented below draws predominantly from interview data and the Mindful Monday worksheets she completed.

Purpose & Goals

During her interview and on some mindful Monday activities, Ashanti discussed several themes of purposes and goals that she had set for herself as part of her CSRI, namely an intent to grow her skills and knowledge base and remain in liberal arts because of an undecided career. Rather than having an explicit goal in mind, Ashanti's objectives could be characterized as more lofty, vague, and generic in nature, focused more towards enhancing skills. However, beyond skill building, Ashanti lacked a detailed, explicit

culminating goal in terms of a decided major or potential career that is the typical endpoint for those who attend post-secondary schooling. Thus, the FYE course helped Ashanti decided to remain in the liberal arts curriculum for several reasons. The FYE course did not significantly alter Ashanti's goals for enrolling at the College nor help her identify an explicit major or career.

Expand knowledge, build skills. Ashanti often discussed a desire to simply expand her knowledge base, naming a generalized aspiration of "trying to learn" more about topics that she stated were not introduced to her in high school role identity. She simply wanted to "know more," "reap the benefits" of the learning opportunity she was been given in college and gain exposure to "new reading material." In several data points, she noted a specific desire to take more English classes, with an aim to achieve the highest score possible on her essays "because I knew I could do it." She explained that she didn't do well on her senior year research project in high school so at college she wanted to attend more English classes to "better herself in researching at topic."

Undetermined career goal. Beyond improvement of skills or enhancement of knowledge, Ashanti herself stated that she did not yet have a "coherent goal" and acknowledged that she is "all over the place." Her mindful Monday names "an actual goal in life" as her culminating point, where others might have written a job title or degree attainment. On the career comparisons assignment, she named editor, museum exhibits director, and writers and authors as options; she gave them ratings of 7, 8, and 8, respectively, for interest on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the least interested and 10 being the most. In our interview she pondered a career in journalism, showing some alignment with her goals of taking English coursework to improve her research and

writing skills; however, any career she named sounded more like vague musings rather than serious possibilities. Although she acknowledged "worrying" about her career decision, she concluded she would "just going to wing it and see what to do from there."

Remaining in liberal arts. Ashanti decided that staying in the liberal arts major was an optimal goal for several reasons. First, this major had looser course edicts, so she would "not forced to be able to do this class…I can choose, like, what I want." Second, she wistfully mused that these courses might someday help her "build up some…idea of a job [she] might want." Finally, she thought remaining a liberal arts major could improve her skills for a possible career in journalism, stating, "If I want to get into writing, I need to get into more writing classes" in order to "better myself."

Self-Perceptions & Self-Definitions

Ashanti's data highlighted three distinct themes in her perceptions of herself in the CSRI, adaptive attributes, maladaptive qualities, and like others, self-doubts. Ashanti used several strong descriptive words to define herself; at times, the words used could be viewed as assets for her CSRI. At other times, some of her self-perceptions and self-definitions were an impediment that deterred her from taking certain steps to achieve success. One specific example was her level of self-doubt. For Ashanti, the FYE course did not significantly alter or encourage exploration of any of her self-perceptions and self-definitions or resolve any conflicts.

Adaptive CSRI attributes. Ashanti described herself in several positive terms that were assets to her CSRI. First, she was "stubborn" and tenacious, explaining even if she were failing a class she would persist because there were still things to learn. What's more, she could still try to pass while gaining the "experience of it," adding, "If I keep

going at it, I'll at least hit something and I'll….be able to…keep going after that." Ashanti pridefully described her creativity, offering a humble boast when she stated that she has been drawing since she was four years old, "self-taught" by her grandmother. When asked of her other strengths, she stated she was willing to listen to feedback from others to improve herself, clearly important to the CSRI.

Maladaptive CSRI attributes. Conversely, Ashanti named several self-perceptions and self-definitions that were not supportive of an adaptive CSRI. She described herself as "independent" and unable to consistently rely on others for help, including family, stating she wanted to show her mother that, "I can do something on my own." She called herself "prideful" in thinking she does not need tutoring, even while acknowledging that it might actually be helpful. The ability to set her own schedule in college led her to become "lazy" and she was "distracted most of the time" because "many other responsibilities at home."

Lacking self-confidence. Another aspect to her self-attributes that showed harmful at times was a lack of confidence in herself and abilities. In the backdrop of her CRSI was her belief that she "was never really good at schoolwork." Fueling her doubts was her experiences at the end of high school when her "mental state was shattered" and "crumbling, crumbling, crumbling," which necessitated a hospital stay and a disruption in her graduation plans. As she transitioned from her high school student role identity to that of college, she felt "really nervous." Ashanti indicated that she was confused by the College's learning management system and how to submit work online, even though the FYE course required her to submit work online to expressly learn this skill. She

expressed feeling “unconfident” in her academic abilities but concluded that she would “try my best to get my shit together.”

Ontological & Epistemological Beliefs

The data uncovered three distinct themes related to her CSRI’s ontological and epistemological beliefs, the sense of comfort she experienced at NECC, her self-reflection prompted by the FYE course, and unsurprisingly, teachers matter. More so than other participants, she referenced her high school student role identity in juxtaposition to her experiences at the College. First, both the College at large and her experiences in the FYE class specifically provided Ashanti with a sense of comfort she did not experience in high school, was due in part to the physical campus but also the students at the College and in her FYE course. Second, she believed it was important to reflect on her strengths, talents, and limitations to make informed choices, something the FYE course allowed Ashanti to do, although her resulting decision did not always align with this belief. Lastly, it was evident that for Ashanti that teachers matter.

A comforting campus. Ashanti spent time talking about how the campus made her feel, stating she did not “feel so restrained and tied down” compared to her time in high school. She described her K-12 education as a requirement that “serve[d] as a time limit” while college was her choice that could guide her to “reach my fullest potential.” This freedom she experienced at the College was also apparent when she mused that her ability to walk around campus was a welcomed aspect compared to “being cooped up inside of a classroom all day” in high school, while she reported liking.”

She added that she “likes the spirit of this campus,” in part because of the student body. She described students at the College as “welcoming” and “really invigorating.”

She claimed her peers were a source of motivation because of their dedication, describing them as "uplifting." In contrast to high school, where, she opined, her classmates were less mature and distracting, she found students at the College were mature, interested in learning, and "really want[ed] the best for themselves." She singled out international students "who came here just to find better lives for themselves and even their families" as a specific motivator for her.

Self-reflection yields knowledge. Another belief the data revealed was the importance of the FYE course helping students identify their talents, strengths, and weaknesses. For example, she described a time in class with a lesson on career exploration; the task asked students to identity their interests; Ashanti indicated she selected creativity, which allowed her to then select courses for her next term based on this interest in absence of a career goal. As another example, in one interview she relayed that students should consider the best times they work and select courses accordingly. For Ashanti, this means she works at night because it was "fact" that it is when she performs her best. Despite this belief, Ashanti did not always use the self-reflection to make the most appropriate plans. For example, she recognized that four is the maximum number of courses for her to take each semester in the written reflection portion of her academic plan; yet, for the chart portion of the assignment, she listed five courses - totaling 16 credits - for the spring term.

Teachers matter. The final belief that Ashanti expressed was related to how critical professors were for student success; Ashanti emphasized this point by providing a sharp comparison to the support she desired and needed in high school but did not always receive. She lamented that in high school, "It didn't seem like there was a lot of

people…. [or] resources there to help me" and could name on "one hand" the number of teachers who had offered her encouragement prior to college. But upon arrival to the College, she stated she felt like she "had somebody on [her] side for once." She gave the example of the FYE professor offering her encouragement related to her career exploration process during one office visit and stated most professors in her second term were "helpful" and "motivating." She recounted one telling her, "You can do this, I believe in you" and pushed her to "do a little better." In addition to encouragement and motivation, she stated that professors were helpful because they were the ones who presented the curriculum and thus, in the best position to help students clear up confusion or address questions. She concluded that while she may not always do so, she was more willing to ask for help at the College.

Action Possibilities

Ashanti articulated several strategies that she believed would help her succeed, some of which came from experiences in high school and others she learned college; these included asking for help and using campus resources. However, although Ashanti was aware of some resources, she rarely used them for help.

Asking for help. One of the most significant options Ashanti discussed where related to asking for help, which occurred in both her high school and college role identities. Ashanti's hospitalization late in her senior year of high school affected her graduation and she had to "pick up the slack" in order to complete the requirements of her capstone project. From this experience, she learned she could ask for help and not "get in trouble…be reprimanded…or mocked." Similarly, regarding her experiences at the College, she expressed, "I know I can count on my professors because they are there

for a reason – to help me out." Regarding social supports available to her, Ashanti succinctly and astutely stated, "I know at least someone who can help me when I need the help." She extended this sentiment to also include mental and physical health by asserting, "If you have problems at home or with mental or physical health you can find help."

Campus resources. Ashanti was aware of some campus resources available to help her succeed, almost out of necessity; she stated that she was unable to ask her mom or sisters for help with schoolwork so could only to "rely on myself." For example, earlier Ashanti noted the distractions she faces at home; therefore, she preferred to study on campus. She noted use of the Duolingo Smartphone app for her French class and identified classmates and the tutoring center as other sources. Like Gregory, Ashanti was hesitant to actually seek out help that she knew was available to her. For example, "prideful" Ashanti never attended tutoring even after acknowledging its utility, albeit was "slowly opening up" to the idea. And while she believed she could "count on" the school's resources for help if she faced problems "at home or with your mental health or your physical health," there was not much in way of action towards seeking help; this point was underscored by her repeated missing FYE assignments that Professor Elora prompted her of often.

Summary of the FYE Context on Ashanti's CSRI

The FYE context has minor, and at times no, impact on Ashanti's CSRI. Ashanti began college uncertain of a specific career goal or major, favoring a stronger desire to increase knowledge, gain exposure to previously unknown ideas, and build her skills. While the course allowed Ashanti to consider a variety of purposes and goals for herself,

such as exploring her interests and strengths as they related to any potential majors or careers, there ultimately was no significant shift towards declaring an explicit career goal by the end of the course. Ashanti reported many various self-perceptions and self-definitions, some that were helpful to her CSRI and others that were barriers. Finally, Ashanti was able to discuss several action possibilities available to her, some revealed during the course, but she did not always act on those options. Thus, like other aspects, the FYE course did not significantly shift or develop her CSRI in many meaningful ways. Although she was confident at the start of the "easy" course, she ultimately failed it, which she described as "pitiful". As noted, several assignments were not turned in; although Ashanti held to her stance of seeing a course to the end, it did not end with a successful pass in this case. For Ashanti, the FYE course helped highlight some of her important ontological and epistemological beliefs inherent in her CSRI, but it did not necessarily shift her beliefs, or lead to any significant changes or growth. She did find the college more comforting and supportive than high school, though, naming professors and students as factors. The course also helped her to explore her own strengths and challenges. Like others, the FYE course did an excellent job of introducing Ashanti to the campus resources available to help her, by way of the scavenger hunt, among other activities. However, Ashanti fell short of actually reaching out to them when they may have helped her in the fall term have a more successful outcome.

Bella: Teachers and College Resources Matter to First-Generation College Student

Bella started at NECC the fall prior to her FYE 101 course. At the time of our interviews, she was enrolled in the Liberal Arts/Social Behavioral Sciences major with plans to transfer for a bachelor's degree in social work. During the fall term of this study,

she was enrolled in a total of 15 college-level credits and earned As in all them. In her first year at the College, Bella completed two developmental level mathematics courses and a 3-credt hour developmental level writing course paired with a 3-credit hour, college level reading course, both referenced in her interviews.

An important aspect to Bella's identity was being the first person in her family to attend college. Perhaps because of this, Bella often sought out help from resources and information that were important to making decisions related to her CSRI, for example, when researching her career and transfer school options prior to FYE 101. Subsequently, the FYE course did not reveal major shifts in the DSMRI components as she likely experienced most identity exploration triggers in her freshmen year.

Purpose & Goals

There were three themes extrapolated from the data surrounding Bella's goals for her CSRI, prior career exploration, defined academic and career goals, and shifting future possibilities. Before beginning FYE 101, Bella had been at the college for one year, and already engaged in career identity exploration processes on her own, which resulted in several changes to her major. Her research and careful decision making led her to pursue a social work; she focused her academic, career, and transfer plan on this pathway for her major and career. Moreover, the FYE course helped Bella expand future possible goals in way of future transfer schools and possibly, graduate education.

Pre-FYE career exploration. Prior to the FYE 101 course, Bella engaged in career identity exploration that resulted in several changes in her major. She initially declared a psychology major but did not seemingly enjoy the introductory class, describing it as something to "get though" before taking more "exciting classes."

Furthermore, after speaking with a counselor, she learned about the educational requirements to become a psychologist and concluded she "did not want to be in school that long." From psychology, she switched to the College's social work-related associate degree; however, her research for this degree revealed that her transfer options were limited, costly, and did not include the school she had hoped to attend. She finally declared the liberal arts/social behavioral sciences option, which was what necessitated her taking FYE 101 in her third term rather than her first. This major, she decided, gave her flexibility to pursue multiple transfer school options for her bachelor's degree in social work (BSW) and was "broad" enough to allow her a variety of career options.

Defined academic and career goals. As noted, Bella began the course with a more sophisticated career identity from her prior extensive career exploration and was keenly focused on earning a BSW. For the careers she included on her career plan, she rated both probation and parole officer and social worker as 10s for her interest on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being least interested and 10 being most interested (compared to the career of paramedic, which Bella rated as a 6 for interest). Thus, the course did not add value to her exploration of career options; instead, it was more helpful for building her academic plan based on her specific transfer goals. For example, the academic advisor suggested that Bella add a statistics course that would not "count" for her associate degree but would satisfy placement testing and curricular requirements at the next institution, to which Bella readily agreed she would do.

Expanding future goals. Bella's academic plan revealed an anticipated graduation in spring 2020, after which time she would transfer to a local four-year school. Although Bella initially identified only one primary school of interest, the FYE course

required that she compare two schools. This, she noted, gave her an unexpected second option for transfer that she had not previously considered. Additionally, the terminal degree she sought shifted. Bella initially rebuffed graduate school, citing that as one reason she left the psychology major and in one interview stated that her “mindset” surrounding her goal was the BSW. However, she later added that she once she achieved her bachelor’s degree the “mountain may be higher.” In her snapshot presentation video, she explained that she planned to earn her associate degree, followed by her bachelor’s degree and then “hopefully soon a master's degree.” More assertedly, in her scholarship reflection assignment, she expressed more certainty about her goals for graduate school, writing that she “will continue all the way til [sic] my master’s degree.”

Self-Perceptions & Self-Definitions

Three categories emerged from Bella’s data about her self-perfections in her CSRI; they were regarding her perceived strengths, unsubstantiated self-doubts, and increased sense of belonginess. Bella identified several strengths she observed and provided evidence for them. Conversely, Bella spoke of her perceived weaknesses and self-doubts, although often times these did not bear true. Bella also spoke about her increasing sense of belonging to the campus community, something influenced by her status as a first-generation college student.

Perceived strengths. Unlike Camila, Bella was able to articulate several strengths she exemplified in her CSRI. During the interview, she stated she was friendly and good at helping people, unsurprising for a future in social work. As a third-semester student, she helped her FYE classmates with “insight” to professors and as a Spanish speaker at home assisted students in her Spanish

class. In her snapshot presentation, she offered encouragement to classmates, inviting "anyone who, quite frankly, needs a friend, I will be there for them."

Bella also stated that she was a "role model" to her younger cousin, adding this responsibility "gives me the push to keep going." In her snapshot presentation, Bella discussed being the first in her family to attend college, having no one "whatsoever" that could help her navigate this new landscape, suggesting that her experiences at college would fulfil for her cousin what was lacking for her as a first-generation college student.

Bella not only saw herself as a role model to others but also for herself. In her snapshot presentation video explained how she was her "own educational influence." Pridefully, she described herself as "a well-rounded person who went through many things" that made her not a victim but a "survivor" from a trauma she experienced in 2014. Although this trauma at times caused self-doubt, she explained that when she felt this emotion, she fought her "sadness and depression" to "pick [herself] back up" to "fight for" what was hers, rather than entertain suicidal ideations.

Unfounded self-doubts. Although Bella articulated several strengths, she also exhibited several self-doubts that were often unsubstantiated. She described herself as "really good at English" but later modified to say only "to a certain extent." She questioned her ability to write a lengthy paper, explaining it caused her "an extreme amount of…self-doubt" that left her feeling "down for a couple of days." Eventually, she was able to "pick [herself] back up" and in fact had earned a "perfect score" on it. During our interview, she stated she wanted to call herself "smart" "because every time I put my mind so something, I can always do it" but fell short of doing so. When pressed about

why she would not call herself smart, Bella replied, “I don't know. Because to me like smart will be like over the top. I have weaknesses.” The theme of self-doubt that is unfounded was common; in fact, she later used her grades and specifically, her GPA as evidence to show just “how important education is” to her, herself giving evidence that contradicted her doubts.

Increasing sense of belonging. Beyond her academic abilities, Bella also expressed doubts about her belonginess that shifted over time. Several times Bella noted her status as a first-generation college student, adding this component of her CSRI makes her feel like she has “big shoes to fill” and that she was “not good enough to be here.” Upon further elaboration, she explained that when first arriving at the college, she was:

> scared…just scared cause I felt like I was out of place. I felt like, not that I didn't belong here, I just felt like, because given my family history, no one else went to college. I gave, um, how do you say the word? Like I gave myself, I like doubted myself more than, more than others. Like I felt like, ‘oh well , I'm not, I'm not as like them, I'm, I'm not as like other students here and maybe I can't pass’.

Initially, her status as a first-generation college student made her question her belonging, sparking more self-doubt; later, she suggested it helped motivate her, explaining it gave her the “mindset” that she has to be successful and “not turn back.” In time, Bella felt like less of “an outsider” and even noted that “making that transition to college has helped…me be me.” She felt that she could “be open” at the College and that others did not judge her, particularly regarding her appearance and clothing choices.

Ontological & Epistemological Beliefs

A number of themes emerged from the data surrounding Bella’s ontological and epistemological beliefs as related to her CSRI; these included the importance of

professors and their different teaching styles on her success, the positive impact of the FYE course, and her evaluation of her experiences at NECC. She gives several examples of professors who she felt were key in her development and compared them to a psychology professor with whom she did not gel. She commented on the utility of some college courses, including FYE and developmental level courses. Despite things not always being to her liking (professors or coursework), she ultimately expressed gratitude for beginning her college career at a two-year school.

Teachers are important. One of the most prominent and oft mentioned beliefs Bella mentioned throughout the data was, quite simply, that teachers matter. She stated emphatically that "the professors kind of help change it for me." She appeared grateful when noting that some professors will "go above and beyond" for their students, even though it was not required because faculty "get paid either way." She felt some of her "educators really cared" both about her and her education and provided a brief comparison to her high school experience, where she "didn't have that" and "they just passed people along" She explicitly named her FYE professor as one such teacher who was meaningful and had a positive impact on her. Bella explained if she was "having a bad day…. she'll take time out of her class and willing to talk to me." She described the FYE professor as "smiley," "glow-y," and "welcoming," added her demeanor "made me want to be here more."

Pedagogical choices matter. Bella expressed discussed how teachers' choices of teaching strategies influenced her learning and interest in the course, expressing particular appreciation for those teachers who helped all students succeed. For example, she referenced her mathematics teacher, who "really took everything step by step

because…. everybody learns at a different pace," adding, "He was able to help all 28 of us figure everything out at different paces." In the FYE course, Bella appreciated Professor Elora's use of gifs and videos along with how discussions were held instead of lectures that go "on and on." She explained that she was unable to learn from a passive style of teaching because she "can't sit there and just remember everything."

However, Bella did not sing high praises for all professors, suggesting she experienced a misalignment between her preferred method of instruction and one psychology professor's style. She explained that he "wasn't a bad person per se but his teaching method was off" in part because he "jumped all over the place." She expressed frustration that he moved the course at *his* own pace rather than making sure students understood material before moving on. She also lamented the ways he reworded textbook definitions, making examinations more difficult. While she expected the course to be "fun," she was disappointed with her experience.

The FYE course. By and large, Bella expressed positive accolades about her experience in the FYE course; including terms like, "welcoming" and "heartwarming." She acknowledged it could have been more valuable to her in her first year, yet still called it an "important experience." She explained that as one of her five courses that term, it actually helped alleviate some stress of her course load by helping her "take 10 steps back and breath." Bella also felt the course filled the gap left behind as a first-generation college student, explaining she did not have someone to "lean on to ask questions." With "everyone moving at like a hundred miles per hour" the course "helped…[it] changed the experience" because "I know more than what I did before," such as financial aid and transfer policies and procedures.

Much more profoundly, the course was extremely meaningful for Bella's socioemotional development, calling it "therapeutic" because it gave her "a shoulder to lean on" and a place to "talk, like, my problem out when I needed to." She elaborated that the course allowed her to discuss her past trauma "for the first time in front of a whole class." She says this public discussion "felt like a weight off my shoulders and provided her with "closure." She commented on the utility of the mindful Monday activities, whereby students could express their feelings. She noted a progressive aspect whereby students became more open to talking "about deeper problems" as the semester progressed despite essentially being "strangers," later adding that these personal disclosures lead to friendships that she maintained after the course ended.

Evaluating her NECC education. Overall, Bella had mixed reviews about her educational experiences at the college. While she previously expressed value in some of her courses, she did not see the utility in all of them. For example, she felt that while her developmental level mathematics course helped her learn, she pondered as a social worker, "When am I ever going to use a Pythagorean theorem?" Additionally, she did not feel her developmental level writing course improved her grammar, one of its course learning outcomes, because she continued to make grammatical errors. And her required reading course did not transfer; unaware why she had to even take it, she concluded it was "useless" and "a waste of time" because her time would have been better spent taking a college-level writing course. While Bella was clearly not pleased with all of her coursework, she did state she was "just glad I started out here" at NECC because she felt "less pressure" because class sizes were limited to just "28 to 30 students" rather than

hundreds. Interestingly, Bella also criticized class sizes because of its impact of obtaining feedback from professors, stating:

> I feel like a lot of the professors here are given a lot of work, like, too much…because some of them do tell me that they grade like 150 papers….You know, we're like, 'when is my paper going to get graded?'…It's understandable because it's not their fault that they have a whole class load, you know? So in a sense it's like they're in a rock and a hard place, you know? What do you expect them to do?

Action Possibilities

The themes were identified the data involving the actions Bella perceived as possible in her CSRI were to utilize the campus resources available whenever necessary, particularly human capital, and learn by doing. Bella, most likely because of her second-year status, was attuned to the campus offices and people that could help her develop an adaptive CSRI. Bella also expressed having to learn by doing as the first in her family to attend college. For these reasons, the FYE courses did not significantly expand her perceived action possibilities.

Campus resources. Prior to FYE 101, Bella demonstrated use of campus resources and advocated for others to do the same, particularly highlighting the importance of networking with people. Although asking for help caused Bella to experience anxiety because she was "shy" and disliked "confrontation," she said that if it were "for [her] grades" she would set her emotions "aside" and do so. She noted asking her professors for help, describing a time she approached her English professor for help tackling her research paper. When she described the process of changing her major three times, she discussed receiving help from a counselor and academic advisor. It is obvious

that Bella is someone who seeks help and information as part of her decision-making process. Relatedly, Bella offered this advice to classmates in her Snapshot Presentation:

> Use all your sources in the campus. Everything. I'm talking about learning labs, tutors, uh, counseling, academic advising, um, single stop. They did not have everything we needed in high school as much per say for me as a connection wise. But at NECC you have to use all these sources because you're paying for the tuition, you're paying for all these sources. So why not use it? Why not get a tutor for free? It's free. Take that step and not be afraid. Use it.

She furthered for students to "make connections; make a lot of friends at NECC, especially connections with teachers" in one's field for help with finding internships and jobs. She proclaimed, "Your connections at NECC will help you along the way in the future."

Learn from experiences. As a first-generation college student, Bella had to "figure everything out on my own." In her words, she did not have "someone to lean on to ask questions" so had to learn some things "the hard way" by "run[ning] back and forth" between various college resources, proudly concluding, "I'm still here…toughing it out." This description of her experiences in her first year of college helps to understand why the course was like the least impactful to expanding her action possibilities for she already explored most options. In fact, she implicitly acknowledged this when explaining that how she took on a helper role for her peers in the FYE course because of her second-year status.

Summary of the FYE Context on Bella's CSRI

The FYE course had the least impact on shifting Bella's CSRI in significant ways, likely because of her sophomore status. She had already undergone extensive career exploration on her own prior to FYE, having already settled on a goal of a BSW. The course helped her create an academic plan that met NECC's requirements, and also fulfill a requirement at her intended transfer school. Additionally, the course revealed a second transfer option to Bella, and possibly persuaded her to consider graduate school later. Bella was able to articulate strengths she expressed in her CSRI, something not all participants could do. Although several times she expressed self-doubts regarding her ability to be successful, the worst-case scenarios she imagined for herself did not come true, a realization she also acknowledged. She also commented on an increased sense of belongingness she felt on campus, which could be observed in her ease of using campus resources. Like other students in the study, the FYE course highlighted to Bella the importance of faculty in a college's student's career. Similarly, Bella was impressed by the atmosphere that the FYE professor created in the classroom, directly attributing it to her getting "closure" from a traumatic even in her life. Bella questioned the value of some coursework she was required to take, even noting the FYE 101 might have better served her in her first year; however, she was ultimately "happy" with her choice to start at a two-year institution. Because Bella had already been attending the college for one year, she had already experienced many of the action possibilities to which a course like FYE would typically introduce a student. Here, she served more as mentor to others, sharing advice for what she learned by doing along the way.

DSMRI Cross-Case Analysis

While the data revealed some commonalities to the nature and development of the participants' CSRIs, there was considerably more variety concerning their levels of sophistication, complexity of exploration, and consequently, observed changes to their CSRIs in the context of the course. This is unsurprising given the research presented in the literature review about the diversity of students who attend community colleges. Additionally, while several aspects of the course were intentionally designed to promote the development of adaptive CSRIs for all students in the course, not all aspects were experienced meaningfully by all participants. Students reported overwhelmingly favorable evaluations on many aspects of the course that were helpful for developing their CSRIs and could not offer any ways the FYE course could improve in the future. However, the data bore possibilities for improving the course in future semesters.

Diverse Students Experience Divergent CSRIs

Students were in different developmental stages of their CSRI at the start of, and throughout the course. This affected the extent to which they explored their identities and subsequently shifted in any meaningful ways. For example, Bella, the second-year student, had conducted extensive career exploration prior to the FYE course that resulted in several changes to her major. Thus, she felt assured in her career choices, having based them on data she gathered from campus resources and did not engage as fully in the exploration of her career identity in the course. This was also true for Camila and Gregory, who began with a clear career goal and did not meaningfully explore other career options. Conversely, Ashanti was undecided, having previously, wistfully, considered a wide range of careers; she entered with an underdeveloped career identity

and did not end the course with one that was any more developed than the start. Furthermore, students often had additional, individualized goals beyond career and major, further highlighting their uniqueness; for example, Gregory's goal to graduate in two years compared to Camila's goal to improve her English. In regard to self-perceptions and self-definitions, Camila showed less insight when unable to name any strengths when asked, compared to Bella's more advanced identity who was able to name strengths. When shifts in CSRIs were observed, the extent of change observed also varied. For example, the data showed that Bella shunned one major for its lengthy educational requirements prior to starting FYE 101 to later assert an intention to attend graduate school, quite a leap over one semester. For Ashanti, the shift was much smaller; the course helped her identify a goal to pursue English courses to align with her trait of creativity and improve her writing skills, but again, she did not ever shift meaningfully to naming a viable career goal or corresponding major.

FYE Design Components that Promote Constructive CSRIs

When asked, students indicated there were no ways the FYE course could be improved; more, Gregory proclaimed the course was about finding oneself during their first year of college. The data revealed a number of design components that promoted adaptive CSRIs among participants, some named by participants themselves; these were the importance of the teacher and some of the required assignments, such as the academic plan, the scavenger hunt and mindful Monday portfolio. One theme common to all participants was the simple belief that teachers matter. They often gave detailed descriptions of one professor's strengths in direct comparison to the weaknesses of another; even more specifically, all valued the impact that Professor Elora had on the

positive development of their CSRIs. Both Bella and Gregory commented about pedagogical strategies teachers employed that were most beneficial to their CSRIs. Perhaps because of her sophomore status, Bella's discussion of teaching styles was much more detailed than Gregory's. Ashanti recalled how the increased support and encouragement from her teachers lead to an increased motivation to "learn" and "know more."

Many assignments were also designed to develop students CSRI to promote their success. The academic plan helped to reveal errors in students plans, such as missing courses or inaccurate sequencing, ideally in time to address them before time or money was lost. All participants reflected positively on the mindful Monday activities. While Gregory spoke more in general how the weekly journal entries helped see weaknesses over time, for Bella they were "therapeutic" and provided "closure" to her sexual assault.

Another theme that was common to all participants in the study was self-doubt; these ranged from in more generalized worry, such as Gregory expecting college to be a challenge he might not overcome, to Camila's experience of pure panic during the fall term. There were several ways the course helped students overcome some self-doubts, at least somewhat, but not all. For example, Gregory was anxious with course registration, and all three first year students (Gregory, Ashanti, and Camila) worried how to navigate the physical campus to locate offices and classrooms. Via their own self-reports, the course directly helped them overcome their worries; they felt confident registering for courses and maneuvering the campus. Additionally, students valued the aspect of the class, informal as it were, to gaining insight into professors to take; for example, Bella sharing her experiences having had some of the "best" and "worst." Ashanti felt the

worry regarding her “lack of coherent” career goal would resolve itself “in due time.” However, the course did not absolve all worries students experienced; for example, Gregory’s same doubts from fall, that were unfounded by his 4.0 GPA that term, were reignited for spring.

Finally, students often referenced the relationships that were important to their CSRIs, outside of the professors mentioned above. For some it was family (i.e., Gregory) but several participants noted the healthy, positive relationships they specifically developed in Professor Elora’s class. Several participants noted the mindful Mondays particularly useful as a mechanism that promoted development of these peer relationships. For Bella, she formed peer-support group with several other classmates who came together over their trauma, a relationship that continued after the course ended. She directly attributed this to the atmosphere created by the professor of the course.

Recommendations for Future Iterations

From these findings, several recommendations can be extrapolated for future offerings of this course. First is to consider ways to make assignments more specific to students’ individualized needs. For example, students more developed on their career identities might complete a different version of the career plan than a student who is undecided like Ashanti. Similarly, Bella was bored with the academic planning piece and might have completed an alternate task more suitable for more advanced identity development, for example, an occupational interview with a social worker. Second, the course should consider mandating use of certain campus resources during the term when issues arise for students. One common observation was that students were *aware* of resources but did not use them when they may have been beneficial. One innocuous

example would be having Gregory use the library for more than just printing. Another more critical example could have been mandating Ashanti attend tutoring. Third, the course should consider more intrusive or wraparound interventions, if possible, when students demonstrate concerning behaviors, as in the case of Ashanti's incomplete academic plan or absent career goal at the end of the term. Finally, the data clearly underscore the critical role that faculty play to help their students develop productive and successful CSRIs; careful consideration should be given to those assigned to teach the course.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This final chapter of my dissertation concludes the findings in relation to the original statement of the problem and my research questions and offers conclusions and recommendations for the future. First, I start with a brief review on the gaps in the literature to give context for the problem under investigation in this study. This helps provide the rationale for the research questions posited and the two identity-related theoretical models applied to answer them, the PRESS and DSMRI models. This is followed by a brief overview of the study's findings. Next, I discuss implications this study has for theory, research, and practice. Finally, I discuss limitations to the study and offer recommendations and suggestions for future research.

Summary of Study and Findings

Using typical measures of outcomes for college student success, those for community college students are bleak; requiring a first-year experience course (FYE) is a common approach two-year schools implement to improve these outcome measures. The small body of research that exists with community college students uses predominantly quantitative measures; while these studies show promising results for the efficacy of FYE courses, the aggregate data also show they are not equally effective for all students. Thus, large gaps remain in our understanding how and why an FYE course promotes successful outcomes for some students but not others, particularly among the diverse students that comprise two-year institutions, who are all but absent from the literature.

Application of identity theories can help to fill this gap in understanding by offering theoretical frameworks from which to study this diverse population and deepen our understanding of their experiences. However, these studies are even fewer in number and mainly focus only on one narrow aspect to identity, such as racial and ethnic identity or age (Babineau & Packard, 2006; Watson, 2009). Yet, as several of these authors rightfully conclude, this approach does not capture the dynamic, complex, and multifaceted construct of identity, that is also highly context dependent. Thus, what is required is a theoretical framework, such as the DMSRI, that can capture this complexity inherent to college student role identity (CSRI) and explore how the context, here an FYE course, can promote healthy, successful CSRIs to lead to desirable student outcomes.

To accomplish this, this study employed the PRESS and DSMRI models related to identity formation as the theoretical frameworks to guide data analysis. The PRESS model designates the professor as agent for prompting identity exploration among her students by creating triggers the students designated as self-relevant, creating a sense of safety in the classroom, and scaffolding exploratory activities. The DSMRI model is comprised of four dynamic, interacting components of one's role identity (purpose and goals, self-perceptions and self-definitions, ontological and epistemological beliefs, and action possibilities) that is highly influenced by context.

Using these two frameworks, this study aimed to capture the complex nature of identity development processes among four community college students within the context of an FYE course and identify aspects of the course that were most beneficial to development of adaptive CSRIs among its diverse participants to inform future offerings of the course. The findings from the PRESS analysis showed that many aspects of the

course organically promoted many of the model's four principles; however, some were observed more often than others and they were not as meaningful for all participants equally. For example, many assignments were designed to trigger identity exploration, and did so in some respect among all participants; however, not all participants resolved conflicts or barriers the triggering revealed. The PRESS principle that was most manifested in the course as supported by the data was the professor's creation of a safe environment for students, something all participants revered. Conversely, scaffolding exploratory actions was the principle least observed among the data.

The findings from the DSMRI analysis revealed some commonalities among the four components of the model across participants but more so, the data revealed variations and divergence in their CSRI exploration. For example, all students spoke of the self-doubts they experienced; some spoke more in general, such as Gregory's worry school would be hard, to more specific doubts, such as Camila's view that she lacked necessary English skills. All students also discussed their academic and career goals (unsurprising given the required academic, career, and transfer plan) but some named secondary goals they held that were unique to their own identities; for example, Camila's Latina identity was impactful on her goal of pediatric medicine and improving English abilities. The depth of the exploration also varied, for example, all spoke about how important teachers were but Bella, a second-year student, spoke at greater lengths about the influence of a teacher's pedagogical choices on her CSRI, presumable because of her greater experience with different college teaching strategies.

There was also variation in the shifts to their CSRIs as a result of the FYE course that the students reported and were observed in the data. For the first-year students,

simply learning pragmatic policies and procedures helped achieve goals relevant to their CSRI, such as registering for courses and learning the campus via the scavenger hunt and campus tours, which helped to alleviate some of the students self-admitted doubts they had performing in their CSRI. For all students, the academic, career, and transfer plan spurred various degrees of change. For example, Ashanti had previously acknowledged her creativity but the FYE course helped her connect this self-perception to her goal to increase research and writing skills and thus, select English courses for spring in absence of an explicit academic pathway. Bella began the course having done career exploration in her first year and therefore was certain in her career path and transfer goals; here, the FYE course helped expand her transfer options by offering another option she was seriously considering. Even more significantly, she proclaimed graduate school as a new goal for herself, something she had formerly rebuffed.

Given the complexity of CSRIs among participants, the aspects that were most meaningful for students of course were also varied, and sometimes dependent on their positionality in the college context. For example, for first-year students, learning about how to navigate the campus and important policies and procedures was important as previously noted, but not for Bella, presumably because she enveloped these into her CSRI her first year at the college. Similarly, Bella was the only student to expand a transfer option, likely because she was much closer to implementing her goal than the first-year participants. Similarly, we can see how this positionality can intersect with aspects of other role identities, such as the case of Camila's Latina identity, which affected her goals of pediatric medicine and improving English, the self-doubts she

proclaimed about her abilities, consideration of campus diversity for transfer institutions as well as selection of future professors who she believed would best help her succeed.

Implications for Research and Theory

The volume of research that is focused on the needs of community college students to even begin with is paltry; more, studies that apply a theoretical framework to this population are practically non-existent, for example, opting more often for an inductive, grounded theory approach. This study contributes to this small base of literature by utilization of two theoretical models, developed for application beyond four-year students, to this understudied population. Some findings from this study support the few prior studies conducted with community college students, while others were either surprising or even contradictory. Because of the limited volume of studies with this population, the implications for future research are wide-reaching.

Students at community colleges are more heterogeneous than students at four-year schools, which is supported by this study's findings (Horn & Nevill, 2006; Karp & Bork, 2014; Kim et al., 2010). Therefore, it does not reason to simply take theories and research that were created with and for four-year students and apply them to those at two-year schools. A significantly greater number of studies, especially those that employ varying analytical frameworks more appropriate for community college students, are needed to deepen the web of knowledge and understanding of the unique challenges by these students face and specifically, how FYE courses can best meet their various needs. As such, the findings of this study are a very small and only a preliminary contribution to this largely absent body of research related to both the FYE course as a mechanism to improve student success rates and the community college student identity research.

Specifically, the combined application of the PRESS and DSMRI models in this study underscores how CSRI occurs in a vibrant, dynamic context, here, the FYE course.

There were several findings from this study that aligned with previous research. For example, some quantitative studies noted the influence of race and ethnicity on different measures of student success (Barnes, 2012; Derby, 2007); from a qualitative stance, Camila spoke often of how her Latina identity was impactful to the dimensions of her CSRI, including purpose and goals and self-perceptions and self-definitions. Similar to other studies, and more broadly, most students in this study reported gaining value from the course's coverage of college resources, and all commented about the importance of developing positive relationships with others in the classroom as key to their CSRIs (Barnes, 2012; Kasworm, 2005; Kimbark, Peters, & Richardson, O'Gara, Karp, and Hughes 2009). More specifically, the findings here indicated the specific professor of this section was particularly impactful in shaping students' experiences in and perceptions of the FYE course, and CSRIs, underscoring the findings of Rhodes and Cairo (1999) whereby students reported extreme dissatisfaction in their college success course, likely due to the professor assigned to teach it.

Some findings of this study were either contradictory to the those in earlier studies or surprising in nature. For example, findings from former research studies of FYE courses show that students often value the college skills that are often covered, such as time management, note taking, and study strategies (Barnes, 2012; Kimbark, Peters, & Richardson, 2017; O'Gara, Karp, and Hughes, 2009). Yet, none of the participants in this study made any mention of this component to the course, which begs the question, why? More surprisingly, not a single student in this study could offer one suggestion on how to

make the FYE course better; this is surprising because past research shows students, understandably, are mixed in their assessment of their FYE course (Duggan and Williams, 2010), although this may be due this study's small sample. Even beyond lack of any identifying weaknesses, some students suggested the course be mandatory, regardless if it is a curricular requirement, which is surprising given that other studies showed students took exception to mandating an FYE course (Duggan & Williams, 2010; Rhodes & Cairo, 1999).

As the literature base is so lacking, the recommendations for future research are seemingly limitless so simply doing more studies with this population, particularly those that apply theoretical models to them, is where researchers must start. Similarly, the findings highlight the context-dependent individualized, dynamic, and interactive nature and development of community college CSRIs; to this end, better theoretical frameworks are needed that allow researchers to more deeply study this complex phenomenon; the PRESS and DMSRI models are one such way. The use of the DSMRI model is particularly useful because it promotes a complex method to analyze all a student's roles, including others they've adopted that affect their CRSI, an important consideration gleaned from by Karp and Bork's (2014) study. However, because identity is emergent and iterative, it also should be studied in a longitudinal fashion, over a semester or perhaps longer, to capture the processes of identity exploration and formation in real time. In addition, the DSMRI posits a larger Identity (capital I) system, which is comprised of many role identities (e.g., community college student role identity and Latina role identity), all which dynamically interact. This study focused firmly on the CSRI but clearly others were prominent for students, that affected and were affected by

the CSRI under investigation here. Additionally, participants all noted the value in their peer relationships that were formed in the FYE context; future research should explore this dynamic in greater depths to study the implications of these interactions on identity exploration and formation. Finally, future research should further explore what aspects of a student's identity are likely to lead to certain behaviors or outcomes. For example, what aspects of CSRIs lead some students to avoid using campus resources, even when acknowledging their utility? Or, what aspects CSRI might have contributed to some failing the course? Conversely, how did one's CSRI intersect with the FYE course, and here, the PRESS principles, in ways that best promote adaptive identity development? More importantly, what might have been done differently to the course to help all students develop constructive CSRIs?

Implications for Policy and Practice

The findings of this study offer several suggestions for policies and practice regarding the course. First, all participants suggested mandating the course for all students. To this end, the college should ensure all guided pathways, capture all students, incorporate some type of FYE course. Next, careful consideration should be given to who is assigned to teach the course. Students shared many ideas about the facets of the professor's role identity they perceived as meaningful. For example, some spoke about feeling welcomed by the professor through her mannerisms, words, and actions and the safe space she created in the classroom. Some students spoke about the pedagogical choices teachers make, such when Ashanti spoke of her exposure to previously unknown material. Although a training session is required to teach the FYE course, NECC course assignments are typically by seniority rather than any other factor; thus, consideration

should be given to the facets of a faculty member's teaching role identity that best serve students. Third, those who do teach must undergo training beyond pedagogy to include how to respond should serious traumas be disclosed; the data showed that many students faced serious life crises that they needed help navigating that few faculty would have training on. More innocuously, teachers must attend to the socioemotional needs or "non-academic factors" that affect their students, considering every participant revealed self-doubts related to their CSRI.

There are also recommendations regarding the design of the course. First, the course was not impactful equally across all participants and did not meet the "one-course-fits-all" approach others have critiqued of these courses (Duggan & Williams, 2010, p. 130). Thought should be given, then, to how to individualize the course to better meet the unique characteristics of the students (i.e., first-year versus second-year students, undecided versus decided majors, or science-intended majors versus social science-intended majors). This might help designers modify assignments to better differentiate among students. One example comes from the notion that students often recalled the campus resources that *could* help them, but they opted not to access; thus, the course might require attendance at a campus event or visit to certain office that is decided upon by student and teacher based on the former's unique needs at the time. Thoughtful, appropriate individuation for each student does require time that a professor may not be able to accomplish in a class size of 36; as Bella noted this is sometimes a barrier to feedback, thus, a feasibility should be conducted about reducing this size. Lastly, consider reincorporating the scholarship assignment back into the course but only for

those students who may benefit. This also highlights the need to individualize the course more as opposed to the "one-course-fits-all" model that is currently employed.

Limitations to the Current Study

Like every study, this one contained several limitations. First, only one section of FYE was studied out of all that were offered, leaving the unanswered one question if the PRESS principles observed here would be revealed in other sections with different teachers. More, the College offered different variations of the college success course, such as those in business and allied health. Next and relatedly, this study's analysis of the DSMRI focused only on four students out of 36 in the course; while case studies are small by design, the students here were quite homogenous in some important ways; for example, no one was older than 21 nor a parent, both facets to identity that could have offered alternate or even expanded findings that capture more diverse CSRIs. Therefore, more sections should be studied so that greater diversity of students' experiences can be explored. This is also important because all four participants in this study would be classified as "traditional college students" based on their ages, and previous studies have demonstrated older students experience FYE courses differently (Kasworm, 2005; Rhodes and Cairo, 1999). The limited age range of participants was likely due to the timing of the section understudy (mornings on three separate days), further highlighting the next recommendation to study more sections, such as an evening one where there is likely to be non-traditional students. Another shortcoming was the limiting of the study to just one semester in the student's pathway; it would be interesting to conduct longitudinal research to better tease out differences between successful versus unsuccessful students in the long-term, beyond one semester, and more deeply capture and explore real-time

changes to identity. Similarly, such a study could add a quantitative component to bolster qualitative findings. Finally, there were additional data collection points that could be folded in that would make the findings more robust and comprehensive and better inform the results regarding the content, structure, and processes of identity formation. These include the students' evaluations of the course, results from the faculty survey, the large collection of weekly classroom activities and readings, and more classroom observations throughout the term. These classroom observations can also help explore the peer-to-peer relationships that developed that many students noted were important to their CSRIs.

Lastly, this study was conducted in a pre-COVID classroom/college setting; it is not an understatement to claim that the landscape of higher education and the world even, indeed all of education, now operates differently post-COVID. An obvious outcome is the increased use of virtual classrooms; thus, application of the PRESS principles in an online environment is likely to be altered. Moreover, the instigation and formation of CSRIs in online classes is likely to change.

Closing Thoughts

As the literature is so scant with students at community colleges, there are many avenues researchers must explore with this population to lay the foundational knowledge for this population that will be critical for improving their dismal outcomes, like degree attainment. Exploration of community college students from the lens of role identities is a worthwhile pursuit to build this foundational knowledge. These students often have multiple role identities that influence, and are influenced by, their CSRI. These complicated, multidimensional relationships, not just between different role identities but also within specific contexts, must be explored as a mechanism to untangle why

community college students experience greater barriers to their success. The application of two theoretical models in this study, the DSMRI and PRESS, helps contribute to the literature.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

FYE 101 COURSE DOCUMENT

1. Course Designation	FYE 101
2. Course Title	First Year Experience
3. Abbreviated Course Title for Banner	First Year Experience
4. Division	Liberal Studies
5. Department	History, Philosophy, and Religious Studies
6. Course Description	This course introduces first-year students to ideas and strategies required for college-level academic inquiry and college success, including critical thinking, communication, cultural competence, problem-solving, data interpretation, and institutional knowledge. Students develop college preparedness skills such as time management, note taking, study methods, test taking, information literacy, and an understanding of academic integrity. Students apply critical thinking and communication skills to areas such as cultural diversity, media literacy and financial literacy and gain an understanding of campus and community resources. Students create an appropriate academic plan, financial plan, and career/transfer plan in the course of the semester. Liberal Arts and Liberal Arts—Social/Behavioral Science students are required to enroll in FYE 101 within the first twelve credits.
7. Prerequisites/Corequisites	None

8. Placement Level	English Level II (ENGL 098/ENGL 099) or ESL ENGL 098/099 or higher placement No math placement level
9. Hours and Credits	3-0-3
10. Class size (maximum)	36
11. Programs where this course appears	Liberal Arts Liberal Arts – Social/Behavioral Science
12. Course Writer(s)	John Joyce
13. Contributor(s)	Melissa Altman-Traub Laura Davidson Steven Davis Fred Dukes, III Marissa Johnson-Valenzuela Linda Knapp Marc Meola Lynne Wagner
14. Facilitator (s)	Amy Birge
15. Recommended Starting Semester	Fall 2016
16. Course Revision or New Course	**New Course**
17. If this is a **course revision**, indicate which are being revised (check box)	☐Prerequisite(s)
	☐ Credit Hours ☐ Course Title ☐ Course Description ☐Student Learning Outcomes
18. Course Attributes	WAIV: Placement Test Waiver
19. Date	March 2, 2016 (updated 3-24-2016)

A. Rationale

This first-year experience course that combines the academic skills approach with the learning strategies approach to college-level academic inquiry is required of all students in the Liberal Arts and Liberal Arts—Social/Behavioral Science programs. FYE 101 is open to developmental and college-ready students, and students must enroll in FYE 101 within the first 12 credits. Because “engaged learning within the first three weeks of the [initial] semester is critical for determining student success” (qtd. in Asera and Navarro 2), a required rather than optional first-year experience course will provide early and much-needed support for students as they develop and hone their ability to persist in and understand college culture. The course will also give those Liberal Arts students who “have survived in difficult communities and have a range of work and family responsibilities . . . the opportunity to learn and practice classroom behaviors such as attendance, punctuality, and participation” (Asera and Navarro 4) while drawing on their strengths and experiences to complete course assignments. The required first-year

experience course will employ two of the high-impact practices identified by the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) in *A Matter of Degrees: Promising Practices for Community College Student Success* because 1) such courses engage students in in-class and out-of-class activities that stress critical thinking, problem solving, and data interpretation, and 2) the course reinforces skills and strategies that will help students succeed in college (e.g., time management, communication skills, study skills, and note-taking). Both practices create a sense of academic and social community within the larger campus, increase student, faculty and staff engagement, and provide information about campus support services and facilities, which facilitates completion.

The first-year experience course also fosters many of the fundamental skills that potential employers desire most in the workplace, such as teamwork, communication, respect, and critical thinking, that the National Network of Business and Industry Associations identify in their report, *Common Employability Skills* (2014).

This course synthesizes national thinking about student success, reflects similar courses at other community colleges, and recognizes the needs of the College student population. The course engages students at both developmental and college skill levels.

B. Student Learning Outcomes and Methods of Assessment
Common assessments will be used across sections to ensure consistency.

Student Learning Outcome Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:	**Method of Assessment**
1. Demonstrate college preparedness in areas such as time management, note taking, study methods, test taking, wellness, information literacy, and academic integrity	Weekly assignments Snapshot Presentation Final project
2. Demonstrate cultural competence in areas such as diversity, civic engagement, media literacy, and financial literacy	Weekly assignments Snapshot Presentation Career and Transfer Plan Final project
3. Describe and/or locate institutional policies, campus resources, and student organizations	Weekly assignments Snapshot Presentation Final project
4. Identify and employ strategies for effective oral and written communication	Weekly assignments Snapshot Presentation Final project
5. Apply critical thinking in the areas of college preparedness, problem-solving, data interpretation, and institutional knowledge	Weekly assignments Snapshot Presentation Final project

6. Develop an academic plan, a financial plan and a career/transfer plan based on the student's individual academic and career goals	Weekly assignments Snapshot Presentation Career and Transfer Plan Final project

C. Grading

The following is a sample of how instructors might weight each graded element in the course that future instructors may modify.

Weekly Assignments	20%
Snapshot Presentation: Academic Plan	20%
Career/Transfer Plan (includes financial plan)	20%
Final Project	40%
Total	**100%**

D. Planned Sequence of Topics

FYE 101 faculty will cover all of the topics listed below in their sections, in consultation with Counseling, Academic Advising, Learning Lab, Library, and other support services. The topics below are mandatory, and, given the large number of sections offered and the use of seminars, must proceed in the prescribed order. This list of topics is for a standard 15-week semester. Instructors may modify this structure for semesters of a shorter duration. For more information about the assignments and activities below, please see Section E.

Week	Topic(s)	Assignment(s)
1	**Topic:** The First 24: Navigating the System, part 1 • You Belong Here • Mindset for Success • Self-Advocacy • Communication	Canvas Starfish Contacting professors (with embedded assignments) Office hour visit (assignment with professor feedback)

2	**Topic:** Emotional and Physical Wellness, Stressors, Challenges, Persistence, Resilience, and Connection	Self-assessment Wellness exercises Financial planning and resources (intro) Contacting classmates Meeting with mentors (with attendant assignments)
3	**Topic:** Expectations and Responsibilities of a Successful Student Introduction to career and transfer programs at the College, part 1	Assignment from the FYE 101 assignment bank that focuses on the **academic skills** and **critical thinking** necessary to successfully enter/complete programs and/or transfer and/or enter the workforce
4	**Topic:** Expectations and Responsibilities of a Successful Student Introduction to career and transfer programs at the College, part 2	Assignment from the FYE 101 assignment bank
5	**Topic:** Expectations and Responsibilities of a Successful Student Introduction to career and transfer programs at the College, part 3	Assignment from the FYE 101 assignment bank
6	**Topic:** The First 24: Navigating the System, part 2 • Preparing for Registration • Executing the Academic Plan • Self-Advocacy • The Importance of Advising	**Academic plan:** My Degree Path and Dual Admissions
7	**Topic:** Financial Planning (FAFSA, student loan, dual admissions, etc.)	Snapshot presentation planning Media workshop Active listening

8	**Topic:** Financial Planning	**Financial plan due** **SNAPSHOT PRESENTATIONS**
9	**Topic:** Career and Transfer Planning	**SNAPSHOT PRESENTATIONS**
10	**Topic:** Career and Transfer Planning (continued) **SNAPSHOT PRESENTATIONS**	Work on **Career and Transfer Plan** (includes financial plan) **SNAPSHOT PRESENTATIONS**
11	**Topic:** Career and Transfer Planning (continued) **SNAPSHOT PRESENTATIONS**	Work on **Career and Transfer Plan** (includes financial plan) **SNAPSHOT PRESENTATIONS**
12	**Topic:** Civic Engagement/Diversity, Cultural Competence and Media Literacy	**Career and Transfer Plan due** Final Projects: Content, Organization, Execution
13	**Topic:** Group Dynamics and Self-Advocacy	Work on Final Project
14	Work on Final Project	Work on Final Project
15	**Final Project Due**	

E. Student Learning Activities and Assignments

Weekly Assignments: In the first two weeks, students will begin developing a mindset for success by completing short assignments that assess their growing familiarity with the institution, their communication skills, the need for early financial planning, and their ability to recognize and address challenges.

For their individual sections, FYE 101 faculty will select from a bank of assignments and rubrics for weeks three through five that focus on the specific academic skills and critical thinking necessary to successfully enter/complete other programs at the College and/or transfer to a four-year institution, and/or enter the workforce at the Associate's level. Instructors may allow students to choose from a limited number of assignments from the assignment bank and rubrics, according to student interest.

In addition, students will work with faculty, in consultation with counselors, advisors, and financial aid, to complete assignments related to My Degree Path, self-assessment,

financial planning, and creating an academic plan that will become part of the Snapshot Presentation.

Snapshot Presentation: At mid-semester, students will give short presentations about how they see themselves as college students, the challenges they face, their academic plan, and their strategies for successful completion. Students will make use of multimedia and demonstrate their oral communication skills and their active listening skills.

Career/Transfer Plan: In weeks nine through twelve, representatives from Financial Aid and other faculty will work with students to complete financial aid tasks and work on assignments designed to foster greater financial literacy and inform students' career and transfer plans. Students are required to meet with an advisor to create a Career/Transfer Plan. The Career/Transfer plan will become part of the Final Project.

Final Project: In the last weeks of class, students work in teams to create a final project that builds upon previously introduced skills and incorporates their Career/Transfer Plan with a topic related to civic engagement in a culturally diverse environment.

Please see the **Appendix** for a sample assignments and learning activities.

F. Required and Optional Texts/Readings/Materials

Course Reader

"10 Things You Should Know about College Admissions":
http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2011/10/10-things-you-should-know-about-college-admisssions/246095/

"The Value of College Is: (a) Growing (b) Flat (c) Falling (d) All of the Above":
http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2011/09/the-value-of-college-is-a-growing-b-flat-c-falling-d-all-of-the-above/245746/

"The Value of a College Degree":
http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/tomorrows-college/dropouts/value-of-college-degree.html

"The Writing Assignment that Changes Lives":
http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2015/07/10/419202925/the-writing-assignment-that-changes-lives?utm_source=npr_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=20150719&utm_campaign=mostemailed&utm_term=nprnews

G. Resources Needed for This Course
None

Course Document Appendix B: Sample Weekly Assignments

My Degree Path Navigation

SLO #3: Describe and/or locate institutional policies, campus resources, and student organizations

SLO #5: Apply critical thinking in the areas of college preparedness, problem-solving, data interpretation, and institutional knowledge

Contributor: Lynne Wagner

During your first year at Community College of Philadelphia, you attempt 27 credits as Liberal Arts major. The courses you took and the grades you earned are:

Fall 2016
ENGL 098: Fundamentals of Writing: Grade: C
ENGL 108: Academic Reading: Grade: B
FNMT 118: Intermediate Algebra: Grade: C
FYE 101: First Year Experience: A
SPAN 101: Elementary Spanish: B

Spring 2017
ENGL 101: English Composition I: Grade: A
ENGL 115: Public Speaking: Grade: D
SPAN 102: Elementary Spanish: Grade: F
CSCI 111: Computer Science I with Java: Grade: B

Log in to My Degree Path and pull up student information. Use the 'What If' function to select Major and input courses that count as completed. Assume that you will complete your degree within five years.

Part A

1) How many of the courses taken apply to your current Degree?
2) Explain which courses do not apply to the degree and why.

Part B

1) Select a new major outside of Liberal Arts to apply the courses to using the 'What If' function. What is the new major and how are the courses applied? For each course, list how it fits into the degree. For instance, if it is part of a specific requirement of the degree, it counts as a general elective, or it does not apply to the new degree at all.
2) Imagine yourself further down the line in your progress at NECC, and you decide to change to a different major. What implications should you consider before changing majors? What are positive things can come from changing a major?

Criminal Docket Search

SLO #2: Demonstrate cultural competence in areas such as diversity, media literacy, and financial literacy

SLO #5 Apply critical thinking in the areas of college preparedness, problem-solving, data interpretation, and institutional knowledge

Contributor: Elizabeth Canapary

Criminal dockets are publicly available in Pennsylvania. This means that each time an adult is arrested and/or convicted of a charge in Pennsylvania, their criminal record is publicly accessible. The following steps are designed to teach you how to locate and navigate criminal records in Pennsylvania. Please follow the steps in the order in which they appear.

Step One: Log on to the following website: ujsportal.pacourts.us

Step Two: Click on the **"Docket Sheets"** box

Step Three: Click on the **"Criminal Courts of Common Pleas"**

Step Four: Under **"Search Type,"** click on **"Participant Name"**

Step Five: Write in the Defendant's First and Last Name

Step Six: Under Case Status, Write **"Active"** – If nothing appears for **"Active,"** write **"Closed."** [Please note that if the case has pled or a conviction has been entered, it will be filed under "Closed." If the case is open, it will be filed under "Active."]

After you have located the individual defendant, look over to the left-hand side of the screen to access their criminal docket sheet.

The webpage you are viewing is operated and maintained by Pennsylvania's Unified Judicial System as a source of public information. The webpage is not affiliated with any search system for public records provided by private organizations for which fees may be incurred. The ability to search for and review information contained in these web docket sheets is a free public service.

Select a CP/MC Docket Search Type from the dropdown *(default search type is by Docket Number)*

Search Type: Participant Name

Enter the desired search criteria and click Search *(available search criteria changes based upon the type selected above)*

* Last Name: Heidnik
* First Name: Gary
Date of Birth: __/__/____

and any combination of

County:
Docket Type:
Case Category:
Case Status: Closed
Date Filed: __/__/____ through __/__/____

Search Clear

Docket Number	Short Caption	Filing Date	County	Party	Case Status	OTN	LOTN	Police Incident/Complaint Number	Date of Birth
CP-14-MD-0000159-1999	In Re: Other	7/13/1999 8:55:00 AM	Centre	Heidnik, Gary	Closed				
CP-51-CR-0510691-1987	Comm. v. Heidnik, Gary	5/11/1987 12:00:00 AM	Philadelphia	Heidnik, Gary	Closed	M3033004			11/22/1943
CP-51-CR-0437091-1987	Comm. v. Heidnik, Gary	5/1/1987 12:00:00 AM	Philadelphia	Heidnik, Gary	Closed	M3033586			11/22/1943
MC-51-CR-0335691-1987	Comm. v. Heidnik, Gary	3/31/1987 12:00:00 AM	Philadelphia	Heidnik, Gary M.	Closed	M3039831		8725040840	11/22/1943

Next, scroll through the criminal docket sheet to access the charges (usually located in the middle of the sheet).

Now that you have learned how to complete a search, let's research five different criminal defendants in Pennsylvania.

Using the steps set forth above, please identify the first two crimes with which the following individuals were charged:

1. Gary Heidnik

2. Kermit Gosnell

Please note that for the last three criminal defendants, you will need to do some research on the internet to determine the name of the criminal defendant as well as his or her birthdate in order to access the appropriate criminal docket.

3. The Unicorn Killer

4. The Kensington Strangler

5. Mumia Abu Jamal

The Why, How, What of Recycling in Philadelphia

SLO #1: Demonstrate college preparedness in areas such as time management, note taking, study methods, test taking, wellness, information literacy, and academic integrity

SLO #2: Demonstrate cultural competence in areas such as diversity, media literacy, and financial literacy

SLO #4 Identify and employ strategies for effective oral and written communication

Contributor: Linda Knapp

Background: Mayor Michael Nutter declared in 2008 that the City of Philadelphia would become the "Greenest City" in the United States and his Administration established the Sustainability Office to create Greenworks, the plan to achieve the ambitious sustainability goal. Greenworks includes 15 targets related to reducing energy consumption in buildings and transportation, storm water management, tree planting, and diverting waste from landfills. The Sustainability Office works in partnerships with other City agencies in addressing the targets and in providing annual reports that document progress toward the goal.
Recycling is a key strategy in the waste diversion target. To be effective, recycling requires participation from all Philadelphians – individuals, households, businesses, schools, religious institutions, and government agencies. In fact, recycling is mandated by both City and State laws.

This lesson will teach students about the important role that they can play in understanding, promoting, and practicing recycling in their homes as well as in various locations throughout the City.

Students will gain practice in using college success skills while they also learn how to be good Philadelphia citizens.

Lesson One (Regular Classroom)

Instructor will distribute the recycling survey (see below) for each student to complete and will ask each student to share with the class some information from his/her answers. The instructor will encourage a discussion about the importance of recycling. (20-30 minutes)

Instructor will provide a presentation that includes:

- Documentation of recycling benefits,
- Review of products that are made from recycled materials,

- Overview of recycling systems (collection, transportation, processing, end markets).

Students will be expected to take notes. (30+ minutes)

Lesson Two (Computer Classroom)

Instructor will provide a presentation (and students will take notes):

- Recycling in Philadelphia (households, on-the-street, businesses, Waste Watchers at special events)
- Opportunities for improving recycling (addressing contamination, adding more materials for collection)

(30 minutes)

Activity: each student will view the Philadelphia Recycling Office web site (http://www.philadelphiastreets.com/recycling/), and will

1. Take the "Quiz to Test Your Knowledge" in the *Learn the Recycling INS and OUTS* section. Students will not be required to announce their scores, but will be asked to share what they learned from completing the quiz. The Quiz focuses on acceptable and unacceptable materials for residential recycling in Philadelphia.
2. Review the web site and take notes on the types of information and resource materials available (including residential recycling and Recycling Rewards Program). Each student will verbally share what he/she learned.

(30 minutes)

Lesson Three (Computer Classroom)

Instructor will provide a brief overview of recycling programs in San Francisco, Austin, NYC and will highlight the innovations in the three cities' programs.
(30 minutes)

Students will review the three cities recycling web sites, will take notes, and will verbally share what they learn about materials that are collected, frequency of collection, and recycling containers.

San Francisco: http://www.sfenvironment.org/zero-waste/recycling-and-composting
Austin: http://austintexas.gov/department/single-stream-recycling
New York City: http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dsny/recycling-and-garbage/residents/what-to-recycle-for-residents.page
(30 minutes)

Homework Assignment
Prepare a short presentation that:

- Describes three benefits of recycling for the City of Philadelphia,
- Provides three recommendations for increasing the recycling rate in Philadelphia,
- Explains three ways that students can recycle and encourage others to do so.

Recycling Survey

Do you live in Philadelphia? __________________ (If no, identify the town/city where you live.)

Do you recycle at home?_____________________________ (f yes, please list the materials you recycle).

Please indicate if you recycle at any of the following locations?
- School
- Work
- Special Events
- Religious Institution
- Other ____

Why do you think that it is important to recycle?

Comments:

Sample Snapshot Presentation

This assignment may be used to assess all of the SLOs for the course.

Assignment: Snapshot Presentation

Each student will have ten minutes to present. Your time management skills and communication skills are being evaluated, so plan and use your time wisely.

Part 1: Content Requirements: Your **Snapshot Presentation** should consist of these elements:

1) Who Is Your Greatest Educational Influence?

   Choose an individual whose educational path or experience you feel has influenced your own ideas about what it means to be a college student.

   - Who is this person (friend, family, mentor, etc.?)
   - How far did that person go in college? (some classes, associate's degree, bachelor's, degree, advanced degree?)
   - Did that person's college education lead to career in some way?
   - What have you learned from that person's experience with higher education?
   - What about this person inspires you? What would you do differently?

2) Your Educational Autobiography
   - Describe your education so far
   - What kind of educational experience(s) have you participated in (public school, private school, location, etc.)?
   - What has prevented and/or enabled your educational success when it comes to your education so far?
   - Describe your most successful educational experience and what helped you to attain it.
   - What are your fears about starting college?

3) Your Learning Style
   - Define your learning style (visual, auditory, spatial, independent, social, etc.) and describe how you came to understand your learning style
   - Which types of learning situations (lectures, class discussion, group work, etc.) are most compatible with this learning style?
   - What pitfalls or problems should you be on the lookout for as a person with this learning style?

4) Your Academic Plan

- Where do you see yourself in two years?
- How will you get there?
- How will you pay for it?
- Are you taking courses within the prescribed sequence per the Catalog?
- Are you taking courses that will enable you to transfer seamlessly, etc.?
- Identify any elements that may detour you from your desired pathway (for example, developmental courses, life events, etc.)

5) Strategies and Resources for Successful Completion
    - Identify at least three College resources and support services and describe how they will help you achieve your educational goals
    - Identify three specific study methods and/or time management strategies that you will practice/are practicing in order to achieve your educational goals.
    - Describe at least three problem-solving strategies that you will use to avoid and/or cope with the pitfalls and distractions you may face?

Part 2: Media Requirements: Content should be arranged in PowerPoint or Prezi and may include (but is not limited to) these elements:

- Photos (past and/or present)
- Selfies with your influential person, family, etc.
- Selfies with College community
- Video (upload a video you've made to YouTube)
- Skits or plays
- Interactive games

Snapshot Presentation Rubric

Criteria	Beginner	Developing	Mastery
Presentation Content ___ of 40 points	Includes some of the required elements ☐ Educational influence ☐ Educational autobiography ☐ Learning Style ☐ Academic Plan ☐ Strategies and Resources Does not address most questions and rarely uses specific terms and ideas	Includes most of the required elements ☐ Educational influence ☐ Educational autobiography ☐ Learning Style ☐ Academic Plan ☐ Strategies and Resources Answers the majority of questions with specific terms and ideas	Includes all of the required elements ☐ Educational influence ☐ Educational autobiography ☐ Learning Style ☐ Academic Plan ☐ Strategies and Resources Answers questions with specific terms and ideas
Media Use ___ of 30 points	Does not use PowerPoint/Prezi or does not use them correctly and/or effectively Does not use other forms of media or does not use them in appropriate and/or engaging ways	Needs some practice using PowerPoint or Prezi, but generally effective Uses other forms of media in ways that are somewhat appropriate and often maintain the audience's interest	Uses PowerPoint or Prezi effectively and correctly Uses other forms of media in ways that are appropriate to the subject matter and also maintain the audience's interest
Communication Skills ___ of 20 points	Information is generally not communicated in clear or logical way, Does not maintain eye contact The speaker's words are often difficult to understand	Some information is unclear or difficult to understand Minimal loss of eye contact It is occasionally difficult to understand the speaker's words	Information communicated clearly and understandably Maintains good eye contact Voice is clear and audible Handles unexpected changes in a calm, practiced manner

	Unexpected changes cause significant delays or disruptions Does not interact with other students or does not interact in appropriate ways	Unexpected changes cause minor delays or disruptions Interacts with other students in appropriate ways	Interacts with other students in positive, appropriate ways
Time Management ___ of 10 points	Presentation is markedly too short or far exceeds the ten-minute time limit	Presentation may be slightly below or beyond the ten-minute mark	Presentation executed within the time limit and maintains a lively, engaging pace that holds the audience's interest

FYE 101 Sample Final Project

Students work in teams to create a final project on a topic related to civic engagement in a culturally diverse environment. The final project builds upon previously introduced skills (time management, note taking, information literacy, oral and written communication, academic integrity, media literacy) and incorporates elements of their Career/Transfer Plan. Students will link their final project with their educational and career goals. As students work on their projects, instructional time will also address the challenges of group work, emphasizing the interpersonal skills (assertiveness, cooperation, compromise) necessary to team success. While students may propose their own topics, below are examples of topics and related events and activities:

Diversity & Civic Engagement	Events/Activities	Media Literacy
Local environmental concerns • Environmental racism • Water quality • Sustainability • Littering • Recycling	• attend civic or organizational meeting • create blog/social media account or comment on a blog, social media site or publication • compose a letter to editor or op-ed piece	Publications such as philly.com Blogs Organization websites Social media • Responsible use • Bullying
LGBTQ issues and concerns Employment • Health/Wellness • Inclusion • Justice • Etc.	• attend civic or organization meeting • create blog/social media account or comment on a blog, social media site or publication • interview members and leaders of the community at an agency or non-profit such as Attic Youth Center, William Way Center or Missoni Center	
Education and Child Welfare • Funding • Charter system • K-12 teaching • Curricular concerns • At-risk youth	• attend a school board meeting • create blog/social media account or comment on a blog, social media site or publication	Publications such as philly.com Blogs Organization websites

	• compose a letter to editor or op-ed piece	Social media • Responsible use • Organizing and activism
Justice • Privacy rights • Prison reform and re-entry challenges • Crime trends	• attend a civic or organization meeting • interview an ex-offender and/or member of the justice system • create blog/social media account or comment on a blog, social media site or publication • compose a letter to editor or op-ed piece	
Arts and Culture • Philadelphia's contribution to the arts (music, film, food, theatre, books, etc.)	• attend a reading, exhibition or performance • interview a local author, artist, performer, restaurateur • post a review of a local book, performance, exhibition or restaurant	

FYE 101 List of Community College of Philadelphia Programs and Proficiency Certificates*	
Career Pathway	**Transfer/University Pathway**
American Sign Language/English Interpreting (ASL/INT) Applied Science and Engineering Technology (ASET) Automotive Technology Behavioral Health/ Human Services (BHHS) Building Science Computer Assisted Design Computer Info. Systems Construction Management Culinary Arts Digital Forensics Digital Video Production Education: Birth-4th Grade Facility Management Fire Science Hospitality Management Justice Paralegal Studies Photographic Imaging Sound Recording and Music Technology Technical Studies	Architecture Art and Design **ASL/INT*** **BHHS** Biology Chemistry Communication Studies Computer Science **Education: Birth-4th Grade** Education: Middle Level Education: Secondary Engineering Science English **Fire Science** Interior Design International Studies **Justice** Liberal Arts Liberal Arts—Honors **Liberal Arts—Social/Behavioral Science** Mass Media Mathematics Music Psychology Religious Studies Theater
Acting PC Automotive Service PC Biomedical Equipment Technology I & II PC Computer Programming and Software Development PC Digital Imaging PC Digital Video Production PC Electronic Discovery PC Geographic Information Systems PC Network and Systems Administration PC Process Technology PC Recovery and Transformation PC Social and Human Service Assistant PC Technical Theater PC Youth Work PC	

Division of Business and Technology

Division of Math, Science and Health Careers

* This list does not include programs in Business or Health Careers, broadly defined, except for Computer Technologies, Automotive Technology, Culinary Arts, and Hospitality Management

** Bold type denotes repetition

Works Cited

Asera, Rose and Diego Navarro. "Rethinking Entry into College." The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges. January 2013.

Center for Community College Student Engagement. *A Matter of Degrees: Practices to Pathways (High-Impact Practices for Community College Student Success)*. Austin, TX: The University of Texas at Austin, Program in Higher Education Leadership. (2014).

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National Network of Business and Industry Associations. (2014) *Common Employability Skills. A Foundation for Success in the Workplace: The Skills Employees Need, No Matter Where They Work.*

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (STUDENT)

Interview 1:

1. Tell me about your experience at NECC; please start from the beginning.
2. Tell me about an important learning experience or event for you in this semester.

   (Possible probes to get at identity components:

   a. Why was this event important to you?
   b. What happened in that event? Please tell me step-by-step.
   c. What did you feel during the event? Why?
   d. What did you do, and why?
   e. Can you think about another event in which you felt that way?
3. How do you feel at NECC? Why?
4. Can you tell me about an event in which you felt good at NECC this semester? (probes)
5. Can you tell me about an event in which you felt bad at NECC this semester? (probes)
6. What are your goals at NECC?
7. How did you adopt these goals?
8. What are your strengths as a student at NECC? (Probes: Why are these strengths? Can you tell me about a particular event in which you experienced these strengths?)

9. What are some of your challenges as a student at NECC? (Probes: why are these challenges? Can you tell me about a particular event in which you experienced these challenges?)
10. Now, I'd like to ask you about your FYE course; tell me about your experience at the FYE course.
    a. Please tell me about an event in which you felt good in this course? (probes)
    b. Please tell me about an event in which you felt bad in the course? (probes)
    c. How has the course change you? (probes)
    d. What aspects of the course did you find the most valuable, why?
    e. What aspects of the course did you find problematic, why?
11. Is there anything else that is important to you that you'd like to tell me about your experiences in the FYE course?

Interview 2:

1. Is there anything else that is important to you that you'd like to tell me about your experiences in NECC?
2. What are some of the important dilemmas you have at NECC?
3. What are the most positive features for you at NECC? (Probes: Why are these positive? Can you tell me about a particular event in which these features were positive for you?)
4. What are problematic features for you at NECC? (Probes: Why are these problematic? Can you tell me about a particular event in which these features were problematic for you?)

5. What are the most important relationships for you as a NECC student? (Probes: Why are these important? Can you tell me about a particular event in which these relationships were important for you?)
6. What are other things in your life that help you as a NECC student? (Probes: Why are these helpful? Can you tell me about a particular event in which these things were helpful to you?)
7. What are other things in your life that problematic for you as a NECC student? (Probes: Why are these problematic? Can you tell me about a particular event in which these things were problematic to you?)

Thank you very much for participating in this interview!

APPENDIX C

FYE 101 COURSE SYLLABUS

FYE 101: FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE
Fall xxxx
Dr. Elora [pseudonym]

Email:
Office Location:
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 2pm – 4pm
And by appointment outside of these office hours– just email to set up a meeting!

Course Description: This course introduces first-year students to ideas and strategies required for college-level academic inquiry and college success, including critical thinking, communication, cultural competence, problem solving, data interpretation, and institutional knowledge. Students develop college preparedness skills such as time management, note taking, study methods, test taking, information literacy, and an understanding of academic integrity. Students apply critical thinking and communication skills to areas such as cultural diversity, media literacy and financial literacy and gain an understanding of campus and community resources. Students create an appropriate academic plan, financial plan, and career/transfer plan in the course of the semester. Liberal Arts and Liberal Arts—Social/Behavioral Science, Justice, and Religious Studies students are required to enroll in FYE 101 within the first twelve credits.

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate college preparedness in areas such as time management, note taking, study methods, test taking, wellness, information literacy, and academic integrity
2. Demonstrate cultural competence in areas such as diversity, civic engagement, media literacy, and financial literacy
3. Describe and/or locate institutional policies, campus resources, and student organizations
4. Identify and employ strategies for effective oral and written communication
5. Apply critical thinking in the areas of college preparedness, problem-solving, data interpretation, and institutional knowledge
6. Develop an academic plan, a financial plan and a career/transfer plan based on the student's individual academic and career goals

Required Text: All readings for this course can be found on Canvas.

Disability and Accommodations Statement: Students who believe they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Center on

Disability, room BG-39, phone number 215-751-8050, to receive an accommodation letter. After receiving a letter of accommodation, students requesting accommodations should speak to me privately to discuss their letter and specific needs as soon as possible (preferably within the first week of class).

Starfish Connect: Starfish Connect is a communication tool for students and faculty. Through Starfish, instructors can provide feedback to you about course progress. Throughout the term, you may receive progress emails regarding your academic performance. The emails are designed to be helpful and increase your success in courses. Be sure to open any emails you receive and follow the recommendations. Instructors may also recommend that you contact a specific campus resource, such as the Learning Lab or Counseling Center. If an instructor makes a referral, you may also be contacted directly by this campus service as a follow-up. To access Starfish Connect, simply log into Canvas and click on the link, Starfish Connect. You can even set up a student profile. If you need assistance with Starfish Connect, you can email questions to starfishconnect@ccp.edu.

Attendance Policy: Regular and punctual attendance is expected. Attendance is taken at the start of class. If you miss the roll call it is your responsibility to inform your instructor that you are present to make sure you get attendance credit. You can miss six classes without penalty. After six absences, your final grade will drop 2% per class missed.

Please note: as outlined in the student handbook, if you have been absent from class for an amount of days equal to the equivalent of two weeks or more [six or more hours], your instructor may initiate a withdrawal (W) after the 20% attendance reporting period.

Withdrawal Policy:
The last date to withdraw from your courses is **Monday November 19th, 2018**. Though you won't earn an F if you withdraw, before you decide to withdraw from this course or any other course, think about the following information:

a. The W will be reflected on your transcript permanently.
b. Ws on transcripts may have a negative impact on acceptance into select programs.
c. Transfer institutions may view Ws negatively, and it may go against your application.
d. Your financial aid may be impacted.

Please discuss your options with your instructor or an advisor/counselor before you decide to withdraw from a course.

Lateness Policy: Arriving to class late disturbs everyone. If you arrive after your name is called on the roll call this will count as being late. Early departures are also strongly discouraged and can be counted as a lateness as your instructor sees fit. Lateness/early departure will result in a reduction of your participation grade.

Participation Policy: You will learn a lot in this class by engaging and completing the fun in-class activities, which will range from discussions to workshops. You are expected to come prepared for class by completing the assigned reading, participate fully in

activities and complete all work assigned during class. You should not disrupt the class. Disruptions include, but are not limited to: **being late/leaving early, using cell phones to text, making calls or using the internet, talking loudly when not appropriate, frequently leaving the classroom, or being disrespectful to your classmates, instructors or guests**. If you fail to complete in class work/disrupt the class you will receive a penalty on your participation grade, which is worth 10% of your overall grade. **Deadlines:** At college you are expected to meet all deadlines. Your instructor has the discretion to decline or deduct points from late assignments, and extensions will be made on a case-by-case basis. "I forgot to do it," "I didn't have Internet /computer access," and "I had to work" are not valid excuses for failing to complete assignments.

You are expected to submit all assignments via Canvas where stated. If you have problems submitting an assignment to Canvas, then it is your responsibility to email your instructor your assignment *before* the deadline to prove it was completed in time. TIPS: try a different Internet browser (such as Chrome or Firefox) if you are having problems with Canvas and allow yourself enough time to allow for technological problems when submitting your work.

Academic Integrity Policy: Violations of academic integrity may involve a variety of acts, including, but not limited to, plagiarism and cheating. Anyone who assists another person in an activity that constitutes a violation of academic integrity is also responsible and accountable for such a violation.

- Plagiarism is the act of appropriating all or part of the work of another person or persons and passing it off as one's own. It occurs when the original ideas, language, or design elements that are not common knowledge are used without permission or proper credit. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, copying from a text without using quotation marks or other appropriate citation.

- Cheating can take many forms. It may occur as a blatant disregard for professor guidelines and rules for assignment completion, an intentional effort at deceiving the professor, or an attempt to gain an unfair advantage over classmates.

- Even one violation of academic integrity can result in your failure of the course. Faculty are required to report all violations to the Dean of Students. There are no exceptions. Take this policy very seriously. Ignorance and carelessness are not acceptable excuses. If you are unsure about what is or is not appropriate, please contact the instructor without delay.

Weather Policy: An announcement indicating that the College is closed due to a weather emergency will be placed on both of the main switchboard numbers (215-751-8000 and 215-751-8010). The closing announcement will play if these numbers are called. Should NECC cancel day classes due to inclement weather, please **check Canvas or your NECC email** for an announcement from me about your assignments. If you do not have Internet access at home, call and have someone you know check for you.

Grades:

Weekly Assignments	30%
Weekly Reading Quizzes (2 lowest scores dropped)	10%
Mindfulness Portfolio	5%
Snapshot Presentation	10%
Academic Plan	15%
Financial Plan	10%
Career and Transfer Exploration Plan	10%
Participation	10%
Total	**100%**

Grade Scale:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
0-59	F

IN-CLASS ACTIVITY AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

ALL READINGS CAN BE FOUND ON CANVAS IN THE MODULE FOLDER

WEEK 1: NAVIGATING THE SYSTEM

Wed 9/5 Introductory Class
Readings: Review the syllabus

Fri 9/7 Navigating the System
Readings: "Defining Success"

Assignment due by 11:59pm Sunday September 9:
Reading quiz 1 (questions will be on the readings for Week 2 "College Success 1" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)

WEEK 2: COLLEGE SUCCESS 1

THIS WEEK YOUR ASSIGNED ADVISORS WILL VISIT YOUR CLASS TO INTRODUCE THEMSELVES.

YOU SHOULD VISIT YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK AS PART OF THE CAMPUS TREASURE HUNT. CHECK FIRST PAGE OF THE SYLLABUS FOR THE TIME AND LOCATION OF YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE HOURS.

Mon 9/10 Time Management
Readings: "Your Use of Time"

Wed 9/12 Decoding Assignments
Readings: "Defining Goals"

Fri 9/14 Note Taking
Readings: "Listening, Taking Notes and Remembering"

Assignment due by 11:59pm Sunday September 16:
Reading quiz 2 (questions will be on the readings for Week 3 "College Success 2" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)

Assignment due by the start of class Monday September 17:
Campus treasure hunt

WEEK 3: COLLEGE SUCCESS 2

Mon 9/17 The Write Stuff
Readings: "Writing Assignment Tips**"**
Assignment due by the start of class:
Campus treasure hunt (print this out, fill it in and then hand it in to your instructor. Be sure to put your name on it and count up how many challenges you have completed!)

Wed 9/19 Public Speaking? No Problem!
Readings: "Public Speaking and Class Presentations"

Fri 9/21 Library Time
Readings: "Top Four Reasons Students Use the Library"
AND
"The Library and the Internet – Ten Good Reasons to Use the Library"

Assignment due by 11:59pm Sunday September 23:
Reading quiz 3 (questions will be on the readings for Week 4 "Communication" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)

Assignment due by the start of class Monday September 24:
Understanding and developing a growth mindset

WEEK 4: COMMUNICATION
THIS WEEK YOUR ASSIGNED COUNSELORS WILL VISIT YOUR CLASS TO EXPLAIN THE FOCUS 2 ASSIGNMENT.

Mon 9/24 What is a Growth Mindset?
Readings: "Thinking About Thought"

Assignment due by the start of class:
Understanding and developing a growth mindset

Wed 9/26 Self Advocacy; Standing and Speaking Up For Yourself
Readings: "Self Advocacy: 5 Tips from a Student"

Fri 9/28 Good Communication For The Win!
Readings: "How to Email Your Professor (Without Being Annoying AF)"

AND

"Advice for Students: How to Talk to a Professor"

Assignments due by 11:59pm Sunday September 30:
Reading quiz 4 (questions will be on the readings for Week 5 "Persistence and Overcoming Hurdles" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)
Exploring your career/Focus 2
Emailing your professor

WEEK 5: PERSISTENCE AND OVERCOMING HURDLES
THIS WEEK YOUR ASSIGNED COUNSELORS WILL VISIT YOUR CLASS TO GO OVER YOUR FOCUS 2 ASSIGNMENT RESULTS. NOTE: IF YOU MISS THAT CLASS YOU WILL NEED TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO SEE YOUR ASSIGNED COUNSELOR IN ORDER TO GET CREDIT FOR THE REVIEWING THE FOCUS 2 ASSIGNMENT.

Mon 10/1 S#!t Happens Part 1
Readings: "Overcome the 5 common obstacles that keep adults from earning their degree"

Wed 10/3 S#!t Happens Part 2
Readings: "Four Steps to Overcoming Failure and Using it to Your Advantage"

Fri 10/5 You Belong Here! The Value of College Participation
Readings: "Engagement is Key to College Success"

Assignments due 11:59pm Sunday October 7:
Reading quiz 5 (questions will be on the readings for Week 6 "Choosing the Right Classes" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)
Snapshot presentation

WEEK 6: CHOOSING THE RIGHT CLASSES
YOU SHOULD PLAN ON ATTENDING YOUR INSTRUCTORS OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK OR NEXT. CHECK THE FIRST PAGE OF THE SYLLABUS FOR THE TIME AND LOCATION OF YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE HOURS.

Mon 10/8 Choosing Wisely; What Kind of Student Are You?
Readings: "Tips for Self Reflection"

Wed 10/10 Using My Degree Path to Get Ahead
Readings: "How to Create the Perfect College Class Schedule for Your Personality Type"

Fri 10/12 Using Course Finder and Other Resources to Choose the Best Classes
Readings: "The Right Way to Use College Professor Ratings"

Assignments due 11:59pm Sunday October 14:
Reading quiz 6 (questions will be on the readings for Week 7 "The Dreaded Duo" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)
My degree path navigation

WEEK 7: THE DREADED DUO: TEST TAKING AND GROUP WORK
THIS WEEK YOUR ASSIGNED ADVISOR WILL VISIT YOUR CLASS TO GET YOU IN GEAR FOR REGISTERING FOR CLASSES BY HELPING YOU MAKE AN ACADEMIC PLAN

IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE YOU SHOULD PLAN ON ATTENDING YOUR INSTRUCTORS OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK FOR A MID TERM CHECK IN. CHECK FIRST PAGE OF THE SYLLABUS FOR THE TIME AND LOCATION OF YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE HOURS.

Mon 10/15 Triumphing Tests and Quashing Quizzes
Readings: "Taking Tests"

Wed 10/17 Surviving Group Work
Readings: "Seven Tips For Surviving A Group Project"

Fri 10/19 Forming an Academic Plan
Readings: "Choosing Your Major"

Assignments due 11:59pm Sunday October 21:
Reading quiz 7 (questions will be on the readings for Week 8 "Wellness 1" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)
Academic plan

Assignment due by the start of class Monday October 22:
Proof of attending your instructor's office hours

WEEK 8: WELLNESS 1

Mon 10/22 What is Wellness?
Readings: "10 Tips to Stay Healthy in College"

Assignment due by the start of class:
Proof of attending your instructor's office hours

Wed 10/24 Catching Those Z's
Readings: "Sleep Rocks! Get More Of It!"

Fri 10/26 Breaking Bad Habits
Readings: "How To Change a Habit for Good"

Assignment due 11:59pm Sunday October 28:
Reading quiz 8 (questions will be on the readings for Week 9 "Wellness 2" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)

WEEK 9: WELLNESS 2
THIS WEEK YOUR ASSIGNED ADVISORS WILL HELP YOU REGISTER FOR SPRING 2019 CLASSES.

Mon 10/29 Registering for Spring Classes
Readings: "Stress"

Wed 10/31 Dealing with Trauma and Grief
Readings: "The Chronic Stress of Poverty: Toxic to Children"

Fri 11/2 Stress, Mental Health and Substance Abuse
Readings: "How Incoming College Students Can Mind Their Mental Health"
AND
"Eleven Simple Proven Ways to Optimize Your Mental Health"

Assignments due 11:59pm Sunday November 4:
Reading quiz 9 (questions will be on the readings for Week 10 "Finances" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)
Living with intention journal

WEEK 10: FINANCES

Mon 11/5 Thinking About Finances
Readings: "Spending Less"

Wed 11/7 Making a Financial Plan
Readings: "Credit Cards"
AND
"College Debt and No Degree Means a World of Financial Hurt"

Fri 11/9 Scholarship Sweetness!
Readings: "Financing College and Looking Ahead"

Assignments due 11:59pm Sunday November 11:
Reading quiz 10 (questions will be on the readings for Week 11 "There May Be Trouble Ahead!" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)
Financial plan

WEEK 11: THERE MAY BE TROUBLE AHEAD!

Mon 11/12 Class Withdrawal: A Curse in a Blessings Disguise?
Readings: "Should I Be Withdrawing From a Course?"

Wed 11/14 Grades Gone Wrong
Readings: "Be Zen About Getting Bad Grades in College"

Fri 11/16 College Behavior and the Academic Code of Conduct
Readings: "The Honest Truth"

Assignments due 11:59pm Sunday November 18:

Reading quiz 11 (questions will be on the readings for Week 12 "Cultural Competency" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)
Withdrawal options

WEEK 12: CULTURAL COMPETENCY

REMEMBER: MONDAY NOVEMBER 19TH IS THE LAST DAY YOU CAN WITHDRAW FROM CLASSES WITHOUT PENALTY OF FAILURE

Mon 11/19 Code Switching
Readings: "How Code Switching Explains the World"

Wed 11/21 Words Matter
Readings: "Why Does Diversity Matter at College Anyway?"
AND
"California Students Now Given Six 'Gender Identity' Choices on College Admissions Applications."

Fri 11/23 NO CLASS THANKSGIVING – ENJOY YOUR HOLIDAY!

Assignment due 11:59pm Sunday November 25:
Reading quiz 12 (questions will be on the readings for Week 13 "Careers, Transfers and Dual Admissions" and will be available to take after your last class of the week ends)

WEEK 13: CAREERS, TRANSFERS AND DUAL ADMISSIONS

Mon 11/26 Career Consideration
Readings: "Real Jobs for Real Majors; What Can I Do With a Major In…"
AND
"Job Growth and Educational Requirements Through 2020"

Wed 11/28 Transfer Time!
Readings: "Transfer Agreements"
AND
"Dual Admission Transfer Partnerships"

Fri 11/30 Making a Career and Transfer Plan
Readings: "Ten Things Prospective College Transfer Students Need to Know"

Assignment due 11:59pm Sunday December 2:
Career and transfer exploration plan

WEEK 14: LOOKING AHEAD

REMEMBER: WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 5TH IS THE DEADLINE FOR FULL PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES FOR ALL STUDENTS REGISTERED BY THIS DATE FOR SPRING 2019 SEMESTER

Mon	12/3	The Power of Networking **Readings:** "The Power of Networking"
Wed	12/5	NO CLASS—UNLESS COLLEGE DECLARES A MAKE UP DAY
Fri	12/7	Finale Class! **Readings:** None **Assignments due by start of class:** Proof of attending a campus event Mindfulness portfolio Print Spring 2019 class roster

WEEK 15: FINALS WEEK

REMEMBER: MONDAY DECEMBER 10TH - SATURDAY DECEMBER 16TH IS FINAL EXAM WEEK. BE SURE TO CHECK WITH YOUR ALL YOUR PROFESSORS WHEN AND WHERE YOUR FINALS ARE!

TBA: End-of-Semester Activity

APPENDIX D

DSMRI ANAYLSYS GUIDE AND CODEBOOK

DYNAMIC SYSTEMS MODEL OF ROLE IDENTITY (DSMRI)

ANALYSIS GUIDE & CODEBOOK

Avi Kaplan[1] and Joanna K. Garner[2]
[1]*Temple University*
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CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION

This Guide and Codebook was developed to guide researchers in analyzing oral or written narratives according to the Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity (DSMRI). A visualization of the model appears below in Figure 1. The theoretical basis for the model is described most extensively in Kaplan and Garner (in-press/2017). Briefly, the DSMRI integrates understandings from multiple perspectives on identity and motivation to capture the rich, complex, dynamic, and contextualized nature of identity phenomena while anchoring it in established identity and motivational constructs. The model's primary unit-of-analysis is the 'social-cultural role' (e.g., teacher, student, principal, parent, friend). The DSMRI portrays role identity as comprising four continuously emerging and reciprocally influencing components: (1) ontological and epistemological beliefs; (2) purpose and goals; (3) self-perceptions and self-definitions; and (4) perceived action possibilities. The DSMRI follows assumptions of the Complex Dynamic Systems approach. It highlights the unit-of-analysis of the role identity as residing within the person, but its formation as continuous, iterative, and emerging through dialogical relations with the person's other role identities and with the role identities of others. This process of continuous emergence occurs through intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions that employ cultural

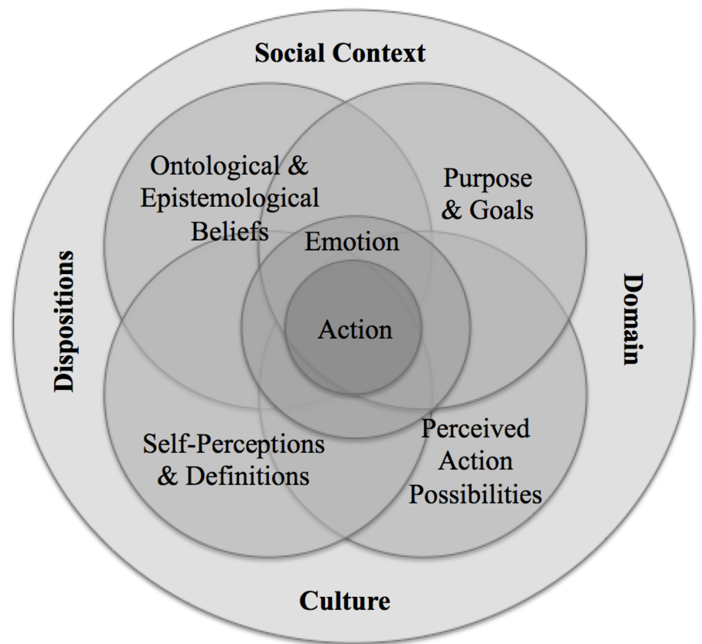

Figure 1: The Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity (DSMRI)

mediating means. Thus, the DSMRI assumes that identity and motivational processes emerge within a cultural context and the social-cultural community of practice around a subject domain while being also shaped by implicit characteristics of the person (e.g., personality dispositions, self-worth concerns) that serve as control parameters for the identity system.

The DSMRI attends to the role identity's three facets of content, structure, and process of formation; emphasizes the central roles of knowledge and emotion in identity; highlights the interdependence of elements, and hence the irreducibility of the role identity to its components; and portrays the non-linear and non-deterministic nature of identity change and its emergence as afforded and constrained by cultural as well as individual-dispositional characteristics.

Kaplan, A., & Garner, J. K. (in press, 2017). A complex dynamic systems perspective on identity and its development: The Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity. *Developmental Psychology*. DOI: 10.1037/dev0000339

ANALYTICAL APPROACH

The ultimate goal of the analysis is to "re-tell" the narrative using the theoretical language and structure of the DSMRI. Therefore, the foundational steps of the analysis involve a combination of deductive and inductive procedures. The deductive procedures involve applying the unit-of-analysis of the "role-identity" and the components of the DSMRI to code the narrative. The coding attempts to identify as much of the narrative data as possible as reflecting the theoretical categories and processes of the DSMRI. The next step of the analysis involves the synthesizing and integration of the coded data into a description that follows the DSMRI assumptions about the content, structure, and process dynamics of identity and motivation. The inductive procedures involve identifying themes regarding content, structure, process, and context that underlie and frame the narrative (e.g., content themes, narrative structure, contextual influences).

ANALYTICAL STEPS

1. Read through the narrative transcripts or written product and identify the various role-identities expressed within (e.g., teacher, participant, student, daughter, colleague, employee).
2. Conduct an analysis for each central role separately, starting with the most prominent role, or the role that is the focus of the research question, and following with the other roles in order of significance.
3. For each role, inductively identify meaning-units (e.g., an activity, a domain, a period in life), and deductively code the statements within that meaning-unit according to the components in the DSMRI, following the definitions below. Double-code segments of data as appropriate.

4. Conduct the inductive thematic analysis of the narrative, identifying themes, narrative structure, and the framing parameters within which the role identity was constructed including the cultural context, social interactions, and implicit processes. Consider other sources of data for this analysis (e.g., curriculum).
5. Write an analytical summary of each role-identity that includes its content (i.e., the beliefs held, the goals pursued, self-perceptions and definitions that are expressed, and actions and strategies noted, and the emotions tied to the role and the components); its structure (i.e., the harmony or tension within components such as goal conflict and associated emotions, alignment and misalignment between components such as conflict between ontological beliefs and self-perceptions such as values, and the associated emotions, and the "maturity" or sophistication of the alignment—the strength and self-constructed nature of the commitment to the content); and its process (i.e., indications of change, reflectivity, questions, exploration), indicating the span of the role-identity across sub-roles and/or sub-contexts.
6. Write an overall analytical summary that integrates the various role-identities throughout the narrative.
7. Credibility and trustworthiness can be promoted through either calculating inter-rater reliability in steps 1 and 3, and/or through using an auditor to critique the analysis.

DSMRI COMPONENTS
(the examples are from the domain of teaching)

Code Name	*Code Description*	*Exemplar Quotes*
Ontological beliefs	Statements that indicate knowledge (e.g., theory), beliefs, assumptions, perceptions, and conceptions that the person expresses as true about the world.	"*Group work doesn't work in chemistry*." "*It's so important to be positive about student contributions even if it's not exactly what you wanted to hear*."
Epistemological Beliefs	Expressions that indicate the level of certainty, credibility, and complexity of the person's ontological beliefs. Often expressed in questions, or in hesitation regarding the definitiveness of statements.	"*Do they have experiences that are relevant to what they are learning? Maybe*"
Purpose and Goals	Statements that express the person's purpose for action in the role, as well as goals and objectives in the role. This category includes general goals of the role/domain/profession, personal goals, as well as specific objectives in particular contexts and situations.	"*One of my teaching goals is to show students the importance of chemistry as a field*." "*I want them to understand this deeply*." "*I aspire to make my students better human beings, not just better students*."
Self-Perceptions and Self-Definitions	Statements that include reference to the self in relation to the role. This includes how participants define themselves in relation to the domain/profession, what participants think about themselves in the role and as part of a role-related community, and how they think about their own functioning in the role (e.g., self-perceived abilities and efficacy, personal values, interests, personality attributes, self-characteristics and definitions).	"*I've always been an experientially oriented teacher*." "*I've always been interested in science*." "*I'm a math person.*" "*As an African American….*" "*I became an instructor because I have passion for my area of expertise*."
Action Possibilities	Statements that indicate internal (e.g., thoughts, planning) and external behavior in relation to the role. This code includes practices and strategies that one is aware of	"*I break the students into smaller groups and have them talk in smaller groups about the particular readings and*

	as possibilities or that one has put into practice, as well as indications for those actions that the person perceived as not possible for him or her to enact.	*their feelings and attitudes towards the readings, and then we come back together and talk as a bigger group*."
Harmony and Alignment	Statements that indicate a relation between two or more of the model's elements (e.g., two goals) and/or components (e.g., an ontological belief and an action; an ontological belief and a goal; a goal and an action).	"*As students gain knowledge best in various ways due to different learning styles* [ontological beliefs], *I make every effort to differ my teaching methods, which includes lectures, class discussions, and group work* [action possibilities]"
Integration	Statements that indicate a relation between two or more role identities (e.g., parent-professional;), including between past and present role identities, and between present and future role identities (e.g., high-school student and college student; pre-service teacher and teacher).	"*In college, my analytical chemistry teacher took interest in my life outside of class, often giving me some career and life advice. Without these teachers, I do not think I would have been molded into the person I am today, which is why I make every effort to have a personal relationship with each student…*"
Change (and Transfer)	Statements that indicate any change in elements (e.g., beliefs, practices, alignments or self-conceptions), or in their relations (e.g., change in harmony of content, alignment between components, or integration between roles). Transfer refers specifically to an explicit change involving increased integration of elements (e.g., beliefs, goals, strategies) between two role identities (e.g., teacher PD-participant and professional; pre-service teacher and teacher)	"*One of the things that* ***I have decided to do in the future is be more*** *transparent with my students about what I'm teaching, why I'm teaching it, and why I'm teaching it the way that I'm teaching it…*"

Emotion (a sub-aspect of each component and of their relations)	Any statement referring to an emotional experience.	"*I enjoy teaching tremendously*" [self-perceptions]; "*I get frustrated when I'm required to lecture*" [ontological beliefs about context and action possibilities]

Additional useful codes (desirably to double code with DSMRI-based codes)

Content Knowledge	Statements that refer (implicitly or explicitly) to specific subject content knowledge that the person has in one or more components (most commonly in ontological beliefs).	"*We read about how the brain actually worked and how individuals process information and the different domains of learning and the different learning styles that people may have*" [ontological beliefs]
Experience in context	Statements that describe knowledge of and experiences in the context.	"*There was about fourteen students I want to say and they were all teaching in the humanities. Half of them were religion students so it was kind of really geared towards, the examples people made were geared towards the stuff that I would end up teaching so it was extra helpful…*"
Affordances and constraints	Specific statements that indicate perception of affording or constraining factors to components of the role identity (e.g., action possibilities). (Commonly, to be double-coded with ontological beliefs)	"*outside of this class I don't think I would have this opportunity to have this mentor.*"

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (FACULTY)

1. Tell me about your experience teaching FYE 101.
2. In addition to the course SLOs, tell me about any other goals you have for your students in FYE 101.
    a. How did you come to develop these goals?
3. Describe examples of how you help students see the relevance of this course to their goals.
4. What are some ways that you help students to explore their identities, strengths, interests, values, and goals?
5. Tell me about an important teaching moment you experienced this semester. (Possible probes):
    a. Why was this event important to you?
    b. What happened in that event? Please tell me step-by-step.
    c. What did you feel during the event? Why?
    d. What did you do, and why?
    e. Can you think about another event in which you felt that way?
6. How would you describe the type of atmosphere to you try to create in your classroom?
    a. How do you achieve this?
    b. How do you know it works how you intend it?
7. Can you tell me about an event in class where you felt good as an instructor for this class?

8. Can you tell me about an event in which you felt bad at NECC as an instructor for this class?
9. What are some of the challenges you believe students at NECC face?
10. What are strengths that students of NECC have?
11. What do you see at any problematic features of the FYE course?
    a. How do you try to solve these problems?
    b. Have you been successful?
12. Is there anything else that is important to you that you'd like to tell me about your experiences as a faculty member for the FYE course?
13. Is there anything else that is important to you that you'd like to tell me about your experiences as a faculty member at NECC?

Thank you very much for participating in this interview!