

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Edward Esparza for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education presented on March 23, 2018

Title: Qualitative Perspectives of Student Success by First year Students Participating in Developmental Education Programs

Abstract Approved:

Larry D. Roper

This literature review seeks to broadly examine historical literature and information pertaining to developmental education in the community colleges and its relationship with the college success. Contextually, the review will examine factors that affect student perception to academic success while being required to participate in remedial course work. Although issues surrounding students participating in developmental education are many, for the purpose of this review the factors discussed are, (a) the cost for students participating within developmental education programs, (b) the impact of student engagement and influence to those participating in developmental education programs and, (c) developmental education as a tool for retention.

© Copyright by Edward Esparza

March 23, 2018

All Rights Reserved

Qualitative Perspectives of Student Success by First Year Students Participating in
Developmental Education Programs

by
Edward Esparza

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of
the requirement for the
degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Presented March 23, 2018
Commencement June 2018

Doctor of Philosophy dissertation of Edward Esparza presented on March 23, 2018.

APPROVED:

Major Professor, representing Education

Dean of the College of Education

Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

Edward Esparza, Author

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to my graduate chair, Dr. Larry Roper, for his support and encouragement. In addition, a thank you to Dr. Alex Sanchez for being a role model and helping me better understand the value of education.

I thank my friend, colleague, and cohort member, Dr. Brian Kaufman who provided me with the support, encouragement and guidance to move to the next steps of completing this project.

Most importantly this work is part of a promise made for the generations of those I call my family. I am grateful to my parents, Raymond and Connie who shaped me by instilling empathy for those who have less and a work ethic that has allowed me give back to my community.

My heart is full with gratitude to my life partner and best friend Melisa Valdez who has taught me the value and importance of humility and the love of family. To my son Nicholas who inspires me to hold on to my integrity no matter what the challenge.

Thank you to the educators' and colleagues who encouraged me and thought it might be a good idea for me to follow a path in higher education, Dr. Michael Bisesi, Dr. Michelle Andreas, Jan Yoshiwara and Dr. Joseph Holliday, all who have never wavered in their commitment to supporting me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER ONE: FOCUS AND SIGNIFICANCE.....	1
Research Problem	5
Research Purpose	6
Research Questions.....	7
Terms and Concepts.....	7
Research Significance.....	9
Articulation of the Institution’s Role	9
Personal Interest.....	11
Chapter Summary	12
CHAPTER TWO: A LITERATURE REVIEW	14
Developmental Education and the First Year Student.....	14
Approach to Review of Literature	15
History and Background of Development Education within Community Colleges.....	15
Student Financial Aid as a Factor for Developmental Students	18
Summary.....	20
The Impact of Student Engagement for Developmental Students.....	21
Summary.....	22
Developmental Education as a Tool for Student Success.....	23

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
Summary	24
Chapter Summary	25
CHAPTER THREE: DESIGN OF STUDY	28
Philosophical Approach	28
Purpose of this approach to research	30
How this approach relates to this proposed research.....	32
History and Major Authors of ISS	33
Methods.....	34
Purpose of the Method	34
Key concepts of this method.....	35
Major steps in carrying out this method	35
Important Authors	35
Procedures.....	35
Data needs.....	36
Data collection techniques.....	36
Participant selection.....	37
Data analysis.....	37

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
Strategies to ensure soundness.....	39
Strategies to protect human subjects.....	39
Chapter Summary	40
CHAPTER FOUR: THE DEVELOPOMENTAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE	41
Pseudonyms	42
Research Findings.....	46
Theme 1: Self-efficacy.	46
Theme 2: Student readiness.	49
Theme 3: Student need	53
Theme 4: Future plans	57
Chapter Summary	61
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS	62
Summary and Discussion.....	62
Analysis.....	64
Self-efficacy.....	64
Readiness.	65
Student need.....	66

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
Future plans.	66
Questions for Practice	66
Implications for Practice	68
Limitations of the Study.....	69
Recommendations for Future Research	70
Acknowledgement of Participants	71
Chapter Summary	72
Bibliography	76
APPENDIX.....	86
Appendix A Research Questions	87

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Timeline	39
2. First Generation, Developmental Education Student Backgrounds	43
3. Summary of Responses, and the Subsequent Coding of the Responses	64

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents Raymond and Connie Esparza. To my best friend Melisa F, Valdez and to my son Nicolas R. Esparza. I also dedicate this to the countless educators Kindergarten through now, who have made this possible.

CHAPTER ONE: FOCUS AND SIGNIFICANCE

“All of us do not have equal talent, but all of us should have an equal opportunity to develop our talent.” John F. Kennedy

Higher education in the United States is facing profound challenges. Societal expectations and public resources for higher education are undergoing fundamental shifts (Zusman, 1999). Kerr and Gade (1989) note that crisis and change in higher education, has been the rule, not the exception and as a result of these challenges and crisis, we have learned that through the work of the Truman Commission community colleges have become sophisticated entities responsible for providing a myriad of programs serving the needs of our diverse communities. More than ever the challenges of community colleges are more visible for public scrutiny. With public discussion addressing institutional mission, state, local politics, community needs, cost containment, compliance and competitive student markets, inherently there is a need to demonstrate success. One challenge is the internal issue of addressing governance for our schools (Amey, Jessup-Anger, & Jessup-Anger, 2008).

More than any other constraint, community colleges face the uncertainty of the shrinking funding, from state, federal and private resources. With the cost of education ~~is~~ on a continual rise and fluctuating unemployment, it will be difficult to predict what community colleges will offer in the near future. Despite the growth in educational access and the greater and diverse numbers who have enrolled, the communities from

which they come from have been little affected (Cohen, 1996). Recent research by the Pew Research Center tells us that community colleges have now entered the largest enrollment ever. Just fewer than 11.5 million students, or 39.6% of all young adults ages 18 to 24, were enrolled in either community colleges or four year institutions. In addition, this research further states that in 2007, 3.1 million young adults or 10.9% of all 18 to 24 year olds were enrolled in community colleges. A year later, this figure had risen to 3.4 million students or 11.8% of all 18 to 24 year olds students (Fry, 2009). Despite this current trend now having shifted nationally where community colleges are now facing a drop in enrollment and the number of community colleges who reported reductions was about 52%. Researcher Kenneth Green (2010) reports that, community colleges remain on the receiving end of doing more with less and doing it better; simply put community colleges at this time are serving a lot more, and are doing it with much less.

Obviously communities must rethink where they put their fiscal priorities when it comes to community colleges. Historically, these community colleges were viewed as conduit to democracy. The advent of community colleges as neighborhood institution did more to open higher education to a broader population than did its policy of accepting even students who had not done well in high school (Cohen, 1996). One major challenge will be to re-synchronize social political needs with our desire to build prosperity for generations to come.

An example of this is that community colleges in Washington State have evolved into institutions that serve the different needs for many different communities. This system has grown into a network of vocational and community education training centers. Nationally, the faces of students attending community's colleges today are representative of many cultures and a wide range of social economic backgrounds. Millions of high school students apply to college each year. While the number of graduates from high school peaked at 3.3 million in 2008, the number of college-enrolled students is expected to continue to increase through 2020 when there will be approximately 23 million students in college (O'Shaughnessy, 2011). Within this process, entering students have a myriad of testing options. These include pre college assessments such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Testing Program (ACT). In most instances students entering college for the first time are required a pre- test for math or English placement. However, according to college testing results by the more than one million college bound high school seniors who took the SAT, data shows a straight-line positive correlation with family income (College Board (2007).

The management and implementation of development education is one of the many challenges colleges face when addressing funding structures which may ultimately affect student success. Post-secondary remediation is delivered in both two year community college and four year university campuses in the United States. The bulk of

remedial courses focus on advancing unprepared students' literacy skills, i.e. English and math (Sparks, 2013).

Developmental education or remediation courses are defined as classes provided for students who have not tested at college level math or writing upon entering college. Remedial courses within colleges fills an important niche in U.S. higher education by providing opportunities to rectify disparities generated in primary education and secondary schooling, to develop the minimum skills deemed necessary for functional participation in the economy and the democracy, and to acquire the prerequisite competencies that are crucial for negotiating college-level coursework (Bahr, 2007). A National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) followed a sample of students who were in the eighth grade in 1988 and were tracked until 2000. The study found that 58% of those who attended community colleges took at least one remedial course, while 44% took between one and three remedial courses, and 14% took more than three courses (Attewell, Lavin, Domina, & Levey, 2006).

In a pre-college research report addressing new, first-time students enrolled in 2009-2010, 20,336 high school graduates from the class of 2008-09 matched to community and technical college enrollments within one year of their graduation in 2009-10. Fifty-seven percent of these students enrolled in at least one pre-college course in 2009-10. Math has proven to be greatest area of need. Fifty-one percent enrolled in a pre-college math class. After math, 20% enrolled in writing classes. Another 11% enrolled in a reading or coordinated reading and writing class. The report further cites

that students of color, apart from Asians, were more likely than white students to be enrolled in pre-college classes while Hispanics were substantially more likely than all other students to be enrolled (Washington State Board for Community Technical Colleges [WASBCTC], 2011).

This research study looks at the complex system of addressing developmental education for the first year student and how resources and implementation strategies may impact student success.

Research Problem

Given the large number of students who enter higher education unprepared for college level courses, the focus of implementing developmental programs that addresses student need continues to be a major concern. As mentioned, administrative entities in Washington State have assisted its legislature with the development of policy and the prioritization of program development and funding recommendations. In 2012 the National Center for Postsecondary Research presented a national Developmental Educational Conference to discuss developmental education. The focus of this conference were to explore the: (a) findings on the effectiveness of developmental education, (b) assessment and placement practices, (c) alternative models (summer bridges, learning communities, and supplemental instruction), and (c) pedagogy and classroom strategies. Conferences such as these have a tremendous impact by demonstrating the large breath of work and research in developmental education that has been applied regionally and nationally. In contrast, there has been very little research or

attention to the voice of the students who are directly impacted by developmental program.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to articulate a voice of students who have had the experience of being engaged in remedial or developmental courses upon entering their college environment. It sought to give a deeper meaning to what courses or programs of this nature mean to their perception of student success, and possibly their view of what it means to persist by participating in developmental or remedial programs.

Evidence has told us that student engagement occurs when students make a psychological investment in learning. They try hard to learn what school offers. They take pride not simply in earning the formal indicators of success (grades), but in understanding the material and incorporating or internalizing it in their lives (Newman, 1992). The intended results of this study are also to shed light on the perception of students who are required to enroll in developmental courses and to identify themes for success or failure by the student. The results of this examined how practitioners of programs can better serve by listening to the student voice. Through this gained knowledge practitioners will have an opportunity to prioritize support for new initiatives and provide organizational learning opportunities for staff such as advisors, career counselors, and instructors who are undertaking new innovative initiatives. This study will be useful to student affairs administrators, deans, and developmental study directors for program planning and development.

Research Questions

This study will investigate the following foundational questions:

1. How do developmental education courses work impact student efficacy to academic success? Rationale: The question acknowledges the reality of the student's perception of participation with developmental/remedial courses and attempt to identify how the student has achieved success or failure?
2. What are student perceptions of developmental programs and their sufficiency in preparing the student for academic success? Rationale: This question seeks to ascertain what formulas of services are best offered for students within developmental/remedial programs. The result of this inquiry may indicate patterns or relationships among the challenges that can be used by program staff. This question also seeks to understand the relationship between institutional strategies and the student perspective. The results of this question may identify best practice models that can be shared by state, regional, and national communities of practice.

Terms and Concepts

College Placement Test (CPT). The College Placement Test, also known as the CPT Test or CPT Exam, is an exam given to students who want to study at certain colleges and technical schools in the United States. The most common test administered within colleges are the Accuplacer and Compass test.

Developmental Education. Remedial education (also known as postsecondary remediation, developmental education, basic skills education, compensatory education, preparatory education, or academic upgrading) is composed primarily of sequences of increasingly advanced courses designed to bring underprepared students to the level of skill competency expected of new entrants to postsecondary education.

Remedial/ developmental education. There is recent research to support the use of the word remedial to characterize students who are taking below college-level courses. Bettinger and Long (2005) used the word remedial exclusively in their work and interchanged it with the words underprepared and pre-college. Oudenhoven (2002) similarly used the word remedial but acknowledged that students at the below college level were often grouped using either the word developmental, remedial, or underprepared. Boylan (2004) referred to the term developmental as encompassing courses or services at the college or university that are precollege in scope as did work by Karp and Hughes (2008). Bailey (2009), however, interchanged the words development education and remediation throughout his work but clearly implied that both terms refer to coursework representative of below college level. The stated definition for remediation utilized in the report by Jenkins and Boswell (2002) was: “those courses in reading, writing or mathematics offered to students lacking the necessary academic skills to perform college-level work” (p. 2). For the purpose of this study, the words developmental education, precollege, and remedial will be

considered one and the same with the term precollege and remedial more commonly used and interchanged.

Adult Basic Skills. Adult Basic Education programs provide opportunities for adults to improve on their reading, writing and mathematics skills which are necessary for productive employment.

Academic Advisor. An individual who assists students in the clarification of their life/ career goals and in the development of educational plans for the realization of these goals. The advisor serves as a facilitator of communication, a coordinator of learning experiences through course and career planning and academic progress review, and an agent of referral to other campus agencies as necessary.

Research Significance

The following three reasons provide significance for this study: (a) a need to examine how higher education intuitions articulate support in addressing persistence and retention developmental programs, (b) a gap in literature pertaining to the student perspective on how institutional alignment pertaining to developmental education impacts student success, (c) my personal and professional interest in contributing to the this discussion

Articulation of the Institution's Role

It is well accepted that the institutions of higher education have addressed developmental education through a myriad of methodologies ranging from institutional alignment, student need, program development, and practice. One significant area

community colleges have addressed is cost. Research has told us that one decade ago colleges spent more than one billion dollars annually on developmental education (Breneman & Haarlow, 2008), while another study recently calculated the annual cost of remediation at 1.9 billion to 2.3 billion dollars at community colleges and another 500 million dollars at four year colleges (Strong American Schools, 2008). Many colleges have used the tool of testing in assessing student need. Although the Accuplacer and Compass are the most common, more than 100 tests are used in California (Brown & Niemi, 2007; Kirst, 2007). This study will also observe what developmental programs have been implemented within selected community colleges from Washington State and compile themes from student perception of these programs.

Historically, preparing students for college has been the role of the K-12 system, and there is ample evidence that, in many cases, the system fails to carry out that role. As a result community colleges are charged with teaching college level courses to a majority of students who arrive with low academic skills in at least one subject area and who are assessed to be too weak to allow these students to engage successfully in college level work. Although colleges address this problem by creating extensive programs within developmental education, the topic of implementing developmental educational within institutions of higher education is complex and broad in scope. Conversely, research has demonstrated that the presence of community colleges promotes access to higher education (St. John, 2003). It has been described that in many ways developmental education has been the foundation of the community college equity agenda. In many

instances, participation in developmental education has been a key to student success, (T. R. Bailey & Morest, 2004) but because of the immense cost, and the necessary data available, all colleges should track and analyze the experience of programs or of the students such as these.

Personal Interest

As an advocate for students one of my passions has been working towards creating access to higher education for underrepresented populations. As an academic advisor my advocacy has evolved from the experiential practice of community service to a greater understanding of the systems and tools that first year students have at their disposal. College success ultimately can mean many things to many people. Margaret Wheatley (2006) notes that the relationship between students and systems by observing that if we are seeking resilient organizations, a prized property of living systems, information is a key ally.

The intent of this study was to hear the voice of the student who have participated in developmental programs. We must be mindful that with all learners the diversity of today's student includes: (a) economic, (b) social, (c) gender, (d) cultural, and (e) age considerations. It is true that many students will carry a common theme of being the first in all the generations of their family to attend college. Many will come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The learner of today is no longer a cookie-cutter of the 18-year-old student one summer removed from a secondary educational environment. In reality, today's learner may be a long-term unemployed factory worker

or a single parent who aspires for a life change. Developmental education programs are one of the many paths students will take in their quest for student success.

Chapter Summary

It is important to note that understanding the development of matriculating students is essential to those seeking to make a difference in these students' lives. V. Tinto (1993) outlined three stages students move through: (a) separation, (b) transition, and (c) incorporation. Students first go through a separation stage in which they move away from their home environment. Although this can be quite traumatic for students, most eventually are able to move to the second stage, transition. While the purpose of this study was to articulate the voice of students who have had the experience of being engaged in remedial or developmental courses upon entering their college environment, it is equally important to understand what programs of this nature mean to their perception of academic success and their view of what it means to persist from one year to the next. We have learned through research that the first year of college is trying for many students; new responsibilities and expectations can be overwhelming. A large percentage of students do not make it to their sophomore year. Gardner and Siegel (2001) cite data gathered by ACT indicating that 28% of students in public four year institutions fail to continue beyond their first year in college. The intent of this study was to examine how developmental programs in a community college setting provides success or failure for first year students through the eyes of the student. This information also seeks to develop

a framework that can be used to support future program development, and practices that can be shared with state and national practitioners.

CHAPTER TWO: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Developmental Education and the First Year Student

The purpose of this literature review was to synthesize historical and professional literature about the first year student who participates in developmental or remedial course work within a community college setting. In addition this review sought to trace the inception of developmental education and its influence in addressing college readiness. This review also sought to address the role of developmental education and its evolution as a practice.

By design this literature review focused on research that has demonstrated a profound effect to those participating in developmental education programs. Its function was to provide background information for those not familiar with remedial or developmental education programs and its participants. Its significance was to use as a tool for those seeking to learn more about developmental education as to make informed decisions about current practices in developmental education. The literature's value is important because community colleges are charged in teaching college level courses while a majority of students arrive with low academic skills in at least one subject area that are assessed to be too weak to allow them to engage successfully in college level work. In addition, this review added dialog to the discussion on how practitioners will have the opportunity to prioritize support for new initiatives and to provide organizational learning opportunities to school staff such as advisors, career counselors, and instructors who are undertaking new innovative initiatives. This study will be useful to student

affairs administrators, deans, and developmental study directors for program planning and development.

Approach to Review of Literature

Articles for the review of literature were extracted from several databases including ERIC, EBSCO host, and Electronic Journals Service utilizing keywords. This review of research provided a foundation of information that addressed what institutional approaches in serving first year students were prevalent in participation in developmental education programs. Sets of themes may serve as effective predictors in first year students who may possess low income characteristics, self-efficacy, and contextual social supports and barriers. These themes include: (a) financial barriers, (b) the impact of student engagement, and (c) developmental education as a tool for student success. Model programs and research that surfaced included: (a) The Achieving the Dream Initiative, (b) National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS), the (c) Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) (2009) which is supported by the work of the integration model from the work of Vincent Tinto and John Bean.

History and Background of Development Education within Community Colleges

The historical connection between student development and developmental education is profound in the context of practice while the history of higher education is replete with anecdote and drama describing the collision of forces surrounding the scope and purpose of postsecondary instruction. The founding of America's first colleges was driven by a vision to nurture and train the leaders of society who would "spell the

difference between civilization and barbarism” (Rudolph, 1990, p. 6). The remediation debate is cast with individuals offering their distinct perspectives on the following questions: (a) What is the purpose of higher education? (b) Who will benefit? (c) What role do postsecondary institutions assume in preparing the academically underprepared?

Community colleges evolved from the idea of several gifted educators including William Harper, and J. Stanley Brown. Harper observed that with overcrowded classes and underprepared students, he desired to concentrate the university resources on the specialized studies of juniors and seniors (as cited in Phillippe & Patton, 2000). Joliet Junior College located in Illinois, was established in 1901 and is the oldest existing public two-year college. In the early years, the colleges focused on general liberal arts studies. During the depression of the 1930s, community colleges began offering job-training programs as a way of easing widespread unemployment. After World War II, the conversion of military industries to consumer goods created new, skilled jobs. This economic transformation along with the GI Bill created the drive for more higher education options.

In 1948, the Truman Commission suggested the creation of a network of public, community-based colleges to serve local needs. (American Association of Community Colleges [AACCC], 2012). The history of remedial and developmental education is sometimes viewed as being on a divergent track. Although remedial education programs are deemed necessary they are sometimes an unwelcome enterprise given the scores of underprepared students entering institutions of higher learning (Tierney & Garcia, 2008).

Arguments in favor or against remedial and developmental education can be traced throughout the history of American higher education. Because the founding and expansion of the colonial colleges predated public systems of primary and secondary education, many students admitted to institutions such as Harvard, the College of New Jersey, King's College and others were inadequately prepared (Casazza & Silverman, 1996).

At the start of the 20th century, courses in remedial reading and study skills were fairly common as 350 colleges offered courses entitled "How to Study" (Casazza & Silverman, 1996). A 1929 survey identified nearly 25% of postsecondary institutions offered remedial instruction (as cited in Casazza & Silverman, 1996). In comparison, today's debate raises similar ideological questions of purpose (Long, 2005) and legitimacy (Clowes, 1980) including the economic return on investment of remedial education (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008).

The landscape of developmental courses within our college campuses has expanded greatly as have approaches to the delivery of remedial education. Some colleges have taken the approach to integrate remedial education with student support services as part of a holistic approach that better prepares students by way of the first year experience. College entrance testing has played an important role in the placement of students, while in some states, such as California have removed entrance testing as a vehicle for classroom placement. The approach of developmental pedagogies has become dominant. Researchers remind us that remedial pedagogies come in many forms,

such as course alignment with college level course work that will inevitably take for graduation credit. However it is widely accepted that the classroom experience is crucial to college success and what we know about good teaching suggest that inadequate instruction is at least partly responsible for poor progress in basic skills sequences (Grubb, 1999).

Student Financial Aid as a Factor for Developmental Students

It is estimated that colleges spend more than two billion dollars annually for remediation alone (Breneman & Haarlow, 1998). Additionally, for the developmental student these barriers frequently carry a significant financial burden and psychological cost to the student. Often, the first year student is faced with incurring debt while spending time, resources, and college ready eligibility, while not earning credits towards a degree.

Community colleges are an integral part of the communities in which they reside. For many communities, especially in rural areas, the college serves as a cultural center, and as the primary postsecondary education and training resource. In communities throughout the country, community colleges serve as an economic catalyst, providing employers with an educated and trained workforce.

The costs to attain a postsecondary degree are on the rise. As a result, increasing numbers of students at community colleges (and 4-year institutions) are looking to federal financial aid programs to help offset or finance the costs of their education. Almost half of the students attending community college receive some form

of financial aid to help finance their studies (AACC, 2010). As with all higher education institutions, the cost of attending community colleges has risen in recent years. Despite established resources and efforts, first year – first generation and low income students struggle to thrive in college, especially those students who often come to college academically underprepared. Utilizing a structural equation model, research examined campus based programs as determinant among Hispanic college students (A. Nora, 1990) attempting to identify factors that are related to student persistence. This included: (a) campus based resources, such as Pell grants that assist with financial need; (b) academic performance, as it relates to high school grades; (c) financial need; and (d) non campus based resources.

In this study, multiple indicators were used to provide a measure of the construct “campus-based resources.” Three single item indicators: (a) Student Education Opportunity Grant, (b) National Defense Student Loan, and (c) College Work Study were used to measure the construct. The three indicators represented actual dollar amounts awarded to the students from the three federal campus-based financial aid programs. This study concluded that financial need for students, and the ways in which institutions package these resources, represents major equity concerns, such as the ability to pay for student needs; tuition, books or housing for first year students in higher education. It has been argued that although these concerns are relevant to many students, given the nature of underrepresented students in higher education, issues such as these are often of particularly great concern for first year – first generations students. Establishing a

connection between institutional factors such as financial aid and student persistence from quantitative studies such as these creates opportunity to create, establish, and implement policy and institutional practices that address student need.

That study is beneficial in addressing student need however, it may be limited since the study was limited to an urban environment versus student need in a rural community environment where need may be viewed quite differently. In addition, recent changes in student aid will affect the maximum amount of money to be distributed per student via the Pell Grant as determined by the federal government through the Consolidated Appropriations Act. The College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA) of 2007 increased that maximum until the year 2013. This law allows for an additional \$490 through the 2009-2010 academic years, \$690 for the 2011-2012 school year and \$1,090 for the 2012/2013 year. With the addition of these funds, the maximum for 2008-/009 rises to \$4,731 (E-How, n.d.). Legislation such as this will have a significant impact on student retention and persistence for the first year students.

Summary. Connection to this study: One of the most profound indicators to student persistence and retention ask whether or not the student will have the resources they need to complete their education from one year to the next? These findings indicate that the United States government has responded to need by incrementally increasing funding for high need students, but one question remains, has this been sufficient?

The Impact of Student Engagement for Developmental Students

Of the many challenges community colleges face is how institutions address the issue of creating strong connections with students. Close to two-thirds of community college students attend college part-time, and about two-thirds of community college faculty members (67%) teach part-time. This is the reality of community colleges, and it is not likely to change (CSSE, 2009). Other issues such as enrollment status is one of many that first year student's face when addressing student engagement. Other engagement issues for colleges to consider, are community colleges addressing the distinct relationship between student and the faculty and staff, and are colleges making an effort to emulate that those that teach are reflective of the communities that they serve?

The CCSSE (2009) conducted a survey of 223 college faculty members. This instrument was designed to obtain information about community college student participation in educationally purposeful activities (school based activities). What was extracted from this survey is that student engagement within their respective institution matters, which confirmed years of research on effective practice in student learning. In addition, this survey found that students and faculty had divergent perceptions about student engagement. The report stated that 96% of faculty reported they often provided prompt feedback on academic performance whereas only 55% of students reported receiving such feedback. Surveys such as this validate institutional efforts in collaborative learning, which is considered a predictor for student success. This study demonstrates that high-risk students are more likely to persist in college if they are highly

engaged with their institution, instructors, and staff and in student activities. Another lesson learned from this study is that student engagement must begin early and occur often in the academic experience. The divergent perspective between student and faculty provides us with an understanding that qualitative methods such as student voice should and must be heard. One weakness of this study is that much emphasis has been placed on the staff involvement as opposed to student response. Nancy Schlossberg's (1989) *Marginality and Mattering* theory discusses the importance of considering the concepts of marginality and mattering when examining the impact of the college experience on student development. For the student the feeling of marginality often occurs when individuals take on new roles, especially when they are uncertain about what a new role entails. Through this detachment or uncertainty this may be especially true for the developmental student.

Summary. Connection to this study: The connection illustrates that more often than not the voice of student perspective is less heard when addressing student need. Student needs may be as broad as fostered relationships with staff, organizations, and academic resources. In order for the educational community to better serve students, a holistic approach to decision making must be implemented. This suggests that avenues of opportunity for voice must be created for these students. As mentioned earlier, first year students have a relatively small window of opportunity in establishing a point of reference for their college experience. These windows of opportunity for voice include examining student perceptions of life beyond the classroom, such as financial burden,

relationships with faculty, staff, and their participation in campus activities. The changing face of today's student brings a new cultural context for us to draw on. Hearing and listening to these perceptions can only broaden our perspective on how we can better address student need and success.

Developmental Education as a Tool for Student Success

As with most institutions of higher learning community colleges are charged with teaching students college level material. As discussed, a great number of students arrive at community college with weak academic skills and often are judged as not able to engage in college level work (T. Bailey, 2009). In 2006, researchers from the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) published a study that followed the educational path of low income students from inner city schools in Chicago for 12 years; tracking these students from 1988, when they entered the eighth grade until the year 2000. This longitudinal study revealed that 58% of these students attended community colleges, of those students 44 % took at least one remedial course and 14 % took more than three developmental courses. As predicted many first year students find themselves unprepared for the rigor of college level courses. As a system, colleges must address assessment focusing on student need to be successful in college. T. Bailey (2009), suggests that colleges should strongly consider minimizing the amount of time it will take to prepare students for entry into college level classes. The Student Integration Model asserts attrition or success results from interactions between the student and their educational environment during their higher education experience (V. Tinto, 1987), this

integration model hypothesized that student persistence is a function of the match of individual motivation, and academic ability with the institutions' academic and social characteristics. However, it can be argued that external factors in shaping perception, commitments and preferences are partially, but significantly, a function of policy development from the institutions themselves (Bean, 1983). Although through different paths both V. Tinto (1987) and Bean's (1983) theories advocate for both the student and institution to formulate common ground in achieving student achievement. The convergences of these theories pertaining to student persistence not only broaden our perspective but hopefully will improve our ability to define predictive variables for student success (A. C. Nora, Castaneda, & Hangster, 1992).

Summary. Connection to this study: Theme three relates directly to the proposed study from the perspective of the large number of first year students who participate in developmental education. To be a first year student, the chances of participation within developmental education are extremely high. There is a significant need to examine the perspective of the voice of first year – first generation low income students as it relates to developmental education and remedial course work. Coupled with one of the major criticisms of developmental education is the enormous economic burden that programs as this place on community colleges. It is calculated that within community colleges remediation cost reflect \$1.9 billion to \$2.3 billion dollars (Strong American Schools, 2008). There is much literature that addresses cost as it relates to institutions however; there appears to be gap in literature that represents the student voice as it pertains to

institutional factors, i.e. remedial or developmental course work that may lead to an increase in first year student's persistence and retention.

Chapter Summary

The discussion of convergent theories by V. Tinto (1982) and Bean (1983) will only be applicable if research such as this are implemented at community colleges for institutional development and change. As noted in the discussion of developmental education, it is important to be mindful that all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or ethnicity should know there will be the resources and opportunities they need to become strong learners, to achieve in school, and to succeed in the working world. Collages that are rooted with good intentions for student success is not a guarantee that developmental education, student integration, and financial resources will affect student persistence. Student voice may tell us how we utilize these resources, how we level the educational field for student success.

Academic advising is key in the success of students as they transition to our institutions, (V. Tinto, 1999). Advisors must understand the informational, conceptual, and relational aspects of their roles and how these affect their interactions with first-year students. Often, providing equitable opportunities requires more than simply equalizing the distribution of resources. It is incumbent that our institutions advocate for resource allocation that takes into account the nuances of those students that partake in developmental education programs. Through research we have learned community colleges must work to increase the access for as many students as possible with strong

academic programs. Affecting them more than any other constraint, community colleges face an uncertainty of shrinking funding from state, federal, and private resources. Therefore it will be difficult to predict what community colleges will be able to offer in the future (Cohen, 1996). Many community colleges have now embarked in academic initiatives such as the Guided Pathways movement that provide a greater focus to the academic and career decision early in student academic experience while simultaneously aligning classroom learning with fields of study (T. T. R. Bailey, Jagers, & Jenkins, 2015). Critics have articulated that the initiatives such as Guided Pathways is particularly risky because of the expansiveness of the movement; though leaders from progressive organizations are calling for nothing short of revolution. In addition it is noted that one-off improvements, whether focused on advising, course scheduling, or early alert, are not sufficient in the absence of a greater strategy that puts all institutional redesign efforts in concert with one another, ensuring that the sum of the parts is greater than the whole (AACC, 2017). Conversely, the Guided Pathways model offers a fundamental redesign of how two-year colleges operate, stressing the integration of services and instruction into more clearly structured programs of study that support every student's goals (T. R. Bailey et al., 2015). However, without the voice of the student these issues in will continue to affect how community colleges face need for student retention and persistence. The questions of how to align programs and services with institutional missions and student needs remain a constant. There is a significant body of quantitative research that has examined student retention and persistence; however there are limited qualitative

research models that specifically consider the voice of first year students while still maintaining institutional alignment with mission. Research is needed that proposes a qualitative approach for further study of factors that may have a profound affect for the first year developmental education student.

CHAPTER THREE: DESIGN OF STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine and articulate the voice of the first year student who has participated in developmental education programs as to develop a greater understanding of their view towards student success. The intended results of this research will provide insight about future practices in academic advising and organizational learning and may identify areas in need of additional research. This study will be useful to academic advisors, college administrators, and instructional faculty who work with developmental education students and will be applicable to planning and prioritizing advising processes throughout the college.

This section of the research proposal will describe: (a) the proposed philosophical approach, (b) the proposed research method, and (c) the proposed procedures for conducting the study. As a practitioner within student services I have a personal connection to this study, it will also contain a statement detailing my personal research perspective.

Philosophical Approach

The philosophical approach for this study is the interpretive social science (ISS) research methodology. This section of the paper describes this approach, setting it in historical context and discussing its appropriateness for this inquiry. It also lays a foundation for the methods and procedures and assures that the methodology truly supports the intent of the study. Interpretive research is concerned with meaning, and seeks to understand organizational members' interpretation of a given situation

(Schwandt, 1994). Creswell, (2008) reminds us that interpretive researchers acknowledge that their research is rarely free of bias, and thus, interpretive researchers typically include a statement of potential bias and epistemology. At times the researcher may take on the role of an advocate in presenting the findings of the research. Because of this bias it is important to note that my work as an academic advisor and as a policy associate has been laden with the incredible stories that seemingly only the community college could provide. In addition, my experience within higher education has provided me with a deeper understanding of the role of community colleges and their relationship with developmental education students. These experiences have helped shape my professional interests, while my voice for student advocacy has strengthened. Having a contextual understanding community college history has further shaped my understanding of why systems such as these exist. The higher education experience has taught me that we must adapt to the changes that are brought forth by social, economic and political conditions. My belief is that in the end all solutions to our respective social economic struggles, such as health and poverty, must be addressed through the continued attainment of knowledge. As with many complex organizations, higher education is not without risk for aspiring students who, over many generations, have had no point of reference to understand the maze of a college experience. For the college students the social and cultural aspects are primary factors that drive growth and change in adulthood. Among the many influences of the adult learner the role of parent, spouse, partner, worker, and friend, and the “correct” timing of those roles have a great impact on shaping

the developmental process (Clark & Caffarella, 1999). I believe it is important to examine barriers in higher education and how they affect student success. While there are many ways to categorize the typology of adult development the four fundamental components are, biological, psychological, socio cultural and integrative (Clark & Caffarella, 1999). The social cultural perspective on adult development acknowledges how the social world in which we live influences our development (Dannefer, 1996; Gardiner & Kosmitzki, 2005; Shaffer, 2005). Researchers such as V. Tinto (1987) have long advocated the idea of social integration as an integral; component for student success, where first-year students become fully involved in the social and academic communities at their new campus. I have learned the value of social cultural and social critical/radical learning and its relevance to the community college population. These perspectives have helped shape me to become the lifelong learner that I am today. Through this research my belief is that it will add value to hear from the voice of the students themselves.

Purpose of this approach to research. Qualitative research methods were developed in the social sciences to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomena. Examples of qualitative methods are action research, case study research, and ethnography. Qualitative data sources include: (a) observation and participant observation (fieldwork), (b) interviews and questionnaires, (c) documents and texts, and the (d) researcher's impressions and reactions (Myers, 1997). Interpretive social theorists such as Max Weber and Georg Simmel introduced interpretive understanding into

sociology, where it has come to mean a systematic interpretive process in which an outside observer of a culture relates to an indigenous people or sub-cultural group on their own terms and from their own point-of-view, rather than interpreting them in terms of the researcher's own culture.

Creswell (2008) defines research as a process of steps used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue. More exactly, he states that research consists of three distinct steps: (a) the posing of a question or what issues are at hand which calls for a greater discussion, (b) the collection of data to answer the questions; this sits at the heart of research – one might ask what evidence is there that supports a theory or phenomena, and (c) presenting an answer to the question; this may be brought forth by the extraction of data, such as looking at data trends, and analysis of information gained in the study. Interpretative Sociology is the study of society that concentrates on the meanings people associate to their social world. Interpretative sociology strives to show that reality is constructed by people themselves in their daily lives or putting yourself in the shoes of others to see things from their perspective (Macionis & Gerber, 2011). Interpretive research is concerned with meaning, and seeks to understand organizational members' interpretation of a given situation (Schwandt, 1994). Critical social science is a combination of critical theory and postmodernism. Critical theory was developed by the Institute for Social Research of the University of Frankfurt, and is based on the politics of Karl Marx and Max Weber (as cited in Kinchloe & McLaren, 1994). While modernist critical theory concerns itself with “forms of

authority and injustice that accompanied the evolution of industrial and corporate capitalism as a political-economic system,” (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002, p. 52) postmodern critical theory politicizes social problems “by situating them in historical and cultural contexts, to implicate themselves in the process of collecting and analyzing data, and to relativize their findings” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 52).

Conversely, quantitative research is an inquiry approach useful for describing trends and explaining the relationship among variables found in the literature. To conduct this inquiry, the investigator specifies narrow questions, locates or develops instruments to gather data to answer questions, and analyzes numbers from the instruments utilizing statistics. In contrast, the positivist approach is to seek the truth and assumes that the world is subjective; hence the positivist researcher will seek out facts in terms of relationship among variables.

How this approach relates to this proposed research. This study seeks to develop a greater understanding of the experience and perspective of students enrolled in developmental studies. As discussed, developmental students are ideal candidates for ISS method by learning how developmental students experience specific activities such as financial aid, student engagement and participation within developmental education programs. Theorist Max Weber (1897) observed that there is no absolutely “objective” scientific analysis of culture. All knowledge of cultural reality is always knowledge from particular points of view. An objective analysis of cultural events, which proceeds according to the thesis that the ideal of science is the reduction of empirical reality to

laws, is meaningless because the knowledge of social laws is not knowledge of social reality but is rather one of the various aids used by our minds for attaining this end.

As the researcher it is imperative that I interpret these finding, themes and connections as to illustrate the differences (if any) between social reality (student voice) and institutional perspective.

History and Major Authors of ISS

ISS was brought to academic light by Wilhem Dilthey (1864-1911). A lifelong concern was to establish a proper theoretical and methodological foundation for the human sciences. Dilthey (1972) suggested that all human experience divides naturally into two parts: that of the surrounding natural world, in which objective necessity rules, and that of inner experience, characterized by sovereignty of the will, responsibility for actions, a capacity to subject everything to thinking and to resist everything within the fortress of freedom of his her own person. Liken to Dilthey, German theorist Max Weber (1897) was a key proponent of methodological anti-positivism, presenting sociology as a non-empiricist field which must study social action through interpretive means based upon understanding the meanings and purposes that individuals attach to their own actions. Weber is often cited, with Émile Durkheim and Karl Marx, as one of the three principal architects of modern social science (as cited in Kim, 2007). ISS has become influential in the realms of academic social research.

Methods

The purpose of this section is to present a rationale for the research methods and to introduce the proposed research design. The method for this study is a qualitative research design which utilizes an ISS perspective that garners information through an interview process. This method of inquiry is employed in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the social sciences. This methodology will be used to gather an in-depth understanding of the perceptions by first year students and understanding of their college experience. The qualitative method will investigate the why and how of decision making. Smaller but focused samples may be utilizing the interview process of subjects.

Purpose of the Method

The purpose of the interview process was to contribute to the knowledge of the group (developmental students). It will allow the investigator to contribute to a holistic perspective when analyzing organizations and behaviors. The study sought to describe how developmental students interpret the objectives, opportunities and services of their respective institution. There were no propositions about the outcomes of the students perspectives other than those based on the initial literature research. The qualitative interview process created an opportunity to analyze findings from individual interviews to identify themes throughout the study and common characteristic that bind them together for analysis (Stake, 2006).

Key concepts of this method. The goal of this study is to produce information only on the particular students studied, (first year, first generational students who have been enrolled in developmental studies) and any more general conclusions are only propositions (informed assertions).

Major steps in carrying out this method. There are four key components to this research design (R. K. Yin, 2009). They are: (a) the research questions (see Appendix A), (b) the units of analysis, (c) data gathering process, and (d) the criteria and interpretation of the findings. Arguably, the research questions are the most important aspect of the design. It is imperative that the researcher capture questions that will support the propositions of the study (Stake, 2006; R. K. Yin, 2009).

Important Authors

The qualitative research design that utilizes ISS perspective garners information through an interview process is a widely accepted research design. Stake (2006) and R. K. Yin (1993; 2009) are important authors and advocates for this method. Creswell, Denzin, Guba, and Lincoln (2005) also have also contributed to literature about the case study method in conjunction with their writing about qualitative research and the ISS perspective.

Procedures

This section summarizes data needs, collection techniques and procedural requirements of the proposed data design.

Data needs. Interview data can be collected from direct and phone interviews, including transcriptions from these interviews. Data was gathered as follows: (a) communication with Washington State Community and Technical colleges system, vice presidents, deans and associate deans of student service programs to take a brief online survey. Noting that the purpose of this survey will be to gather basic descriptive evidence about candidate participants, to test questions for future interviews; (b) implementation of a test survey to students to ascertain soundness of the test. This test survey was implemented at a pre- selected community college; (c) as to assure that enough participants have been identified, a pre-select contingency of three community college sites were identified to implement the survey; (d) after completion of the interview phase, participants were given the opportunity to review the transcript of his or her interview and follow-up interviews will be conducted if needed; and (e) supporting documents were incorporated into the data, if provided by the participants. Having multiple sets of evidence facilitated triangulation and enhance trustworthiness.

Data collection techniques. A semi-structured, open-ended interview questions were developed. The interviews were conducted via the phone and in person. The interviews were recorded and complete transcripts were made of each interview. At the outset of the data collection process, a pilot interview with an advising director or director of a program serving first year students who have taken developmental education courses was conducted. Results of this interview were used to test the trustworthiness of the tool. Initial interviews lasted approximately one hour in length. At the outset,

permission to grant further interviews, if needed, were sought. Follow-up interviews were used to gain additional information or to investigate unexpected information that arose as a result of interviews with other participants. If needed, a focus interview with all participants to provide a richer set of data was also agreed upon. In addition, while the interviews were conducted supporting documents which may support the evidence, were collected.

Participant selection. Participants were students participating within a developmental education program and who have completed at least one year of college and participated in at least one developmental education course. Initially, a minimum of eight, but no more than 12 students were sought to conduct this study. Eight students were selected to be a part of this study. The intent of this criteria was to narrow the scope of the study to developmental education students within participating in first year programs. It was acknowledged that there might have been differences between institutions due to their organizational size and structures. With the assistance of the office institutional effectiveness at the college site students were identified/selected/recommended by student and instructional affairs staff who commonly worked with these students daily.

Data analysis. Data from interviews were systematically analyzed using a process based on recommendations by Creswell (2008). The steps of the process are as follows:

1. Organize data - sort, review, and subdivide the data in order to get a sense of it as a whole.

2. Evaluate documents of interview or transcript to review data looking for large ideas. Take notes. Cycle through the data iteratively to discover its meaning.
3. Repeat the process above for several more documents. Record key themes and ideas that emerge from the readings.
4. Abbreviate the list and use it to code the whole of the data. Look for major and minor themes. Classify expected themes, unexpected themes, contradictory information, and difficult to classify themes.
5. Lean coding. Begin the process of lean coding or grouping similar codes into categories. This will lessen the number of categories making analysis more efficient.
6. Seek saturation. If saturation has not been achieved, focus interviews will be utilized to assist with pending issues or needs.
7. Finalize codes. Make final decisions about the abbreviations of the codes and organize the codes alphabetically.
8. Begin the data analysis. First layering themes and highlighting interconnections. Use triangulation to insure trustworthiness.
9. Write report. Summarize findings in a report that describes key themes and includes exact words from respondents' interviews.

Data gathered from the structured questions from the interview survey were tabulated and are presented in the findings. They will provide a means with which to triangulate differences and unexpected evidence received in the interviews. Documents gathered

from interviewees were described and used as evidence to support information gathered through the interview process.

Strategies to ensure soundness. Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Creswell, 2007) recommend the following tests to increase trustworthiness of qualitative research, (this may include case study designs): (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. This was done by a deeper examination of the collection of data.

Table 1 is a timeline of when these tests were applied for this study.

Table 1

Timeline

Scholarly Activity	Proposed timeline
Proposal approved by committee	October 15, 2014
Request Institutional Review Board approval	November, 2014
Audit, pilot and refine interview questions	December, 2014
Institutional Review Board approval	December, 2014
Begin interviews	January 2016
Data gathering concluded	November, 2017
Data analysis concluded	January 2018
Draft of dissertation completed	February 2018
Revision of dissertation completed	March 2018
Defense of dissertation	March 2018

Strategies to protect human subjects. Careful consideration of the protection of human subjects was taken throughout this study. Approval from the Oregon State University Human Subjects Review Board was granted before contacting subjects and all participants were given consent documents outlining the purpose of the research in advance of the interviews. Subjects' names and the names of their institutions were

altered in order to provide confidentiality. All data collected will be kept in a secure location and regard for participants' privacy.

Chapter Summary

The philosophical approach for this study was identified as the ISS research methodology. ISS represents a tradition in which the author offers a personal perspective at the outset of the study. In keeping with that tradition, I identified myself as being a strong advocate for the community college and the role it serves in higher education. This section further described ISS as a philosophical approach related to hermeneutics, a theory of meaning in which the researcher becomes interpreter or translator (Neuman, 2003). This study is consistent with this methodology because it seeks to understand the experiences of a social group in context of its environment.

The method for the research was the ISS, qualitative interview analysis. The purpose of the ISS method was to contribute to the knowledge of individual, group of social phenomena (R. K. Yin, 2009). This section outlined the four key components to the design: (a) the research questions, (b) the units of analysis, (c) the data gathering process and (d) the criteria and interpretation of findings. It included a detailed explanation of the design and proposed procedures for conducting the study and for protecting human subjects. It concluded with a proposed timeline that was used to accomplish this research.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE DEVELOPOMENTAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Within higher education many first year, first generation college students participate in their academic journey via the community college system. Often these students find themselves navigating a complex system of academic demand with minimal resources, a looming prospect that they may not be immediately ready for college level courses such as English or math. For many these challenges often have a profound effect on whether a student can persist from one year to the next. Research tells us that approximately 49% of students at public two-year colleges complete all remedial courses attempted (U. S. Department of Education [USDE], 2016). These challenges not only effect student's success but they impact many of our community colleges on how they develop programs in response to the critical needs of the first year, first generation student. We have learned that students who take developmental education or remedial courses have a lower likelihood to persist (Kuraender & Howell, 2012). Adding to this complexity is the continued demographic change of the community college population and this trend will continue to over the next two decades. Within the 1,108 colleges listed by the AACC, women now represent 56% of all community college students, while students of color represent 52% of the student enrolled for credit (as cited in NCES, 2017). Within this group first generation students represent 36% of all students in community colleges.

Community colleges in the United States are represented by over 11 million students in which one third or 29% participate in developmental education courses,

(Skomsvold 2014). These programs carry an economic impact of over 2 billion dollars (Strong American Schools, 2008). The high cost of remediation has spurred debate on how to determine student's college readiness, i.e. course placement (T. Bailey et al., 2010; Hassel & Giordano, 2015; Hughes & Scott-Clayton, 2011)

Through this plethora of research there are few examples that demonstrate student voice or engagement as an influencing factor to the development of remedial programs. The intent of this study was to examine the voice of eight students who have completed at least one developmental/remedial courses at their respective community college. The student group was made up of six women and two men. Their characteristics included: (a) two single parents, (b) a survivor from a physically abusive relationship, (c) a veteran with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), (d) an undocumented student (DREAMer), (e) a displaced homemaker, (f) a sole provider for an immigrant family and (g) a parent whose adult life has been supplemented by state welfare assistance.

Pseudonyms

The participants of this study were assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity and to maintain student confidentiality. The following names were chosen: Maria, Robert, Rachel, Melisa, Jill, Joe, Rosie, and Jennifer.

All of the study participants are first generation college students. First-generation status includes students whose parents may have some college, postsecondary certificates, or associates degrees, but not bachelor's degrees. This is the definition of first-generation status commonly used by the Federal programs, i.e., TRiO, Student

Support Services etc. Other studies have defined first-generation students as those whose parents have no education beyond high school (Chen, 2005; Horn & Nunez, 2000; Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998; Warburton, Bugarin, & Nunez, 2001). Each student was asked in the face-to-face interview to share with the researcher about their background as a first generation college student. Contextual snippets of their stories are depicted in the Table 2.

Table 2

First Generation, Developmental Education Student Backgrounds

Pseudonym	Background
Maria. Nineteen year old female	Maria comes to the college as a late arrival, after struggling with finding resources she entered her college testing low in math and English. She struggles with integrating at her college. Her family is predominately Spanish speaking and English is her second language
Robert. Twenty-five year old male	Robert comes to college with desire to become a nurse, he has limited resources and is a DREAMer student. He works two jobs to help his family with living expenses. He is preoccupied with issues around his immigration status
Rachel. Twenty-four year old female	Rachel is a single parent and has issues with childcare, transportation, and support for her child. Multigenerational poverty, high financial need.
Melisa. Twenty year old female.	Melissa is a first generation student who transferred from a four year institutions back to her community college due to cost. Through financial aid, grants etc. she is paying for college herself.

Table 2

(Continued)

First Generation, Developmental Education Student Backgrounds

Pseudonyms	Background
Jill. Thirty-two year old female.	Jill is a displaced homemaker, she and her husband owned a business and due to economic hardship she and her husband had to give it up. She is also a nontraditional student who is much older than her classroom peers.
Joe. Thirty year old male.	Joe is a veteran and enrolled into a community college to save money. He has found it difficult to attend classes in what he described as an unstructured environment.
Rosie. Twenty-eight year old female.	Rosie is a single parent, who is highly dependent on financial aid and state support. She struggles with transportation and resources for child care.
Jennifer. Twenty-eight year old female.	Jennifer is a single parent, with two children who decided to go to college after living in an abusive relationship.

Data from their interviews were systematically analyzed using a process based on recommendations by Creswell (2008, 2009). The steps for analyzing the student response were as follows:

1. Organize data - sort, review, and subdivide the data in order to get a sense of it as a whole.
2. Evaluate documents - of interview or transcript to review data looking for large ideas. Take notes. Cycle through the data iteratively to discover its meaning.
3. Record key themes and ideas that emerge from the these discussions

4. Abbreviate the list and use it to code the whole of the data. Look for major and minor themes. Classify expected themes, unexpected themes, contradictory information, and difficult to classify themes.
5. Lean coding - Begin the process of lean coding or grouping similar codes into categories. This will lessen the number of categories making analysis more efficient.
6. Seek saturation, if saturation has not been achieved, focus interviews will be utilized to assist with pending issues or needs. Note: No focus interviews were conducted.
7. Finalize codes - Make final decisions about the abbreviations of the codes and organize accordingly.
8. Begin the data analysis - First layering themes and highlighting interconnections. When possible use triangulation to insure trustworthiness.

This chapter presents the data findings collected for the participants who have participated in developmental education courses at their community college. The purpose of this research was to explore the expectance of first year, first generation students who have successfully completed at least one developmental education course. The collection methods used were face to face, semi structured interviews, with sometime follow up interviews and journal entries. Data was collected and utilized from both of these methods. The response from these students can be best described as a reflection of the student's experiences after they had completed a developmental course. The interviews

or student voice identified the predominant finding that emerged and connected them to the predominant findings that emerged from the data and connect them to the literature. Eight students were interviewed, they consisted of six women and two men. Their backgrounds ranged from low income, single parents, a veteran and a self-identified undocumented students. All began their community college experience as a first generation student.

For the first year developmental education student the difference between learning and survival can be sometimes described as blurred line. Often the student finds him or herself conflicted by a lifetime of cultural nuances, such as economic factors, family needs, roles or expectations etc., while conversely the pressure for student success is often centered on academic performance with a known map for success or a point of reference to successfully navigate forward by.

Research Findings

Theme 1: Self-efficacy. Efficacy beliefs influence the particular course of action a person chooses to pursue, the amount of effort that will be expended, perseverance in the face of challenges and failures, resilience, and the ability to cope with the demands associated with the chosen course (Bandera, 1997).

At age of 28 Rosie made the decision to leave her family home this meant she would be leaving without educational credentials that would support her working career. She shared having a lengthy history of low expectations to academics or work. She relocated from the Hawaiian Islands to the Pacific Northwest. At an early age and

throughout her adolescence she was reminded that her place in life was to care for her younger siblings and this was when she made the decision to leave. Her role models consisted of family members who worked in low paying seasonal employment. In her words “*being poor was the norm*” (Rosie). At an early age she experienced physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Her decision to leave her home had much to do with wanting something better. At this time in her life she shared that she had no idea what “better” would mean, she just knew it was time for her to find it. In 2015 she enrolled into a local community college. It was there that she was tested and found she was not college ready and was placed in developmental education classes. She shares that in all the generations of her known family she became the first ever to enroll in college. During the interviews she described her early years at her community college as “*a blur in time*” by stating:

Everything, the classes, the buildings, the faces, process of enrolling and even the sidewalks were all new. I had no network of friends or instructors to tell me where I needed to be or even why I needed to be there, I did not even know I was in a developmental class until much later. The only thing I did know was that I was in college. In looking back it was something for me to hold on to, it was something my children could see and maybe do. (Rosie)

Despite how difficult Rosie’s history and current challenges were, she made a conscious decision, that no matter how limited her knowledge was of higher education, this was her choice and her perception of “something better.”

Bandura (1997) describes efficacy as beliefs that influence the particular courses of action a person chooses to pursue, the amount of effort that will be expended,

perseverance in the face of challenges and failures, resilience, and the ability to cope with the demands associated with the chosen course. V. Tinto (1982) further notes that, “Change can be unsettling. The transition from high school to college can place significant demands on young adults” (pp 3-15). College life can be demanding and stressful for a new student (Noel, Levitz, & Saluri, 1985) and requires higher levels of independence, initiative, and self-regulation (Bryde & Milburn, 1990).

In discussing “self-regulation,” Rosie tells us that despite her then academic and social shortcomings, this is what she had learned about herself as learner:

After completing one year in college I've learned to really push through these courses and a whole bunch of obstacles in my life. I've proven to myself that I'm able to work through these (obstacles) and overcome them, so it's actually made me become a stronger person well-rounded person.

Students must learn to operate on their own, and take responsibility for themselves. It is important for students to find emotional and instrumental independence. Emotional independence means the ability of a student to willingly risk relationships of those who are close to them in exchange for pursuing their own individual interests or convictions, (Chickering, 1969). In relationship to Chickering's (1969) Seven Vectors, and as it applies to student development theory, in time Rosie would inevitably develop stronger relationships, develop a greater sense of belonging with the establishment and a development of identity.

Chickering (1969) writes, that the Development of Identity is the process of discovering with what kinds of experience, at what levels of intensity and frequency, we

resonate in satisfying, in safe, or in self-destructive fashion. Another vector relates, is the Development of Purpose, where college students begin to identify why they are earning their degree. Students not only establish the purpose of getting a job, earning a living, a building skills, but the development of purpose moves beyond that, and lastly, is the Development of Integrity, which addresses the ability for students to personalize humanizing values, and apply them to their own behavior. Often many of these values is what students like Rosie bring with them to college and are challenged in this environment. In retrospect, for Rosie making the decision to attend college, and despite all of her cumulative experiences she was able to move successfully through remedial course work, college level courses and be accepted into her school nursing program. Undoubtedly, the idea of earning a living wage, to better provide for her children was something new in her life. To emulate student success through the sometimes tumultuous journey of higher education is an achievement in itself.

Rosie further stated:

But you know, along the process, I was like, man, I don't know. I don't know. You know, I wasn't sure about it because it seemed overwhelming and that, you know, taking these prerequisite classes, I was like, 'Am I going to be able to, complete all of these classes with the A's and B's that they want us to get, in order for us to get into the nursing class?,' but along the way I've pushed for A's - Just go for A's, you know.

Theme 2: Student readiness. The challenges and the diverse nature of the first year student, single parent is profound. Their lives are complex and filled with an immediate need - a sense of belonging which is directly affected by a student's

perceptions of his or her engagements with other people on campus. If a student does feel belonging, motivation is enhanced. Conversely, not feeling a sense of belonging leads to decreased motivation to persist.

First year- first generation parents, Tina and Jennifer both participated in developmental education course work at their college. Both are single parents, both are sole providers for their children. In both instances the father of their children do not contribute financially to their needs. They are for all intentional purposes, absent in the development of their children. They share that the state provides assistance for most of their educational cost. One is a pre nursing student and the other aspires to earn a degree in business.

Tina's grandparents provide a room behind their home for her and her son. They also help by providing childcare. Jennifer uses private child care, in this case a neighbor takes care of her child while she is attending classes. With no personal transportation they both rely heavily on public transportation. Long days at school included catching the bus to their college and back home. Home budgets are built around student financial aid. These two students do not live paycheck to paycheck, they live by academic quarter to quarter. The state issues Electron Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards which subsidizes them for food purchases for the month. Because of their circumstance they maximize the average monthly payout which is \$125 dollars per month (SNAP, 2015).

Single mothers are prevalent at community colleges with 44% of all single student mothers attending a public two-year institution. Four in 10 women at two-year colleges

say that they are likely or very likely to drop out of school due to their dependent care obligations, (Institute for Women's Policy Research [IWPR], 2017b). Often single parents within community colleges are under resourced and commonly live in poverty.

Nationally 52% of community college students receive some sort of institutional aid, i.e. federal financial aid, state aid, scholarships, private and public, etc. These students are more likely to be immigrants, underemployed, and the first generation in their families to go to college (IWPR, A 2017a). Nationally, the average age of community college students is 28, (AACC, 2017). Nearly 40% of all public two-year college students are 22 to 39 years old. Another 10% are over 40 (AACC, 2017).

Nationally research tells us that the number of single mothers in college more than doubled between the 1999-00 and 2011-12 school years, to reach nearly 2.1 million students, or 11% of all undergraduates, as of 2012. In addition, the growth in single mothers in college was more than twice the rate of growth seen among the overall undergraduate student population (42%) over the same time period (IWPR 2017a). The financial complexities of their lives can be overwhelming and may have negative consequences for achieving their academic goals. Yet still, student aid in itself does not address all need for students. When asked, what difficult issues she faced, Jennifer responded:

Yes, I have a child, a one-year-old, so dealing with the child care if she's sick, finding backup, people to help watch her if -- so that I can go to school. And so it's the challenge of asking for help, asking for -- 'cause I am not one to ask for help. It's relying on someone else that they'll take care of if my daughter - I've had car issues, that's a challenge, you know, I've had to bail to get to school, get to

work and so that's already been a challenge this year, and I've had to find alternative means for both areas so that I don't - so I wouldn't drop out 'cause that came into question a couple of times, even within the first week of school. Because the first quarter within the, like - the first week after classes my daughter had fevers and she couldn't go daycare. If it wasn't for my roommate, I would've had to stop because there was no one else to. Missing class was a huge participation grade, and I would've felt behind, and so I wasn't sure how long my daughter was - if fevers were gonna last. It was going on a week. It's made me have to rely on other people. When it was just me, I didn't have to rely on anyone but myself. I was more - I could take the bus or I could - I've had to ask for help when I normally wouldn't. I've had to - and relying on the people is what I've had to adjust to. It's the adjustments I've had to make.

When asked to further identify barriers that made her college experience difficult she stated:

Even though she's a blessing, you know, my child. It's been difficult with a child being a single parent. Transportation is another thing that has been difficult -- would make the college experience difficult. The third one is without financial aid it would be cost. (Jennifer)

From this testament a sense of resilience from poverty and stress for a single parent students is evident. Resilience is defined by the ability to thrive, mature, and increase competence in the face of adverse circumstances. Further, the adverse circumstances may be chronic and consistent or severe and infrequent. To thrive, mature, and increase competence a person must draw upon all of his or her resources: biological, psychological, and environmental (Gordon, 1995). This definition means that resilience is competence despite chronic and severe adversity. It will be important that we remember that it is chronic and severe adversity such as lifetime poverty; although everyone faces hard times, not everyone faces such chronic and severe adversity. What it means to be competent also varies depending on one's developmental level. We have

learned that developmental level can be interpreted in many ways for the first year student. As practitioners in community colleges, at any level, it reasons that a willingness to listen to the voice that says, “I will be late because my sitter was not available, my child is sick, or my car is broken” is key to the success of these students. Considering these limitations, about one-third of the population is high risk and one-third of that high-risk population is resilient, leaving 10% of the general population resilient, true resilience - competence despite chronic and severe adversity - is rare (Werner, 1994).

Theme 3: Student need. We have learned student need goes well beyond addressing the classroom experience, often finding a campus home will bring stability. Student need is defined as the student’s self-identification of needs through the gathering, reviewing and assessing information needed to be successful inside and outside of the classroom.

Joe, a veteran first generation student, also participates in developmental education course work.

Approximately half of all post-secondary students in the United States are enrolled in two year learning institutions (AACC, 2008; Guess, 2008). There are 450,000 veterans using their G.I. Bill benefits for education, and approximately 40% of them attend community colleges (Alvarez, 2008).

Joe is a two-time Afghanistan campaign veteran. He, like many developmental education students, is first generation and when he arrived on his campus tested into remedial math and English. His decision to attend a community college was based on

economic convenience. It was close to his home and he could save money by starting out at a two year college, rather than moving away to a four year college or university.

Among his observations he shared how chaotic the community college life was. Coming from the structured military life this presented a change and a challenge. In addition to acclimating to college life, he shared that he did not feel academically prepared. On one side he had three years of military structure and but very little academic preparation. Joe stated the following:

I learned that I was not at all prepared for the study habits that would be required for college. I stepped in here thinking that I was pretty prepared as a writer and was well versed with my math skills. Turns out that I was not at all. And I had to do a lot of out-of-class studying on my own, which I wasn't exactly prepared to do. And I learned after a year that with some practice that I actually could get better and with some effort I could do basic math. But it took some practice to get to where I am now.

By contrast, his presence as an older student, interpersonal relations, and cultural difference were clearly apparent in his assessment of where he was socially on his campus. Veterans tend to be older and those who enroll in community colleges after separation from the military are traditionally not Caucasian. Forty-three percent of students with military experience attended public two-year institutions, 21% attended public four-year institutions, 12% enrolled in private nonprofit institutions, and 12% enrolled in private for-profit institutions (Radford & Wun, 2009). The transition to life after military service can also make attending college difficult for undergraduate veterans. They may be experiencing psychological and/or physical post-war trauma

(DiRamio, Ackerman, & Mitchell, 2008; McBain, 2008), readjusting to personal relationships (DiRamio et al., 2008), and adapting to a new lifestyle.

As Joe stated:

Coming to grasp with the fact that I'm over 10 years older than most of the new students. It took a - it took a minute to get used to that. I get annoyed fairly easily. So when I see people acting up in class or showing up late on a regular basis was something I wasn't prepared for and almost took it personally even though it had nothing to do with me. I would say sticking to my work outside of the classroom was a big one 'cause when I was in the army, and even my other jobs prior to the army, I was stuck there from the time I got there in the morning until I got off work. But when I get here, I try to have that same attitude. Like, when I leave campus, I shut it off, and then I have to almost re-open that later on at night. And I'm not almost willing to do that, so I have to really struggle to force myself to study at night or do homework that's due. I tend to do it last minute because, almost like, I'd rather wake up at three o'clock in the morning, Monday morning, and start my college week rather than take my Friday night or my weekend which I'm used to having off. So I have to really struggle to do any work during those times.

Researcher Vincent Tinto (1975) notes that this central idea is that of

“integration” as it claims that whether a student persists or drops out is quite strongly predicted by their degree of academic integration, and social integration. These evolve over time, as integration and commitment interact, with dropouts depending on commitment at the time of the decision. Two key areas that are connected to student persistence are Academic Integration and Social Integration including Performance personal development, identification with academic norm and values. While Social Integration relates to friendships, personal contact with academics, i.e. relationship with staff or faculty, assimilation with the college itself.

Joe reinforced this concept by stating:

A lot of it is talking to other students on studying habits. But when I first came here, my first quarter I had to take an ESS (Early Student Success) class. It was like a - basically like a walk-through on how to navigate college, like study habits. We did things like learn Cornell notes and basically studying habits that you're supposed to have. And that's when I first realized the habits that I do have are not what are needed for college, so that class was a big help. And then there's a guy, a director here of - I don't know, he is a financial director upstairs, he's a fellow veteran and he's talked to me a few times about different things, different opportunities as far as financial aid and the veteran services upstairs. And I hung out there a few times 'cause I almost feel like you find, like, a sense of place here on campus. But I don't necessarily fit in at the Diversity Center. It's too much in there for me. But the vet center is cool because I go in there and everybody is a veteran so I have, like, commonality in the room, and it's a nice quiet place to study.

The success or appreciation of this student finding a campus home with other like students (veterans) relates to the value of learning or support communities, where the goal is for students to work together inside and outside the classroom by expanding their academic and social knowledge base collaboratively. From an instructional perspective the development of Learning Communities has proven to support student engagement. Minkler (2002) defines leaning a community as a way of deliberately structuring curriculums so that students are actively engaged in sustained academic relationships with staff and faculty. Gabelnick, MacGregor, Mathew, and Smith (2008) define learning communities as a variety of curricula structures that link academic courses or restructure curriculum in a manner that creates opportunities for students to gain a greater understanding of course material via interaction with instructors and peer students as active participants in a learning process. It is well documented that institutional support

for student participating in developmental education programs is needed, this support includes: (a) the identification of developmental education as an element connected to goals and mission, (b) insuring that resources are allocated to support learning community programs, and (c) publically supported programs as such by implementing them as part of the fabric of the institutions.

Theme 4: Future plans. For the practitioner, future plans address transitions in higher education. For the undocumented student future plans are often seeded in the immediate

It is estimated that currently there are approximately 1.8 million young immigrants who were brought by their parents to the United States before age 16 without documentation and have been raised and educated in the United States as Americans (American Immigration Council, 2012).

Undocumented students, i.e. DREAMer students or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students represent approximately 800,000 students nationally. The DREAM Act bill, which would have provided a pathway to permanent residency for unauthorized immigrants brought to the United States upon meeting certain qualifications, was considered by Congress in 2007. Most recently, it failed to overcome a bipartisan filibuster in the United States.

Immigrant children are entering schools in the United States in unprecedented numbers, making them the fastest growing segment of the youth population (Landale & Oropesa, 1995). These children come from highly diverse backgrounds, with over 80%

arriving from Latin America, Asia, and the Afro-Caribbean basin (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003). Although they bring remarkable strengths, such as strong family ties, deep-seated beliefs in education, and optimism about the future, they also face a range of challenges associated with the migration to a new country, including high levels of poverty (Capps et al., 2005). Consequently, a large segment of immigrant youth struggle to succeed in the American educational system. Continued studies have demonstrated that immigrant youth have more positive attitudes toward their schools (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995), hold higher aspirations (Fuligini, 1997; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), and are more optimistic about the future (Kao & Tienda, 1995), than their native-born peers.

For immigrant children challenges such as these appear to be part of a continuum of academic life for the first generation student who is attached to developmental education. As a student might achieve or complete an academic milestone, i.e. high school graduation, the passing of a class etc., however a new reality inevitably sets in.

As illustrated by Robert:

It was very different from high school. In high school, you barely read the book. Unless the questions of the math problems are on the book, you really don't touch the book. I went to a school right here (in this community). It's very Hispanic oriented. We have teachers that really help us out, but it really depended on the teacher if you learned or not, and so with the textbooks, we really didn't touch the textbooks and when I got here to community college and you had to. You had to read the textbook, you had to know the terms, and know the definitions. And then you had to be engaged in the lecture. And you had to read the material before the lecture too. So that was very new to me.

Research indicates that the number of developmental courses a student is required to take has a negative impact on persistence (Adelman, 1998). Further research that examines the relationship between the subject area in which a student is under prepared in the completion of a degree (English or math) would inevitably help inform the development of better career and academic pathways for the first generations developmental education student. This might be especially true for students who may begin their academic journey as English language learners. Through research, we have learned that there is a gap in college enrollment in both student of color and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds when compared with their Caucasian peers who come from middle incomes (Bowen, Kurzweil & Tobin, 2005) the minority enrollment gap is primarily a result of the fact that underrepresented minority students are more likely to come from low income families. While research tells us that children whose parents have higher income also have access to better schools and are inevitably better college prepared (Bowen et al., 2005). As illustrated by Robert:

My mom was never able to go to high school. Her parents couldn't afford it. My parents come from Mexico, Tijuana. I was born in Mexico, Tijuana and I'm a DREAMer, and so I don't get any FAFSA until just quite recently actually. And so, I mean, it's been a struggle. You never get handed things. You have to work for everything you have. So you have to work for everything you have, for your career, for the job that you want. So that's what my mom taught me. She never got to go to high school and she was very smart.

Today, 52% of students earning college credit are minority students and of those enrolled for college credit, 37% are first generation students. Fifty-eight percent of all community college students do receive some type of financial assistance (NCES, 2017).

Typically because of their resident status DACA and DREAMer students are not eligible for federal financial aid, in many instances these students pay international tuition fees, which is sometimes double the cost of their in-state tuition. Twenty states offer in-state tuition to unauthorized immigrant students, 16 by state legislative action, 16 state legislatures - California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Texas, Utah and Washington - enacted laws to allow in-state tuition benefits for certain unauthorized immigrant students. These laws typically require attendance and graduation at state high schools, and promising to apply for legal status as soon as eligible. (National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators [NASFAA], 2017). Robert points out:

A DREAMer - it's hard, it's really hard. I mean, the United States gives us so many opportunities. I've been living here since I was six. I mean, we were able to get licenses here, we were able to work. They use a pin number in order to work. We don't get any Social Security. We have to save up for the future. We have to it just makes everything harder, and, you know, it's kind of like successes as the bird cages. It's still a cage. So we can't leave and visit home. All of our family is home in Tijuana.

With the instability of national policy pertaining to DACA students there is uncertainty for these students, how they might pay for their education, or their resident status, moving through development education. Despite these hardships, these barriers,

and the uncertainty- many DREAMers continue to persist. This innate quality of persistence is illustrated by Robert when he stated the following:

So then there is always something that we're scared of as DREAMers 'cause our parents are still not safe to be in this country to work or, like, if for some reason they get stopped by the police for, like, a simple infraction like speeding or something, I'm always scared that they're gonna get stopped and they're gonna get a racist cop and they're gonna call IS and they're gonna be gone out of this country. Despite all of this with my AA I'm going on to a university. I am pursuing the nursing career, and so once I'm done here with my AA, I'm going to go on to a university.

Chapter Summary

What we have observed about the student who is first generation and participates in developmental course work is that they have a litany of circumstance that sometimes makes their participation very difficult. It appears that for the longest time as the stewards who serve these students, we have found that our practice is often not compatible to these circumstances. Moving forward what we might consider is aligning our practice with purpose – purpose, meaning listening to the voice of the student, and practice meaning integrating the student needs into policy, program development, and pedagogies for learning, similar to the mother who advised her son that he must work hard because nothing will be given. Practitioners too must work hard if they are to realize goals that lead to access, persistence and completion.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this qualitative ISS research was to explore the experiences of first generation students, who had completed at least one successful class in developmental education. As a practitioner in the field of student services my belief is that it is important to hear the voice of each student as it pertains to how policy and practice is experienced in their learning environment. This chapter discusses the observations of the study as they relate to the literature review. It also discusses suggestions for practice, identifies study limitations, and provides recommendations for future research.

Summary and Discussion

This section focuses on study findings related to the two research questions and the relevant literature. The two research questions were: *How does developmental education courses work impact student efficacy to academic success?* and *What are student perceptions of developmental programs and their sufficiency in preparing the student for academic success?*

Research Question 1 acknowledged the reality of the student's perception of participation with developmental/remedial courses and attempt to identify how the student has achieved success or failure.

Research Question 2 sought to ascertain what formulas of services are best offered for students within developmental/remedial programs. The result of this inquiry may indicate patterns or relationships among the challenges that can be used by program staff.

These questions also sought to understand the relationship between institutional strategies and the student perspective. The results of these questions may identify best practice models that can be shared by state, regional and national communities of practice.

Most of the data found in the study and the emerging themes were consistent with the research and the effectiveness of developmental education programs and their purpose to serve first generation, disadvantaged students. This study was conducted with students who had successfully completed at least one developmental class and were able to share their personal experience and sense of belonging in their educational environment by adjusting to a new school, systems, and people. From this study four themes emerged:

- **Self-Efficacy.** The student's view of their ability to produce a desired or intended results by way of their participation in an academic setting at their community college. This would include their perception of their standing as a first year, first generation college student.
- **College Readiness.** The students' perception of their knowledge, skill, and attributes that they (the student) should poses to be ready to succeed in entry level college courses.
- **Student Need.** The student's self-identification of needs through the gathering, reviewing and assessing information needed to be successful inside and outside of the classroom.

- Future plans. The student's perception of their ability to identify their next steps in an academic setting or future plans for self-sustainability.

Table 3 displays the response summary that served as a guide for triangulating responses.

Table 3

Summary of Responses, and the Subsequent Coding of the Responses

Summary	Responses
Number of Participants	8
Number of questions	7
Number of Total Responses	158
Themes (4)	Responses
Efficacy	45
Readiness	36
Student Needs	45
Future Plans	32

Analysis

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy received 45 responses appeared to be most influential as it pertained to the college experience. External factors such as economic, social, and cultural standing were consistent as all the respondents were low income and were receiving some type of student aid. In most instances this idea of successfully completing a developmental education course appeared to validate the student's reason to move forward with their academic goals, i.e. transfer, and integrate in at their institution. Bandura (1997) notes that self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments. Efficacy beliefs

influence the particular courses of action a person chooses to pursue, the amount of effort that will be expended, perseverance in the face of challenges and failures, resilience, and the ability to cope with the demands associated with the chosen course. A clear majority of students that were interviewed expressed a willingness to make changes in their current situation by way of enrollment in their community college, however a majority of the respondents were not aware that participating in developmental courses would be a part of their higher education experience. In most instances the respondent were seeking change in their current life situation, i.e. under employed, poverty or economic standing. Based on responses, extending their college experience by way of developmental courses appeared to have very little to do with their aspiration for college completion.

Readiness. Readiness received 36 responses and asked, *“In what ways did you feel prepared for the academic challenges of college?”* The majority of the participants relayed that their external experiences had a significant influence in their decision to attend college. i.e., economics (as a way out) cultural nuances, i.e. family situation, single parent, etc. Often the dynamic of family influence served as an asset for students, such as the idea or suggestion that through hard work educational attainment could be realized. In only one instance did a participant respond that his or her high school academic experience prepared them for the rigor of college level coursework. As noted earlier, this student was mentored by his single mother stating *“You never get handed things. You have to work for everything you have. So that's what my mom taught me”* (Robert).

Student need. Student need received 45 responses and at first glance this theme might have been intended to relate to academic need such as, course preparation, however the students interviewed responses directed themselves towards external non cognitive factors, i.e. financial support for child care, transportation, access to resources and their internal ability to persist.

Social integration with like peer groups appeared to be very important to the students as a tool for continued success. Finding a support mechanism such as cohorts, learning communities, staff faculty etc., on a college appeared to be very important for the first year student.

Future plans. Future plans received 32 responses and appeared to be the least robust of all themes. In most instances the student had a general view of what they might want to accomplish in their academic goal, however in most instances, those goals were not well defined. Answers were consistently vague, i.e. transfer, make more money, contribute to the family needs etc.

It was rare that a student might identify long term goals such enrollment in a graduate courses, or attainment of a specific credential, i.e. nursing, business, or advance degree, etc. It could be ascertained that these students were still trying to figure this out. It is important to note that these students were still very early in the academic setting.

Questions for Practice

The idea of establishing services for student success for the first year student is not a new concept. Colleges have made concerted efforts to provide a learning environment

that will make the student feel welcome upon their arrival. Among the many questions asked is:

- Should colleges invest fiscal and human capital to support access, persistence and completion for first generation students?
- Is the cost to benefit ratio effective if it produces an increased outcome of completion? There is no doubt the students in this study had a desire to complete their academic journey. However, countless studies have demonstrated unprecedented numbers that first generation student leave often and much too soon – especially those from low income, under represented communities. The complexities of providing support services for these students extend a wide reach.

Most recently community colleges have embarked on investing into students early on in their higher education experience through the Guided Pathways model where colleges have begun investing on curriculum and instruction and student support models to help the student identify their chosen major or career path early in their higher education experience. Moving forward it will be important for colleges to address student success through an equity lens that touches every nuance of the higher education experience, i.e., how we develop processes to hire staff who develop and teach our students? How we develop learning environment that is inclusive of the needs of our diverse populations and ever changing student populations? These are among a few of challenges colleges and communities face now and will continue in the years ahead.

Implications for Practice

Given today's political and policy landscape, those serving students with significant needs have found themselves doing more with less. For those college staff who serve the most vulnerable (low income, immigrants/undocumented, veterans and unprepared students) many have adopted skill sets that are similar to that of a modern day social worker.

Student development professionals should possess a willingness to help underprepared student by establishing partnerships with internal and external organizations. Both faculty and staff must be skilled in identifying not only academic need, but they must be skilled in their knowledge of resources for students - on and off the community college campus.

Currently, it is not uncommon for social service agencies to reside on the community college campus as to collaborate in the mutual effort of college completion. This change in campus culture must be pervasive if colleges are to be successful in serving all that enter its doors.

Through the recognition of cognitive skill development practitioners will be better positioned to engage with student when addressing issues pertaining to student need, program development and pedagogy in the classroom. The opportunities appear to be without limits as students become further engaged in their learning environment.

As federal, state, and private resources become less abundant community colleges must make difficult choices regarding how they prioritize instruction or program

development. For the student entering higher education via developmental education programs, colleges must create paths that are responsive to the changing demographic. Underprepared students have diverse needs that stand-alone services and classes that historically often do not meet. For the community college administrator effective developmental education is not about academics only; it concerns students' non cognitive and affective needs such as motivation, goal setting, career development, study skills, teamwork, technology literacy and most importantly access to resources. Community college leaders must develop practices that support the action of Diversity Equity and Inclusion that is campus wide as they recruit and hire faculty and staff who will reflect the diversity and needs of the underprepared student.

Limitations of the Study

The purpose of this interpretive social science study was to hear the student's voice and to explore the experiences of the first generation student that had successfully completed a developmental education course in their community college experience. As mentioned previously the data compiled by this research was drawn from face to face interviews, follow up phone calls, and journaling by the researcher. The limitations of the study were anticipated and unanticipated. They are as follows:

- The study was conducted on a community college campus, and it may not be generalized to other colleges who may be of different size, demographic and community make up. For practical purposes this research was conducted

within an urban environment, which by nature may reflect different responses such as responses of a student from a rural campus.

- The study itself was limited to eight student participants. Due to the study size this study cannot be generalized to all first generation students that have participated in developmental education courses. While small, the data compiled provided a snapshot of the experiences of these students, which were appropriate for a this study
- The study only interviewed students who were first generation and had completed a developmental course; therefore there was no comparison group to generate further finding for this populations.
- Through this study, it was learned that the student interview had extremely busy lives too. Finding times to meet was often difficult as their personal and academic schedule sometime necessitated rescheduling meeting times, which might influence their responses negatively or otherwise.

Recommendations for Future Research

- In the future it is recommended that the study be conducted with a wide reach, i.e., several campuses as to gain a comprehensive or broad look at how students articulated their college experience. A replication of this study could add to the literature and impact programing for local or system wide institutions concerned about successful completion of developmental courses for first year students.

- This result of this inquiry may indicate patterns or relationships among the challenges that can be used by program staff. This research sought to understand the relationship between institutional strategies and the student personal perspective. The results of this study may identify best practice models that can be shared by state, regional and national communities of practice.
- The study itself revealed that students that participated in this research strive for student success on many levels, more often than not success was discovered outside of the classroom through non cognitive experiences, i.e. attaining resources such student aid, child care, developing social networks, and transportation needs. A future study could be conducted to examine the value of these experiences and how prevalent this might be in student persistence, completion, and input to program development.

Acknowledgement of Participants

Within my career in higher education much of my work has been working with students by guiding and mentoring them towards their academic success. Likened to the students in this study I too am a first generation student that overcame the stigma and obstacles of participating in developmental course work. For every story heard in this study I too could see, hear, and empathize to their resilience in overcoming barriers. These students' live busy lives and much of their lives are filled with the commonality of survival. Their survival might include having enough gas to get from home to their

campus and back. Their survival also may include who they trust for the care for their child while they are away from home. Their survival includes coping with cultures different from their norm in the classroom or campus.

I am grateful and honored for the opportunity to be a part of these shared stories. My hope is that because of their participation in this study and the process of personal reflection as a participant, they were able to view their situation in a different light which will ultimately provide the change needed for their personal and academic success. It will be important to recognize the tremendous duty of the single parent, or the veteran who sacrificed. I am compelled to honor the student who strives for academic success but yet lives a life of uncertainty regarding his or her citizen status.

I am appreciative of the assistance from the college and staff where these interviews took place. I am also touched by and grateful to the developmental education instructors that facilitated my connection with these students – as one instructor shared, *“these students mean the world to us and to what we do, and helping here gives a hope and validates our work life.”*

Chapter Summary

Through this study we have learned of the profound voice first year student brings to the higher education community by way of developmental education programs. Their participation in this study brought deep and meaningful context to the many needs first year students have, and in many instances what was shared was far different from our perception of measurable outcomes that institutions of higher education often

gravitate to. These students were more pre-occupied with the development of their non-cognitive skills. Succinctly the students interviewed articulated a greater value to their survival in higher education than to the cognitive skills of learning college level math or English

Without question the clear majority of these students well understood that they had academic needs but it is worth mentioning that not one of the students understood why. Not one student articulated the proposition the perhaps because they came from low income, economically disadvantaged environments this might be a common factor that would correlate to their academic status. The commonality that these students shared was survival in order to persist.

In retrospect student definition of student need had very little to do with supplemental student support, tutoring or careers pathways that would correlate to career pathways. Student need was sometimes best found by way of a new friend who happened to share the same circumstance of being economically disadvantaged, single parent or thrust into a college environment where there are no walls of discipline or structure.

By most account the student-participants' perception of academic vision appeared to be limited to the completion of the next class. The classroom language by way of syllabus of understanding learning outcomes could often be perceived as a second language. The paradox to this is that college leaders well know that completion rates for the first year student are and continue to be dismal. In our interviews these students

articulated that either they would move on to a four year institution or they would earn a degree to earn a living because this had to be better than where they came from.

Our questions for practice include how can we as higher education professional instill depth and meaning to the first year experience? Especially for those students who participate in developmental education programs. Given our well documented change in student demographics we might be well served to look into how we respond to program development and how we address student need from a cultural competence perspective. Community colleges have made significant changes by adding administrators whose sole purpose is to address equity and inclusion on the college campus.

In evaluating our implications for practice one might ask, is this enough? Do we as educators hold a shared responsibility to do more as student service or instructional professionals? And if so is it feasible for us seed our work in a social justice frame work? The limitations of this study are only a snapshot of a much larger picture, eight participants give us opportunity to plan for new ways to discover contextual information that may help serve as a best practice for a wider range of participants. The recommendations for further research is to expand our inquiry to examine perhaps rural environments, or develop a comparative study of students who are not developmental education participants. Lastly, it is my belief that we provide acknowledgement for our participants. As practitioners we are bound to the ideal of student success from start to finish for all students, especially those that are deemed underrepresented. The foundational piece that says community college doors are open to all and everyone is

meaningful and consistent to those who gave their time to this study. For these students it is important that they are engaged in this discussion.

Bibliography

- Adelman, C. (1998). The kiss of death? An alternative view of college remediation. *National Crosswalk*, 6(3)
- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2006). *Paying double: Inadequate high schools and Community College Remediation*.
- Alvarez, L. (2008, November 2). *Continuing and education: Combat to college*. The New York Times. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/02/education/edlife/vets.html?_r=1
- American Association of Community Colleges (2008, January). *Community college statistics*. Retrieved June 13, 2008 from <http://www2.aacc.nche.edu/research/index.htm>
- American Association of Community Colleges. (2017). Retrieved from <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/research-trends/fast-facts/>
- American Immigration Council. (2012). *Who and where the Dreamers are*. Revised estimates. Retrieved from <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/who-and-where-dreamers-are-revised-estimates>. Accessed May 14, 2014
- Amey, M. J., Jessup-Anger, E., & Jessup-Anger, J. (2008). Community college governance, what matters and why. *New Directions for Community Colleges*.
- Attewell, P., Lavin, D., Domina, T., & Leavey, T. (2006). New evidence on college remediation. *Journal of Higher Education*, 77(886-924).
- Bahr, P. R. (2007). Double jeopardy: Testing the effects of multiple basic skill deficiencies on successful remediation. *Research in Higher Education*, 48, 695-725.
- Bailey, T., Jeong, D. W., and Cho, S. (2010). Referral, enrollment, and completion in developmental education sequences in community colleges. *Economics of Education Review*, 29(2): 255–270.
- Bailey, T. (2009, February). *Rethinking developmental education in community colleges* (Issue Brief CCRC 40). Retrieved from CCRC Columbia.edu <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?UID=672>

- Bailey, T. R. (2009). Challenge and opportunity: Rethinking the role and function of developmental education in community college. *New Directions for Community Colleges* (145), 11-30. doi:10.1002/cc.352
- Bailey, T. R., Jagers, S. S., & Jenkins, D. (April 2015). *Redesigning America's community colleges, a clear path to student success*: Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Bailey, T. R., & Morest, V. R. (2004). *The Organizational efficiency of multiple missions for community colleges*. New York, Community College Research Center, Teacher College, Columbia University.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: Freeman.
- Bean, J. (1983). The application of a model of turnover in work organizations to the student attrition process. *The Review of Higher Education*.
- Bettinger, E., & Long, B. (2005). Remediation at the community college: Student participation and outcomes. *New Directions for Community Colleges* (129), 17-26. doi:10.1002/cc.182
- Bowen, W., Kurzweill, M., & Tobin, E. (2005). *Equity and excellence in American higher education*. University of Virginia Press.
- Breneman, D., & Haarlow, W. (1998). *Remedial education: Cost and consequences*. Paper presented at the Remediation in Higher Education: A Symposium, Washington, DC.
- Brown, R., & Niemi, D. (2007). *Investigating the alignment of high school and community college assessments in California*. San Jose, CA: The National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education
- Bryde, J. F., & Milburn, C. M. (1990). Helping to make the transition from high school to college. In R. L. Emans (Ed.), *Understanding undergraduate education* (pp. 203-213). Vermillion, SD: University of South Dakota Press.
- Capps, R., Fix, M. E., Ost, J., Reardon-Anderson, J., & Passel, J. S. (2005). *The health and wellbeing of young children of immigrants*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

- Casazza, M. E., & Silverman, S. L. (1996). *Learning Assistance and Developmental Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Chen, X. (2005). *First-generation students in postsecondary education: A look at their college transcripts*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Chickering, A. (1969). *Seven vectors*. Retrieved from <http://www.cabrini.edu/communications/ProfDev/cardevChickering.html>
- Clark, M. C. & Caffarella, R. S. (1999). *Theorizing adult development*. Retrieved September 24, 2006, from <http://www.ncsall.net/?id=268>
- Clowes, D. A. (1980). Remediation in American higher education. In J. Smart (Ed.) *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 8, pp. 460-493). New York: Agathon Press.
- Cohen, A. F. (1996). *Projecting the future of community colleges. ERIC digest*. Retrieved March 4, 2009, from <http://www.ericdigests.org/1996-2/future.html>
- College Board. (2007). *College bound seniors: Total group profile report*. Princeton, NJ: The College Board community college remediation.
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement. (2009). *Making connections, dimensions of student engagement* (Annual Report). Retrieved from [www.ccsse.org: http://www.ccsse.org/publications/nationalreport2009/CCSSE09_nationalreport.pdf](http://www.ccsse.org/publications/nationalreport2009/CCSSE09_nationalreport.pdf)
- Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Dannefer, D. (1996). Commentary. *Human Development*. 39, 150-152. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Dilthey, W., (1972). *Die geistige welt: Einleitung in die geisteswissenschaften*. Printed in Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht
- DiRamio, D., Ackerman, R., & Mitchell, R. L. (2008). From combat to campus: Voices of student-veterans. *NASPA Journal*, 45(1), 73-102.

- E-How. (n.d.). *About the new Pell grant legislation*. Retrieved from http://www.ehow.com/about_4596101_new-pell-grant-legislation.html
- Fry, R. (2009). *College enrollment hits all time high fueled by community college surge*. Retrieved from Social and Demographic Trends, Pew Research Center <http://pewsocialtrends.org/pubs/747/college-enrollment-hits-all-time-high-fueled-by-community-college-surge>.
- Fulgini, A. (1997). The academic achievement of adolescents from immigrant families: The roles of family background, attitudes, and behavior. *Child Development, 69*, 351–363.
- Gabelnick, F., MacGregor, J., Matthews, R. S., & Smith, B. L. (1990). *Learning communities creating connections among students, faculty and disciplines*. San Francisco, Jossey Bass
- Gardiner, H. W. & Kosmizki, C. (2005). *Lives across cultures: Cross-cultural human development*. Pearson
- Gardner, J. N., & Siegel, M. J. (2001). Focusing on the first-year student. *Priorities, 17*, 1-17
- Gordon, K. (1985). The self-concept and motivational patterns of resilient African American high school students. *Journal of Black Psychology, 21*, 239-255.
- Green, K. C. (2010). *Still doing more with less, community colleges continue to confront rising enrollments and eroding budgets*. Community Colleges and the Economic Downturn, winter 2010 Survey of community College Presidents, The Campus Computing Project
- Grubb, W. N. (1999). *Honored but Invisible: An inside look at teaching in community colleges*. New York and London: Routledge
- Guess, A. (2008). A ‘penalty’ for starting at a community college? *Inside Higher Education*. Retrieved October 1, 2008, from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/10/01/pathway>
- Hassel, H., & Giordano, J. B. (2015). The blurry borders of college writing: Remediation and the assessment of student readiness. *College English, 78*(1): 56–80.

- Horn, L., & Nunez, A. (2000). *Mapping the road to college: First-generation students' math track, planning strategies, and context of support*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Hughes, K. L., & Scott-Clayton, J. (2011). Assessing developmental assessment in community colleges. *Community College Review*, 39(4): 327–351.
- Institute for Women's Policy Research. (2017a). Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS: 00, NPSAS: 04, NPSAS: 08, NPSAS: 12) and the Integrated Postsecondary Aid Survey (IPEDS) 1999-2012. Retrieved from <https://iwpr.org/>
- Institute for Women's Policy Research. (2017b). Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2011–12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12). Retrieved from <https://iwpr.org/>
- Jenkins, D., & Boswell, K. (2002). *State policies on community college remedial education: Findings from a national survey*. New York, NY: Education Commission of the States (ECS), Center for Community College Policy.
- Kao, G., & Tienda, M. (1995). Optimism and achievement: The educational performance of immigrant youth. *Social Science Quarterly*, 76, 1–19.
- Karp, M. M., & Hughes, K. L. (2008). Supporting college transitions through collaborative programming: A conceptual model for guiding policy. *Teachers College Record*, 110(4), 838-866.
- Kerr, C., & Gade, M. L. (1989). *The guardians: Boards of trustees and American colleges and universities*. Washington, DC: Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
- Kim, S. H. (2007 August 24). *Max Weber*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/weber/>. Retrieved 17 February 2010.
- Kincheloe, J. L., & McLaren, P. L. (1994). Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 138-157). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

- Kirst, M. (2007, winter). Who needs it? Identifying the proportion of students who require postsecondary remedial education is virtually impossible. *National Crosstalk*. Retrieved September 10, 2007, from <http://highereducation.org/crosstalk/et0107/voices0107-kirst.shtml>
- Kurlaender, M., & Howell, J. S. (2012). *Collegiate remediation: A review of the causes and consequences*. New York: College Board Advocacy & Policy Center. Retrieved February 3, 2014, from <https://research.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/publications/2014/9/collegiate-remediation-review-causes-consequences.pdf>.
- Landale, N. S., & Oropesa, R. S. (1995). *Immigrant children and the children of immigrants: Interand intra-ethnic group differences in the United States* (Population Research Group PRG Research Paper No. 95-2). East Lansing: Michigan State University.
- Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2002). *Qualitative communication research methods*, (2nd ed.).
- Long, B. T. (2005). The remediation debate: Are we serving the needs of underprepared college students? *National Crosstalk*, 13(4). Retrieved from <http://www.highereducation.org/crosstalk/ct0405/voices0405-long.shtml>
- Macionis, J. J. & Gerber, L. (2011). *Sociology*, (7th ed.). Toronto, ON: Pearson Canada Inc. pp. 32–33.
- McBain, L. (2008), American Association of State Colleges and Universities Summer. When Johnny or Janelle comes marching home: National, state and institutional efforts in support of veterans' education. *Perspectives*, Summer 2008
- Minkler, J. E. (2002) Learning communities in the community college. *Community College Review*, 3(3), 46-63.
- Myers, M. D. (1997). Qualitative research in information systems, *MIS Quarterly* 21(2), 241-242.
- National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. (2017). Retrieved <http://www.nasfaa.org/news item/1899/Deferred Action for Dreamers>
- National Center for Educational Statistics. (2017), IPEDS Fall 2015 Enrollment Survey (AACC analysis). Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds>

- Newmann, F. (1992) *Student engagement and achievement in American secondary schools*. Teachers College Press (2–3).
- Neuman, W. L. (2003). *Social research methods* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Noel, L., Levitz, R., & Saluri, D. (1985). *Increasing student retention: Effective programs and practices for reducing dropout rate*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Nora A. C., Castaneda, F., & Hangster, D. (1992). The convergence between two theories of college persistence. *Journal of Higher Education*, 63, 143-164. doi: Retrieved from
- Nora, A. (1990). Campus based aid programs as determinants of retention among Hispanic community college students. *Journal of Higher Education*, 61, 312-330.
- Nunez, A. & Cuccaro-Alamin, S. (1998). *First-generation students: Undergraduates whose parents never enrolled in postsecondary education*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- O'Shaughnessy, L. (2011 October 11). Latest trends in college admissions: 15 things you should know. *CBS News*. Retrieved from http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505145_162-37246967/latest-trends-in-college-admissions-15-things-you-should-know/
- Oudenhoven, B. (2002). Remediation at the community college: Pressing issues, uncertain solutions. *New Directions for Community Colleges* (117), 35.oi:10.1002/cc.51
- Phillippe, A. K., Patton, M. (2000). *National profile of community colleges: Trends and statistics* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Community College Press, American Association of Community Colleges
- Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (2001). *Legacies: The story of the second generation*. Berkeley: University of California Press
- Radford, A. W., & Wun, J. (2009). *Issue tables: A profile of military service members and veterans in higher education*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

- Rudolph, F. (1990). *The American college and university: A history*. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press.
- Schlossberg, N. K. (1989.) Marginality and mattering: Key issues in building community. In D.C. Roberts (Ed.), *Designing campus activities to foster a sense of community*. New Directions for Student Services, No. 48 pp. 5-15, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco
- Schwandt, T. A. (1994). Constructivist, interpretive approaches to human inquiry. In K.K. Demzom & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 118-137) Newberry Park, CA: Sage
- Shaffer, D. L. (2005). *Social and personality development* (5th ed). Belmont, CA: Speeches/Conference Papers (150), presented at the Fall Conference of Maryland College.
- Skomsvold, P. (2014). *Profile of undergraduate students: 2011–12* (NCES 2015-167). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
- Sparks, S. (2013). Many Students Don't Need Remediation, Studies Say. *Education Week*. Retrieved November, 2013
- St. John, E. P. (2003) *Refinancing the college dream: Access, equal opportunity, and justice for taxpayers*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press
- Stake, R. E. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Strong American Schools. (2008). *Diploma to nowhere*. Washington DC Author. Retrieved October 8, 2008 from [http:// www:edin08.com](http://www.edin08.com)
- Suárez-Orozco, C., & Suárez-Orozco, M. (1995). *Transformations: Immigration, family life, and achievement motivation among Latino adolescents*. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press
- Tierney, W. G., & Garcia, L. D. (2008). "Preparing underprepared students for college: Remedial education and early assessment programs." *Journal of At-Risk Issues*, 14(2), 1-7.
- Tinto, V. (1975). Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Educational Research* 45, pp.89-125.

- Tinto, V. (1987, November). The principles of effective retention. Viewpoints (120) – Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.
- Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes of student attrition*, (2nd ed.) Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Tinto, V. (1999). Taking retention seriously: Rethinking the first year of college. *NACADA Journal*, 19(2), 5-9.
- Tinto, V. (2008, June 9). Access without support is not opportunity. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from <http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2008/06/09/tinto>
- Washington State Board for Community Technical Colleges. (2011). Role of Pre College (Developmental and Remedial) Education for Recent Public High School Graduates Who Enroll in Washington Community and Technical Colleges within Three Years of Graduation, System Summary for the New, First-time Students Enrolled in 2009-2010
- Wheatley, M. J. (2006). *Leadership and the New Science, discovering order in a chaotic world*. Barrett Koehler, San Francisco, CA.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2003). *Profile of the foreign-born population in the United States*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). *Remedial Course Taking at U.S. Public 2-Year and 4-Year Institutions: Scope, Experience, and Outcomes*. (NCES 2016-405), September 2016.
- Warburton, E. C., Bugarin, R., & Nunez, A. (2001). *Bridging the gap: Academic preparation and postsecondary success of first-generation students*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Weber, M., (1897). “Objectivity” in social science. Edited by Wolf Heydebrand, published in 1994.
- Werner, E. E. (1994). Overcoming the odds. *Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*. 15(2) 131-136.
- Wheatley, M. J. (2006). *Leadership and the New Science, discovering order in a chaotic world*. Barrett Koehler, San Francisco, CA.

Yin, R. K. (1993). *Applications of case study research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Zusman, A. (1999). *Issues facing higher education in the twenty-first century*.
Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

Research Questions

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. This survey is a designed to hear the student voice. Its purpose is to gain insight on how you the student feel after one year in college. Your comments are confidential and you will not be identified in any way.

Research Questions

1. After completing one year in college what have you learned about yourself as a learner?
2. In what ways did you feel prepared for the academic challenges of college?
3. What was the most difficult issue(s) you faced in your first year at college and why?
4. What/who has helped you the most in your success as student while at college and how?
5. Can you identify any barriers, if any, that have made your college experience difficult?
6. What are your current post-college plans?