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THE INDIVIDUAL AND SHARED MEANINGS STUDENTS MAKE OF THEIR
DIVERSE INTERACTIONS WITH AFRICAN AMERICAN FACULTY:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

A Dissertation Presented

by

KATHLEEN MARIE NEVILLE

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies,
University of Massachusetts Boston,
in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

June 2011

Higher Education Administration Program

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ABSTRACT

THE INDIVIDUAL AND SHARED MEANINGS STUDENTS MAKE OF THEIR DIVERSE INTERACTIONS WITH AFRICAN AMERICAN FACULTY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

June 2011

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Critics contend college graduates are not prepared to work in a global society. In response, higher education leaders identify the need to transform curriculum and teaching techniques (Bikson & Law, 1994). African American faculty are more likely than their White colleagues to employ teaching strategies that introduce students to diversity coursework and expose them to knowledge about race and ethnicity in the classroom, which positively affects students' openness to diversity (Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1996) and prepares them to work in a global society. This qualitative study, grounded in phenomenological methodology, used ethnic (Phinney, 1996) and White (Helms, 1990) identity development theory to understand how students

experienced and made meaning from their interactions with African American faculty within the context of the classroom. Data collection consisted of 15 classroom observations and in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 22 student participants representing different races and ethnicities. This study occurred at a comprehensive public university in the Northeast. Data included classroom observations and interviews with students. Data were analyzed to determine “what” and “how” students experience their interactions with faculty, and how their perceptions of faculty related to their own racial and ethnic identity development.

Four themes illustrate the ways racial or ethnic identity development influence student-African American faculty interactions. Students at different levels of identity development perceived the faculty and experienced their interactions with the faculty, differently. Most students felt faculty treated them with respect, genuinely cared about them, and displayed a commitment to their success. Students felt faculty created a learning environment that made them feel important in the educational process. Students also indicated their interactions with African American faculty provided them the opportunity to examine or re-examine their beliefs, values and perspectives. Some students also however displayed challenging or disrespectful behavior in the classroom. White students were the most overt and blatant in their behavior. Implications for institutional policy and practice, to create engaging educational environments for students, and create supportive environments for African American faculty, and their colleagues of color, are offered.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my father and superhero

Leo Robert “Bob” Neville, PhD

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“It takes a village to raise a doctoral candidate”

- University of Massachusetts Boston, Higher Education Administration,
Cohort 2005

When I entered the doctoral program I knew it would be a life-changing endeavor. I did not realize however how much this process would impact others around me. I am forever grateful to my various support systems for their encouragement and belief in me.

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My parents instilled in me a belief that I can achieve anything - Thank you Janet and Bob for your love and dedication to my growth as a person. I also want to thank my sisters, Sheila and Maureen, for providing me the opportunity to remain focused on the most important aspects of life. I cherish their children Bennet, Cooper, Perry and Celia.

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As I begin the new chapter in my professional and personal life I look forward to spending more time with my family and dear friends. I also look forward to continuing my contributions to the study of higher education.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

One of the most critical issues facing higher education is preparing students of all races and ethnicities to live and work in an increasingly diverse society. By the middle of this century, it is estimated people of color will make up more than half of the United States population (Cole & Barber, 2003). Although our nation is on the verge of becoming a truly diverse society, there is a disturbing trend of increased segregation within our nation's neighborhoods and schools (Orfield, 2001; Orfield, Bachmeier, James, & Eitle, 1997) .

Orfield and Lee (2007) argue, due to recent U.S. Supreme Court desegregation decisions, "Nearly 40 years after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we have now lost almost all the progress made in the decades after his death in desegregating our schools" (p. 11). As our nation's children grow up in communities defined by racial, ethnic, and economic disparities, White students remain the most educationally and geographically isolated of all racial groups (Orfield & Lee, 2007). For example, in 2005-2006, White children represented 57% of the nation's students in primary and secondary education. However, on average they attended schools with a 77% White enrollment (Orfield & Lee, 2007). Thus, the majority of White students are educated in

overwhelmingly White schools with more financial resources and little or no contact with African American or Hispanic students or teachers (Minatoya & Sedlacek, 1984; Orfield, 2001; Orfield & Lee, 2007).

Meanwhile, despite African American and Hispanic students comprising 37% of the total school enrollment, these children attended schools where more than half of their classmates were African American (52%) or Hispanic (55%) (Orfield & Lee, 2007). On a national average, 73% of African American children and 78% of Hispanic children are likely to attend predominantly minority schools (less than 50% white). Furthermore, 39% of our nation's Hispanic children are in intensely segregated schools (greater than 90% minority). In addition, based on residential patterns, Asians are the most integrated racial group; yet, on average, Asian American children, (representing 5% of the total student enrollment) attend schools that are 24% Asian (Orfield & Lee, 2007).

The segregation of children in public schools is associated with inequality in educational resources leading to considerable disparities in college attainment across racial groups (Kelly, 2005; A. Teranishi, Allen, & Solorzano, 2004). The gap in educational attainment between White students and their Hispanic, African American, and Native American peers is growing larger (Kelly, 2005). In fact, Teranishi, Allen, and Solórzano (2004) found that educational inequalities within public high schools significantly influence the rates at which students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds are accepted into different sectors of public higher education in the state of California. Teranishi and Parker (in press) further determined that African American and Hispanic students attending predominantly African American or Hispanic high schools in

California are significantly less likely than their White peers to enroll in the prestigious University of California system, as well as the most selective individual UC campuses. Thus, educational inequalities at the elementary and secondary levels replicated within higher education leads to a continuous societal division, perpetuating inherent inequalities within our nation defined by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (Orfield, et al., 1997).

Even though society is becoming more pluralistic, the consequences of persistent segregation and societal division is influencing a new generation whom, as a result, lack the ability to engage in complex problem solving and critical thinking, which requires informed, ethical decision making that incorporates a diversity of perspectives (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002). This downward trend of racial isolation as indicated by segregation research is likely to continue if young college students of all races and ethnicities are not afforded the opportunity to interact with other diverse people, ideas, and information that serve to challenge their thinking and formation of personal values. Schofield (2001) indicates that desegregation helps break the cycle of racial isolation in which individuals from all racial groups avoid one another in spite of the fact that segregation limits occupational, social, and residential opportunities. Therefore, the college environment should provide a critical opportunity to challenge students' perceptions, values, and beliefs related to race, if our nation intends to fully address and counteract the adverse effects of racial segregation and prepare students to live as citizens within a pluralistic democracy and work within a global economy.

Problem Statement

Institutions of higher education have a unique responsibility to provide opportunities for interaction and engagement among diverse groups of students (Milem, 2003). Critics from outside the academy are questioning whether colleges and universities are meeting the goal of developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to live and work in an increasingly diverse and global society. A report by the Rand Corporation (Bikson & Law, 1994), for instance, found that officials from 16 multinational corporations believe higher education is not sufficiently producing college graduates with the ability to work effectively in groups with colleagues from diverse backgrounds. Critics further contend college students are not achieving a level of cross-cultural competence in communication and cooperation necessary to be successful in a global economy (Bikson & Law, 1994). These criticisms are supported by the Spellings Report (U.S. Department of Education, 2006a), which posits new college graduates are unprepared for today's work environment due to a lack of critical thinking and problem solving skills.

In response to the criticism, representatives from 16 public and private institutions of higher education indicate that improving student performance in these areas will require changes in curriculum, course design, teaching techniques, and assessment (Bikson & Law, 1994). Recommended changes put forth in the Rand Report (Bikson & Law, 1994) include; making better use of the cultural diversity within the student body and communities to encourage global awareness and cross-cultural competence and providing faculty with incentives to create or adapt courses to address globalism. The

implementation of such overarching changes is critical, as student involvement in diversity related coursework and exposure to knowledge about race and ethnicity in the classroom has proven to positively affect students' openness to diversity (Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1996; Springer, Palmer, Terenzini, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996). More specifically, students engaged in a diversity-related course develop the ability to get along with peers of a different race/ethnicity, reduce their levels of prejudice (Chang, 2001), and develop moral reasoning skills (Hurtado, Mayhew, & Engberg, 2003). When students' pre-conceived attitudes, beliefs, and opinions are challenged, their views regarding social issues are broadened and it is likely their behavior will change as well. Therefore, the necessary changes in curriculum, course design, and teaching techniques must begin with faculty (Bikson & Law, 1994). White faculty, however, are far less likely than their colleagues of color to incorporate an inclusive curriculum or utilize a wide range of pedagogical techniques in the classroom environment (Hurtado, 2001; Milem, 1999; Umbach, 2006).

The diversification of faculty creates rich opportunities for students to engage with diverse ideas, information, and interactions (Milem, 2003; Smith, 1989), which contribute to preparing students to live and work within a pluralistic society (Hurtado, 2001; Smith, 1989; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000; Umbach, 2006). African American and other faculty of color are more likely than their White colleagues to utilize active teaching methods (Milem, 1999; Umbach, 2006), conduct research on topics related to race, teach diversity related coursework (Milem, 1999), and place importance on the affective, moral, and civic development of students (Antonio, 2002). In fact, Umbach

(2006) indicates that faculty of color are more likely than their White colleagues to interact with students in and out of the classroom. What is yet to be fully understood, however, is how the attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions of students are influenced by the teaching strategies, research interests, and interactions with faculty of color.

The hiring and promotion of African American and other faculty of color could significantly influence the needed changes in curriculum, course design, teaching techniques, and assessment in order to fully prepare students to live and work in a democratic and pluralistic society (Umbach, 2006). Currently, faculty of color remain inadequately represented within higher education as they comprise just 15.2% of the full-time tenured and tenure track faculty in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Education, 2006b). More specifically, African American faculty represent 4.7% of all faculty of color in full-time tenured and tenure track positions. As much of the current professoriate, first hired in the 1960s, prepares to retire, there is an opportunity for profound changes within higher education.

As institutions of higher education attempt to diversify the faculty, in part, to more closely represent changing national and college student demographics, students will have more opportunity to interact with African American faculty within the classroom (McGowan, 2000). This student-faculty interaction provides students of all races and ethnicities the opportunity to engage with a person of color that may serve as a powerful influence in their cognitive and social development. The dynamic inherent within this student-faculty interaction may influence students' ability to problem solve utilizing a diversity of perspectives, become more open to racial/cultural understanding, develop the

cross-cultural communication and cooperation skills necessary to live within our diverse society, break down racial segregations, and be successful in the global marketplace.

Therefore, the problem this study addresses is the need to understand the ways in which faculty of color, particularly African American faculty, influence the process for students to examine their personal beliefs, values, and attitudes in an effort to prepare them to live and work in the 21st century. This may enable institutions of higher education to better prepare our next generation to address the issues of racial, ethnic, and economic disparities that plague our nation.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of my qualitative study was to explore and understand how students of all races and ethnicities find meaning (Maxwell, 2005; Patton, 2002) in their interactions with African American faculty. Grounded in the social constructivist paradigm (Creswell, 2007), this study describes the meaning students made and shared from, their “lived experience” of interacting with African American faculty (Patton, 2002, p. 57) in the context of the classroom environment. Through describing their interactions with African American faculty, students’ shared their descriptions and perceptions of this phenomenon (Patton, 2002). Ultimately, understanding students’ perceptions and meanings gained from their interracial, or in the case of African American students’ their intra-racial, interactions with African American faculty allows us to understand how their interactions with African American faculty influences their educational experience.

The approach of phenomenological research was used in order to develop a complete description of the “essence” of student’s interactions with African American faculty (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). The interactions students have with African American faculty were selected as the phenomenon of interest for several reasons. First, African American faculty represent the second largest proportion (32%) of underrepresented, full-time, tenure or tenure track faculty within higher education (U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Second, although Asian Americans comprise the largest percentage (47%) of faculty of color (U.S. Department of Education, 2006), as a group, they are less likely than their African American and Latino/a colleagues to conduct research on issues of race, utilize active teaching methods, and incorporate class readings on issues of race/ethnicity (Milem, 1999). Third, as a significant proportion of faculty of color, African American faculty are more likely than their white colleagues to conduct research on race/ethnicity (Milem, 1999), utilize active and collaborative learning techniques (Milem, 1999; Umbach, 2006), engage students in diversity related activities, and interact with students (Umbach, 2006). For the purposes of this study, an eligible student-faculty interaction involved an African American faculty member who was a tenured or tenure track Instructor, Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor.

In addition, due to the perpetual nature of segregation influencing the perceptions, values, beliefs, and attitudes of all students, regardless of race or ethnicity, in this study, I sought to understand how students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds found meaning in their interactions with African American faculty. More specifically, the student participants in this study self-identified as African American, bi-racial, Hispanic,

and White. This study describes “what” students experienced as they interacted with African American faculty; “how” they experienced their interactions with African American faculty; and “how” these experiences influenced the examination or re-examination of preconceived values, beliefs, and perspectives (Moustakas, 1994).

My study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- How do students experience and make meaning of their interactions with African American faculty?
- In what ways, if any, do students perceive their interactions with African American faculty influence the examination or re-examination of their own personal values, beliefs, and perspectives?

Significance of Study

Inquiring about the student experience as they interact with African American faculty is a significant area of study for numerous reasons. First, this research makes a considerable contribution to the literature regarding the educational benefits of diversity. Research has shown students greatly benefit from their diverse interactions with peers (Gurin, et al., 2002; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1999), however student interactions with faculty of color, and the meaning made from those experiences has not yet been explored. Specifically, my study contributes to research by seeking to understand how, if at all, students’ perceive their interactions with African American faculty influence the examination, or re-examination, of their personal values, beliefs, and attitudes. My study also examines how students’ make meaning from their

experience of interacting with African American faculty which provides additional evidence regarding the educational benefits students' gain from their diverse interactions.

Second, my study makes a significant contribution to the literature concerning the contributions of faculty of color, and African American faculty in particular, to student development. Faculty of color are more likely than their White colleagues to use active teaching methods (Milem, 1999; Umbach, 2006), create an inclusive curriculum, conduct research on issues of race (Milem, 1999), and place importance on the development of students (Antonio, 2002) however, we do not yet know how students perceive and make meaning from their interactions with these faculty members. In other words, the literature describes what, faculty of color as a group, do to contribute to the mission of research, teaching and service within higher education, but research has yet to explore how or what students learn from their experiences and interactions with these faculty members. My study addresses this gap in the literature, which will inform policy and practice.

Third, African American faculty, and other faculty of color, experience significant push back and challenge from students representing different racial groups. White students more readily challenge the authority of African American faculty, show a low level of respect, and report their concerns or critiques to the professor or his or her superior (McGowan, 2000). Research further suggests White students can be especially challenged when engaged in classroom instruction, or course curriculum, that may test their preconceived notions and values (Collier & Powell, 1990; Jackson & Crawley, 2003). African American students are also reported to display disrespectful and aggressive behavior, seemingly caused by unmet expectations of favoritism in the

classroom (Hendrix, 2007). Understanding the perceptions and meaning students make from their interactions with African American faculty, assists faculty members prepare a course curriculum, develop learning activities, and create an inclusive classroom atmosphere that will engage students of all races and ethnicities in a safe and supportive educational environment. Ultimately, creating such an environment may encourage students to develop into citizens prepared to live and work in a diverse and integrated society.

Fourth, this research provides empirical confirmation that it is not uncommon for students, who are challenged in their thinking and values, to experience a wide range of behaviors in or outside of the classroom (Pope & Joseph, 1997). This study explores why students exhibit inappropriate or negative behavior in the classroom, which will assist faculty, as they encourage students to reflect upon their learning, decision-making, and actions.

Fifth, as institutions strive to create inclusive learning environments and increase the compositional diversity of the campus community this research is quite useful in determining issues most central to addressing student, faculty and staff needs. As administrators attempt to develop initiatives and curriculum in order to meet the missions of research, teaching, and service, understanding the experiences and meaning students associate from their interactions with African American faculty will assist in the alignment of resources and setting of priorities related to creating a campus environment that encourages students to interact with diverse ideas, information, faculty and staff.

Sixth, students may find this research quite useful in understanding their experiences and feelings as they interact with African American faculty, both inside and outside of the formal classroom environment. It is important for students to assess and analyze their reactions when interacting with a faculty member who is a person of color. Some students may react by retreating into the polarizing stereotypes of African Americans while others may ultimately develop a sense of cultural awareness and racial understanding (Minatoya & Sedlacek, 1984). A student who is willing however, to objectively examine whether or not s/he is reacting or interacting differently to a faculty member, due to the faculty members' race, may be more likely to experience a greater overall sense of personal development.

Finally, due to the significance of this study, this research informs the development of policy as it is related to educating, challenging, and supporting students. This study informs institutional policy around issues such as tenure and post tenure review, curriculum reform, and assessment of learning objectives. Ultimately, exposure to a desegregated college environment and interactions with a faculty member of color may influence society as students are encouraged to analyze their personal development and prepared to be successful in our diverse society.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter begins with reviews of the relevant research regarding two significant bodies of literature: a) the benefits of diversity in higher education, and b) the influence of faculty-student interactions on the cognitive development of students. The chapter concludes with the conceptual framework of this study.

Research regarding the benefits of diversity will first be examined as it serves as a foundation for this literature review. This body of research primarily focuses on the cognitive and social development individual students acquire through their interaction with their peers, a diverse curriculum, and their participation in diversity related workshops. Although the existing research regarding the individual benefits of diversity has not yet examined the influence of student's interactions with faculty, or more specifically, faculty of color, it provides invaluable insight regarding how students benefit from their diverse interactions. Ultimately, this literature serves as an important resource when determining how students make meaning from their diverse interactions with African American faculty.

The second body of literature presented in this chapter examines research regarding student-faculty interactions. More specifically, the literature illustrates that majority students and students of color may experience different interactions with faculty.

This body of research serves to frame a discussion on the unique contributions African American, and other faculty of color, make to the academy through the implementation of an inclusive curriculum, active learning techniques, and diversity related coursework. The impact of these teaching practices provides the opportunity for students to engage in diverse interactions with peers, ideas, and faculty.

Finally, this chapter concludes with the conceptual framework guiding this study. Phinney's (1996a) model of ethnic identity and Helm's (1990) model of white identity are the lens from which this study examines the complexity of the student-African American faculty interaction and the meaning students make from their experience.

Benefits of Diversity

Research on the educational benefits of diversity is part of a long-term effort to transform undergraduate education to better prepare the next generation of students to live and work within a multicultural society (Hurtado, 2007). Milem and Hakuta (2000) assert "the ability to enroll a diverse student body and to hire a diverse faculty and staff are essential to the mission of colleges and universities across the nation" (p.46). Milem (2003) further posits that supporting diversity in colleges and universities is more than addressing issues of social justice rather it is the promotion of "educational excellence" (p. 126). Thus, the educational benefits of diversity are complex. Racial and ethnic diversity in higher education benefits: a) individual students, b) higher education institutions, c) the economy and private enterprise, and d) society (Milem, 2003).

Individual benefits are the educational experiences and outcomes student's gain from their interaction with diversity on campus. Institutional benefits include the ways diversity allows colleges and universities to achieve their missions, particularly as diversity relates to teaching, research and service. Economic and private-sector benefits are ways in which diversity influences the economy and the functions of business within the private sector. Societal benefits are the ways in which diversity within higher education affects lives, policies, and issues within the greater global and local community (Milem, 2003). The integration of diversity related ideas and initiatives, therefore, positively enhance all aspects of our individual lives and institutional agencies, ultimately preparing our citizens to live and work in the twenty-first century.

Research regarding individual benefits of diversity suggests that increases in the composition of student and faculty racial and ethnic demographics enhance student growth in terms of cognitive, affective, and interpersonal development (Gurin, et al., 2002). As this study explores the individual benefits and educational outcomes student's gain from their interactions with African American faculty, it is first necessary to explore how diversity within the campus community influences the opportunities for students to engage with diverse others, ideas and information. The next section, therefore, discusses the three dimensions of diversity, which influence student's interactions with diverse peers and faculty.

The dimensions of diversity

When engaged within diverse campus communities, students of all races and ethnicities benefit from three dimensions of diversity, which include; structural

/compositional diversity, diverse interactions, and diversity related initiatives (Gurin, 1999; Milem & Hakuta, 2000). First, students benefit from structural/compositional diversity on the college campus as it provides an opportunity for students to engage in interactions with different racial/ethnic groups. Although Gurin (1999) and Milem and Hakuta (2000) include the broadly used term “diverse groups on campus” in their definitions of structural diversity, it is clear that within this definition groups including faculty and staff of color are not considered. Hurtado et al. (1999), however, include faculty of color in their definition of structural diversity and Milem (personal communication, May 29, 2008) has since amended his original definition of structural/compositional diversity to include the representation of diverse groups of faculty and staff. Chang (2003) further argues that structural diversity must include a “critical mass” or significant number of individuals of color in order for students to confront racial stereotypes and increase exposure to differing viewpoints.

Given racial segregation in schools and communities, college may be the first and only place where students have the opportunity to encounter and interact with a person of a different race or ethnicity from themselves (Gurin, 1999; Hurtado, et al., 1999; Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004). Simply having a more equal distribution of students from different racial/ethnic groups, however, does not necessarily create positive conditions or improve the racial climate for all students (Hurtado, 1992).

Gurin, Lehman and Lewis (2007) contend that the benefits of diversity occur when students interact with people different from themselves and explore new viewpoints. Like all other institutional resources however, structural/compositional

diversity must be purposively and properly used to fulfill its potential and students must be engaged in intentionally designed diverse interactions in order for learning and development to occur (Gurin, Dey, Gurin, & Hurtado, 2003). It is therefore during intentional interactions that student attitudes and preconceived beliefs are challenged, creating an opportunity for the student to experience personal growth in a safe learning environment.

Thus, structural diversity can create a rich environment, which can be used as an educational tool to promote students' intellectual and social development. The educational potential of diversity however is not a result of the numerical composition of students from various racial or ethnic groups; rather its value depends upon whether or not institutions intentionally foster an environment which encourages students to engage with others and become involved in diverse interactions and diversity related initiatives (Chang, Denson, Saenz, & Misa, 2005). In fact, in a multi-campus study, Rankin and Reason (2005) determined that students of color perceive the campus climate as more racist and less accepting than their White peers. Findings of Rankin and Reason's study further reveal that students of color experience harassment, as defined as "offensive, hostile, or intimidating behavior that interferes with learning" (p. 43) at a higher rate than White students. Experiences such as these negatively impact students' level and quality of on-campus involvement and learning (Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000; Eimers, 2000; Fleming, 1991; Rankin & Reason, 2005; Schwitzer, Griffin, Ancis, & Thomas, 1999). Furthermore, when the structural diversity of students increases on a college campus, without the implementation of intentional and ongoing discussions about race, students of

color report less overall satisfaction with their college experience (Chang, 1996).

Jayakumar (2008) argues that establishing a welcoming environment for students may be the link that determines whether or not the structural diversity on a college campus leads to positive diverse interactions across race and ethnicity.

The second dimension of diversity, diverse interactions, is defined as, “students’ exchanges with racially and ethnically diverse people as well as ideas, information and experiences” (Milem, 2003, p. 132). These interactions occur informally on campus, as well as within the formal classroom environment. Students’ interactions with their diverse peers are linked to a number of developmental outcomes, including critical thinking (Astin, 1993; Gurin et al., 2002; Hurtado, 2001) and commitment to racial understanding (Astin, 1993). Furthermore, students who engage in cross racial interactions during college are likely to gain a “lasting pluralistic orientation”, even if the student does not continue to socialize with people of other races after college (Jayakumar, 2008).

Finally, diversity related initiatives, are opportunities for students to benefit from their participation in activities such as cultural awareness workshops and ethnic studies courses (Gurin, 1999; Milem & Hakuta, 2000). These types of initiatives provide students the opportunity to become more open to diversity and challenge (Pascarella, et al., 1996) and develop critical thinking and problem solving skills (Smith, 2005; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000).

These three dimensions of diversity; structural/compositional diversity, diverse interactions and diversity related initiatives, are not mutually exclusive (Milem &

Hakuta, 2000), rather, diversity is a process of “engagement across racial and ethnic lines comprised of a broad and varied set of activities and initiatives” (Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005, p. 4). While each of these three dimensions of diversity can produce positive effects on educational outcomes, the impact is strengthened by the existence of all three dimensions (Gurin, 1999; Hurtado, et al., 1999). Therefore, creating intentional spaces, which encourage students to express their opinions and share ideas with diverse others, fosters an environment for learning and engagement to occur. As stated by Gurin, Lehman and Lewis (2007),

(Institutions) have to make college classrooms and informal educational settings authentic public places, where students from different backgrounds can take part in conversations and share experiences that help them develop an understanding of the perspectives of other people (p. 111).

The next two sections of this literature review examine the benefits student’s gain from their conversations, experiences, and diverse interactions with peers and faculty.

Understanding the developmental outcomes students gain from their interactions with peers and faculty serves as a foundation from which to explore the educational benefits students achieve from interacting with faculty of color.

Diverse Interactions with Peers

Astin (1993) states, “the student’s peer group is the single most potent source of influence on growth and development during the undergraduate years” (p. 398). Cross racial interaction among students has been linked to a number of educational outcomes

including greater cognitive development and critical thinking (Astin, 1993; Gurin et al., 2002; Hurtado, 2001), social awareness (Greene & Kamimura, 2003), and commitment to racial understanding (Astin, 1993). This section explores the research regarding the benefits student's gain from their diverse interactions with peers.

Chang (2001) asserts attending college with peers representing different races and ethnicities increases the likelihood students will socialize across racial lines and discuss issues regarding race. In a quantitative study which surveyed over 8,000 first year students, Antonio (2000) found that having friends of another race and being a member of an interracial friendship group has significant and positive effects on students' racial/ethnic attitudes and values. These include openness to various forms of diversity and declines in racial prejudice. Although interracial interactions occur at different rates for different student groups (Cole, 2007), Antonio (2002) determined the percentage of same-race friends is significantly and inversely related to measures of cultural knowledge, interest, and promoting racial understanding for both Whites and students of color. The more students interact with diverse peers, and the more they discuss controversial or value laden issues, the greater their development toward openness to diversity and challenge (Pascarella et al., 1996).

In a quantitative study examining data from more than 19,000 undergraduates at 227 institutions, Chang, Denson, Saenz, & Misa (2006) determined the frequency of cross racial interaction positively correlates to students' knowledge of and ability to accept different races/cultures, growth in general knowledge, critical thinking, and intellectual and social self confidence. In a national, longitudinal study, conducted to

determine the student and institutional conditions necessary for achieving positive cross racial interactions, Saenz, Ngai, and Hurtado (2007) further determined that compared to their peers, African American students may have more positive interactions with those of a different racial/ethnic background on public college campuses. In fact, African American students self-reported the greatest level of positive interactions across race at the end of their second year of college and White students reported the lowest levels. Results of this study also indicated however, that for those African American students who perceived more racial tension on campus, they experienced lower levels of positive interactions with their diverse peers. These results are supported by the study conducted by Chang, et al (2005), which found that a negative campus climate compromises the growth and development of all students.

Smith and Schonfeld (2000) posit the impact of interaction between diverse student groups cannot be underestimated. They argue that diverse interactions increase understanding, and decreases prejudiced attitudes, while also positively affecting academic success and long-term attitudes and behaviors. Thus, it is imperative that institutions create safe and intentional learning environments to encourage students to engage with one another and discuss differing viewpoints. Pascarella, Terenzini and Hibel (1978) further argue that the development of student behavior, attitudes, and learning outcomes is influenced not only by the frequency and quality of student interactions with peers but with their faculty as well.

The next section examines research concerning the influence of student-faculty interactions on student development. The section begins by examining literature, which

illustrates the profound influence all faculty have on student development. It then examines the unique and significant contributions African American and other faculty of color make to the academy which influences students' ability to interact with diverse peers and diverse ideas, both in and outside of the classroom environment.

Interactions with Faculty

This section examines the outcomes associated with students' out-of-class and in-class interactions with faculty. Over six decades of empirical evidence illustrate the positive influence of student-faculty interactions have on the cognitive and social development of students. While the research on student-faculty interactions does not typically disaggregate by race, it offers a broad perspective from which to understand the influential relationship between students, of all races and ethnicities, and faculty of color.

Out-of-classroom interactions

Pascarella's (1980) review and synthesis of more than one-hundred studies conducted between 1943 and 1980 specifically examines student-faculty interactions occurring outside of class and the educational outcomes associated with this interaction. Conclusions drawn from Pascarella's (1980) extensive review of the literature indicates the extent and quality of student-faculty interaction positively influences students' educational aspirations, attitudes toward college, academic achievement, intellectual and personal development, and retention. In addition, Pascarella (1980) concludes the most influential form of student-faculty contact is one that extends the intellectual interests, value issues, or career concerns of students into the out-of-classroom environment.

Limitations of Pascarella's (1980) review include: a) the majority of the studies were conducted at single institutions which do not generally include the assessment of structural or programmatic effects, and b) the uncertain causal direction in the data. In addition, the review did not include a discussion on the influence of race on the student-faculty interaction. Pascarella (1980) cautions that causal linkages are reciprocal and that, "while frequent informal contact with faculty may positively influence students' intellectual interests or educational aspirations, increases in those interests or aspirations may in turn, lead to more frequent informal interaction with faculty" (p. 566). Regardless of these limitations however, Pascarella (1980) concludes the evidence clearly illustrates faculty significantly influence students' cognitive and social development.

Complimenting Pascarella's (1980) extensive review of the literature, Lampert's (1993) examination of the literature concerning informal student-faculty interactions underscore the importance of the role of faculty on the socialization of students in the college experience. In addition to supporting Pascarella's (1980) conclusions, Lampert (1993) contends the faculty member who is willing to extend her or his interaction with students beyond the classroom environment has the potential to make a significant impact on students' lives, and vice versa.

Since 1990, empirical studies have provided additional quantitative evidence regarding the influence of out-of-class student-faculty interaction on student development and degree aspiration (Arredondo, 1995; Astin, 1993). Astin's (1993) national longitudinal study, examined the impact of college on students. According to Astin (1993), college outcomes are a function of three sets of elements; inputs - the

demographic characteristics students bring to college, environment - the full range of people [including faculty] and experiences students encounter in college and outputs - the student characteristics, knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that students gain through their college experience (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Responses from 24,847 first-year students, taken from data generated from three sources, were used in Astin's (1993) study. Data was retrieved from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) follow-up questionnaire, which was administered during 1989-90 to students who originally entered college as first-year students in the fall of 1985. Additional data on each of these students was obtained by the registrars at their institutions and at a number of national testing organizations.

Conclusions drawn from Astin's (1993) seminal research regarding the impact of college on students provide further empirical evidence that the nature and quality of student-faculty interaction significantly and positively enhances academic attainment, career outcomes, self-reported intellectual and affective growth, and attitudinal outcomes such as social activism leadership and commitment to promoting racial understanding. Astin's (1993) study also provides evidence that student-faculty interaction positively correlates to students' behavioral outcomes including a willingness to tutor other students, being elected to a student office, attending recitals or concerts, and participating in campus demonstrations. Findings suggest that the more contact students and faculty have both inside and outside of the classroom, the greater the student development and overall satisfaction with the college experience.

Building upon research conducted by Astin (1993), Arrendondo (1995) further analyzed the national longitudinal data sets used by Astin (1993) to determine the types of student-faculty interactions that positively attribute to higher degree aspirations for students. Findings from Arrendondo's (1995) study determined the amount of contact with faculty, including spending more hours with faculty, being invited to a professor's home, or working on a research project with a faculty member, significantly and positively influenced students decisions to aspire to graduate study.

Contrary, however, to conclusions by Astin (1993), Lamport (1993) and Pascarella (1980), the results of Umbach and Wawrzynski's (2005) study found that faculty out of class interactions with students have little or no relationship with student perceptions of a supportive environment or student perceptions of educational gains. Umbach and Wawrzynski (2005) concluded students do not choose to seek support from faculty. Kuh and Hu (2001), however, determined that year in school makes a difference in the frequency and nature of the student-faculty interaction and out of class contact with faculty has positive effects on student satisfaction, general education, personal development, science and technology and vocational preparation. Thus, it appears we do not yet fully understand the complexity of the student-faculty interaction.

Evidence clearly suggests out-of-class interactions with faculty influences students' cognitive and social development. It is also quite apparent, however, that research has yet to examine the influence of race, on out-of-class student-faculty interactions. The next section examines research regarding the developmental outcomes students' gain as a result of in-class interactions with faculty members. Similarly, this

body of research does not present findings specifically addressing the influence of race on these interactions.

Classroom interactions

According to Umbach and Wawrzynski (2005), faculty attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors play a role in creating an atmosphere that fosters student learning. By conducting an empirical study using spring 2003 data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and a data set, consisting of responses from 14,336 faculty members, from a parallel study, Umbach and Wawrzynski (2005) examined the attitudes and behaviors of faculty at institutions throughout the United States.

More specifically, results from Umbach and Wawrzynski's (2005) study determined higher levels of student engagement and learning occurred when faculty members interacted with students, used active and collaborative learning techniques, engaged students in experiences, emphasized higher order cognitive activities in the classroom, challenged students academically and valued enriching educational experiences. Supporting these findings, Cokley's (2000) institutional study determined the quality of the student-faculty interaction significantly and positively influences student's academic motivation and academic self confidence. Furthermore, in a national study utilizing the data from 5,409 randomly selected student respondents of the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) from 1990 to 1997, Kuh & Hu (2001) determined that as students progress through four years of college they report more frequent contact with faculty in and outside of the classroom environment. This contact was also found to have a considerable influence on the amount of effort students

expended on other educationally purposeful activities. Thus, as determined by Umbach and Wawrzynski (2005), faculty create an educational environment within the classroom, which has a dramatic effect on student learning and engagement. These findings also support the conclusions drawn from previously mentioned studies (Arredondo, 1995; Astin, 1993; Pascarella, 1980).

As evidence suggests, faculty significantly influence the cognitive and social development of students. Student - faculty interaction positively enhances academic attainment, self reported intellectual and affective growth, and attitudinal outcomes such as social activism, leadership, and commitment to promoting racial understanding. Careful analysis of the literature, however, reveals that much of the research fails to examine the influence of race on the student–faculty interaction. Failing to examine the impact of race on these interactions leaves a number of unanswered questions regarding the influence of student-faculty interactions on the development of students of color. In other words, how relevant is the prevailing body of literature on student-faculty interactions, which represents the voices and opinions of the “majority” student and “majority” faculty, on the influence of faculty-student interaction once race/ ethnicity is considered?

As the proportion of students of color has increased on college campuses, the faculty population remains predominantly White. Pascarella (1980) indicates that student characteristics such as having similar interests and aspirations of faculty, and establishing a mentor relationship with a faculty member are important qualifications for determining the frequency and quality of contact with faculty. Since students of color often interact

with faculty of a different race or ethnicity than their own, this interracial relationship may have implications for student learning (Allen, 1992; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004). Therefore, the influence of student race on educational outcomes associated with student-faculty interaction has emerged. More specifically, student learning, perceived gains in intellectual development and self-development, and satisfaction with the undergraduate experience have been examined in relation to student race or ethnicity (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Cole, 2007, 2008; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004; Mayo, Murguia, & Padilla, 1995). Faculty demographic information however, typically remains ignored (Cole, 2007). The next section therefore explores these and other studies that examine the experiences of students of color as they interact with majority [White] faculty within the academy.

Student – faculty interaction and students of color

Interaction with faculty is a strong predictor of student learning for all students, regardless of race or ethnicity (Lundberg and Schreiner, 2004). The quality of a students' relationship with faculty significantly predicts learning for multiple racial and ethnic groups (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004; Mayo et al., 1995) and formal contact with faculty in the classroom and the development of a mentoring relationship is likely to positively influence the development of student intellectual self-concept (Cole, 2007; Mayo, et al., 1995; Santos & Reigadas, 2000).

Anaya and Cole (2001) determined frequent interactions with faculty (i.e., talked with professor), especially faculty that are perceived as accessible and supportive, enhance Latino/a student academic achievement. Nettles, Thoeny, and Gosman (1986) determined however, that the quality of the student-faculty interaction, rather than the

frequency of contact, is more important to African American students. Furthermore, Cokley et al., (2006) found the academic performance of African American students is positively impacted by the students' perceptions of faculty being caring and approachable.

Lundberg and Schreiner (2004) further determined that frequent and satisfying relationships with faculty, especially those faculty that encourage hard work, are strong predictors of learning for every racial/ethnic group. The type of relationship or interaction required for learning to occur however varied due to the race and ethnicity of the student. In a national study (n=4,501), examining student responses on the College Student Experiences Questionnaire between 1998 and 2001, Lundberg and Schreiner (2004) found the relationship with faculty was the strongest predictor of learning for Asian/Pacific Islander students, Mexican American students, and Native American students; the second largest predictor of learning for African American, Hispanic, Puerto Rican and multiethnic students; and the third largest predictor for White students. Results of Lundberg and Schreiner's study also found that two other variables, "working harder due to instructor's feedback" and "working to meet faculty expectations" were relevant for every group, however the strength of influence varied substantially by race.

The first of these variables, "working harder for instructor's feedback" was relatively small for White students; however, it was the strongest predictor for Hispanic, Puerto Rican, and African American students. This result is supported by a recent study conducted by Cole (2008), who determined that constructive criticism, described as a

balance of positive and negative critical feedback, significantly influenced the college GPA and educational satisfaction of African American and Hispanic students.

The second variable, in the study conducted by Lundberg and Schreiner (2004), “working to meet faculty expectations” however held the largest weight for White students and predicted learning for every other group except African American and Native American students. Ultimately, Lundberg and Schreiner (2004) caution the conflicting results and differences in perceptions of faculty could be a result of students experiencing differential treatment in the classroom.

Research indicates that White faculty treat students of color and majority students differently within the classroom environment (Suarez-Balcazar, Orellana-Damacela, Portillo, Rowan, & Andrews-Guillen, 2003; Trujillo, 1986). For example, Trujillo (1986) found White faculty reported significantly lower academic expectations of students of color compared to White students. More specifically, through the use of classroom observations and a questionnaire designed to assess the style and frequency of faculty interactions with White students and students of color, results of Trujillo’s (1986) study determined faculty spent significantly more time responding to and elaborating upon questions generated by White students as compared to students of color. In addition, faculty were more likely to ask White students questions that required more complex responses, and they pushed White students to help them improve their responses in class.

Trujillo’s (1986) findings are supported by a study conducted by Suarez-Balcazar et al., (2003), which found that within the class setting, African American students reported being treated differently by their peers and faculty more frequently than other

student groups. Differential treatment in the classroom not only influences students overall satisfaction, learning outcomes, and relationship with faculty (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Ancis, et al., 2000; Chang, et al., 2005; Cokley, et al., 2006; Hernandez, 2000; Kuh & Hu, 2001; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004; Mayo, et al., 1995), but it can lead to feelings of alienation and isolation (Ancis, et al., 2000; Cokley, et al., 2006; Eimers & Pike, 1997; Fries-Britt, 1998; Fries-Britt & Turner, 2001; A. Jackson, Smith, & Hill, 2003; Schwitzer, et al., 1999; Watson, et al., 2002).

Evidence regarding students of color feeling alienated, isolated and discriminated by faculty exists within quantitative (Ancis et al. 2000; Cokley, Rosales et al. 2006; Eimers and Pike, 1997) and qualitative studies (Fries-Britt, 1998; Fries-Britt & Turner, 2001; Jackson, Smith, & Hill, 2003; Schwitzer et al., 1999; Watson et al., 2002).

Although the majority of research examining experiences of students of color emerges from the responses and voices of African American students, evidence suggests other student groups experience differences in perceptions and experiences' with faculty. Even though students of color have significantly higher levels of student-faculty interactions than White students, the experiences of discrimination, microaggressions and isolation negatively affect their academic integration and academic achievement (Eimers & Pike, 1997; Watson et al., 2002)).

Results of an institutional study conducted by Ancis et al. (2000) revealed that African American students experience greater racial hostility; greater pressure to conform to stereotypes, less equitable treatment by faculty and teaching assistants, and more faculty racism than any other student group. Asian American and Latina/o students also

reported experiences of stereotyping and prejudice in the form of limited respect and unfair treatment by faculty, teaching assistants and peers; and pressure to conform to stereotypes. Compared to all other racial/ethnic groups however, Latina/o's reported experiencing the least amount of racism on campus and White students were virtually unaware of the hostile climate impacting their peers.

Additional research utilizing focus groups and interviews explore the complexity of relationships between students of color and faculty as well as seek to understand the student experience within the classroom. Emergent themes of proving ones intellectual ability (Watson et al., 2002), and stereotype threat (Steele, 1997) are prevalent.

According to Steele (1997), stereotypes can negatively influence the intellectual functioning and identity development of students of color. Stereotype threat occurs when students find themselves in an environment in which they have a sense of connection or identity. The threat of a stereotype emerges when the student cares about the environment, situation or relationship in which the stereotype occurs. Therefore stereotype threat within the academic setting such as the formal classroom or during interactions with faculty, can negatively impact the confidence and intellectual development of the student attempting to become fully engaged in his/her personal development.

For example, Native American students have reported experiencing passive and active racism in the classroom (Jackson, Smith and Hill, 2003). Passive racism, described as being ignored or singled out by the professor as the representative of the Native American race or culture, led to feelings of isolation and social pressure. Some students

in the study conducted by Jackson et al., (2003) indicated that active racism occurred during discussions about historic or cultural issues resulting in a feeling of being marginalized and offended during interactions with faculty.

African American students have also reported feeling isolated and express difficulty when initiating interactions with majority faculty. African American students often perceive White faculty to be culturally insensitive (Fleming, 1991), uniformed and inexperienced in relation to African Americans (Schwitzer et al., 1999). Most concerning is the recurring theme that African American students believe that their relationship with faculty is negatively impacted due to feeling that they must continuously prove their intellectual competence in the classroom (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2001; Guiffida, 2005; Schwitzer et al., 1999; Watson et al., 2002).

Racial microaggressions, defined as subtle verbal, nonverbal and/or visual insults directed automatically or unconsciously to individuals of color, (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000) and stereotype threat (Steele, 1997) occurring from faculty, and extending within the classroom environment, illustrate why some students of color experience difficulty connecting with White faculty (Guiffida, 2005). Students of color are often hesitant to approach faculty members with whom they do not identify. Instead, they may want to interact with faculty members who understand their cultural uniqueness, who can empathize with the pressures students of color face on the predominantly white campus (Watson et al. 2002) and who are open and approachable (Cokley, Rosales et al., 2006). For some Native American students, having a personal relationship with caring and welcoming faculty members, who engage students, is essential for their development of

self-confidence (Jackson et al., 2003). Ultimately, many students of color report that they are looking for faculty that are perceived to be “student-centered”, which is defined as exhibiting a high degree of concern for student academic integration, showing support, advocating for students and genuinely caring about a student’s well-being (Cole & Barber, 2003; Guiffrida, 2005; Hernandez, 2000; Jackson, Smith and Hill, 2003; Nettles, Thoeny & Gosman, 1986).

Although the above findings represent an emerging body of literature examining the influence of student race on student-faculty interaction, research fails to examine the influence of a faculty members’ race on the cognitive and social development of students. More specifically, we do not yet fully understand how White students and/or students of color experience their interactions with faculty of color. Failing to examine the influence of faculty race, on the student-faculty interaction, leaves a number of unanswered questions regarding the impact of these interracial, or in the case of African American students and African American faculty, intraracial relationships, on the cognitive and social development of students.

The next section of this literature review seeks to address this shortcoming by exploring the influence of faculty of color on teaching, research and service within the academy. Faculty of color make unique and significant contributions to pedagogy, active learning techniques, research on race and ethnicity, and curriculum within the academy (Antonio, 2002; Milem, 2003; Umbach, 2006), which creates an educational environment that encourages students to interact with new knowledge and new perspectives as they share their learning experiences with diverse peers and faculty members. This next

section concludes with a review of the limited research regarding students (i.e., White students and students of color) perceptions and experiences when interacting with African American faculty. This literature however does not address the developmental outcomes students achieve from these interactions. In fact, much of what we know is shared from the voices, experiences and perceptions of faculty of color as they describe their experiences within the classroom (Benjamin, 1997; Myers, 2002; Vargas, 2002).

Diverse interactions with faculty of color

Smith (2005) posits, “the diversification of faculty... is likely to contribute to what is taught, how it is taught, and what is important to learn, contributions that are vital to the institution” (p. 51). Specifically, faculty of color are more likely than their White colleagues to provide students the opportunity to interact with people different from themselves and explore new viewpoints, creating an environment that fosters a new sense of intellectual diversity (Chang, 2003; Gurin, et al., 2007; Saenz, Ngai, & Hurtado, 2007).

According to Antonio (2002), researchers examine faculty of color as a group to compare a relatively small but significant proportion of the professoriate with the majority faculty population. Recognizing that grouping the responses of these various racial/ethnic groups’ together masks the differences between and within African American, American Indian, Asian Americans, and Latino faculty, Antonio (2002) posits that, for analytical purposes, this grouping helps to clearly distinguish the patterns and behaviors of majority faculty from the slowly growing presence of faculty of color. Faculty of color significantly contribute to undergraduate student learning and

involvement (Umbach, 2006) and the diversification of faculty is an important aspect of preparing students to live in a diverse society (Cole & Barber, 2003; Hurtado, 2001; Smith, 1989).n class and out of class diverse interactions

Faculty of color are more likely than their White colleagues to utilize more active teaching methods (i.e., class discussions, cooperative learning activities, group projects and student presentations in class), conduct research on race and ethnicity and incorporate class readings on issues of race/ethnicity (Antonio, 2002; Milem, 1999).

Thus, students exposed to the classroom environment with a faculty member of color will more likely encounter a different educational experience than they may be most familiar with (Collier & Powell, 1990). Faculty of color are more likely to encourage students to interact with diverse ideas in the classroom by including issues of race and ethnicity within the curriculum and promote teaching strategies that encourage students to interact with and challenge one another in class (Umbach, 2006). The contributions African American and other faculty of color make toward the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, and teaching (Boyer, 1990) has a profound impact on the development of students, as well as on the ability of institutions to meet the missions of research, teaching, and service (Antonio, 2002; Milem, 1999, 2003; Rosa, 2005; Umbach, 2006).

In a study designed to examine the influence of faculty of color within the academy Antonio (2002) sought to answer the following primary question: How do faculty of color and White faculty differ with respect to their involvement in and commitment to the scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching?

Utilizing the 1995 Faculty Survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California Los Angeles, data for Antonio's (2002) study consisted of the responses from 21,467 full-time undergraduate teaching faculty (faculty of color; n= 2345; white faculty, n=19122) at 313 four-year institutions. Data were analyzed through the use of univariate and multivariate comparisons.

Results indicate that, in regard to the scholarship of discovery, as measured by the number of journal and book publications, White faculty published more research. Faculty of color, however, spent more time conducting research and felt that the opportunity to pursue research was a very important reason for having chosen their career path.

According to the variables associated with the scholarship of teaching, faculty of color were slightly more likely to ask students to make presentations in class, however, they were much more likely to place a high level of importance on the affective, moral, and civic development of students, and value student experiences outside of the classroom. Although Antonio's (2002) results do not provide further elaboration on how faculty of color convey to students their desire to influence these areas of student development, this significant finding warrants further exploration. This finding may illustrate a significant difference in the type or quality of student-faculty interaction that students may experience when interacting with an African American faculty member.

Additional results of Antonio's (2002) study indicate there is a small, yet statistically significant, difference between faculty of color and White faculty teaching an interdisciplinary course. Concerning the scholarship of application, faculty of color were 75% more likely than White faculty to enter the professoriate because they perceive this

career path as an opportunity for them to take personal responsibility for effecting change in society. Thus, faculty of color were 29% more likely to pledge a professional and personal commitment to providing services to the community and a third more likely to advise student groups involved in community service. Although Antonio (2002) does not elaborate upon these findings, they illustrate that faculty of color may establish very different relationships with students than their White colleagues.

Antonio (2002) concludes that results of this study illustrate the values faculty of color bring to the academy influence their greater involvement in and support of activities related to the scholarship of teaching, integration, and application, from which higher education, students, and society at large can benefit. He argues:

Faculty of color in comprehensive and baccalaureate institutions offer a commitment to the scholarship of teaching and the scholarship of application in conjunction with a commitment for the scholarship of discovery. This combination can serve higher education as the seeds of transformation for a more integrated, socially responsive educational institution. As potential change agents, faculty of color are an important resource for the transformation of the professoriate and the academy (p. 598).

African American and other faculty of color make a unique contribution to higher education, which affords students the opportunity to interact with a more diverse curriculum and engage in classroom activities with their peers. It is through these interactions that students may be challenged to think more critically.

Results of national studies conducted by Milem and Astin (1993) and Milem (1999, 2003) provide additional empirical evidence in support of Antonio's (2002) conclusions that faculty of color significantly influence and contribute to the transformation of scholarship within the academy. In an effort to analyze the relationship between race/ethnicity and a variety of outcomes related to teaching, research, and service within the academy, Milem's (1999) quantitative study analyzed data collected from the 1992/1993 Survey of College and University Faculty conducted by HERI at UCLA. Although the number of respondents is not indicated, Milem (1999) reports a 61 % return rate in this national survey. Descriptive analyses and blocked hierarchical regression were used to analyze data. Similar to Antonio (2002), Milem (1999) cautions that, due to the small proportion of faculty of color within the sample, the strongest evidence come from patterns of behavior revealed within the findings.

Results of Milem's (1999) study indicates that, compared to their White colleagues, faculty of color are more likely to attend racial awareness workshops, be involved in community and public service activities, teach ethnic studies and or women's studies courses, and value the goal of promoting racial understanding. Specific findings indicated that compared to 20 % of White faculty, over 60 % of African American faculty report conducting research on race and ethnicity. Compared to 6.5 % of the White faculty, nearly one-third of African American faculty indicated they taught an ethnic studies course. Finally, results illustrate that faculty of color may place a greater value on social and political activism. African American, American Indian, Mexican American, and Latino faculty indicated an interest in influencing the political structure and social

values. Milem's (1999) findings illustrate how influential faculty of color are in creating a campus community that provides important opportunities for students to engage in diverse interaction, not just with racially and ethnically diverse people, but with diverse ideas, information, and experiences (Milem, 2003).

Umbach (2006) further explored how faculty of color engage students in a broad range of effective educational practices. The conceptual framework for Umbach's (2006) study is based upon the tenet that "diversity is essential for an organization to understand and respond to changes within the environment" (p. 319). This framework contends that a greater representation of faculty of color will increase the likelihood and ability of institutions to change and meet the needs of an increasingly diverse society, resulting in institutions that are more successful in educating all of their students.

Umbach (2006) utilized a survey instrument designed to measure faculty expectations for student engagement in educational practices linked to high levels of learning and development. The survey also asked questions related to the faculty members' structure of the classroom and their out-of-class work. Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) was utilized to analyze responses from over 13,000 faculty representing 134 institutions. Of those respondents, approximately 8% were faculty of color (3% African American, 3% Asian Pacific American, 1% Latino/a, 1% Native American, 1% Multi-racial or other). Limitations of Umbach's (2006) study include the possibility of biased sampling, due to institutions volunteering to participate and the limited variability of structural diversity at each of the participating institutions. For three quarters of the participating institutions, faculty of color comprised 13 % or less of the entire faculty.

Supporting results established by Milem (1999), Umbach (2006) determined that, compared to White faculty, faculty of color (from all racial/ethnic groups) more frequently use active and collaborative learning techniques in the classroom and (with the exception of Asian Pacific American faculty) introduce students to diversity related activities. In addition, with the exception of Native American faculty, faculty of color more frequently employ the use of higher order cognitive experiences in the classroom. A significant finding in Umbach's (2006) study determined that the greater structural diversity of faculty on a campus results in a greater likelihood of increased use of effective educational practices, which may ultimately impact the interactions students have with new knowledge, diverse opinions and active learning strategies.

Research conducted by Antonio (2002), Milem (1993), and Umbach (2006) provides evidence that African American and other faculty of color "play a specialized and fundamental role in the teaching and learning process" (Milem, 2003, p.144). These studies, however, do not provide evidence regarding how race /ethnicity, along with other characteristics of a college professor, relate to the faculty member's actual interaction with students. Rosa (2005) argues "the literature on diverse faculty is void of evidence that describes faculty members' full experiences with students as teachers and how they contribute to engagement with students and, ultimately, institutional effectiveness" (p.3).

Rosa (2005), therefore, sought to examine the impact that faculty race/ethnicity, and other faculty characteristics, had on patterns and frequency of in-class and out-of-class interaction with students. For the purpose of the study, Rosa (2005) examined the amount of time professors spend with students both in and out of the classroom

environment. She also examined the forms of interactions; such as classroom experiences, advising, and counseling students outside of class that faculty had with students.

Utilizing 1998 data from the triennial national survey of college faculty conducted by HERI at UCLA, the national normative sample for this study consisted of 31,477 full-time undergraduate teaching faculty from 342 four-year institutions. In order to investigate how race/ethnicity, along with other characteristics of a college professor, influenced faculty-student interaction or engagement, a stratified sample of the norms data was used based on race/ethnicity categories. The final data set defined by race/ethnicity consisted of 937 Asian Americans, 676 Latino/as, 586 African Americans, 500 other, 376 American Indians and 4,000 White, non-Latino faculty. Thus, the sub-data set consisted of 7,075 respondents.

Research questions guiding Rosa's study included: 1) how does the race/ethnicity of a college professor along with other faculty characteristics and institutional settings relate to faculty engagement with students, and 2) what patterns exist with respect to frequency of interactions, and in class and out of class interactions? Rosa's (2005) study explored the student-faculty interaction from the faculty perspective therefore Rosa utilized Astin's (1993) Input-Environment-Outcome (IEO) model for student involvement and multiple regression analysis to examine the personal and environmental factors affecting faculty interaction with students. Limitations of this study stem from only one year of self-reported data from faculty and findings do not specifically address students' gains in cognitive and social development.

Specific findings from Rosa's (2005) study indicate that distinctive patterns exist with a faculty member's overall approach and amount of interaction with students. Compared to White faculty, faculty of color spend more time with students. African American, American Indian, and Latino/a faculty, in particular, use engaging in-class techniques and initiate out-of-class activities, such as research work with students. Female faculty and African American, American Indian and Latino/a faculty who are newly appointed and not yet tenured are also more likely to have more meaningful in-class interactions with students. Additional findings show that women faculty across all racial and ethnic groups spend more time advising students and using engaging in-class techniques than do their male colleagues. Across all racial and ethnic groups, faculty time spent on activities other than teaching, such as research, community service, and committee work positively predicted interaction with students.

Rosa's (2005) findings support research regarding the influence of in-class teacher behaviors that create cues for students regarding the availability of faculty. Examples of these "cues" include engaging students in the learning process, valuing student comments, linking out of class activities with curriculum, and creating racially/ethnically structured student groups (Cole, 2007). In other words, student's interactions with faculty in the classroom are taken as indicators about a faculty members desire to interact with students outside of class, thus influencing the quality and frequency of student-faculty interactions (Cole, 2007; Wilson, Woods, & Gaff, 1974).

Finally, findings from Rosa's (2005) study suggest that a faculty member's personal educational orientation or philosophy influences their interaction with students.

In-class interactions with students are influenced by the faculty member's educational philosophy toward enhancing student's knowledge of other racial/ethnic groups, instilling in students a commitment to community service, enhancing out of class experiences for students, and believing that colleges should actively help solve social problems.

Frequency of contact is most likely to occur with faculty who value a service commitment to the community, enhancement in out of class experience for students, and preparation of students for advanced or graduate education.

Rosa's (2005) study builds on what is known about faculty-student interactions by adding the influences of race/ethnicity and gender. In addition, it further solidifies the value that faculty of color bring to teaching and learning in American higher education. As the empirical evidence suggests, faculty of color significantly contribute to the scholarship of teaching, integration, and application (Antonio, 2002). Once again, this confirms the influence faculty of color have on the educational process, which may positively impact the cognitive and social development of students.

Influence of faculty of color on students' diverse interactions

Faculty of color's unique and significant contribution to higher education is influenced by their commitment to creating learning environments that enable students to interact with new knowledge and new ways to approach learning. As previously indicated, faculty of color are more likely than their White colleagues to conduct research on issues of race, teach diversity related courses, and incorporate inclusive curriculum in the classroom (Milem, 1999). Thus, faculty of color are more likely to provide students with the opportunity to interact with cultural awareness topics (Gurin, 1999; Milem &

Hakuta, 2000), become more open to diversity and challenge (Pascarella et al., 1996), and develop critical thinking and problem solving skills (Smith, 2005; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000).

Student involvement in diversity-related coursework and exposure to knowledge about race and ethnicity in classrooms (Gurin, 1999) impacts a number of outcomes related to student cognitive and social development. Specifically, participation in a racial or cultural awareness workshop has a significant and positive effect on student's openness to diversity (Pascarella, et al., 1996; Springer, et al., 1996) and overall satisfaction with the college experience, especially for White students (Astin, 1993; Villalpando, 1994, 2002). Chang's (2001a) institutional study, conducted at a public university in the Northeast, determined that students gain positive learning outcomes from their interaction with diversity-related course work. Utilizing the Modern Racism Scale (MRS) questionnaire to assess students' level of prejudice and seven questions from the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) to assess students' learning experiences while in college, Chang (2001a) found that interaction with a diversity-related course developed students' ability to get along with their peers of a different race/ethnicity and reduced their levels of racial prejudice.

Survey instruments for Chang's (2001a) study were distributed to 167 students enrolled in a spring 1999 diversity-related course. Multivariate regressions were used to estimate the relationship between racial prejudice and the seven educational learning experiences. Specific results of Chang's (2001a) study determined that, even after controlling for student's background characteristics, and their level of exposure to other

racial groups, the reduction of prejudice directly influenced the likelihood that students could adapt to cultural and demographic change, and develop personal values and ethical standards through their development of reasoning skills. Chang (2001a) concludes that reducing racial prejudice and challenging students' biases greatly enhances the advancement of students developing critical thinking and reasoning skills.

Hurtado, Mayhew, and Engberg (2003) further posit opportunities that encourage students to engage in critical thinking and active learning enhance students' ability to develop moral reasoning. In an attempt to understand the influence of diversity courses on the development of moral reasoning, Hurtado et al., (2003) employed the Student Thinking and Interaction Survey (STIS) along with several other standardized instruments to a final sample of 236 students at the beginning and end of the Winter 2001 semester at a public institution in the Northeast. The STIS was designed to assess student exposure to diversity, through their interaction with diverse peers and course content, influences students' cognitive and social development. Kohlberg's (1976, as cited in Hurtado, Mayhew & Engberg, 2003) model of moral development served as the theoretical foundation for this study. The moral development model contends that environments that stimulate growth in moral reasoning provide opportunities for individuals to learn to see things from a different perspective.

Two types of courses were used for Hurtado et al's (2003) study in order to assess the influence of diversity inclusion and the type of pedagogy employed in the classroom. The first type of course was a "diversity course" which included a social diversity course and a women's studies course. The second type of course was a "management course",

which did not infuse diversity related topics into course content and the faculty member utilized more traditional pedagogy. A limitation of this study is that the researchers did not directly observe each class rather the data is based upon student perceptions of the class environment and pedagogy.

Results of the study conducted by Hurtado et al., (2003) indicated that those students who chose to enroll in a diversity course began and ended the semester with a higher level of moral development than their peers in an introductory management course. Therefore, it appears that students with a higher level of moral reasoning are more likely to choose courses that further challenge them to develop skills in this area. Results also determined that active learning techniques, which positively influence critical thinking, and course content within the diversity course influenced students moral skill development. Students participating in the diversity related courses were much more likely to demonstrate post conventional moral reasoning than students enrolled in the management course.

Hurtado et al., (2003) conclude that pedagogy and content can challenge students to move from one stage of development to another. Cognitive and social development occurs when students are exposed to and challenged to think about themselves and the society in which they live. Hurtado et al., (2003) further contend that instances of cognitive disequilibrium must be within a relatively safe educational environment and facilitated by pedagogy that supports students as they experience different perspectives and personal frustration. Hurtado and her colleagues contend that all students, regardless

of academic discipline, should be encouraged to participate in a course that will ultimately challenge them to become more socially conscious.

The incorporation of pedagogy, course readings, and research inclusive of issues related to race and ethnicity provides students with the opportunity to understand the experiences of individuals and groups that are different from them. Classroom experiences that encourage students to explore issues of race and to interact with diverse others creates opportunities for students to interact in deep and meaningful ways (Rankin & Reason, 2005). Evidence also suggests that students who are enrolled in diversity courses and have positive interactions with diverse peers are more likely to report developing academic self-confidence, critical thinking abilities, and social agency - defined as “one’s belief in the value of things such as working in one’s community and correcting social injustices” (Laird, 2005, p. 367).

Building upon the theory by Gurin and colleagues (2002) that classroom diversity and informal interaction each influence educational outcomes, Laird (2005) sought to examine the relationship between the two and their combined impact on academic self-confidence and social agency - both aspects of student identity. Results in Laird’s study suggest students who take more diversity courses may be more likely to report developing positive quality interactions with peers and critical thinking abilities (Laird, 2005). This connection between the classroom environment and students interactions with diverse peers illustrates important implications for faculty members that are teaching diversity courses. Facilitating positive interactions across race within the classroom may maximize the educational benefits for students (Laird, 2005).

In conclusion, evidence illustrates that faculty of color significantly and uniquely contribute to the transformation and enrichment of the three central missions of higher education: research, service, and teaching (Milem, 2003). Faculty of color influence the mission of research as they are more likely than their White colleagues, to conduct research on issues of race and ethnicity (Milem, 1999), thus, “expand[ing] the boundaries of current knowledge” (Milem, 2003, p. 144). The mission of service is greatly influenced by faculty of color, as they are more likely than White faculty to engage in service related activities. Faculty of color are more likely to advise student groups involved in community service and make a personal commitment to provide service to the community (Antonio, 2002). Finally, as it relates to the mission of teaching, faculty of color are more likely than White faculty to utilize active learning techniques, introduce inclusive perspectives in the classroom, value out-of-class experiences, and teach diversity related coursework (Milem, 1999; Milem & Astin, 1993; Rosa, 2005; Umbach, 2006).

Although these contributions impact the institutional missions of research, service, and teaching in higher education, there is a disconnect between what we know African American and other faculty of color do in and outside of the classroom and how their contributions impact student outcomes and their interactions with students. In other words, few studies examine the cognitive and social development that student’s gain from their interaction with faculty of color (Gurin & Nagda, 2006). More specific to this study, research examining the individual and shared meanings students of all races and ethnicities make from their interactions with African American faculty is virtually non-

existent. We do know, however, that faculty of color's use of pedagogy and inclusive curriculum facilitates opportunities for all students to interact with new knowledge and their diverse peers within the classroom environment. These interactions in turn influence students' cognitive and social development.

Evidence suggests students involved in diversity-related course work and active learning techniques experience significant cognitive and social development through their interactions with diverse peers. Smith and Schonfeld (2000) posit that diverse interactions increase racial understanding, decrease prejudiced attitudes, and positively influence academic success and long-term attitudes and behaviors regarding racial understanding. We do not know, however, if the benefits students receive from diversity-related courses or active learning techniques are actually due to interactions with faculty of color. In other words, research regarding the benefits students gain from their interaction with diverse curriculum and learning activities that foster an environment for them to challenge and be challenged by their diverse peers does not explicitly state the role or race of the faculty member teaching the course. In fact, research has not yet explored the educational outcomes that students (i.e., White students and students of color) gain from their interactions with African American faculty. The limited research available does, however, reveal that White students and students of color perceive African American faculty very differently (Guiffrida, 2005; Hendrix, 2007; Lee, 1999). African American students are more likely to perceive African American faculty as caring (Guiffrida, 2005) and White students are more likely to be critical of the faculty member's teaching styles

(Benjamin, 1997; Myers, 2002; Vargas, 2002). The next section explores the differences in students' perceptions, and behavior toward African American faculty in greater detail.

Diverse interactions with African American faculty

In a qualitative study, in which 19 African American students were interviewed, participants reported perceiving African American faculty to be “student centered” and more realistic role models (Guiffrida, 2005). These students indicated that African American faculty went “above and beyond” by assisting them with academic, career, and personal issues. Students in this study indicated that African American faculty provided extra tutoring, helped them locate money to stay in school, and talked to their families about academic and personal issues. Some students in this study also felt that African American faculty had even higher expectations of African American students in order to convey the message that they must overcome the challenges of being a minority at a predominantly White institution (Guiffrida, 2005). Overall, students reported that their interactions with African American faculty helped them navigate within a predominantly White institution, as well as reinforce that their professors cared about more than just their academic success. Supporting these results, Chism and Satcher's (1998) survey of African American students (n=120) at two Historically Black Colleges found African American faculty were perceived as knowledgeable about racial issues, approachable, involved on campus, and concerned about the overall well-being of students. Contrary to these results, Lee's (1999) qualitative study at a large research university determined that African American students did not consistently experience positive interactions with African American faculty. The site utilized in Lee's (1999) study was an institution

located in the southeastern part of the United States that employed a number of Northern born and educated African American faculty. Lee (1999) cautions that these results illustrate that African American culture is not monolithic and intracultural differences between African American students and faculty can influence student perceptions.

The available research on White students' perceptions of African American faculty is primarily limited to descriptive accounts from the perspectives of faculty. In fact, a trend emerges from the shared voice of African American women faculty as students of all races/ethnicities test their limits and attempt to position themselves within the classroom environment (Hendrix, 2007). As a group however, White students are more likely to harshly judge and resist African American faculty teaching styles, question the faculty member's expertise, and devalue course content, especially when race is discussed (Benjamin, 1997; Myers, 2002; Vargas, 2002).

According to Hendrix (2007), some White students may carefully observe the behavior of faculty of color to ensure that special favors are not granted to students of color. Meanwhile, students of color may attempt to establish a "kinship" based on their perception of shared experiences with prejudice in hopes of gaining an "in" with faculty of color. Although the voices of women faculty of color indicate that the majority of incivility arises through interactions with White students (Benjamin, 1997; Myers, 2002), Hendrix (2007) argues that students of color can also be disruptive, hostile, and disrespectful of authority.

The experiences shared by faculty of color regarding their interaction with students is valuable in that it provides some information regarding the issues, needs, and

concerns of students. The lack of research, however, specifically designed to hear the voices of students, regarding their interaction with faculty of color, and how this impacts their development, leaves a significant gap in the literature concerning the student's perspective of their relationship with faculty. African American faculty and their colleagues of color teach, guide, mentor, and advise students from all races and ethnicities. As the literature reveals, students develop intellectually and socially through their interaction with faculty. However, the influence of race on this interaction has yet to be explored from the perspective of students.

Although the perspectives of faculty are critical to understand the complexity of their interaction with students, qualitative narratives and quantitative surveys designed to explore the faculty experience do not address the perspectives, experiences, and development of the students. Students of any race or ethnicity that challenge faculty in the classroom in a negative fashion is inappropriate, yet the question remaining unanswered is why is the student behaving in such a manner?

Ultimately, this literature review serves as a foundation for understanding the cognitive and social development of students' as a result of their interaction with faculty of color and informs our understanding of how students may find meaning in their interactions with African American faculty. The next section will, therefore, describe the conceptual framework for this study, which serves as a foundation from which to explore and understand the student's experiences and the meaning they make from their interactions with African American faculty.

Conceptual Framework

Phinney's (1996) model of ethnic identity and Helm's (1990) model of White racial identity provide a framework from which to examine how the nuance of culture, power and oppression, and preconceived values and beliefs influence the students' experience as they interact with African American faculty. According to Phinney (1996b) the term ethnicity refers to groupings of Americans on the basis of both race and culture of origin. For White individuals however ethnicity is not a salient aspect of their identity (Ortiz & Santos, 2009; Phinney, 1996b). Although Phinney (1996b) proposes race and racial identity are components in the construct of ethnicity, Phinney (1996a) further posits that examining White identity development allows one to explore how the awareness of racism and privilege influences the perspectives of White individuals. Incorporating White identity development theory allows for the concepts of power and oppression to be examined in relation to how White students perceive individuals of color. Therefore, when seeking to understand the experience and meaning White students make from their interactions with African American faculty, it is therefore imperative to explore how White privilege influences their perceptions of those experiences. To fully understand the complexity of the student-African American faculty interaction, both models of identity development, White racial identity (Helms, 1990) and ethnic identity (Phinney, 1996) therefore serve as the lens from which to explore the student experience and the meaning students make from their interactions with African American faculty.

According to Phinney (1996a) ethnic identity emerges as individuals begin to examine and question preexisting attitudes and assumptions about ethnicity. More specifically, the development of an ethnic identity is associated with the individuals' ability to "resolve conflict between 1) the level of prejudice and stereotyping perceived as prevalent within the majority culture, and 2) dissonance of values between minority and majority culture" (Torres, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2003, p. 36). White identity development is equally complex, as it requires the abandonment of individual racism and ultimately the recognition of oppression and societal racism (Helms, 1990).

As students develop their sense of White or ethnic identity they begin to examine and question preexisting attitudes and assumptions. Helm's (1990) six-stage model and Phinney's (1996) three-stage model both describe how worldviews are altered as individuals develop their racial or ethnic identity. Both Helms (1990) and Phinney (1996) present how an individual's perspectives develop as they maneuver through three significant levels of identity development.

The first level in identity development is the period of time when students of all races and ethnicities begin to explore the beliefs and attitudes inherent within their racial or ethnic identity. According to Phinney (1996), within this first level of development students of color are in *unexamined ethnic identity*. This is a period of development in which students of color give little thought to the salient nature of ethnicity and they are likely to show preference for the White majority culture. According to Helms (1990) White students in the first level of development are in the *contact stage*. In this stage, White students are generally unaware of the implications of their racial identity. Helms

also indicates that within this first level of development a white student may also begin to exhibit a conscious although conflicted acknowledgement of his or her Whiteness. Helms (1990) refers to this as the stage of *disintegration*. It is during the stage of *disintegration* that the White individual first comes to realize that in spite of idealistic beliefs, Blacks and Whites are not considered equals within society.

The intermediate level of identity development is the period of time when students of color begin to express more interest in their ethnic heritage. Phinney (1996a) refers to this as the stage of *ethnic identity search/ moratorium*. White students, who are in this intermediate level of their development are in what Helms (1990) terms, *reintegration*. It is within this intermediate level that students of all races and ethnicities begin to learn how the values of others call into question their own personal values. Some students of color may experience internalized anger toward the majority culture that now becomes viewed as the oppressor. White students may experience feelings of discomfort, guilt and denial when realizing the advantages of being White and the inequalities experienced by their peers of color (Helms, 1990). According to Phinney (1996a) White students at this point may actually begin to feel anger toward people of color, who are blamed as the source of their discomfort and they may want to distance themselves from individuals of color.

Finally, in the advanced level of White and ethnic identity, students begin to hold a positive view of their own group and abandon anger toward the majority group. In Phinney's model, the third and last stage, *ethnic identity achievement*, is the time when students of color make a commitment to group membership. According to Helms, White

students who reach this advanced level are in the *pseudo-independent stage*, and they begin to acknowledge the responsibility of Whites for racism and recognize how they have contributed to racism in society. Helm's model (1990) stipulates that two additional stages exist for the White individual, *immersion/emersion* and *autonomy*. Individuals within these two final levels actively search to realize what it means and what it has meant to be White.

Awareness that college students will be at different levels in their own ethnic and racial identity development, and their level of development will influence their response to learning about diverse groups and information, assists in data analysis (Phinney, 1996a). The use of racial and ethnic identity development as a lens allows me to understand how students make meaning of their interactions with African American faculty. This lens also enables me to examine how students make meaning from the teaching techniques, and inclusive curriculum, often used by the African American faculty in the classroom. This is especially important since students' perceptions and experiences with African American faculty are reflective of their personal sense of their White or ethnic identity, their world-view of power and oppression, cultural differences, pre-conceived values and beliefs, and their perceived role of faculty in and outside of the formal classroom environment.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods used to understand the experiences and meanings traditional aged undergraduate students, representing different races and ethnicities, make from their diverse interactions with African American faculty. This chapter begins with a description of the research paradigm and chosen strategy of inquiry for this study. Next the details of the research design, including site selection and access, the process for locating students who interact with African American faculty, participant selection, data collection, and data analysis are discussed. This chapter concludes with a description of the role of the researcher, action taken to ensure trustworthiness of the data, and limitations and delimitations of this study.

Research Paradigm

As described in Chapter 2, quantitative studies examine the influence of student-faculty interactions (Arredondo, 1995; Astin, 1993; Kuh & Hu, 2001; Umbach & Wawrzynski, 20005). Quantitative research however fails to fully explore the student experience, and the meaning students make from that experience, since the methodology lacks the important dynamic of talking and listening to students. According to Harper (2007), the utilization of quantitative research to understand the student experience:

provides an incomplete assessment picture that lacks depth, complexity, personal accountability and voice. More problematic is that students are denied opportunities to reflect on what they learned and the ways that programs, interventions and people added value to their lives and educational trajectories (p. 56).

This study, therefore, utilizes qualitative methodology to allow for the voices of students, and their multiple realities, to emerge through the collection and analysis of data (Creswell, 2007).

Qualitative methodology is appropriate when attempting to understand the meaning (i.e. cognition, affect, intentions, nuances) participants find in their experiences (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Maxwell, 2005). Qualitative methodology is characterized as inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researcher's experience in collecting and analyzing data (Creswell, 2007). Naturalistic in nature, qualitative research takes place in real world settings and the researcher does not manipulate or influence the phenomenon of interest (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002). Utilizing methods, that are interactive and humanistic in nature, such as observations and interviews, the investigator remains focused on the context of the phenomenon under examination (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Unlike quantitative research that in some way manipulates or constrains the phenomenon under study, the naturalistic approach of qualitative methodology requires the investigator to remain open to discovery and outcomes (Patton, 2002). Thus, qualitative methodology allows the researcher to examine the influence that

a particular context or experience has on participants' perceptions and actions (Maxwell, 2005).

Framed within a social constructivist paradigm, this study is based on the premise that the participant's perceptions and statements are based on their worldview perspectives (Patton, 2002). Worldview perspectives are formed through our interactions with others, as well as through the historical and cultural norms in which we live (Creswell, 2007). The qualitative researcher, therefore, attempts to capture these different perspectives through methods such as observations and semi-structured interviews in order to examine the implications of these differing perceptions without judging any one perception to be more "true" or more "real" (Patton, 2002, p. 98). Finally, qualitative research compliments quantitative research as it helps the researcher understand the process that leads to outcomes (Maxwell, 2005) and causal relationships (Creswell, 2007; Maxwell, 2005).

Understanding the worldviews of students may help us understand how students' racial and ethnic identity development influences their experiences and interactions with African American faculty. It will also help us to understand how the students' interaction with African American faculty influences the examination of personal attitudes, beliefs and values. Is it possible that students' worldviews are changed as they experience the phenomenon of interacting with a faculty member of color in or outside of the classroom? Qualitative methodology allows for the complexity of the interactions between students of different races and/or ethnicities and African American faculty to be examined and understood.

Strategy of Inquiry: Phenomenology

This study is designed to examine the individual and shared meanings students make of their “lived experience”; therefore, phenomenology is the chosen strategy of inquiry. Originating within psychology and philosophy (Creswell, 2007), phenomenology is utilized to explore “how human beings make sense of experience and transform experience into consciousness, both individually and as shared meaning” (Patton, 2002, p.104). Phenomenological methodology is used to examine a phenomenon from all sides, angles, and perspectives “until a unified vision of the essences” of the phenomenon is achieved (Moustakas, 1994, p. 58). This approach assumes that “there is an essence or essences to shared experiences” (Patton, 2002, p. 106). These essences are the core meanings understood and shared by all who experience the phenomenon. In the field of philosophy, the term phenomenology was used as early as 1765 (Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenology is utilized in the social and health sciences, sociology, psychology, nursing and health sciences education (Creswell, 2007), and psychotherapy (Patton, 2002). Most recently, phenomenology has been used in higher education research. For example; Mulready-Shick (2008) explored the lived experiences of students as English language learners in the nursing classroom; Harper (2003) examined the experiences of high-achieving African American male students; and Museus (2008) sought to understand the role of ethnic student organizations in the cultural adjustment of African American and Asian American students.

Two primary approaches to phenomenology exist: the interpretive approach and the descriptive approach. In the interpretive, or hermeneutic approach, phenomenology is a “process in which the researcher makes an interpretation of the meaning of the lived experiences” (Creswell, 2007, p. 59). Within the hermeneutic approach the researcher examines his or her own existence within the phenomenon ("Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy," 2009). In descriptive, or empirical, transcendental phenomenology, the researcher sets aside or “brackets” her personal experiences with the phenomenon in order to explore the experiences of others from a fresh and naïve perspective (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). Descriptive phenomenology has been selected as the methodology for this study as it focuses on the “descriptions of what [students] experience and how it is that they experience what they experience” (Patton, 2002, p. 107). Thus, this study provides a format for traditional aged undergraduate students to reflect upon and share, in their own voice, their experiences and the ways that African American faculty added value to their lives and educational trajectories (Harper, 2007).

Edmund H. Husserl (1859-1938) developed descriptive, empirical phenomenology to study how people describe a phenomenon and experience the phenomenon through their own senses. This dissertation reduces individual student experiences with African American faculty to a description of the universal essence – the very nature of the interaction (Creswell, 2007). In other words, this strategy of inquiry has been chosen because it allows me, as the researcher, to capture and describe how college students, separately as well as collectively, experience and make meaning from a phenomenon. As the researcher, who is White, a current doctoral student, and a seasoned

professional in student affairs, I must “bracket” my experiences with African American faculty in order to remain “open, receptive and naïve in listening to and hearing [students] describe their experience” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 22). As my experience and worldviews are undoubtedly different from the traditional aged undergraduate student, by bracketing my personal experiences I am then able explore and come to understand the meaning student participants make from their experience. As previously stated, phenomenologists contend that as individuals we experience and interpret the meaning of a phenomenon, which creates our worldview or subjective reality. This reality is then the essence of our human experience (Patton, 2002). Therefore, the goal is to explore how students make sense of their “lived experience” with African American faculty and talk about it with others (Patton, 2002).

Research Design

The research design for this study was comprised of five components: a) site selection and access, b) locating students who interact with African American faculty, c) participant selection, d) two-phase data collection, and e) data analysis and synthesis. A description of each of these five components is included in this section. Table 1 illustrates the components in the data gathering process.

Site selection and access

Six, public, baccalaureate-degree granting, liberal arts and science institutions with predominantly white student populations in the Northeast were selected as initial sites for this study. These sites were initially selected for a number of reasons. First,

according to Umbach (2006), faculty at baccalaureate–liberal art institutions are more likely to interact with students outside the formal classroom environment. It was therefore, anticipated that rich data would emerge through in-class observations and interviews with students at these public institutions. Second, over 90% of first-time, first year students enrolled at these institutions permanently reside in the same state in which the six sites are located (National Center for Education Statistics; IPEDS Peer Analysis System, retrieved October 11, 2008) and many of these students come from segregated communities (U.S Census, 2000).

Gaining access to the initial sites selected for this study was a challenge. Upon the Institutional Research Board's (IRB) approval at my institution, I sought approval from the IRB or Administration at each of the six sites. All six sites approved this study however two sites did not grant approval in time to conduct classroom observations and they were omitted from the study. As I needed to recruit students who had experienced interactions with African American faculty, accessing these students proved to be much more difficult than first anticipated.

Locating students who interact with African American faculty

The success of this study relied on, finding and ultimately interviewing students who had the “lived experience” of interacting with African American faculty within the context of the classroom environment. In order to locate these students, I asked African American faculty for permission to recruit students within their classes. In 2006, the six initial sites together only employed approximately 30 full-time tenure or tenure track faculty who self-identified as African American (National Center for Educational

Statistics, 2006). Therefore, the willingness of African American faculty, to serve as a resource so that I could gain access to students, was critical for the success of this research. The process of finding African American faculty, willing to assist me, ultimately determined site selection for this research project.

Even though they were not the unit analysis for this study, due to the shortage of African American faculty within the initial six sites, I remained cognizant that the confidentiality of faculty members must be considered when designing this study. As I had to find African American faculty willing to support my research, by allowing me to observe students in their classroom and recruit students for interviews at the end of the course, I had to ensure their identity would be protected. Thus, two methods of contacting African American faculty were employed. First, depending on institutional guidelines and protocols, Human Resource Officers at each of the six sites were asked to either a) provide the names and contact information for each of the African American faculty or b) forward an email (Appendix A) to each faculty member, on my behalf, which contained information describing this study and my contact information. Since contact with faculty, via the Human Resource departments, did not generate enough interest, I established a second method. The use of “snowball sampling” (Patton, 2002) was employed by sending an email to Department Chairs (Appendix B) requesting their help in connecting with African American faculty members.

Three criteria were predetermined for the eligibility of an African American faculty member to serve as a resource for this study. First, African American faculty was defined as: Black/Non Hispanic, U.S. born, full-time, tenure or tenure-track, Assistant,

Associate or Full Professors, teaching undergraduate students. This criteria was modified to include full-time, tenure track Instructors once it became apparent that contact with faculty across the six sites was difficult to achieve. Second, faculty who volunteered to serve as a support and resource needed to exhibit behaviors indicating they had achieved a well-developed sense of ethnic identity. Phinney (1996a) suggests faculty in the final stage of ethnic identity development should exhibit a commitment to group membership, a positive view of their own group, and an abandonment of anger toward the majority group. Therefore, the faculty who ultimately agreed to serve as a resource for this study and allow me to recruit students within their classroom all employed; active teaching methods; an interest in conducting research on topics related to race or involvement in teaching diversity related coursework; and interaction with students in and outside of the formal classroom environment. These teaching and research practices also support the literature suggesting students benefit from their participation in diversity related initiatives such as cultural awareness workshops and ethnic studies courses (Gurin, 1999; Milem & Hakuta, 2000). In addition, an inclusive curriculum and active teaching methods create an educational environment in which traditional aged students become more open to diversity and challenge (Pascarella et al., 1996), and develop critical thinking and problem solving skills (Smith, 2005; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000).

The third, and final criteria, was established to ensure that the class taught by the faculty member was not considered an outlier on a continuum of “diversity inclusivity” (Laird, 2008). In other words, as the classroom served as the context from which to understand the student-faculty interaction, courses taught by African American faculty

that were determined to be on the opposite extremes of presenting and discussing diversity related topics (i.e., a physics course and a sociology course on the Black woman) were not eligible for this study. The continuum of diversity related topics covered by faculty within these courses may have influenced the students' experience and perception of the faculty member.

Overall, communication with nine African American faculty members, representing three of the six potential sites occurred. Unfortunately, two of the faculty members were ineligible because they only taught graduate students. Two additional faculty members chose not to participate due to stress associated with the tenure review process. One faculty member was ineligible because he was a naturalized citizen of the United States and a sixth faculty member, who expressed a desire to serve as a resource and arranged a day for me to conduct a classroom observation, suddenly abandoned all communication without notice. Ultimately, three full-time, tenured track faculty members, all from one institution, volunteered to serve as a resource for this study. Therefore, the site selected for this study is located within 25 miles of the state's largest city and the majority of the undergraduate students' at this institution permanently reside within a 25-mile radius of campus. The fall 2009 full-time undergraduate enrollment at this institution was over 6,000 and approximately 20% of the student population was comprised of students of color. In addition, over 300 full-time tenure or tenure track faculty were employed at this public institution during fall 2009. Approximately 90% of the full-time faculty members were White and just 2%, were African American. In order

to ensure the confidentiality of the faculty and student participants, this institution will be referred to as East Coast University.

Ensuring the confidentiality of the faculty who support this study

Due to concerns regarding confidentiality, the names and academic disciplines of the three faculty members have been altered. Two faculty members were Assistant Professors in a department that will be referred to as Human Development. The third faculty member was an Instructor in a department that will be referred to as Professional Studies. Each of these faculty members were relatively new to the institution with no more than three completed semesters of teaching.

Each of the faculty members were given recruitment materials which included a summary of the literature and the purpose of this study (Appendix C), and a consent form outlining how their confidentiality would be maintained (Appendix D). A questionnaire (Appendix E) inventorying teaching methods, willingness and experience interacting with students in and outside of the classroom, and commitment toward teaching or conducting research on issues of diversity was also distributed. In addition, I met with each of these faculty members to review the materials and answer any questions that they had regarding the methods and my personal interest and intentions behind this study.

The faculty granted permission for classroom observations during fall 2009. They also allowed me to recruit students within their classes for in-depth interviews. Due to the assistance of these three faculty members, five classrooms, with approximately 100 enrolled students, served as the context for this study. The recruitment of student

participants for in-depth interviews occurred during the classroom observation phase of this study.

Student participant selection

Forty-nine students indicated an initial interest in interviewing for this study. Twenty-six students scheduled an interview and twenty-two completed the interview process. Two of the twenty-six participants were not interviewed because they were over 24 years of age. Two other participants failed to attend their scheduled interview and neither of them responded to an invitation to reschedule. Therefore, the 22 participants were all traditional aged (19 – 24 years) undergraduate students and they reflect a representative distribution of students at East Coast University based on race, gender and year in college. Of the twenty-two participants, six (27%) self-identified as students of color and the remaining sixteen were White. Ten participants were men and twelve were women. Finally, the participants included nine seniors, nine juniors, three sophomores, and one first-year student.

Data collection

Data were collected in two phases. The first phase consisted of observations of students in each of the five classrooms. Observations occurred on three separate occasions during the fall 2009 semester, totaling 15 classroom observations. The second phase of data collection, included 22 in-depth interviews with student participants.

Phase One: In-class Observations. Phenomenology is the study of the “lived” experience with a particular phenomenon and in-class observations provided the context from which to examine the students’ experience, interpretations, and interactions with

their faculty member (Wragg, 1994). Although Moustakas (1994) presents interviews as the primary method of data collection for phenomenological research, detailed, and objective data regarding student behaviors, actions, and interactions with African American faculty within the classroom environment informed the descriptive nature of this phenomenon. Observations provided a context from which to analyze interview transcripts and explore the meaning student participants made from their experience. Concrete descriptions of what was observed in the classroom provided rich data in which to describe the complexity of the student-faculty interaction (Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002).

During the first series of visits to classrooms, I was introduced to the members of each class by the faculty member and the students were told that I was conducting research on student-faculty interaction. My first observations focused on general behavior patterns exhibited by students as they interacted with faculty. As patterns were identified, more focused observations, designed to monitor such behavior were determined for later classroom visits (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). In other words, classroom observations provided me with the opportunity to gather information on students' verbal and non-verbal behaviors associated with their reactions to class discussions and individual interactions with African American faculty. More specifically, observations allowed me to visualize student behavior associated with a) engagement in the classroom and, b) displays of dissonance cues (i.e., aggressive tone of voice, physical changes indicating discomfort, verbally challenging the faculty member) when a student was uncomfortable due to classroom dynamics or a particular interaction with the faculty member. An

observation tool (Appendix F), designed to allow me to document such behaviors in the classroom was developed for this process. As the literature suggests African American faculty report students of all races and ethnicities challenge their authority within the classroom environment (Hendrix, 2007) thus, the observation tool was designed to record any verbal and non-verbal cues of respect, agreement, hostility, and disrespect of authority (Benjamin, 1997; Meyers, 2002; Vargas, 2002). Emergent patterns of behavior and observations were utilized to finalize interview questions in order to fully explore and understand observed interactions and behavior. At the conclusion of each observation I wrote up detailed notes along with a memo of my thoughts and reflections. The notes were coded into meaning units and themes utilizing the NVIVO ® qualitative software.

Phase Two: Interviews. As phenomenology explores the “lived experience” (Moustakas, 1994), individual in-depth interviews occurred after class observations and courses were completed. On the third and final observation of each class, I verbally told students I was seeking volunteers for individual interviews. At that time, students were informed interviews were voluntary, their identity and the identity of their professor would remain anonymous, their professor would not know whether or not they met with me, and their participation would in no way affect their grade in the course. For the purpose of this study, handmade business cards were distributed in each class and a sign up sheet was distributed in case students preferred to submit their contact information that very day.

Interviews therefore occurred once courses were completed in order to ensure students’ participation in no way influenced grades and their identities were protected.

Interviews were scheduled during the two-week period between the end of classes and the closing of the university for winter recess. As an incentive, I also offered a gift card to each participant. As previously stated, 49 participants indicated an initial interest in interviewing for this study and 22 scheduled an interview.

Upon a scheduled interview, each participant was sent an electronic version of the student participant letter, which provided more information regarding the study (Appendix G). At that time, participants were also given consent forms (Appendix H and Appendix I) and a questionnaire (Appendix J). The questionnaire asked the participant to self-disclose demographic information (i.e., race, gender, age, nationality, year in college), and to describe their experience in the course as well as their interactions with the African American faculty member. In response to the literature regarding the influence of faculty of color on teaching, research, and service within the academy, the questionnaire also asked the participant if their faculty member utilized active teaching techniques, promoted racial understanding, and interacted with students in and outside of the classroom (Milem, 1999; Milem & Astin, 1993; Rosa, 2005; Umbach, 2006). Participants were told that the questionnaire and consent forms would be reviewed with them before the interview took place. Participants were once again made aware that their participation was completely voluntary and they would be assigned pseudonyms in all written materials and presentations associated with this research project.

Using a semi-structured interview format (Appendix K), digitally recorded, face-to face interviews lasted between 40 and 75 minutes (Creswell, 2003). This format created an opportunity for rich data to emerge, as participants had the opportunity to

reflect upon their interactions with the faculty member. Participants who have directly experienced the phenomenon of interest, (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002) are generally asked two primary and open-ended questions; “What have you experienced in terms of this phenomenon?” and, “What context or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon” (Creswell, 2007, p. 61). Interview questions were, therefore, designed in order to gather data leading to a description of *what* participants’ experienced [textural description] and a description of the context or setting that influenced *how* participants’ experienced [structural description] their interactions with African American faculty (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). An example of a question regarding *what* participants experienced is, *Think about a time when you had to ask Professor X a question, or share a concern with her/him. What happened during your conversation?* A follow up to this question, to gain insight as to *how* the student experienced this interaction is, *How did you feel during this conversation?*

Interview questions were designed to be deliberately broad in order for the participants to describe how they make meaning of their interactions with African American faculty in and/or outside of the classroom. As a researcher it was essential that I refrained from judging by asking leading questions and instead remained in the process of Epoche (Moustakas, 1994). Epoche is setting aside, or bracketing, everyday understandings, judgments, and knowledge regarding the phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2007). Therefore the questions focused on the participants experience as students were asked to reflect upon their interactions with African American faculty. Follow-up questions asked participants to talk about the more specific ways they

experienced personal growth as a result of their interactions with African American faculty in and outside of the formal classroom environment. More specifically, questions were designed to understand how the participants perceived their interactions with African American faculty and how if at all, they believed the faculty member created an opportunity for them to reflect upon their personal values, beliefs and attitudes.

As each interview was completed the digital recording was sent to a paid transcriptionist. I then compared each transcription with the original digital recording to ensure the transcription and the participants' pattern of speech was accurate. At that time I assigned each participant a pseudonym and I ensured anonymity by altering all identifying information within the transcript.

Data analysis and synthesis

The analysis of data occurred in three distinct phases; 1) observation notes and associated memo's were coded and analyzed to determine patterns of student verbal and non verbal behaviors in the classroom, 2) transcripts were coded and analyzed in order to determine "what" students experienced and "how" they experienced the phenomenon of attending a course and interacting with an African American faculty member, and 3) each transcript was analyzed to determine the participants worldviews related to their racial/ethnic identity (Helms, 1990; Phinney, 1996) and how these world views influenced the participants perceptions and interactions with the faculty member. These phases of analysis adhered to a three-step process that serves as the foundation of data analysis and synthesis within a phenomenological study (Moustakas, 1994).

In order for the researcher to establish the origin and essence of the phenomenon, according to Moustakas (1994), the three-step process of Epoche, phenomenological reduction and imaginative variation must occur. Through these essential steps of analysis, the three phases of data were, coded, themes emerged from observations and participant statements, and the analysis developed textural and structural descriptions enabling the “essence” of the phenomenon to be revealed. In addition, the NVivo ® Data Management Software Package for Qualitative Research was utilized to assist with the storing, coding, and analysis of data.

Phase One: Observation notes and memos were coded. This phase of analysis allowed for the student’s verbal and non-verbal behavior, associated with their interactions with faculty in the classroom, to be examined and placed in initial meaning units. At the beginning of data collection and analysis, this process allowed me to examine student behavior, determine some initial areas for further observation, and revise the interview protocol to ensure students were asked questions that allowed me to fully understand “what” and “how” they were experiencing their interactions with African American faculty. During this phase I adhered to the phenomenological process by setting aside my personal assumptions regarding my observations, by placing those assumptions in a new memo as I coded the observations.

Phase Two: Coding and analyzing transcripts to determine “what” and “how” participants experienced the phenomenon. In this phase of analysis, it was imperative that I, as the researcher, approach each student’s experience from a fresh and completely open perspective. Thus, I began the process of epoche, which according to Moustakas (1994) is

the first step of analysis. Within epoche, I developed a full description of my own experience with the phenomenon, which is shared at the end of this chapter. Ultimately, this process of epoche enabled me to set aside my own personal experiences so that I could focus on the experiences of the participants within the study (Creswell, 2007). In addition to developing a description of my own experiences, as I read each interview transcript, I further bracketed out my thoughts and assumptions by writing them in a memo linked to each interview transcript within the NVIVO software. Moustakas (1994) states that bracketing is “a process of setting aside predilections, prejudices, predispositions, and allowing things, events, and people to enter anew into consciousness, and to look and see them again, as if for the first time” (p. 84). The gap in time between conducting the initial interview and reviewing transcripts aided my ability to re-visit each participant’s experience from a fresh perspective. This process helped me to focus on the meaning meant by each student participant rather than make judgments and assumptions based on my own personal experiences.

The second step within the analysis phase, according to Moustakas (1994), begins with phenomenological reduction. This step required that significant statements within each participant’s transcript were coded and a list of “nonrepetitive, non-overlapping statements” was created (Creswell, 2007, p. 159). This process treated verbatim statements as having “equal worth” and sixty-seven (67) invariant constituents were created in this process. Moustakas (1994) refers to this process as the horizontalization of the data. Phenomenology contends that horizons are unlimited and “we can never exhaust our experience of things completely no matter how many times we reconsider them or

view them” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 95). I began this step of analysis by coding 12 of the ten transcriptions, allowing me to establish initial “meaning units” (Creswell, 2007, p. 159). These clusters of meanings established categories that best described the themes for each student participant. Once the initial twelve transcriptions were coded and sorted into meaning units and themes, I then coded the remaining ten transcriptions. Any outlying statements from the remaining ten transcriptions were placed aside and clustered into additional meaning units. From this process of phenomenological reduction, emerging themes created a description of “what” the students’ experienced. Moustakas (1994) refers to this as the “textural description” of the experience.

Next, I created structural descriptions of the phenomenon, which established the “underlying and precipitating factors” for “how” the phenomenon was experienced by each participant. The structural descriptions included a vivid account of how students felt as a participant in a classroom and during their individual interactions with an African American faculty member. The structural descriptions reference the four themes that emerged during the coding process. Once structural descriptions were completed for each participant a composite description using imaginative variation was written for the group as a whole.

The third process, imaginative variation, is a critical aspect of developing a composite description that accurately reflects “how” participants’ experienced the phenomenon. Imaginative variation allows the researcher to contemplate conflicting and contradictory perspectives and worldviews in order to develop an accurate depiction of how the phenomenon was collectively experienced. As I reflected upon the setting and

context in which the phenomenon occurred (Creswell, 2007), engaging in imaginative variation allowed me to determine “how did the experience of the phenomenon come to be what it is?” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 98) The comprehensive, textural-structural description representing the “essence” of the experience for all participants in the study is presented in Chapter 5.

Phase Three: Determining participants’ worldview as it relates to racial and ethnic identity. Once the first phase of analysis had examined “what” participants experienced and “how” they experienced the phenomenon, I sought to understand the influence of the student participants’ race and ethnicity on their interactions with African American faculty. Once again, I closely followed Moustakas’ (1994) three-step process of epoche, phenomenological reduction, and imaginative variation in order to gain insight and come to understand how students’ worldviews and sense of racial or ethnic identity influenced their perceptions and interactions with African American faculty.

The process of epoche was followed as I re-read each transcript from a fresh perspective and I “bracketed” personal thoughts and feelings into the margins of the printed pages. I then began the process of phenomenological reduction by highlighting verbatim statements in each transcript and comparing those statements to the theories presented by Helms (1990) and Phinney (1996) to determine the stage of racial or ethnic identity for each of the participants. Once again, the horizontalization of the data was upheld as a list of statements was created for each participant allowing me to examine various statements from each participant before making a final determination regarding the stage of racial or ethnic identity for each student participant. Finally, the process of

imaginative variation was employed, allowing me to thoroughly examine the data from multiple perspectives. Chapter 5 contains results of this second phase of analysis, which produced the first theme entitled Ethnic and White Identity: Acknowledgement of Race. The influence of the participants' worldviews, based on their ethnic and White identity, is also examined as it relates to how students perceive and make meaning from their interactions with African American faculty.

Table 1: Research Design

Site Selection and Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 institutions initially selected • 2 institutions late with final approvals • 4 institutions remained as possible sites
Locating Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African American faculty served as a resource to gain access to students • Spoke with 9 African American faculty at 3 sites • 6 faculty were eliminated for various reasons • 3 African American faculty remained (all from one institution)
Data Collection Phase 1: Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 classes were provided by the faculty • 3 observations of each class • 15 total observations occurred
Participant Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were selected from classes taught by an African American faculty member • Once classroom observations were complete, 49 students indicated an initial interest in interviewing
Data Collection Phase 2: Interviews with Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 student total • 6 students of color • 16 White students
Data Analysis Phase 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation notes and memos coded
Phase 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coded and analyzed transcripts to determine

Phase 3:	<p>“what” and “how” participants experienced the phenomenon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined participants’ worldview as it relates to racial and ethnic identity
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Role of the Researcher

According to Moustakas (1994), in order to conduct a phenomenological investigation, the researcher must have “a personal interest in whatever she seeks to know...[and] she must be intimately connected with the phenomenon” (p. 59). Thus, I have chosen this methodology, in part, because I have a keen interest in understanding how undergraduate students understand and perceive their college experience. As a professional in student affairs, with over twenty years of experience, I have been fortunate to supervise and counsel hundreds of students. As a practitioner, I have learned a great deal about student development through in-depth conversations and observations. I am fascinated by the growth and development a student achieves during his or her college career. More specifically, I enjoy being a part of the process that encourages students to examine or re-examine their values and preconceived notions. As students mature and develop, they discover their true potential and determine their purpose.

As the Director of Residence Life, at a predominantly white public institution, I have witnessed interactions between students and faculty. In 2004, I had the opportunity to create the first and only Faculty-in-Residence (FIR) program in the state system. The FIR program is designed to enhance the living-learning environment within residence halls. Since its conception, eight full-time, tenured or tenure-track faculty have chosen to

live in the residential communities, conduct educational and social programs for the resident students, interact with students on a daily basis, and become actively engaged members of the living environment. During this period of time, the FIR program has hosted four African American, three White, and one Asian faculty member. I have witnessed each of these faculty members speak to students, welcome students at the front desk after a long day of exams, and present workshops at evening events. These interactions occur with students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds and of the 2000 students in the residence halls, approximately 25% self-identity as individuals of color. My perception's regarding the nature and quality of these interactions varies significantly based on the race of the faculty members. From my limited observations, African American faculty are more likely to ask students value-laden questions. They were also more likely to engage in co-curricular activities with students, in and outside of the residence hall environment.

As a doctoral student, I have the personal experience of taking courses from and interacting with my dissertation advisor who is an African American woman. I attended a predominantly white high school and undergraduate institution, thus, as a doctoral student I have experienced my first interactions with an African American professor. Never before have I experienced such a supportive and engaging relationship with a faculty member. My advisor expresses high expectations and she challenges me to be a better writer and researcher. Most importantly however, she provided me with tremendous guidance and support as I advanced through the doctoral program. Therefore, as a student affairs professional and researcher, I am interested in exploring the

undergraduate students' interactions with African American faculty in order to understand the essence of this phenomenon.

In order to conduct a phenomenological study, it is imperative that I avoid placing my assumptions upon the participants by remaining focused on the topic in a fresh and naïve manner (Moustakas, 1994, pg. 47). Therefore, as a White student affairs practitioner and doctoral candidate, with the noted experiences, if I am to determine the essence of this phenomenon, I must utilize the process of Epoche to orient myself to search without judging. In other words, I must suspend my "natural attitude" (Creswell, 2007, p. 58-59) and set aside "the biases of everyday knowledge as a basis for truth and reality" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85). Epoche will allow me to "clear a space within [myself] so that [I] can actually see what is before [me] and in [me]" (pg. 60). This process of Epoche allows for the phenomenon to be "revisited, freshly, naively, in a wide open sense" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 33). Epoche allows the phenomenon to appear from many angles and perspectives so that I may see it from a fresh and completely open perspective. According to Moustakas (1994), engaging in the process of Epoche is essential as I collect, interpret, and analyze data in order for the voices and experiences of students' to fully emerge. Only through this process will I discover the "essence" of the student-faculty interaction between students (from White, bi-racial, African American, and Hispanic backgrounds) and African American faculty.

Trustworthiness

The qualitative researcher must demonstrate that she has represented the participants multiple worldviews, and the associated findings and interpretations are those of the participants themselves (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In other words, it is imperative I represent the experiences, feelings, and associated meanings student participants made from their experience rather than allow my personal perceptions influence the interpretation of the data. Rigor is therefore needed to insure that findings are to be trusted and believed (Merriam, 1995). Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicate four criteria exist for the qualitative researcher to establish “trustworthiness” in qualitative research. These criteria; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, replace the conventional and positivist terms; internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity, used to evaluate quantitative and experimental research.

Credibility is the qualitative researcher’s method for addressing the positivists notion of internal validity. Internal validity is the extent to which a causal relationship can be determined and duplicated if the methodology of a study is replicated. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state the positivist approach is grounded in “naïve realism” rather than the assumption of multiple constructed realities (p. 295). The qualitative researcher is most concerned with demonstrating that the multiple realities of participants are reflected in the findings and interpretations of the study. It is also imperative participants find the conclusions credible and reflective of their experience. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) criteria for credibility include “persistent observations” and the “triangulation” of data. “Peer debriefing”, the process of exploring aspects of interpretation that may not be

fully explored by a single researcher is also recommended, as is the process of “negative case analysis”, which is the process of eliminating all outliers by fully exploring and analyzing the data. Finally, the process of “member checking” allows participants to review interpretations and conclusions.

Transferability is often compared to the positivists notion of external validity, which is the presumption that results of a study will hold for the general population across “different types of persons, settings and times” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 p. 291). Qualitative research however is contextually bound and the role of the investigator is to provide “sufficient descriptive data to make such similarity judgments possible” (p. 298). In other words, the qualitative researcher must fully describe the context of the study, and participants, so others may transfer the conclusions drawn from the study and apply them to different settings.

Finally, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the criteria, dependability and confirmability are achieved through audits. The *process* under which the study was conducted and the determination of *acceptability* by the auditor attest to the dependability of the research. The assessment of the *product*—data, findings, interpretations, and recommendations—verify that the study is supported by data establishes the confirmability of the inquiry.

Dependability is the qualitative researchers substitute criterion for reliability, which is the concept that repetition of a study, will result in consistent, dependable, and predictable results. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the concept of reliability once again depends upon naïve realism as it assumes one truth. The qualitative research

process is emergent and it allows for multiple realities and worldviews. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) dependability is assessed through an outside audit, which determines if the *process* under which the study was conducted is deemed acceptable.

Confirmability is the qualitative researchers' method for addressing the positivist notion of objectivity. Positivists believe the researcher must remain objective by setting aside her personal biases and beliefs to see the world as "it really is". Objectivity is defined as expressing or dealing with facts or conditions as perceived without distortion by personal feelings, prejudices or interpretations (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2011 An Encyclopedia Britannica Company [ww.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com)). The qualitative researcher however removes the emphasis from the investigator to the data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state the assessment of the *product* (i.e., data, findings, interpretations and recommendations) by outside auditors, serve to verify the study is sound. For the qualitative researcher the confirmability of the data is imperative in order to fully understand the experiences and associated meanings derived from a phenomenon of interest (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

As I conducted this study, several methods were used to establish trustworthiness. First, as the purpose of this study was to explore and understand the meanings students from diverse populations make from their interactions with African American faculty, a representative sample of students based on race, ethnicity, gender, and year in college, completed in-depth interviews. Thus the perspectives of a diverse sample of undergraduate students, is included in the findings. Second, throughout the research process I continuously set aside and bracket my personal biases and preconceived notions

(Moustakas, 1994). As I observed each classroom environment, I bracketed out my thoughts and assumptions before, during, and after each session by writing my thoughts in a memo in the NVIVO data management software. At the time of the scheduled interviews, I repeated this process so that I could remain open to what the participant experienced and how they expressed their experience. Engaging in the process of bracketing my thoughts and creating memos throughout the process allowed me to continuously examine trends and remain open to emergent patterns.

Third, as I conducted observations, I identified the most relevant elements in a situation and focusing on them in detail. This process is defined as “persistent observations” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 304). Thus, I focused on the complexities of verbal and non-verbal interactions between students and faculty within the context of the classroom environment. By sitting in class and listening to students share their personal experiences, beliefs, and opinions I also entered into a bond of trust with students in the classroom. According to Lincoln & Guba (1985) “trust” is a developmental process by which the researcher can demonstrate to the participants that their experience will be held in confidence. During the first observation I informed students I was conducting research on student-faculty interactions and I would be asking them to volunteer to interview with me at the end of the semester. I also told them that as I observed the classroom environment their anonymity would be respected. As the semester progressed I became a familiar face and students did not appear to let my presence influence their behavior or engagement in the classroom. In fact, students were observed cursing in class, texting,

and talking to one another even when they would greet me and say hello as I sat in the back of the classroom.

Fourth, developing a level of “trust” with the student participants continued into the interview process. Marshall and Rossman (2006) propose the conduct of a study significantly depends upon the researcher to build a relationship with participants. During the interview process it was essential that I was “an active, patient, and thoughtful listener... [who displayed] an empathetic understanding of and a profound respect for the perspectives of others” (p. 78). As a seasoned student affairs professional, experienced in working with a diverse undergraduate student population, I was able to talk with students, and relate to them, in a manner that made them feel comfortable. Marshall and Rossman (2006) refer to this as “dropping the academic armor” and by doing so, it allowed “richer, more intimate acceptance into the ongoing lives and sentiments of participants” which enabled me to “move beyond seeing to understanding” (p. 78) as the participant engaged in thoughtful reflection. Once the in-depth digitally recorded interviews were completed, a professional transcriptionist then transcribed them. I then compared each original recording to the transcription for accuracy. The diversity of opinion and perspectives emerged as the data was coded and analyzed.

Fifth, triangulation of the data occurred as detailed notes from observations were compared to transcribed interviews. Participant interviews were also compared to one another as students talked about specific incidents, some of which were observed, that occurred within the classroom environment. The comparison of these documents further illuminated the differing opinions and perspectives of the participants.

Sixth, each of the 22 participants were sent a composite description that included what they experienced and the associated meaning they made from their interactions with African American faculty. This process of “member checking” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) allowed participants to reflect upon their experience, my interpretation of the meaning they made from their interactions, and provide comments. Fourteen (64%) of the participants responded and all of them indicated I accurately reflected their experience, feelings, and meanings they made from their experience.

Finally, auditing occurred throughout the dissertation process. My committee, comprised of an African American woman, an African American male, and an Asian American male challenged my thinking in many ways, from the original design of this study to my interpretations of the data. The perspectives of my committee, as faculty, and as individuals of color, strengthened my analysis and encouraged me to critically assess the student participants’ perceptions and behavior.

Limitations and Delimitations

There are several limitations and delimitations of this study. First, although not initially intended, this study was conducted at a single, predominantly White, public institution in the Northeast. As such, the three faculty members who volunteered to serve as a resource for this study were all employed at the same institution and two of them were assistant professors in the same academic department. In addition, all of the faculty members were relatively new at the institution with no more than three semesters of university teaching experience. As such, this study is limited to students interacting with relatively new faculty members who all indicated an interest in addressing issues of race

in the curriculum and using active and engaging pedagogy in the classroom. In addition, the courses were neither “diversity courses” nor courses that may rarely address issues of race, such as physics. Including such courses may have otherwise influenced the findings presented in this study.

Second, as each of these faculty members volunteered to serve as a resource for this study, their interest in student-faculty interactions and the benefits of diversity on the educational outcomes of students most certainly influenced their willingness to provide me access to students in their classrooms. These three faculty members were also willing to have their students observed even within a unionized environment that strongly discouraged outside evaluation of any kind. It is therefore unknown how the student’s experience, and the meaning made from that experience, would be different had they interacted with a tenured faculty member or a faculty member whom was not particularly interested in exploring the influence of race on the student-faculty interaction.

A third limitation involves the selectivity of the student participants. As all of the interviewed participants were required to be members of an observed classroom, this limited the potential sample from which to recruit student participants. Participants for this study took courses within two departments at the university. It is unknown how students within other departments, taking a course with an African American faculty member would talk about their experience.

Two delimitations of this research project are noted. First, the use of Phinney’s (1996) ethnic identity theory and Helm’s (1990) White identity theory may not fully capture the identity development of the three bi-racial students’ who participated in this

study. According to the Factor Model of Multiracial Identity (Wijeyesinghe, 2001) for biracial individuals there is “no one right or more appropriate choice of racial identity for Multiracial people...[and]... racial identity is determined by each individual, as opposed to being assigned by other people or by society” (p. 131). Although all three students self-identified as students of color, one student indicated an ambivalence to her White and African American identity and the two other students reported a closer connection to their African heritage and family members. Therefore, the identity development of these three student participants was analyzed through the lens of ethnic identity development theory (Phinney, 1996). Examining the experiences of biracial students as they interact with African American faculty therefore warrants further examination.

Second, this is not a longitudinal study. Although the responses from students were analyzed within the framework of Helms (1990) and Phinney (1996) to illustrate that depending on the students’ racial or ethnic identity, they may experience a different relationship with African American faculty, it was not the intention of this study to document the associated experiences of any one participant over multiple years. Therefore, this study does not explore the individual experience or personal development of any particular student over the course of their attendance in college. Rather, the purpose of this study was to seek to understand the “essence” of students’ interactions with African American faculty at one point in time during their college experience. Since participant selection included students ranging in age from 19 to 24, results of this study illustrate a possible pattern in experiences and perceptions as students develop a more mature sense of their racial or ethnic identity.

CHAPTER 4

CLASSROOM CONTEXT

The context of this study is held within the classroom environment. Observations focused on students' verbal and non-verbal behavior as they interacted with African American faculty. Students within five courses were observed on three separate occasions during the fall 2009 semester, for a total of 15 classroom observations. Each course was observed for the full class length, which was 50 or 75 minutes. In fact, I arrived at each classroom five to 10 minutes early and left five to 10 minutes late to capture interactions between students and faculty before and after each class session. The observation tool (Appendix F) was described in Chapter 3.

A male faculty member within the department of professional studies, Mr. Alex Thompson, taught courses 1, 2 and 3. These courses were Professional Studies 101, Professional Studies 102, and Professional Studies 301. Mr. Thompson was new to East Coast University and in the process of completing his dissertation. As such, he was hired as an instructor rather than assistant professor, yet he was on track for tenure. A female faculty member, Professor Amy Norton, taught course 4, which was within the human development department. The course was Human Development 201. Professor Norton, an assistant professor, was new to the institution and had recently acquired her doctorate. The last class, course 5 was also taught by a female faculty member, Professor Sandra

Melton, in the human development department. This course was Human Development 220. Professor Melton was also an assistant professor, even though she had not yet completed her doctorate. Professor Melton was in her second year at the university and she defended her dissertation during the observation period.

This chapter describes the observed interactions between students and faculty as well as the students' verbal and non-verbal behavior as they responded to the faculty member in each of the classroom environments. It concludes with a summary of common themes that emerged from the 15 classroom observations. I only refer to those students, with whom I became familiar with through in-depth interviews as the conclusion of the semester, by pseudonym.

Course 1: Professional Studies 101

This 50 minute, introductory course, was held within the department of professional studies. The class met at 9:00 a.m., three times a week and it was held in a newly renovated building with “smart” technology. The room contained a built in podium with controls for a ceiling mounted projector and interactive white boards were on the wall behind the podium. Long tables and executive style seating were arranged in two rows facing the formal podium and screen. The majority of students in this class were in their first or second year at the institution. Three observations, all scheduled on a Friday occurred in September, October, and December.

On the first observation, 22 students attended class and they comprised 11 men and 11 women. As I was not provided the racial or ethnic identity of the students, my

observations suggested six students in this class identified as students of color. In October, 12 students attended class (seven White males, two White women, two female students of color, and one male student of color). On the final day of observation in December, 13 students were present (nine White males, two White women, one female student of color and one male student of color). Although student attendance declined from 22 on the first observation to 13 on the last observation, I do not know if students formally withdrew from class. At the end of the semester, three students from this course volunteered to interview with me. They were: Levine, a 21-year old, bi-racial female, senior, and nationalized citizen of the U.S., Kenton, a 22-year old, bi-racial male, junior and recent transfer student, and Tom, a 19-year old, White male, first-year student.

In this course the faculty member, Mr. Alex Thompson, exhibited a lot of energy, provided students with individualized attention, and referred to students by their first name. Mr. Thompson stood in the hallway before class to greet and welcome students. At the end of each class he stayed in the room, telling students to have a good weekend, until the last student left. He would begin each class by stating in an excited tone, “Good morning, how are we all doing?” which served as a signal to the students that class was about to start. If students were talking amongst themselves, the ritual of being formally greeted in the classroom caused them to quiet down. If the students were particularly quiet at the beginning of class, the welcome from the instructor resulted in students beginning to talk and take notebooks from book bags. When talking to students Mr. Thompson looked at them directly, referred to them by name, and often asked them how they were feeling.

Mr. Thompson encouraged student participation. When presenting PowerPoint slides Mr. Thompson walked from behind the podium so he could stand in the middle of the classroom and ask the students questions about the material. He asked questions in a rapid manner to the general class and he also asked questions to students directly, by pointing to them and addressing them by name. Mr. Thompson was often smiling in class and he exhibited a sense of energy. Thus, students would quickly raise their hands, to be called upon; however often students would shout out the answer or shout out a story or opinion relevant to the question. During one observation, Mr. Thompson asked a particular student for his opinion and the student smiled and said, "I don't know." Upon saying this, another student shouted out the answer and the class discussion continued. Mr. Thompson thanked both students for their participation. Regardless of how the student chose to become involved in the conversation, Mr. Thompson enthusiastically thanked and praised the student for contributing to the discussion. During one observation, for example, Mr. Thompson said, "You guys are on fire this morning!" Thus the lecture, which was a common pedagogical strategy used by Mr. Thompson was infused with questions and opportunities for students to fill in the gaps of conversation. Although Mr. Thompson energetically interacted with students during each observed class session, ultimately, the flow of the class discussion was dependent on the students' energy and willingness to engage. It was apparent however that Mr. Thompson wanted students to share their opinions and thoughts.

Mr. Thompson used active learning techniques such as a group project and a class competition utilizing an Internet simulation. During the first observation, for example,

Mr. Thompson had groups of students design and market a new product. They then had to sell that product to the other students in the class. The prize for this competition was lunch with Mr. Thompson in the dining hall. This activity generated a loud, boisterous class session and cheers were given to the winning team. Students on the winning team were observed smiling and laughing.

On the second observation, Mr. Thompson gave the class a pop quiz to illustrate the need for students to read and come to class prepared to discuss the material. Mr. Thompson was observed stating, “We can’t have a conversation if you don’t read the material.” Upon distributing the quiz Mr. Thompson stated: “How we feelin?’ Lots of blank faces huh?” At one point Mr. Thompson left the room for a few minutes and several students were observed looking around the room. An Asian woman and a White woman moved closer to one another and the White woman began to look at her neighbor’s answers. Once the quiz time had elapsed, Mr. Thompson stated, “I can only do so much as a professor – you need to engage” and he then asked the students to go through the questions with him. As students begin to rapidly answer the questions from the quiz, Mr. Thompson said, “All right, I love it!” In responding to one question, Mr. Thompson stated to the student, “think about this question from a global perspective.” In response, two students shouted out answers and both received confirming and positive feedback from Mr. Thompson.

Mr. Thompson wove personal experiences into his lectures. In addition to encouraging students to talk about their opinions and provide personal examples, he too shared stories about his family and work history to make a point. During one observation,

Mr. Thompson told a story about a family dynamic. The story was a bit of a tangent from the course topic and a White male stated, under his breath: “what the hell?” It is possible the student was frustrated Mr. Thompson was not getting directly to the point of the lecture.

During the observations, three additional White male students were observed displaying disrespectful behavior in the classroom. One male surfed the Internet as Mr. Thompson was lecturing. Two other males entered class late and neither of them apologized to Mr. Thompson for their tardiness. Mr. Thompson did not display any verbal or non-verbal response when these incidents occurred, rather he continued with the class discussion or lecture.

Course 2: Professional Studies 102

The second course taught by Mr. Thompson was a 50-minute introductory course and the syllabus and format was identical to Course 1. This class met three times a week, at 10:00 a.m., and the three observations occurred on Fridays in September, October, and December. The classroom space was the same used for Course 1. The majority of students in this class were in their second year or recent transfer students. Twenty-one students attended class during the first observation. The class was comprised of 11 men and 10 women. My observations suggested three of the male students were individuals of color. On the second observation, 18 students attended (seven White males, eight White women, and three male students of color) and on the third date, 20 students were present (nine White men, eight White women and three male students of color). Attendance in

this class was fairly consistent. This may be due to the course being held later in the morning or it could be due to a greater number of second year and transfer students. At the conclusion of final exams, five students in this course volunteered to interview. They were: Andi, a 23-year old, white male, sophomore, Beth, a 20-year old, white female, sophomore, Matthew, a 20-year old, white male, sophomore, Michelle, a 24-year old, white female, junior and recent transfer student and Quinton, a 21-year old, African American male, sophomore.

Mr. Thompson's behavior and interactions with students mirrored his actions in Professional Studies 101. On the second observation, for example, Mr. Thompson sat on a desk before class began and talked with three White male students about class related topics. During all of the observations he also continued to address students individually and by name asking them, "what do you think?" As a whole however, the students' were much quieter than the students in Course 1. Generally speaking, the students did not talk amongst themselves before each class began and it was not until the third observation that students were talking more with one another as well as with Mr. Thompson. In addition, students rarely raised their hands to be called upon rather; they were more likely to shout out responses during classroom discussions. The classroom environment appeared less formal than Professional Studies 101 and Mr. Thompson appeared to enjoy the student participation and engagement. It is quite possible the difference in student behavior was due to more upper division and fewer first year students in this course.

Active learning techniques were identical to those in Professional Studies 101. Mr. Thompson assigned a group project and a class competition utilizing an Internet

simulation. In this course however, the use of the virtual learning management system, such as blackboard, created some angst for two students. During the first observation, Mr. Thompson indicated that he changed something on the class web portal and therefore he did not get all of the student's assignments. Mr. Thompson asked students to re-load their assignments and a White male and a White female became defensive. Apparently, prior to submitting their assignments they did not save their work and they were concerned they would not receive credit. The White male (later identified as Andi) became verbally aggressive and his tone was disrespectful and belligerent. Rather than continue the conversation in class, Mr. Thompson told Andi that he would be fine and to speak with him after class. Andi turned in his seat, so his back was to Mr. Thompson, and he complained to the woman sitting behind him.

During the second observation, Mr. Thompson gave the class a pop quiz without a word bank, which is a list of terms for students to fit into pre-designed questions on an exam. Several students expressed concern over not having a word bank and Mr. Thompson stated:

Why am I asking you to do this exercise – because I have nothing better to do?

This is not just word recognition, its concepts. A word bank is not going to help you with concepts. My job is to focus on student success and your learning. I want to prepare you for the world you are about to enter.

When the quiz was over, Mr. Thompson asked the class to review the questions with him. Once again, he called on students individually. In this particular observation, Mr. Thompson called on a student by using his known nickname and several students in the

class laughed. This is an example of the sense of familiarity and informality Mr. Thompson developed with students.

In this course students overtly displayed what could be perceived as disrespectful and challenging behavior. During each of the three observations several students, of different race and ethnicity, arrived late, talked, or texted on their phone during class, or left the class early. Over the course of the observations six different students entered or exited the room, and some of them did so multiple times while class was in session. Only two of these students were observed speaking to or apologizing to Mr. Thompson. For example, an interview participant, Andi, was observed leaving class as early as 45 minutes on two separate occasions. When leaving, Andi did however nod to Mr. Thompson. In addition to leaving early, several students were observed sitting without notebooks or writing utensils, texting on their cell phones, and surfing the Internet on their personal computers.

One student in particular however displayed on-going disrespectful or challenging behavior throughout the three classroom observations. This African American male came to class late and unprepared every observed class session. On the first observation, the student was seated prior to the beginning of class however he left the classroom a few minutes before class began. Ten minutes into the class discussion he returned and did not respond when Mr. Thompson stated, "We will catch you up." The student was then sleeping in his chair 15 minutes later. During the second observation this same student came to class without books or a notebook and he told Mr. Thompson that he lost his laptop. Five minutes into the class session the student had his head on the desk. Mr.

Thompson distributed the pop quiz during this class session and the student visibly struggled with the exam. Mr. Thompson approached the student, leaned over his desk and talked with him about one of the questions. The student left the classroom immediately following this interaction and did not return for 20 minutes. During the third observation, the same student got out of his seat and threw a bottle into the trash in the middle of class. He did not acknowledge his distracting behavior and he did not say anything to Mr. Thompson or members of the classroom. During the observations Mr. Thompson did not confront or address this student's behavior.

Course 3: Professional Studies 301

The third course taught by Mr. Thompson was a 75-minute upper-division class, held in the department of professional studies. The classroom was a newly renovated space with "smart" technology. This class met two days a week, at 11:00 am. Observations occurred on Fridays in September, October and December. The furniture was identical to what was in Courses 1 and 2 however the tables were in a large U shape with center square seating for 10 to 12 students. The center square seating was closest to the front of the room and podium.

The majority of students in this course were seniors and attendance was fairly consistent throughout the semester. On the first observation, 23 students (18 men and five women) were in the classroom. Based upon observations, two of these students (one male and one female) appeared to be individuals of color. On the second observation 19 students attended class (17 White men, one White woman, and one female student of

color). At the last observation 19 students were present (15 White men, two White women, one female student of color, and one male student of color). At the end of the semester five of the interviewed students were from this upper-division class. These students were; Isabella, a 21-year old, biracial female, senior, Jack, a 22-year old, White male, senior, Mark, a 21-year old, White male, senior, Paul, a 21-year old, White male, senior, and Robert, a 22-year old, White male, senior.

As in the previous two courses, Mr. Thompson was observed talking with students before and after class about course related activities as well as weekend plans. When interacting with students in the classroom Mr. Thompson addressed students by name. He asked members of the class questions and encouraged them to engage. For the most part, students in this class were quiet and reserved. At the beginning of each of the observed classroom sessions, the students were silent. Before one class session began a White female, sitting in the outer edge of the U shaped seating, was observed reading a novel and not talking to others in the classroom. At each observation, the formal welcome from Mr. Thompson signaled the beginning of class. Although students remained quiet, the beginning of class resulted in the shuffle of papers and notebooks. Students were also observed keeping their heads down and avoiding eye contact when Mr. Thompson asked the class open questions to generate conversation. Those students sitting at the center square seating however raised their hands and answered questions more frequently than their peers sitting in the outer row of seating. On average, eight white males and one female of color sat at the inner center square on each of the observed days.

Once again Mr. Thompson utilized active learning techniques for this upper division course. Specifically, he developed a semester long project which required students to work in small teams, apply the theories presented in class, and implement fundraising events for a national children's charity. During the second classroom observation, Mr. Thompson presented the small working groups for this project. When showing the PowerPoint slides of the working teams, Mr. Thompson stated, "I don't have a photo of team two" and a White woman in the back row responded, in a defensive tone, "I sent it to you!" Mr. Thompson replied: "no offense intended, no offense intended" and the student stated, "okay." The immediate defensiveness of the student was evident and by saying "no offense intended", Mr. Thompson quickly diminished the tension. It was unclear however as to whether Mr. Thompson ever received the photo as requested.

Once Mr. Thompson introduced the teams he then asked the students to create team names. Students immediately began talking amongst themselves and they were smiling and laughing. Mr. Thompson walked around the room and visited each team as they chose a name, talked about their fundraising ideas, and developed their group leadership structure. As teams were getting established, one White male, who ultimately volunteered to interview with me, approached Mr. Thompson from behind and in an effort to get his attention, placed his hand on Mr. Thompson's shoulder. The student (later identified as Robert) and the professor talked by the podium for several minutes and Robert left his hand on Mr. Thompson's shoulder for a considerable length of time. Mr. Thompson did not appear uncomfortable as he spoke with Robert. When Mr. Thompson brought class together again to review project expectations, Robert and the

other members of his team consisting of all White men, continued to talk amongst them and did not pay attention to Mr. Thompson.

During this particular class session, Mr. Thompson displayed a willingness to be flexible with assignment due dates. When lecturing to the students about the financial and ethical responsibilities of this project, he announced the date a project was due. Students were very vocal as it was apparent they wanted a due date that allowed them to complete their other course work and develop fundraising events that would generate a significant amount of money. Upon hearing their concerns, Mr. Thompson allowed the students to engage in a discussion and pick a new due date for the project. Thus, the students agreed upon a due date that provided them with three more weeks than Mr. Thompson originally planned.

During the third observation, Mr. Thompson showed a movie from the 1950's that addressed the topics related to the course work; such as the different roles of a leader. When the movie was over Mr. Thompson asked the students to share their opinions about the film and how it related to their group work experience. Several students openly and enthusiastically engaged in this discussion. Interestingly however, the majority of students who spoke up were once again those seated at the center table. As the discussion focused on the class experience, Mr. Thompson accepted, validated, and integrated all of the students' opinions into the class discussion.

Similar to what occurred in the two other professional studies courses, students in this course displayed disrespectful behavior. One White male was observed sitting back in his chair texting during a class session and another White male surfed the Internet as

Mr. Thompson was speaking. Finally, during the last observation, as the movie was playing, the student known as Robert sat in the back row and surfed the Internet. Seeing this, Mr. Thompson sat next to Robert. Rather than immediately shutting down his computer, Robert continued to ignore the video as he surfed the Internet for 15 more minutes. Robert's behavior was blatant as Mr. Thompson sat next to him for more than 20 minutes. When the class began to talk about the meaning of the video, as it related to the team experiences, Robert sat back in his chair with his head on the wall behind him. Robert kept looking at the clock on the wall and he appeared bored. Forty-five minutes before the class ended, another White male whom I had not been observing, suddenly got up out of his seat in the back of the room, threw out a water bottle into the trash can, and walked out of class without saying anything to Mr. Thompson.

Course 4: Human Development 201

This 50-minute human development course met three days a week at 12:30 p.m. This course was a requirement for students within the department of human development. Two observations occurred in October and one occurred in November. All classroom visits were scheduled on a Friday. The course was held in an older facility on campus and the furniture was in a U-shape with center square seating for six to eight students. A manual pull-down screen was at the front of the room. Attendance was fairly consistent over the course of the semester. On the first observation 19 women were in class and based on my observations it appeared that nine of these students identified as individuals of color. There were no men in this class. On the second observation, 13 women were

present and six of these women were possibly students of color. Sixteen female students attended the observed class in November and six of these students appeared to be women of color. Two students in this course volunteered to interview. They were: Elvita, a 23-year old, Hispanic female, senior, and Ariela, a 21-year old, Hispanic female, junior.

In this course, Assistant Professor Amy Norton displayed caring and supportive behavior. Before the beginning of class, Professor Norton sat on a desk in the front of the classroom and talked with members of the class. In fact, on the first observation, 15 minutes before class was scheduled to begin, five women were sitting in the classroom having a conversation with Professor Norton. When a student (later identified as Elvita) said, "I am so excited! Its Friday!" Professor Norton smiled and responded, "Since you are so excited do you want to do the pre-test pep talk today?" Professor Norton then clapped for Elvita after she gave her speech to the class encouraging them to do well and providing them with positive comments regarding their future as human development practitioners.

Professor Norton used various learning activities, incorporated issues of race in the curriculum, and encouraged students to integrate the influence of cultural differences into their discussions. This was accomplished through the use of video, case studies, and students openly sharing their personal experiences in class. The video used during the first observation was on gangs and segregated housing practices in America. The language was explicit and the interviewed gang members were honest and forthcoming. I observed some students intently watching the film while others fidgeted and whispered in class. It is possible some students found the material overwhelming and others may have

felt the content was not relevant to their experience. Two students however, an African American woman and a Hispanic woman (later identified as Elvita) responded to the film by doing such things as shaking and nodding their heads during various aspects of the film.

During the second observation, Professor Norton used case studies to encourage students to discuss moral development theory and its applicability to people from non-western viewpoints. At the beginning of class, students were very quiet and Professor Norton commented, “Man, if you had a pop quiz today you would all be in trouble. What’s goin’ on?” It appeared that the majority of students were not prepared for class. Rather than turn to a lecture format, Professor Norton challenged the students to find the information in their textbooks and then engage in a conversation. When a student wove a new theorist into the discussion Professor Norton provided the student support and recognition by stating, “good job!” Professor Norton then asked the students to pair up and discuss how they would interact with an individual from a very different moral framework. As the groups were talking, Professor Norton walked around the class and talked with each dyad. When asked to report back, students raised their hands and engaged in class discussion.

On the third observation, domestic violence and appropriate community response was the class topic. Students were very engaged as they raised their hands and openly talked about personal experiences with domestic violence and working in a shelter for abused women. The students discussed cultural differences and the associated responses to physical or emotional abuse. One Hispanic female (later identified as Elvita) shared

that in her family no one would ever call the police for such an issue or any issue for that matter. According to Elvita, in her neighborhood the police were not seen as helpful and calling them would only cause more problems for a family. Towards the end of class, an older Hispanic student stood in front of the class and shared her personal story of abuse. The other students in the class were quiet and several of them were observed crying as the woman shared her story.

During each of the three observations, students displayed, what appeared to be, challenging or disrespectful behavior. During the first observation, when Professor Norton announced that it was time for students to hand back a quiz, one African American student kept her head down as she was trying to take more time so that she could finish. The professor knelt down beside the student and began talking to her. The student however kept working and did not immediately give Professor Norton the test. Once the student handed the test in, she turned her head from the professor, looked at the person next to her, covered her head with her hands and rolled her eyes in the direction of the professor. She then said something to the student next to her as she slid down in her seat and remained low in the chair for the remainder of the class. It is unknown what was said between Professor Norton and this student however it is possible that the student's response was due to needing more time and an expectation that Professor Norton would be more lenient. In addition to this student rolling her eyes at Professor Norton after her quiz was taken away, several students were observed texting during class. A White woman was also observed entering class 10 minutes late without offering an apology or in any way recognizing her disruptive behavior. Finally, students were often whispering

and talking to each other while class was in session. Professor Norton could see students texting and talking however at no time during the observations did she confront members of the class.

Course 5: Human Development 220

Human Development 220, a 50-minute class, met three times a week at 9:00 a.m. Successful completion of this course, defined as a B- or better by the department of human development, is a requirement for students to continue on with their practicum coursework. Observations, all scheduled for Fridays, occurred in September, October, and November. Attendance was fairly consistent and a number of students in this course were also members of Course 4: Human Development 201. On the first observation, 16 students (15 women and one male) were in attendance and it appeared that four of the women identified as students of color. On the October observation, 11 students attended (10 women, one male) and four of the women were students of color. In November, a total of 15 students attended the observed class (14 women, one male) and five of the women identified as students of color. Of the participants who volunteered to interview at the end of the semester, seven were from this course. They were; Janet, a 20-year old, White female, junior, Jennifer, a 20-year old, White female, junior, Kim, a 22-year old, White female, senior, Lee, a 21-year old, White male, junior, Maureen, a 20-year old, White female, junior, Samantha, a 21-year old, White female, junior, and Sheila a 21-year old, White female, senior.

Assistant Professor Danielle Melton taught this course and she was observed before and after class, informally talking with students about personal and academic concerns. On the first observation, before class began, a Hispanic female and a White female, sitting to the immediate right of the professor, were observed asking Professor Melton questions about class work and practicum selection. This generated conversation among several female students sitting near the faculty member. Professor Melton shared a personal story resulting in these students laughing and smiling. This conversation however was not loud enough to engage students sitting on the other side of the room.

On the first and second observations Professor Melton began class by formally welcoming students by stating “Okay, Happy Friday!” which signaled to students it was time to quiet down and pay attention. Generally speaking, students responded positively to Professor Melton’s welcome by pulling out textbooks and focusing their attention toward the front of the classroom. During the observations, Professor Melton displayed caring and supportive behavior as she repeated directions, due dates, and expectations for students on several occasions. When a student thanked Professor Melton for extending the date of a paper by two weeks, Professor Melton stated with a small laugh, “Sometimes I do nice things.” At the end of that particular class Professor Melton shouted out, “Everyone stay well! Drink tea, get sleep!” as students were packing up their book bags. Another example of how Professor Melton showed the students support occurred during the third observation when she gave a test back to students. Professor Melton stated:

I know many of you may be upset with the grade. Don't panic. It is only worth 10%. I did give each of you 10 points and I tried to write down page numbers so you can find the right answer.

In response, a Hispanic female student (known as Elvita) stated, "Oh, that's nice....thank you." Another student asked, "Why? Are the grades bad?" And Professor Melton stated, "Yes" with a smile and a little laugh. A third student was then heard saying, "Well, at least she is honest." Although students had done poorly on the exam, Professor Melton tried to engage the students and keep them from becoming overly upset.

Active learning techniques such as case studies, role-playing, and interviewing public officials, were infused within the course curriculum. During the first observation students discussed a case study in small groups and then reported their opinions to the entire class. During this discussion, students raised their hands to speak and Professor Melton offered supportive and encouraging comments after students openly shared their perspective. During the second observation, an activity on active listening occurred as students practiced listening skills in small groups. Professor Melton talked to the students about the attributes of active listening and she told the students that they often pretended to listen in class. Professor Melton stated, "you look like you are paying attention but you are thinking about other things or you are texting under the table." After Professor Melton said I heard several students laughing. Immediately following Professor Melton's statement about texting in the classroom, a White woman in the back of the room was observed texting on her phone. The students' cell phone was in her lap, and as she continued to look down at her phone, she tried to hide the phone from Professor Melton

with her hands. In addition to this particular incident, on numerous occasions, students were observed displaying challenging, distracting or disrespectful behavior.

A White female, for example, exhibited distracting behavior during the first observation as she grabbed and unzipped her book bag, shuffled through it, pulled out a water bottle, shifted in her seat, zipped up the book bag and then threw the book bag back onto the floor. The student then began writing notes, with her head and paper oddly tilted away from the front of the room and Professor Melton. Fifteen minutes into the class lecture the alarm on her phone rang. She apologized to Professor Melton for the alarm and then she stretched her arms up in the air and sank back into her chair. All of this occurred during a class discussion on cultural competence and aspects of social identity. Based on this observation it was unclear if she was uncomfortable, bored, frustrated, or disrespectful.

A second example of student behavior that appeared disrespectful was that of the only male in the classroom (later identified as Lee). This student always sat in the back corner of the room, the furthest away from the professor. Lee did not participate in class discussions and he generally sat for several minutes without taking out paper or a notebook. He continuously exhibited behavior, such as yawning and rubbing his face and eyes, which seemed to indicate he was tired or bored and he often appeared as if he had just woken up and he failed to shower. His hair was matted and his face unshaven. He also wore a sweatshirt and the hood covered most of his face. During the second observation Lee sat back in his seat with his hands clasped behind his head. He stretched

back in his chair, chewed gum, and rather than pay attention to Professor Melton, he continuously looked around the room and focused his attention on other students.

The most aggressive and blatant act of disrespect occurred during the third observation when students reported on their group papers. When it came time for two White women to report on their project, one of the women talked about the paper while her partner sat quietly with her feet up on an empty chair. Professor Melton asked a question about their paper and the woman who gave the report responded. Meanwhile, the other student, who was sitting quietly, turned her head away from Professor Melton and mouthed “What the fuck?” to another female student sitting near her. I do not know if Professor Melton saw this students’ reaction to her question. Professor Melton did however ask the second student if she had anything further to add to the report and the student replied, “No, that all sounds good...” This second woman was also texting and talking to the woman sitting next to her throughout the class session. The reasoning behind the students’ verbal and non-verbal behavior is unknown.

During the semester, Professor Melton addressed texting verbally when lecturing about active listening skills. In November, she also sent an email to the class regarding the distracting and disrespectful nature of texting and talking in class. Professor Melton wrote:

Hi everyone,

I want to say that I am extremely disappointed and saddened by behavior in the classroom. I have often observed people texting, working on other assignments, and/or having side-conversations. This is incredibly rule, disrespectful, and distracting.

I would like to remind you that there is a classroom conduct policy for this course.

One of the major indicators of professional development is your behavior in a professional setting. The classroom is such a setting and you should not be using your cell phone to text message or working on other assignments while in a class. I have noted those of you who have been violating the classroom code of conduct and your participation grade will be adversely affected.

The behavior I have witnessed is incredibly rude and disrespectful to me as your professor and to your classmates. If you have other things you need to be doing, please excuse yourself from class and go do them. I hope that each of you will think about this and work on being more present in class and adhering to the classroom code of conduct.

Thank you,
Prof. Melton

Professor Melton forwarded this email to me after it was sent to the students. During the classroom observations I did not hear any student comments or reactions to this document. Therefore, during the interviews I asked students from Professor Melton's class, to talk about their perceptions of this email and the behavior of texting and talking exhibited in class. Chapter 5 addresses how students felt about this email and presents how students justified their behavior in the classroom.

Summary

Although the academic programs, professional studies and human development, have a profoundly different focus and curriculum, common faculty and student behaviors were observed in the classrooms. The three faculty members used active learning techniques and included concepts regarding global awareness and racial or cultural understanding. Faculty formally and informally welcomed students to the classroom environment and they addressed students by name. In each course, students were

observed talking with the faculty, individually or in groups, before and after class.

Generally speaking, students were engaged in the classroom discussions and they raised their hands or spoke up to share an opinion or perspective in class. In response, when a student spoke up in class, all three faculty members were observed providing students with support and positive feedback.

It appeared from the professional studies courses, the students' year in college, may influence the level of engagement in class. Professional Studies 101 was a 9:00 am course, and the majority of students were in their first year. The students in this course were very talkative and actively engaged during each observation; however student attendance in this course varied the most. Conversely, student attendance in Professional Studies 102 and Professional Studies 301 were held later in the day and primarily comprised of upper division and transfer students. Attendance remained more consistent and although the students in these two courses were more subdued, they became engaged once Mr. Thompson presented a topic to discuss or a class project. Thus, it appears that the time of a course offering, the year in college of the students, and possibly the commitment of a chosen major, may influence the initial level of student engagement within these professional studies courses. Conversely, students attending Human Development 201 and Human Development 220 were upper division students taking a required course for their chosen major. In these courses, attendance remained fairly consistent throughout the semester and generally speaking the students were engaged in all aspects of the course.

As noted within each of the course descriptions, students were often observed displaying challenging, disruptive, and disrespectful behavior in the classroom. During all of the observations students came to class late or left early and they rarely looked at or apologized to the faculty member. Many students used their cell phones to send text messages throughout class, they talked and whispered to their peers, and they surfed the Internet and played computer games on their laptops while class was in session. Several students were observed displaying overtly aggressive or challenging behavior such as arguing with the professor, rolling their eyes, texting when specifically asked not to, and mouthing profanities in class in response to a faculty member.

These contextual findings serve as a foundation from which to explore what students experienced in these five courses and how they made meaning from their experiences. In the next chapter, Chapter 5, students in their own words, present what these three faculty members did within the classroom and how they in turn responded. The students also describe how they interpreted or made sense of their interactions with the faculty. In addition to the students sharing their experiences with Instructor Mr. Thompson, Assistant Professor Norton and Assistant Professor Melton, several of the students shared their experiences with other African American faculty members at East Coast University. Although observations did not occur in these faculty members' classrooms, students shared these faculty members made a significant impact on their educational experience and they felt compelled to talk about these experiences during the interview. These additional faculty members have been given pseudonyms. Therefore, the next chapter includes the voices of students as they discuss their interactions with the

African American faculty members who made a significant influence on their collegiate experience at East Coast University. When appropriate, observations are woven throughout the next chapter to affirm or challenge student perceptions.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

This chapter presents a composite description of the student participants' experience, and associated meaning made from their interactions, with African American faculty, illustrating the common aspects of the students' shared experience. Twenty-two students were interviewed and all of the participants had the "lived experience" of interacting with an African American faculty member. All of the participants were enrolled in a fall 2009 course taught by one of the three African American faculty members who volunteered to serve as a resource and provide me access to students in his or her classroom. Two female faculty members, assistant professor Danielle Melton and assistant professor Amy Norton, represented the department of human development. The third faculty member, instructor Mr. Alex Thompson, represented the department of professional studies. Students also shared their experiences with other African American faculty that made a significant impact on their collegiate and educational experience.

All of the student participants attended a predominantly White public institution, hereby referred to as East Coast University, during fall 2009. Participants were traditional aged (19 - 24 years) undergraduate students and they comprised a representative sample of the East Coast University student population based on race, gender and year in college. Participants of color embody 27% of the sample, which is higher than the representation

of students of color at the institution. Women at East Coast University approximate 60% of the student body therefore gender distribution among the participants mirrored the student population, as there were 12 female and 10 male participants. The participant sample consisted of nine seniors, nine juniors, three sophomores, and one first-year student. Sixteen of the participants were enrolled in a course within their academic major and the six remaining students took an introductory professional studies course to fulfill an elective.

Twenty of the participants were residents of the state in which East Coast University is located. The permanent address for 17 participants was within a 25-mile radius of the institution. The majority of the sample (64%) reported attending a predominantly White elementary and secondary school system and seven participants attended mixed/balanced schools. The two remaining participants attended a predominantly Hispanic school system and a predominantly Black school system. For 11 of the participants, it was not until attending college that they experienced interacting with an African American teacher or professor.

Participants' worldviews, informed by their racial/ethnic identity (Helms, 1990; Phinney, 1996a) are presented in Table 2 and Table 3. The stages of ethnic identity for each of the six participants of color are illustrated in Table 2. Table 3 contains the same information for the 16 White participants.

Table 2 Participants of Color and Phinney's (1996) Model of Ethnic Identity

Stage of Ethnic Identity	Participant	Evidence
<p>Unexamined ethnic identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnicity is not salient and has been given little conscious thought. • Minority group members are likely to show a preference for the white majority culture 	<p>Isabella</p> <p>21 year-old bi-racial female (African American and White)</p>	<p>"My dad's black. My mom's white. I don't care. I grew up in like a biracial household. It wasn't ever a big deal. Race was never a big deal to me because I was too, and so it never mattered."</p>
<p>Unexamined ethnic identity</p>	<p>Quinton</p> <p>21 year-old African American male</p>	<p>"I didn't actually just realized it today [that his faculty member was African American] so I didn't even thinking anything of it at all."</p>
<p>Moratorium or exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals become deeply interested in knowing more about their group. • Encounter diverse others and increasingly exposed to discrimination. • Ethnicity is assumed to be highly salient, and attitudes toward ones group highly positive, even ethnocentric. • Increasing awareness of racism and discrimination. 	<p>Ariela</p> <p>21 year-old Hispanic female</p>	<p>When asked how she felt as she was watching a video on African American gangs Ariela stated; "I felt sad for them. It's just very...I don't know...I feel like they should have never gone through that. I felt like something should have been done. People should have looked at it differently. It's not only one person's opinion."</p> <p>When talking about family and cultural elements within her family Ariela stated; "And also umm...with colored people, my dad is...not racist but I can say he doesn't want us to marry a Black man, he wants strictly Puerto Rican so that was very open in this class. Being in class with diverse people and</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals may feel greater empathy for members of other minority groups who have shared the experience of oppression, even though these feelings can be in conflict with their strong in-group attitudes. 		<p>watchin' and reading about this I feel like there is nothing wrong I feel like people should date whoever they please...whatever makes you happy."</p> <p>"Mmm... I think reading about it and seein'.... I feel like after knowin' what these people go through its something very eye opening to me I feel like I didn't know that these people go through this...I just know what I go through as Hispanic and I know what my culture goes through I had never experienced other cultures."</p>
Moratorium or exploration	<p>Levina</p> <p>21 years-old bi-racial female (Portuguese and Cape Verdean)</p>	<p>"I used to call myself Portuguese and everybody knew that you were Portuguese because you're born there. So when I came here, I used to say, "Well, I'm Portuguese". And then my boyfriend is like, "But you're not Portuguese, you're Cape Verdean". It's like, "No, I'm Portuguese". I swear we go back and forth until today. I start to say to people, "I'm just a mutt".</p>
Moratorium or exploration	<p>Kenton</p> <p>23 year-old bi-racial male (African American and White)</p>	<p>"The first part of the question is how I identify myself and that's always been a big, awkward thing. And usually, it's even difficult to talk about now because I've always pushed it away. Even in identifying myself, the options are limited."</p> <p>" Even since a kid – I mean from a kid until now, it still puts a little asterisk on whatever I'm</p>

		doing. It's in the back of my head but I try not to think about it. Ah... I don't know."
<p>Achieved Ethnic Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals develop a secure, confident sense of themselves as members of their group. • They are assumed to hold a positive but realistic view of their own group. • Individuals at this stage have abandoned anger toward the majority group and are generally open to other groups, but their personal relationships with other groups may vary. 	<p>Elvita</p> <p>23 year-old Hispanic female</p>	<p>[In the classroom] "... it was all white women and there's nothing wrong with that but it's just like...even from the perspective that there was only Latina women in the class like... it's not – the good thing with Latinos is we're all very different ya know.... A Puerto Rican is very different from an Ecuadorian, so we had those differences, which is cool. But it's like I really – especially in a class where we're talking about diversity and culture and ethnicity um..., you're only getting very few perspectives."</p>

Table 3 White Participants and Helm's (1990) Model of White Identity

Stage of White Identity	Participant	Quotation
<p>Contact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A naïve curiosity about Blacks and a superficial awareness of being White. • Limited inter-racial interaction with Blacks, unless the interaction is initiated by Blacks who "seem" White. • The White person uses often uses societal stereotypes of Blacks as the standard against which the Black person is evaluated. 	<p>Andi</p> <p>23 year-old male</p>	<p>"I don't look at anybody any different. You can be black. You can be silver for all I care or green. I don't care. Like ya know what I mean.. It doesn't bother me, so I don't know how other people took it but my race, my ethnicity might have had something to do with it, but I don't look at him any different than any of my other professors. I don't see a difference between you or him ya know what I mean.."</p>
<p>Contact</p>	<p>Beth</p> <p>19 year-old female</p>	<p>"I'm not racist or anything, but when I see a black person it's like baggy jeans, not very educated and my first thoughts were like, 'Oh my god. Great. The last thing I needed'. I was even debating on switching but the first day – I mean...he's not the typical black person, I think, at all. He's very, very professional and he truly cares and he makes the class very interesting. I mean, he, he looks very professional, not like the typical black person or Spanish person you see on the streets."</p> <p>"Even the first day... he acted almost like a friend, too, and he was there and he wasn't just this black guy [whispers] that didn't care. He's so different from any</p>

		African-Americans. I think he's half. Is he even full African-American?
Contact	Jack 22 year-old male	I mean I don't I don't see color basically to me everyone's all the same like I'm not one of the people like that will like you know be racist or anything like that... like to me everyone's human everyone's like you know here to make a living and do the same thing everyone has the same common goals... so like I said I don't view color or anything to me it's just everyone's black, white, yellow anything... so skin color has no real affect on.. you know how I'm gonna go about learning in a course like... I'm not gonna be like "oh this teacher's African American I don't really care for what he has to say... like to me everyone is all the same it doesn't really matter one way or the other
Contact	Jennifer 20 year-old female	"I don't it didn't really bother me like I didn't even recognize well obviously I recognized but it wasn't like something that even jumped out to me it was... just actually when I started looking at that paper and I was trying to think back if I ever had an African American teacher before and I was like I must have had one before but I haven't... it's just I don't I don't even see like the color it just I think it's because I'm from [city] and it's such a diverse city I grew up not seeing it"

Contact	<p>Lee</p> <p>21 year-old male</p>	<p>“I was born and raised in [city]. Like I’ve had white friends, Asian friends, black friends, so on and so forth. Ya know, I mean, I try to look as hard as – as best I can, I try to look at everybody as just a person, not really a color. Her being African-American had absolutely nothing [emphasis] at all to do with how I perceived her. She’s the professor; I’m the student. That’s all that matters. Obviously, I’m not stupid. Obviously I could tell from the first day she’s African-American, but nothing at all of my perception of, if I liked her or not or disliked her or whatever... It’s just I didn’t like her as a person. She could have been white and I still wouldn’t have liked her.</p>
Contact	<p>Mark</p> <p>21 year-old male</p>	<p>“I’m not like a racist, prejudice person. I’m not here to say, “He can’t teach me because he’s a different race.” Or “He can’t teach me because he’s a different color.” He’s his own person. We’re all in the same country here. We’re not back in the slavery times. The world has really progressed since then. I was always brought up to treat everyone the same, don’t discriminate against someone just because they’re a different race. That’s how I was raised, so it was never a problem of him being an African American teacher.”</p>

Contact	Mathew 20 year-old male	“I don’t think it has at all, because like I said I’ve always grown up that everyone was equal, either man, woman, colored, not, whatever. Everybody was equal.”
Contact	Maureen 20 year-old female	“like my identity and her identity has nothing to do with it.
Contact	Michelle 24 year-old female	“I didn’t really, it didn’t phase me it was just like having a white teacher it didn’t matter” “Um..I don’t I don’t even think of it (laughs) I really don’t I guess cause all the racial issues were so long ago”
Contact	Paul 21 year-old male	“[pause] I didn’t even really think that much about it he was just a professor he was a person I didn’t really think much of it... I had to take the class, could have put any body up there and I would have been fine with it I guess...”
Contact	Robert 22 year-old male	“So I was brought up in an environment where race, color, creed, uh...sexual orientation didn’t mean anything. It was the person’s own business um... I didn’t – just because the person is black, Chinese, whatever, it doesn’t mean they’re – I respect you as a person or I don’t. It has nothing to do – it has to do with your work ethic, your – basically your work ethic.” “On the level of him being – and again, as I said before, I hate the

		<p>term white. I also hate the term African-American, Hispanic-American, anything like that. Either you are or you aren't, I mean..."</p> <p>"Not even....we had a conversation one time and he was saying that his mother is Irish. Okay? To me, the word African-American to describe Alex [Instructor Thompson] is really not – I don't know how he identifies himself. I've never asked him. So if he does identify himself as African-American, great, but I mean to me when I read that I almost chuckled. To me, just to sit there and say – that would be like me saying I'm an Italian-American. I'm just not. I'm an American whose ethnic background is Italian."</p>
Contact	<p>Samantha</p> <p>21 year-old female</p>	<p>"...like to me I know a lot of people say I don't see color but like to me it doesn't really matter if you're white or black but, I mean I guess along with her color and maybe like just her personality I was interested to be her advisor"</p> <p>"like there are some people of color that I just can't stand just because like there is that stigma and there are these, there are some people that just they play the part of that stigma they don't try to you know show people that they are different they just kind of like are that stereotype um... but then there are other people that you know that they're just different and I mean Sandra [Professor Melton] is successful she's a professor she's a</p>

		Human Development provider which is even better and um she's my advisor and I mean whether Sandra was white or black I don't think it really made, makes a difference I think it's just her personality and my experiences with her that that shape my feelings towards her... it's not it's not her race and I mean it's the same with everyone I mean if someone is of color and they're rude to me I'm just you know I don't like you because of what you've done to me and because of how you act not because you're black so I mean it's more of a personality issue with me than race."
Contact	Tom 19 year-old male	"Um... I didn't really treat it differently you know I basically saw him as just another teacher."
Disintegration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conscious though conflicted, acknowledgement of ones Whiteness. • Recognition of moral dilemmas associated with being White. • The person first comes to realize that Blacks and Whites are not considered equals in society 	Janet 20 year-old female	<p>"That's a tough question, um... I don't know. I, I mean like I said earlier, I don't tend to think a whole lot of it because I've always grown up with friends of different races and things like that."</p> <p>"But I do, I do, I have wondered what it's like for Sandra [Professor Melton] to be the teacher in a classroom full of White kids, because we were in that classroom. There were a few kids of different races and cultures, but we are predominantly White. So I have wondered if that's you know if that's strange for her, but I don't tend to think anything of it myself."</p>

Disintegration	Kim 22 year-old female	<p>“I guess I don’t know as much about their [African American’s] background as I do about, obviously, my own background. I’m a Jewish white woman and um... My personal identity – I would say that just because I am Jewish, our ancestors being both Black and Jewish we come from kind of a similar place.”</p> <p>“So, having them as teachers, I felt like it was self-empowering, just because they um... they didn’t let society’s whatever – society’s judgments and everything it didn’t get them, didn’t get in their way or anything. They’re still – I would say it’s more empowered because of their color, and everything...society’s judgments and everything, it didn’t get in their way or anything. They’re still, I would say, more empowered because of their color. That’s been really helpful, and it’s been a good – especially with Amy [Professor Norton] having us think about how we would confront a situation. “</p>
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In summary, the tables show students of color varied considerably in their expressed ethnic identity. Of the six participants of color, two expressed little conscious thought regarding their ethnicity, three shared a sense of confusion or exploration, and one exhibited a secure and confident sense of identity. Of the 16 White participants, 13 expressed a naïve curiosity about African Americans and a superficial awareness of being White, two referred to having a conscious albeit conflicted acknowledgement of

Whiteness and one participant was able to express a conscious acknowledgement of her White identity. The influence of racial and ethnic identity development on the participants' perceptions of African American faculty is examined in greater detail throughout this chapter.

This chapter is organized in terms of examining two research questions posed in Chapter 1. In response to the first research question, *how do students experience and make meaning of their interactions with African American faculty*, this chapter first examines how the racial and ethnic identity of each participant influenced their perceptions of race as a salient characteristic of the faculty members. Next, this chapter reports how participants describe the personal characteristics of the African American faculty members who served as a resource for this study. It then presents the experience and associated meaning participants found through their classroom interactions with three faculty members. Three emergent themes in response to this first research question include; 1) Racial and Ethnic Identity: Acknowledgement of Race, 2) "Breath of Fresh Air", and 3) "It was a Warm Experience". In response to the second research question, *in what ways, if any, do students perceive their interactions with African American faculty challenge or affirm their values and beliefs*, the fourth theme, "I Learned A Lot" concludes the chapter. When warranted, contextual evidence from classroom observations, presented more fully in Chapter 4, is provided to further enhance and explore the participants' experience and perceptions.

Racial and Ethnic Identity: Acknowledgement of Race

Near the beginning of each in-depth interview, participants were asked to describe the African American faculty member with whom they had taken a course during fall 2009. Then, at the end of each interview they were asked to reflect upon their self-expressed White or ethnic identity and discuss how their identity influenced their perceptions of the faculty member. This theme is divided into three general sub-themes or discussions. The first discussion, entitled, “To Me Everyone is Human” presents the attitudes and perspectives of participants in the beginning stages of their ethnic identity or White identity. These stages respectively include unexamined ethnic identity (Phinney, 1996) and the contact stage (Helms, 1990). The second discussion, entitled, “Race has always been kind of an interesting thing for me” presents the attitudes and perceptions of White participants as they progress in their identity development. These White participants are in two stages of development, disintegration and reintegration (Helms, 1990). Finally, this theme concludes with a third discussion entitled, “I don’t feel like she’s any different than I am” which presents the attitudes and perceptions of students of color in the two advanced stages of Phinney’s (1996) ethnic identity development, moratorium or exploration, and advanced ethnic identity.

“To Me Everyone is Human”

This first discussion examines how students of color, in the initial stage of their ethnic identity and White students in the initial stage of their White identity acknowledged or failed to acknowledge race as a personal and distinctive characteristic of the faculty. Two participants of color were in Phinney’s (1996) stage of *unexamined*

ethnic identity and 13 of the 16 White participants were in the *contact stage* of Helms (1990) White identity theory. Thus, 15 of the 22 participants (68%) failed to acknowledge or minimized the fact that their professor was African American.

As described in Chapter 1, individuals of color, in the first stage of their ethnic identity, did not give a lot of conscious thought to race. The two participants of color, within unexamined ethnic identity, minimized the racial/ethnic identity of the African American faculty members and suggested an ambivalence regarding race. As Quinton, a 21-year old African American student indicates, it was not until the scheduled in-depth interview with the researcher that he gave any thought about the race of the faculty member, Mr. Thompson. Quinton said, "I didn't actually... just realized it today [that my faculty member was African American] so I didn't even think anything of it at all." Although Quinton first indicated race was not a salient characteristic, when reflecting upon how his identity as an African American male influenced his interactions with his professor, Quinton expressed feeling that he shared something in common with Mr. Thompson which allowed him to feel that he could easily approach and talk to the faculty member. Quinton reflects upon this:

I don't know how to say this but I don't know I just maybe automatically felt because he was Black and I was Black that I should be able to ah...I should be able to talk to him

Similar to Quinton, Isabella, a 21 year-old bi-racial (African American and White) student, stated race was never a "big deal." Isabella indicated that she "never even thought of it [race]." She further stated, "I knew he [Mr. Thompson] was [African American] but I never put any actual thought into it." Thus, these two participants of

color had given little conscious thought regarding the influence of ethnicity or race and it was not a significant factor in how they perceived or described their faculty member.

Unlike these two students of color, who recognized their faculty member was an individual of color, 12 of the 13 White participants, all in the contact stage (Helms, 1990), alluded to being “color-blind” because they were raised to “treat everyone the same.” As Jack, a 22 year-old senior commented:

I mean I don't see color... basically to me everyone's all the same... I'm not one of the people that will like, you know, be racist or anything like that... to me everyone's human ... you know, here to make a living and do the same thing... everyone has the same common goals... so like I said I don't view color ... to me everyone's Black, White, yellow anything... so skin color has no real affect on... I'm not gonna be like “oh this teacher's African American I don't really care for what he has to say...like to me everyone is all the same it doesn't really matter one way or the other.

As Jack illustrates, this group of White participants shared a naïve perspective regarding the influence and dynamics of race in their lives and they failed to recognize race as a distinguishing characteristic of the faculty members. Jack also states a concern, shared by many of the participants in this stage of White identity, that he could be considered racist if he presented any thoughts that were not politically correct during the interview. Mark, a 21 year-old senior, for example, was clear regarding his belief that he treats everyone the same, regardless of race.

I'm not like a racist, prejudice person. I'm not here to say, “He can't teach me because he's a different race.” Or “He can't teach me because he's a different color.” He's his own person. We're all in the same country here. We're not back in the slavery times. The world has really progressed since then. I was always brought up to treat everyone the same, don't discriminate against someone just because they're a different race. That's how I was raised, so it was never a problem of him being an African American teacher...

In addition to stating that he is “not a prejudiced person” Mark also clarified that racism is a part of our countries history and it is no longer an issue that must be addressed in society. Mark is confident that his upbringing taught him to be open and accepting so, according to Mark, “it was never a problem” for him to take a course taught by an African American faculty member.

This sentiment of being raised to be accepting of others and open to people of different races and ethnicities was widely shared by these White participants. In addition, similar to Jack, several participants clarified the categories of racial difference by referring to the colors of the rainbow. This metaphor is another example of how participants used terminology to illustrate they were raised to be open to diversity and accepting of people from all racial and ethnic groups. One participant, Matthew, a 20 year-old sophomore however, in an attempt to illustrate how open he was to diverse populations used a historically pejorative term to describe people of color:

...like I said I’ve always grown up that everyone was equal, either man, woman, colored, not, whatever..

Use of the antiquated term “colored” to describe another individual illustrates how completely unaware Mathew was that as a White individual, his use of the word employed a racist connotation. Furthermore, Mathew appeared naïve as to how his use of the term “colored” contradicted the open and accepting values he talked about possessing.

As previously stated, 12 of the 13 White participants within the contact stage (Helms, 1990) stated they “treat everyone the same” and they espoused color-blindness. There was one participant however that openly used societal stereotypes of African

Americans when describing and evaluating the faculty member, Mr. Alex Thompson.

Beth, a 20 year-old sophomore, relied on stereotypical White professional businessmen to gauge Mr. Thompson's credibility, professionalism, and intellect. When asked to talk about the first time she had a teacher of color, Beth described her reaction to finding Mr. Thompson's name on her fall 2009 class schedule.

Honestly, I looked at the name on my schedule and I was like, 'You've got to be kidding me.' [whispers], because I went to a Catholic high school. There wasn't even any [whispers] Black or [whispers] Spanish kids in my school, let alone teachers...I'm not racist or anything, but when I see a Black person it's like baggy jeans, not very educated and my first thoughts were like, 'Oh my god. Great. The last thing I needed.' I was even debating on switching [classes]...

As this quote illustrates, Beth was educated in a segregated environment. Her perceptions of African Americans are based on stereotypes and these perceptions almost led her to drop from the course. Beth was then asked to continue talking about the feelings that arose when she saw Mr. Thompson's name on her course schedule. She explained:

Ah, just, it was, it, it was going to be different for me. I had never had an African-American teacher. I just, the first thing that came to my mind was how they are in other ways. I mean...you really – because I work at a bank, too, and all the high up management, none of them are – except I think our CEO is – I don't know. He's something. But all the high-end management, they're all White and everything and you just – I was thinking, "Oh, he's probably not professional. Let's hope he knows what he's talking about". But that was, the first thing that came to my mind was not good. I was seriously debating on switching.

At the end of the interview Beth was asked to reflect upon her identity as a White woman and share how her identity influenced her perceptions of Mr. Thompson. Beth stated,

At first, before I even walked into the classroom, it was not good. But as time went on I didn't even see him – I wasn't even sure if he was Black anymore [laughs]. I didn't even – when I was describing him the word African-American would never come up because that's not how I saw him any more. I saw him as a really good professor. At first, yeah, I was like, "Oh, I have this African-American professor". But now, when topics came up about him, that wasn't even

the discussion at all. That never even came up... Even the first day... he acted almost like a friend, too, and he was there and he wasn't just this [whispers] Black guy that didn't care. He's so different from any African-Americans. I think he's half. Is he even full African-American?...I don't think he is [laughing]

As Beth explains, her first perceptions of Mr. Thompson were grounded in negative stereotypes, which reinforced her inability to believe that Mr. Thompson could teach a course in professional studies. These perceptions slightly changed however as the semester progressed. Ultimately, her evaluation of Mr. Thompson's abilities challenged her beliefs and preconceived notions to such a point that she denied Mr. Thompson's racial identity and tried to justify his abilities due to the possibility that he might not be a "full African American." As she describes Mr. Thompson as a faculty member, she continued to struggle with her preconceived notions of African Americans. Ultimately, Beth justifies Mr. Thompson's qualities by insinuating that he is indeed exhibiting some typical White characteristics.

As illustrated in the next discussion, entitled, "race has always been kind of an interesting thing for me", three of the 16 White participants were a bit more advanced in their racial identity and therefore held a slightly different view of the influence of race as a contributing characteristic to the personal qualities of the African American faculty. This second discussion presents how these three participants within the stages of disintegration and reintegration describe the influence of race as they begin to recognize the inherent privilege that exists within their own White identity.

"Race has always been kind of an interesting thing for me"

As presented in Chapter 1, White participants in the stages of *disintegration* and *reintegration* become more conscious of their White identity and the inherent inequities

between Whites and Blacks in the United States. Of the three participants presented in this discussion, two of them were in the stage of disintegration and one was in the stage of reintegration. The two participants in disintegration, Janet and Kim, illustrated the conflict and struggle with the moral dilemmas associated with the inherent privileges of being White. They also struggled with the reality that although they thought of themselves, as treating everyone equally and living within a society that is open and inclusive, Whites and Blacks are not considered equal in society.

Kim, a 22 year-old Jewish woman, indicated that having two African American faculty members during the fall 2009 semester was “normal” for her because she was raised in a very diverse town where she and her family socialized with people of color on a regular basis. Kim acknowledged her White identity and stated she felt a connection to the two African American female faculty members in the department of human development because she too identified as a minority. Kim also however articulated that as a White woman her physical features do not disclose her religious and cultural identity. Kim reflected upon her cultural identity as it related to racial identity:

Race has always been kind of an interesting thing for me. I’ve always seen myself as a minority, so it’s easier for me to accept other minorities. It’s easy for me....but my thing is when you look at me, you’re not like, “Oh, she’s Jewish.” You can’t really look at me – I have blonde hair and green eyes. I don’t look like a Jewish person necessarily so I don’t get stereotyped that often. So I hear a lot more than I normally would of the anti-Semitic stereotypes and all that stuff. I think because of that, I’ve become more aware of other stereotypes and other people and how they deal with that.

Kim further described what it was like taking two classes during fall 2009, both taught by African American women,

So, having them as teachers, I felt like it was self-empowering, just because they

um... they didn't let society's whatever – society's judgments and everything didn't get in their way or anything. They're still – I would say it's more empowered because of their color ...They're still, I would say, more empowered because of their color...

Kim was able to articulate inherent differences between religious and racial discrimination. She also appreciated the empowerment Professor Norton and Professor Melton role model as women of color teaching in higher education. As Kim illustrated, a participant in disintegration begins to understand the differences in power and privilege between White people and people of color. It is within the next stage, re-integration that White people begin to acknowledge their White identity and any residual feelings of guilt or anxiety are transformed into fear and anger toward Black people (Helms, 1990). Only one participant, Sheila, a 21 year-old senior, had progressed to this next stage in White identity development.

During the interview, Sheila discussed her perceptions of two African American female faculty members at East Coast University. One of these faculty members was Professor Danielle Melton who volunteered to serve as a resource for this study. For the purpose of this study, the second faculty member was given the pseudonym Professor Charlotte Petry. Sheila's description of these two faculty members illustrate her perceptions of them varied greatly as she examined her White identity in relation to their self-expressed racial identity as African American women. When describing these faculty members Sheila stated:

...so with Danielle, her teaching, her personality has nothing to do with race. I wouldn't....if someone said, 'describe her', I wouldn't even say African American. But with Charlotte, I would say she's a very strong or she says, she says she's 'a very strong African American woman who just feels she's still enslaved by White women'...

As indicated by Sheila, the racial identity expression fostered by the faculty members significantly influenced her perceptions of Professor Melton and Professor Petry. Sheila further stated:

She [Professor Melton] was very... very fair and she didn't, she didn't put her opinions in, which I liked. Um...she didn't really judge...she didn't come off as um...like oppressed. My other teacher that I had for [course title]...she threw in *all* her opinions in and was very judgmental and.... She almost came off as racist towards anyone who wasn't African American or who wasn't a minority and um...I didn't connect with her [Professor Petry] at all. I actually shut myself off because she...I just felt like she was very ignorant.

According to Sheila, she felt comfortable with Professor Danielle Melton because she remained objective. In contrast, Sheila indicated Professor Charlotte Petry shared personal opinions in the classroom and she seemed to favor students of color. Sheila went on to state:

[Professor Petry] almost made, it feel, um made at least me, feel uncomfortable for being White because that's what they used to do back then...and she would emphasize that point so much, like it's the White peoples fault for the reason why there are African American gangs...and that's not my fault that happened so many years ago...

As previously described, reintegration is a stage in the progression of White identity development in which the White individual expresses anger toward the Black individual for his or her feelings associated with guilt. Sheila's anger and dislike of Professor Charlotte Petry is evident; however her perceptions of Professor Danielle Melton are quite different. Sheila's differing perceptions of these two faculty members most likely stem from how she identifies as a White woman in relation to her interactions with one faculty member, Professor Petry, who espouses her Black identity and a second faculty member, Professor Melton, who does not.

The third and final discussion in this first theme examines the perceptions of the participants of color who were beyond the initial stage of their ethnic identity. This last group of participants shared how their own identity development influenced their perceptions of African American faculty.

“I don’t feel like she’s any different than I am”

Of the remaining four participants of color, three were in the second stage of ethnic identity; *moratorium or exploration* (Phinney, 1996). The fourth participant of color was in the third, and final stage of Phinney’s model; *achieved ethnic identity*. This discussion presents how these four remaining participants of color recognize race as a personal characteristic as they describe the African American faculty.

According to Phinney’s (1996) model of ethnic identity, individuals of color within the second stage of ethnic identity development, *moratorium or exploration*, are described as *ethnocentric* and they have an increasing awareness of racism and discrimination. They also feel a greater empathy to other minority groups who have experienced oppression, even though these feelings can conflict with their in-group attitudes and values. All three participants in this stage of development recognized the race of the faculty as an aspect of their personal characteristics however they all indicated other personal characteristics were more salient in nature.

Levina, a 21 year-old female and senior, stated that as a bi-racial student of Portuguese and Cape Verdean, decent she struggles with defining her own ethnic identity. When she first met Mr. Thompson she recognized he was a person of color however she was unsure if he was Black or Hispanic. Mr. Thompson’s race however was not the

distinguishing characteristic she found most interesting rather she was surprised at how young he appeared. Similarly Ariela, a 21 year-old junior and Hispanic female, was more impressed with how open Professor Norton was with students in her class. Ariela expressed she felt “out of place” in high school due to her African American teacher failing to address issues facing people of Hispanic decent. When describing Professor Norton, the faculty member at East Coast University Ariela stated:

I didn't feel...I don't know...she wasn't racist at all. I feel like she was very open and she knows about like all these ethnicities, it wasn't like she was only on Black Americans or only on Whites

For Ariela, her faculty member's willingness to diversify the curriculum and include information on all races and ethnicities was significant to her feelings of comfort in class. Although Ariela did not specifically state Professor Amy Norton's race was an important personal characteristic, she did insinuate a connection to Professor Norton because of her identity as a person of color. Ariela stated, “I don't feel like she's any different than I am.” The third student, Kenton, also felt a connection to the faculty member Mr. Thompson due to his racial identity. Kenton, a 22 year-old bi-racial transfer student of African American and White decent, reflected upon his struggle with his identity,

The first part of the question is how I identify myself and that's always been a big, awkward thing. And usually, it's even difficult to talk about now because I've always pushed it away. Even in identifying myself, the options are limited... I mean from a kid until now, it still puts a little asterisk on whatever I'm doing. It's in the back of my head but I try not to think about it.

For Kenton the most important characteristic Mr. Thompson exhibited was his “genuine” nature. Kenton stated:

I probably feel more comfortable talking to him because of that, ah..not only because of his personality, but on top of that, um..his ethnicity. He's a genuine person, or at least comes off as a genuine person. That's the biggest part of it...

Each of the three participants of color, in moratorium or exploration, recognized the influence of race on their perceptions of the African American faculty. The distinguishing characteristics, which were most influential for them as a group however, were how young, open, and genuine the faculty members appeared to be.

Elvita, a 23 year-old senior and Hispanic female, was identified as being the only student of color in the third stage of Phinney's (1996) ethnic identity model: *achieved ethnic identity*. Individuals in this stage are described as secure and confident in themselves as members of their ethnic group. They are assumed to hold a positive but realistic view of their own group, they have abandoned anger toward the majority group and they are generally open to other ethnic groups. When Elvita was first asked to describe the faculty member Professor Amy Norton, she stated:

...in the beginning, she was kind of ambiguous about herself and I really wanted to – because she's so light-skinned I'm like, "Okay, is she Black? Is she mixed? ...she could be Latina". She looks really like you don't know what ethnicity she's from. So slowly as the class went on she opened up and we found out she's Black...she's a doctor you know. So it was really cool the way she unfolded everything. She didn't lay everything out on the table right away but she opened up to us slowly.

Elvita describes a curiosity regarding the ethnicity of her faculty member and an appreciation that Professor Norton opened up to students and disclosed her own identity. She also shares a sense of admiration in Professor Norton's accomplishment of achieving a doctoral degree. As Elvita further shares, she felt a common bond with Professor Norton:

So I think her and I really had a connection and the fact that we're both minorities. And the fact that she's Black American, I feel like I can really relate to her because I'm Puerto Rican American ya know...[]... she says intersectionality – there's many parts to a person – and I feel like she really gets that.

As Elvita indicates, she is at a stage in her identity as a woman of color in which she recognizes and appreciates the racial identity of Professor Norton. Elvita also states that she is aware that individual identity is a complex notion. She understands the development of an individual's identity is comprised of more than one's racial and ethnic identity. Elvita shares an appreciation for all aspects of her Professors identity and she feels a connection to Professor Norton as they share the experience of being women of color.

As participants develop their own sense of ethnic or White identity, their understanding of the relevance of race as a salient personal characteristic becomes more defined. The majority of participants however failed to recognize or minimized the influence of race or ethnicity on the personal characteristics of the faculty members. Regardless of how participants described the faculty members in terms of race or ethnicity, all of the participants stated that other personal qualities more accurately described the faculty. The second theme describes these qualities, that one participant deemed a “breath of fresh air”.

“Breath of Fresh Air”

As Jack, a 22 year-old White male in the contact stage indicates, for many participants, their interaction with their African American faculty member was different than they were typically accustomed. For Jack, and 10 of the other participants, this was

their first experience taking a course taught by an African American faculty member.

Jack reflected upon his instructor:

I thought our relationship was one of the best I've had with a professor throughout my college experience and throughout my high school experience...and I usually just don't go tossing that around like it's anything... it meant a lot that I could actually, my senior year... actually I had a professor that was like that...but it was kind of like a breath of fresh air you know...

According to Jack, Mr. Thompson was different than his other professors at East Coast University. Jack felt Mr. Thompson displayed a genuine and caring attitude that fostered interactions based on trust and respect.

This theme is divided into four sub-themes or discussions based upon how participants described the personal qualities and characteristics of the African American faculty. The sub-themes are; “down to earth”, “open”, “passionate” and “caring”. This section begins by exploring the participants’ description of how “down to earth” each of the faculty members appeared to be. It then expands upon the other personal qualities participants found most salient as they described the faculty.

“Down to earth”

As witnessed during observations, it was common for faculty members to address students by first name and talk with them informally before and after class sessions. This behavior, exhibited by faculty, was also pertinent to several of the interviewed students. Many participants perceived faculty to be genuine and the manner in which they communicated with students made them feel respected and trusted. As Paul a 21 year-old White male indicated, several participants felt the African American faculty were

different than most of their other professors because they related to students on a more personal, respectful, and friendly level.

...there wasn't any of this Doctor or Professor, he was Alex [Mr. Thompson]... he was just another person, he was willing to help and everything...he wasn't "stuffy, he wasn't...he was very down to earth cause some of the professors they get their degrees and they kind of think they're better than everybody.

Mr. Thompson was Paul's first African American college instructor and he expressed that Mr. Thompson did not project the air of superiority displayed by the majority of his other faculty members. As Paul is in the initial stage of White identity, it is also quite possible he does not consider Mr. Thompson worthy of the same recognition and level of respect he shows his White faculty members. White individuals in this stage of identity may unconsciously base their behavior and actions upon the racial stereotypes and expectations of African Americans in society. In this instance, it is possible Paul's evaluation of Mr. Thompson is being compared to the stereotypes placed upon White faculty members.

Other participants further compared Mr. Thompson's way of communicating to majority faculty members in the academy. Several students stated Mr. Thompson spoke in a "laid back" manner, which enabled him to connect with students on a different and more personal level. For example Levina, a 21 year-old biracial senior in the stage of moratorium or exploration, clearly articulated why she perceived Mr. Thompson to be more down to earth than her other professors. As stated by Levina, the majority of her faculty members used "proper" English so when she spoke with them she generally needed to pick her words carefully. She stated Professor Thompson however spoke in a casual manner yet he avoided using such vernacular as; "Yeah, it was cool" and "Yeah, I

was chillin” when teaching in the classroom environment. Thus, Levina indicated she felt a connection to Mr. Thompson because he communicated in a less formal manner than her White faculty members, which made her feel comfortable.

The casual and personal manner in which faculty engaged with students in the classroom transcended into the manner in which students formally addressed faculty. As previously illustrated by Paul, several participants indicated they at times called their faculty member by their first name. One participant stated there were times when he “slipped up and called [Professor Thompson] by his first name instead of Professor” which, according to the student, was unacceptable to most of the other professors within the department. Once again, individuals in the contact stage of White identity, may be unaware that, by calling their professor by first name, they are displaying a lack of respect they would not generally dispose onto White faculty members.

Maureen, a 20 year-old White female in the contact stage, further states she felt comfortable due to the personal and informal manner in which Professor Danielle Melton talked to students and shared personal information.

She’s funny. She has a contagious laugh [chuckles]... She tries to stay on a personal level with everybody. Its not just strict, like, ‘This is what we’re doing. That’s what’s going on’. Um...but its easy to talk to her. I would feel comfortable...if I had a problem I would feel comfortable going to her...

Student participants perceived the faculty as approachable and they felt faculty related to them in a relaxed and friendly way. They also felt faculty members understood what they were going through as full-time college students:

He’s a young guy and he moved here from [state]...and he he’s done a great job of adjusting and you know there were times when he’d come in the class, he’s ready to go, he’s got his coffee and he’s like ‘yup, I was up till 2 o’clock last night

and the car broke down' and its like, you know, one of the students is up there teaching and you felt like he was in the same predicament as you which he is, I don't know if he's working on his dissertation or what right now, I think he is.... So it's...it's nicer to be around somebody who's in the same boat. He was definitely a friend...

As Michelle indicated, participants felt they shared something in common with their faculty members. Since the faculty, recently completed or were in the process of completing their doctoral degrees, participants felt they understood what it was like to be a student. Even though students felt they shared something in common with their faculty members, participants indicated the faculty maintained a professional relationship with them. Kim, a 22 year-old White female in the disintegration stage stated:

I don't know...she's easy to talk to just because she's my age. She's really close to my age. But she's approachable and she's kind of like a friend where you can talk to her, but then she's also very professional and she doesn't really share her personal life with us

Michelle and Kim both referred to feeling that their professor was or could be "a friend". This notion of friendship permeates throughout the participants' descriptions of how they felt about their faculty members. As Kim indicated, several participants stated the faculty appeared young which enforced the perception that they could more closely relate to the college student experience. Kim was also clear however that faculty maintained an appropriate and professional boundary with students. Andi, a 23 year-old White male sophomore, reflects upon why he believed Mr. Thompson could relate to students,

He's more of a student-based teacher ...especially younger students, like 18 to 22 or 23. He's good for these kind of students because he understands... and he's young. He's not that much older than us. He's maybe, what, 12 or 13 years older? He's not that far off. Some teachers that are 65, 70, 50, you're scared to approach them on certain issues. He [Mr. Thompson] was actually down to earth.

As Andi indicated, the perception of youthfulness enforced how he and other participants perceived the faculty to be down to earth, approachable, and more student-oriented than the majority of the seasoned faculty at East Coast University.

Overall, participants found the African American faculty members' genuineness and attitude regarding engaging with and helping students to be unswerving. Participants felt faculty members related to them in an authentic and personal manner. More specifically, participants described the genuine and down to earth personalities of the faculty in terms of their level of openness.

"Open"

Participants stated faculty shared personal stories, remained non-biased, and valued opinions making them feel respected and trusted. Jack, a 22 year-old White male in the contact stage, reflects upon the level of openness Mr. Thompson shared with students in the classroom:

...he could just relate to all of us... he opened up to us...he told us stories...he mentioned how [a family member] had been murdered and he told us that a few classes in... I was like wow this is really nice, he can open up to us like this and feel comfortable enough to give us that as an example... a tragic event that happened and then he relayed it to something in class...I think he trusts everyone... you know were not gonna think any different of him....so he's very respectful, trustworthy, outgoing you know...pretty much everything you could look for in a professor...

As Jack indicated, the majority of participants felt faculty treated them with the utmost respect and trusted them with personal stories and information. Mr. Thompson's willingness to expose his vulnerability and share his personal self was a different experience for many of the participants. Jack's statement however illustrates how individuals in the contact stage of White identity development (Helms, 1990) utilize

societal stereotypes of Blacks as a standard in which to evaluate African American individuals. When Jack reflects upon the family tragedy shared by Mr. Thompson and states, “you know were not gonna think any different of him....so he’s very respectful, trustworthy, outgoing you know” it appears Jack may be attempting to delineate his perceptions of Mr. Thompson from the stereotypical life circumstances of some African Americans.

Jack’s statement also illustrates participants felt faculty displayed trust in them, which created an environment for participants to feel a personal connection to their professor. For some participants, this connection created a sense of accountability and responsibility to be prepared for class. Isabella states:

He’s [Mr. Thompson] really open with us... he would always tell us transparency, but he was just very open. If he was mad because we didn’t read he would tell us, “Guys, you need to read. I’m not kidding. You need to read... read before you come to class next time”. But I don’t know what it was about him. We would all show up and we all read. – Isabella, 21year-old biracial senior of African American and White decent, unexamined ethnic identity

In addition to feeling a sense of responsibility for class preparation, the manner in which faculty remained open and expressed themselves made participants feel respected and valued. Robert, a 22 year-old White male, reflects on conversations with Mr. Thompson,

He [Mr. Thompson] doesn’t come at it from, ‘I’m your professor. You’re my student.’ He doesn’t come at it from, ‘I know more than you.’ He wants to know your opinion. He wants to have the conversation um...and when you’re having the conversation he, again, doesn’t jump to conclusions. He listens to what you’re saying instead of hearing the first bit of it and then formulating his own conclusions of what you think...

As Robert articulates, participants felt the open and genuine nature of faculty created a place for students to express their personal opinions. Jennifer, a 20 year-old White female

in the contact stage, describes how comfortable she felt when interacting with Professor Danielle Melton.

I just think its how she's really open... I don't know... she laughs in class and she's fun... she just seems like she's having fun in class, which makes me want to have fun. I don't know there's just something about her. I feel really comfortable just being me...

Participants found the openness of the faculty allowed them to express themselves, feel comfortable, and be themselves. Beth, a 20 year-old White sophomore in the contact stage, further stated she felt very comfortable and “like herself” around Mr. Thompson, which is not how she typically felt around other professors.

You feel good about yourself around him. I mean, you can feel like you can be yourself, whereas a lot of professors you almost have to be really careful what you say and you didn't really feel like you had to impress him

As previously stated, Beth is in the initial stage of White identity development. As such, this quote illustrates Beth did not feel that she had to “impress” Mr. Thompson in the same manner that she would her other [White] faculty. In other words, Beth's preconceived notions and stereotypes regarding African Americans influence how she perceives Mr. Thompson's professionalism and authority. Beth indicates she did not need to treat Mr. Thompson with the same professional regard she gave her other faculty members. Although Beth insinuates that she did not need to impress Mr. Thompson, she also states that he made her feel comfortable and she could be herself around him.

Contrary to Robert, Jennifer, and Beth's feelings of comfort, that enabled them to express their opinions and be themselves with the faculty, two of the 22 participants indicated feeling uncomfortable when interacting with African American faculty members at East Coast University. Lee, a 21 year-old White male in the contact stage,

felt Professor Melton “talked down” to him and did not respect his opinions. The only male student in Course 5: Human Development 220, Lee described one particular incident in which he expressed disagreement with Professor Melton in class. Lee indicated that he did not want to “pick a fight over ” over the topic however, he felt strongly about his opinion. When asked if he felt Professor Melton was receptive to his opinion, Lee stated:

No. not really. Like I said, she’s firm in her ways. She is not going to budge. She heard me out but there was not way.... I was going to convince her ...It was just my opinion against hers

Although Lee indicated he felt he could express an opinion he did not feel Professor Melton would respect it or accept it. Lee further describes his relationship with Professor Melton:

It just seemed like she was on one side and I was on the other side and we never could agree in the middle...I just felt like she really wanted to see me ... not do well. Obviously in the end, I probably know that’s not true, but that’s just how I felt.

As a White male in the contact stage, Lee expressed that he felt his opinions had value and he believed Professor Melton would not recognize him as an equal in the classroom. Lee stated that he felt Professor Melton’s actions toward him were based on personal rather than professional reasoning. More specifically, Lee felt Professor Melton did not like him. Thus, Lee felt that her dislike and disrespect for him influenced her willingness to recognize his strengths as a student. Supported by observations, Lee’s perception of Professor Melton’s frustration with him may be quite accurate. As stated in Chapter 4, observations of Lee in Course 5: Human Development 220 indicated he displayed challenging and disruptive behavior in the classroom. Lee was often unprepared, as he

did not have notebooks or textbooks, and he appeared disinterested in class discussions. I also observed him talking during class and texting on his phone.

The second participant, Sheila, a 21 year-old White female in the reintegration stage, shared feelings of insecurity when interacting with the African American faculty member, Professor Charlotte Petry, who did not serve as a resource for this study. As previously stated, Sheila was in the stage of reintegration, in which the individual begins to acknowledge her White identity and experience feelings of fear or anger toward Black people. Sheila described Professor Petry as “extremely biased” and indicated that Professor Petry “almost came off as racist towards anyone who wasn’t African American or who wasn’t a minority”. Sheila felt Professor Petry treated students differently depending on their racial identity and she described how this made her feel,

I was just really upset because she related a lot to the African American students in the class and she would joke with them. But then honestly, when a White student would ask questions, she...you could see the difference [in her attitude].... I was just so upset a lot of the time. I just...I didn’t want to go to her class

As a White student, Sheila felt alienated, to the point of not wanting to attend class.

According to Sheila, Professor Petry also displayed a sense of superiority that made her feel insignificant when interacting with her. Sheila stated,

I didn’t interact with her [Professor Petry]. I tried to stay away from her as much as possible because I didn’t want to interact with her. ‘Cause I don’t, I don’t feel like she’s a nice person. I don’t really want anything to do with her. I just felt like every time I talked to her she was judging me and she made me feel insecure, which no one [laughing] really makes me feel that way. I feel like I’m pretty confident in most things that I do, and she just... she made me feel very...she just made me feel very stupid...which I didn’t think was appropriate...

As Sheila indicated, this faculty member made her feel uncomfortable and insecure in her

own abilities. Sheila also stated that due to her interactions with Professor Petry, she got the sense that Professor Petry was “not a nice person”. Thus, Sheila’s feelings toward Professor Petry were intensely personal and negative.

The experiences and perceptions shared by Lee and Sheila offer insight to how students respond when they feel alienated and isolated in the classroom. Their voices also shed light on the complexity of how the students’ racial and ethnic identity development can influence the students’ experience when interacting with African American faculty. The majority of participants however overwhelmingly felt the open and genuine nature of faculty was comforting and it made them feel respected and valued. As participants described how faculty related to them in a genuine and friendly manner, they also shared the enthusiasm and passion faculty displayed in their teaching.

“Passionate”

As stated in Chapter 4, observations revealed faculty exhibited a high level of energy in the classroom as they lectured, which generated enthusiastic and engaged classroom discussions. During the interviews, participants reflected upon faculty behavior in the classroom and stated they believed faculty members were excited to be teaching, loved their jobs, and were passionate about what they were doing. Participants described the faculty members’ general disposition, excitement, and positive energy as influential and motivating.

[Mr. Thompson] comes in and he’s full of energy and he is really passionate about it and it really did rub off it made everyone else passionate about it...

As Paul, a 21 year-old White male in the contact stage indicates, the passion Mr. Thompson displayed in class influenced how he felt about learning the material.

Samantha further described Professor Melton's general attitude, which influenced her perception of how much the faculty member enjoyed teaching:

Danielle's [Professor Melton] a happy person. Danielle is very...she's friendly and she's always laughing or giggling about something, and she's upbeat. She clearly likes what she does...

Samantha went on to say she believes Professor Melton is a "really good professor...and a really good person." The positive and "upbeat" attitude displayed by Professor Melton influenced Samantha's perception regarding the personal quality of being "a good person". This friendly and positive nature faculty brought to class stood out for several participants. For example, Isabella described Mr. Thompson as "different" than all of her other professors. She stated:

I don't know what it was but the way he taught us, he was so excited to teach us that it actually stuck. . . You could tell he always wanted to be in class. He was excited to be here. He liked being around. He liked being with us. He was very helpful.

The excitement and energy faculty brought to the classroom created a supportive environment and participants felt faculty were responsive and student oriented.

Participants also described how faculty displayed a high level of care and concern about their overall well-being, which the majority of them found comforting.

"Caring"

Students shared the faculty deeply cared about them and they exhibited a strong desire to help them with academic and personal matters. Classroom observations illustrated this caring nature as faculty talked with students individually as they were struggling with exams, called on students by their first name, and wished students well as the end of class sessions. Participants felt faculty spent a considerable amount of time and

energy getting to know students. Kenton reflects upon how Mr. Thompson displayed a caring attitude:

It would just be the level of involvement, and initiative taken by him [Mr. Thompson]. Like I said, all of my professors make it clear that they're student-oriented. They're worried, they're concerned about what the students are getting out of their classes, what they can do to help further understanding...but just on that personal level...it's one thing to just say hi and be cordial, and another thing to like go above and beyond to know somebody's background, know their interests. And that's probably the difference, the main difference between the two [cordial and personally invested]. So the conversation is a little different.

Kenton, a 22 year-old bi-racial student felt Mr. Thompson was personally invested in his academic and professional success. As previously described, Kenton, an individual in the moratorium or exploration stage, relayed he felt a connection to Mr. Thompson due to their shared ethnicity. It is possible this influenced why Kenton perceived his conversations with Mr. Thompson were on a more personal level. Other participants however agreed that faculty went out of their way to get to know them as individuals. Andi, a White male in the contact stage shared that for some of the participants it was an oddity to have a professor that cared enough to get to know students by name.

... sometimes I feel like teachers don't even know you. They don't even know who you are. They recognize your face. They don't know your name. He knew who you were, your name.

In addition to knowing names and personal interests, faculty were devoted to establishing relationships with the students. More specifically, it was obvious to Elvita, a Hispanic female, that Professor Amy Norton was extending herself in an attempt to get to know the members in her class.

[Professor Norton] made a relationship with us...I would see her go and talk to this person on the other side of the room and that person. I'm like, okay, she's really building relationships with these people and she's knowin'...this one has a

problem with her son. That one, her father's sick. Amy really knows all of us in the class

Thus, faculty spent the time needed to become aware of students' personal interests and motivations. For example, Mr. Thompson required all of the students in his introductory courses to attend a mandatory 10 to 15 minute meeting with him at the beginning of the semester. Participants stated that during these meetings Mr. Thompson not only talked to them about class, he also talked with them about their personal interests and future goals. Mr. Thompson connected class material to the students' chosen major and areas of interest. He also encouraged them to think about their futures and create an academic plan, which allowed them to pursue those interests. In describing how he felt during this conversation Tom, a 19 year-old White male and first year student in the contact stage, said it was a "warm experience" because Mr. Thompson "wanted to help me out so I didn't go down that [wrong] path..." For Tom, the time Mr. Thompson took to talk with him about his future aspirations, and what he wants to accomplish in college, created a supportive experience. Mr. Thompson showed tremendous care in connecting with Tom on issues he was most interested in. Tom also indicated he had introductory meetings with other professors but they were never like the meeting that he had with Mr. Thompson. This meeting was different. In this meeting, rather than focusing on the content of the course, Mr. Thompson focused on assisting Tom reach his personal and academic interests.

Similarly, Kim, a 22 year-old White female in the disintegration stage, shared an experience in which Professor Danielle Melton provided her support outside the confines of the academic context. At the end of the semester, Kim emailed Professor Melton for

advice on how to help a family friend who was suffering from severe depression and suicide ideation. Professor Melton provided Kim with resources and suggestions on how to provide assistance to this individual. In addition, although the semester was over, Professor Melton told Kim that she would keep her cell phone on over the holidays so that she could be contacted at any time. Kim stated:

She was really very helpful and I felt like that was not something that a teacher would necessarily have to do. But she um...had no problem doing it and she was really nice about it. That was a nice touch that I felt like I could go to her for help.

Kim's experience is an example of the connection faculty made with students and their willingness to assist students with issues or problems that occurred outside of their immediate classroom or assigned course work. Michelle, a junior, further sums up the perspective student participants shared regarding the level of commitment and interest faculty displayed in helping students. She states Mr. Thompson was "one of the more effective teachers because of all he put into it...he was really listening and he wasn't just there for a pay check." She went on to say:

He's a teacher that if you went to him with any other kind of issue he would listen, you know what I mean...he's just an all around very helpful person which is the right kind of person for a professor's personality...

Although Michelle felt Mr. Thompson's caring attitude and commitment to students made him an effective professor, she also recognized that some students took advantage of his kindness. More specifically Michelle felt Andi, a White male, took advantage of Mr. Thompson. Michelle witnessed Andi leaving the classroom about a half hour before the end of each class to go to work. This pattern of behavior was confirmed during classroom observations and is presented more fully in Chapter 4. According to Andi, Mr.

Thompson understood why he needed to leave early on many days to go to work.

Michelle however stated, “there’s always a couple of kids where you know that there’s a new guy on campus and the new instructor your gonna try to test him out as much as you can so I just I don’t like that.” Michelle’s criticism of Andi provides insight into her awareness of how students’ took advantage of the caring attitudes of faculty by exhibiting disrespectful behavior in the classroom.

Elvita, a senior and Hispanic female, also believed students took advantage of the kindness and compassion Professor Norton role modeled in the classroom. Elvita indicated students did not show Professor Norton the respect she deserved,

I think some of the kids just didn’t have enough respect for her...like because she was such a good professor and she was so accessible to us, I think some people took advantage of the... like there were girls who would be talking in class and stuff like that, over her, like whispering while she was talking, which is – don’t come to class if your going to do that, in my opinion []...Yeah they were too focused on talking and talking about whatever, like stupid stuff. They were talking about their boyfriends or whatever.

Elvita further indicated she believed Professor Norton did not hold students responsible for their disruptive and disrespectful behavior. She stated:

I think Amy [Professor Norton] let them get away with it, honestly, ‘cause I don’t know if she knows how to deal with it. Who does know the right way to deal with it? But I felt like a lot of times she let people talk over her in class, ya know...She would continue talking and they would be talking and I think she should of- I probably would have put my foot down and be like, “Listen, if you don’t want to be in class, you want to talk, go outside of class. Don’t talk while I’m talking because I put...” because I get offended because I now how much work she puts in.

Elvita shared a sense of frustration in the behavior exhibited by her peers and she believed Professor Norton should have been more direct and forceful in classroom management. Elvita also surmised that Professor Norton may not know how to deal with

the disrespectful behavior presented by students in the classroom. As a student of color, who has a more highly developed sense of her own ethnic identity, Elvita was able to empathize with Professor Norton and convey that she too was offended by the behavior of her peers.

Conversely, rather than holding her peers responsible for their disrespectful behavior, Jennifer, a 20 year-old White female in the contact stage, blamed Professor Melton for confronting student behavior via the email that is presented in its entirety in Chapter 4. Jennifer stated:

Yeah like she is so nice she couldn't say it to our faces but she's the teacher and she's supposed to be the one that's telling us what to do...[]...... I felt like that was something that she should have just said to us called us out in class and said guys I'm teaching can you please stop using your phones cause it made me feel bad afterwards I was using my phone... I felt bad...but I think that's the thing that like made me think differently of her, that she couldn't say it to our faces...

Jennifer indicated that she “felt bad” when the email regarding texting and talking was sent to members of the class. However, she also shared that Professor Melton’s failure to confront student behavior within the context of the classroom environment caused her to “think differently” of Professor Melton. According to Jennifer, after the email was sent, it bothered her that Professor Melton did not publicly address the behavior, even when her peers continued to text and talk in class. In fact, two additional White participants in the contact stage, expressed disappointment in Professor Melton’s utilization of an email to condemn their behavior and they justified their texting and talking because Professor Melton did not confront them in a manner they deemed professional. Samantha, a 21 year-old White female in the contact stage, felt Professor Melton’s method of confrontation was “inappropriate” and she was disappointed that Professor Melton did

not say something directly to the students. Samantha felt her professor's inability to confront the class was "immature" and she expected that Professor Melton "would put her foot down." Unlike Jennifer however, who felt remorse for her behavior, Samantha admitted that "out of spite" she did not stop texting people in class. When talking about the email, Samantha justifies her behavior.

I mean there are some people that their phone goes off every day and I mean I'm the president of the human development club so a lot of my text messages were to [students name] next to me about like we're planning a trip ... [] ... I just felt it was inappropriate that she couldn't just say it to our face she had to send us a nasty email after class... [] ... I think out of spite I just did it even more just because you're the professor you need to put your foot down and say you know that this is disrespectful stop it... I mean it just didn't have any backing to it because she just couldn't say it out right and I mean everyone was just annoyed like they were like, 'oh my God did you get the email that Danielle sent'...

Samantha blatantly disregarded Professor Melton's email. As White individuals in the contact stage, Jennifer and Samantha shared the sentiment of feeling disappointment in Professor Melton's failure to personally confront the class. They also failed to take much, if any, responsibility for their disrespectful behavior or hold their peers responsible for texting and talking in class. It is possible these two participants believed a White faculty member would be able to more effectively address student behavior, thus they blamed Professor Melton for her inability to control her classroom.

Although several participants presented they or their peers displayed disruptive or disrespectful behavior toward faculty, the majority of the participants perceived faculty demonstrated a genuine interest in them as individuals and a passion for teaching. These personal qualities of the faculty generated opportunities for the promotion of student-faculty interactions based on mutual respect, support, and encouragement. As the third

theme describes, for the majority of the participants this created a sense of comfort and safety within the classroom environment.

“It was a Warm Experience”

Participants were asked to describe “what” they experienced and “how” they felt as they reflected upon their interactions with African American faculty within the formal classroom environment. More specifically, participants described the active learning techniques utilized by faculty. They also shared how faculty fostered a safe learning environment, which enabled them to feel comfortable sharing their opinions and experiences in the classroom. Beth and Tom, in the initial stage of White identity development, captured the essence of how participants experienced the environment as they described it terms of it being “warm”. Tom stated:

It was a good experience, ...it was a warm experience...he [Mr. Thompson] was one of those teachers that was laid back and you could talk to him he would help you...

Similarly, Beth said:

I loved it. His [Mr. Thompson] class was my favorite class this semester. I felt very comfortable. He included me in all his discussions. He included everybody. So in his class it was a feeling of warmth right when you walked in. It was very comforting.

As Beth and Tom indicate, participants felt faculty were approachable and they created a classroom environment that made students feel included and comfortable. The “warmth” of the classroom environment is further clarified as participants described three areas that illuminate their experiences. Participants felt faculty focused on what the students needed in order to learn, utilized real world examples in order to present information, and

encouraged students to share their opinions and experiences. Therefore, this theme is divided into three sub-themes; 1) “It was about us”, 2) “Makes it real”, and 3) “It was a safe place”.

“It was about us”

Participants described faculty as willing to change the focus of a class, adapt a syllabus during the semester, allow students to design a class project, seek student feedback, and incorporate different activities in an effort to create an engaging learning environment. In other words, participants described what faculty did that made them believe faculty focused on student success. Kenton, a 22-year old biracial junior of African American and White decent, in the stage of moratorium or exploration, summed up this perception:

Like from day one, he said it was about us. Throughout the semester he backed it up too...all the projects were based on our ideas. They were about getting our background knowledge, our interest involved in the class and seeing how that applies...

As Kenton suggests, participants described the active learning techniques faculty used to create an environment that encouraged students to be active participants in the classroom. In addition to lecturing with the use of power point, faculty utilized on-line projects, case studies, role-playing, videos, reflective journal assignments, group projects, exams, and papers. For example, Mr. Thompson adapted a standard departmental course syllabus to include an online simulation in two of his courses. This simulation allowed students to compete against one another as they invested in a virtual stock market. Mr. Thompson also modified his upper division course in the third week of the fall semester by requiring students to select a national charitable foundation for which to raise money. This class

project enabled students to implement theories presented in class as they developed actual fundraising events for a children's charity.

Students appreciated the level of time and commitment faculty gave toward developing creative projects that stimulated learning. When describing her appreciation for what Professor Norton did to make learning fun and engaging, Elvita stated:

I like the fact that she really did innovative things...She really went the extra mile. That takes a lot of time and effort to do those kind of things.

Elvita understood the time and commitment required of faculty to develop creative teaching and learning opportunities for students. Two seniors, Isabella and Mark, further described the commitment and flexibility Mr. Thompson employed in the classroom in order to create an engaging environment.

According to Isabella, Mr. Thompson created an environment that she termed "open learning". For example, on days in which students were not all that talkative, or fully prepared, Mr. Thompson utilized PowerPoint presentations. However on days when students were more actively engaged he would alter his teaching approach. Isabella liked the environment because it often felt like "a conversation" was occurring. She describes Mr. Thompson's approach:

I liked how it was very open learning. It was very give and take. Days that we weren't being very open in class, he would step up and be like, "Okay. Well, we'll go for the PowerPoint today since you guys are being a little bit quiet...But then other days if we got talking, he wouldn't use the PowerPoint at all but he would still find ways to teach us all of the things that were in the PowerPoint's just like through our interactions between us and him. I liked that a lot because it's a lot easier and it's a lot less stressful. It doesn't feel like you're in class. It just feels like a conversation.

As Isabella indicated, Mr. Thompson adjusted his method of teaching in order to meet student needs. Mark further stated that on days when students came to Mr. Thompson's class unprepared they were given the first 15 or 20 minutes to read the material. Mark stated that by doing this, Mr. Thompson created an environment in which everyone would get involved and no one was left out of the discussion. Mark, a White male, also felt that by doing this, Mr. Thompson not only expressed that students needed to be actively engaged, he treated them with respect.

It would just be like, "Come on guys. You've got to do the reading. You can't expect me to sit here and talk by myself." And then he would just be like, "You know what, just open your books and just read it right now and then we'll talk. You read it right now; 15-20 minutes, and then we'll talk about the subject," and everyone would get involved. He never really made us feel lesser than him or anything like that. He understood that some people just sometimes can't do the homework, or choose not to do the homework.

As Mark stated, he never felt Mr. Thompson belittled or punished students for coming to class unprepared rather he gave them a few minutes of class time to read the material so all members of the class could fully participate in the discussion. Mr. Thompson created a positive environment for all of the students and although he expressed that he wanted students to come to class prepared, he did not forego a class session because students did not read the material, unlike some of Isabella's other professors. Isabella reflects upon the difference:

...it was just a very positive environment for us all to be in and he was very like, "Okay. So you didn't read this time. Next time you will. We'll learn about this today instead" He would never let – I've had professors like kick everyone in class out because they didn't read. I've experienced it.... – Isabella, 21 year-old bi-racial female, senior, unexamined ethnic identity

According to Isabella, Mr. Thompson's flexibility created a student-centered

environment that promoted learning and students felt they were an essential part of the learning process. In addition, unlike some of her other experiences with faculty, Isabella felt Mr. Thompson took great care to ensure he was teaching students regardless of whether or not they came to class fully prepared. Thus, the flexibility and commitment Mr. Thompson displayed made Isabella feel that she mattered and her learning was important.

Although Mark and Isabella presented the benefits of a faculty members willingness to be flexible and accommodating, two participants voiced disappointment in faculty adjusting the syllabus and canceling assignments. According to Samantha, a 21 year-old White female in the contact stage, Professor Melton failed to meet the high expectations she originally set forth in the class syllabus. Samantha stated Professor Melton had a reputation for dropping assignments and although Samantha admitted that the dropped assignments lowered some of her personal stress, she shared a sense of disappointment because her professor did not hold herself to the high expectations that she initially placed on the class.

At the beginning it was really stressful because she has said she had like so many things planned for us, so many big papers so many essays, so many tests but then... I like other people were like, she'll drop half of that stuff by the end of the semester...which she did...[] ...I just wish she would like go on beyond my expectations of her and just actually be able to complete a class...and the fact that she like missed three weeks of class for like her dissertation and then...[]...a conference and it was just kind of like, felt like it was unfair to me because like I'm paying to go to school, to be in this class that I have to take to get into the second part of this class, and she's missed three weeks of class...[]...she didn't go beyond the expectations of what I thought the class would be

As Samantha indicated, she set intentionally low expectations for Professor Melton from the very start. Samantha was in the initial stage of her White identity, and it is possible

that her low expectations of Professor Melton stemmed from an unconscious evaluation of Professor Melton's abilities based on the negative stereotypes of African Americans in society. According to Samantha, she expected Professor Melton to drop assignments over the course of the semester, and when that happened, Samantha's low expectations and opinion of Professor Melton went unchallenged, leaving her disappointed in her professor. Similar to Samantha, a second participant, Jack, a 22 year-old White male also in the contact stage, expressed the sense of disappointment because he believed Mr. Thompson was easily swayed by students to alter assignments. Jack believed Mr. Thompson could have asserted his authority a bit more.

You know he would just side with us and like give us what we want instead of just you know... he has the power... he's the professor..."

As Jack reflected upon Mr. Thompson's willingness to give in to student requests, he also recognizes he and his peers were disrespectful because they did not come to class prepared. Jack alluded to feelings of regret:

I mean, I think personally, I speak for everyone in the class we could of all come to the class a little more prepared to like help him out a little bit so we could...when he'd ask a questions we'd just leave him hanging out to dry but you know that's what I'd do differently...definitely cause I mean he's being respectful to us I feel like we should be respectful to him and actually prepare for his class...do what he asks... – Jack, 22 year old White male, senior, contact stage

Although participants may not have come to class fully prepared, as described, participants felt faculty remained focused and responsive to the students in order for learning to occur. In addition to remaining flexible and creating opportunities for students to be fully engaged in their learning, faculty provided students with the tools needed to be academically successful. For example, Professor Norton provided students with study

guides and options to earn extra credit. According to Ariela, a 21 year-old Hispanic female, the use of study guides enabled Professor Norton to be transparent in order for students to be successful on an exam. Elvita, a senior, further stated Professor Norton encouraged students to seek out academic resources by administering extra course credit.

According to Elvita:

She [Professor Norton] accepted all kind of forms of learning, you know....like if the writing center wasn't working for me and I went to [the tutoring center] instead or I went to a professor that I had a relationship with that helped more... or a student, ya know...she really, "Okay, you're getting extra help. I'm going to give you credit for it.

As Elvita stated, Professor Norton supported students' receiving academic support from various resources as she gave credit when students sought academic help. For Elvita, Professor Norton's flexibility proved how student-centered she was as a professor. Elvita also believed the support and commitment Professor Norton displayed to her academic success was "a kind of gift".

...this is a kind of gift I think...she would give us points for going to the writing center and seeking extra help, which was awesome because I do that anyways and for her to give me credit because I'm doing somethin' – its kind of high school-ish a little bit. College they don't do that for you really at all. So I thought that was like, wow, she's really [chuckles] trying to help us out. She's on our side.

As Ariela and Elvita indicate, participants perceived faculty as student-centered because they provided students with the resources and support needed to be successful. In addition to developing creative learning activities, being flexible, and supporting students in their use of academic resources, participants stated faculty were concerned about students fully grasping the concepts presented in class so they could apply that knowledge.

As Lee, a 21 year-old White male stated, when lecturing Professor Melton spent a considerable amount of time reviewing power point slides and answering student questions in order to ensure students were absorbing the material.

...when it came time for her to lecture, she was the best at that. I thought ya know that she'd always talk about what was on the projector or whatever and she made sure that we were all caught up. She would never like – I used to have these professors that would always show it, give us 20 seconds to write down a page and then move on. She wasn't like that. Like I said, she'd take the whole class time on one slide if she could....That was probably the best trait that she had as a professor that I really loved. She was very much – she'd always make sure that if anybody had a question to ask like it would be asked before she'd move on....

Professor Melton displayed a genuine desire to ensure students' questions were fully explored in class. Isabella, a senior, also indicated Mr. Thompson was just as concerned that students fully understood the material. More specifically, faculty prepared students to integrate what they were learning into every day practice.

All he [Mr. Thompson] really wanted was for us to understand it [the course material]. Other professors, they just want us to learn it so we pass the test. He actually wanted us to learn it. Like he always said that his class wasn't about getting an A or a B or a C in it. It was about understanding it and learning to apply it in real life situations...[]...he cared more about us understanding the concepts than it was like you can spout off all 15 definitions from Chapter 2...

As participants described, faculty were committed to creating classroom environments that met the needs of students. Participants also felt faculty were willing to do whatever it took to help them be academically successful. Finally, faculty were focused on ensuring students fully understood the material so that they could integrate theory and practice.

The next sub-theme presents what faculty did to integrate real-world situations into classroom learning and how it helped students relate to course material.

“Makes it real for us”

Participants stated faculty integrated real-life experiences and newsworthy items into their teaching. Course topics were brought to life in three significant ways. First, faculty used active learning techniques such as videos, reflective assignments, case studies, and group projects. Second, faculty shared their own personal experiences as examples in the classroom. Finally, faculty encouraged students to weave in their experiences and interests into class discussions and assignments in an attempt to connect theory and practice. All of these methods made topics more relevant and participants described how it made a difference in their learning. Elvita reflected upon how this occurred:

I liked how Amy [Professor Norton] took the topics and made them real ...It wasn't just something we were reading in a book. She made the AIDS topic personal for us, for all of us to understand. She made the um...LGBT youth – she takes videos that are relevant to our topics and makes it real for us and gives us a connection with these people, with the populations that were going to work with as human development professionals

Kim also described how Professor Norton's use of learning tools helped her to connect theory and practice.

She [Professor Norton] brought in a lot of outside information. She brought in a lot of videos and documentaries and everything, and taught us about specific populations. We would watch a movie about something and then she would have us relate back to different theories and everything. We learned a lot about theoretical perspectives and um...we kinda learned how to process the whole person and everything, the family, the race, the religion, the age, the gender, the sex, all that kind of information, and learning how to not just see a person for one aspect of their lives but just be able to see the person as a daughter and all these different aspects that could impact a person

As seniors Elvita and Kim both described that by linking theory in course readings to relevant learning tools, such as videos, it was as if a bridge closed the gap between theory

and practical application. The utilization of such learning tools helped Elvita and Kim prepare for their futures as human development professionals. For younger students, however, the link between classroom theory and real-world examples served to keep students attention. Tom, a first year student stated;

The easiest way for me to be motivated is to not be bored and he [Mr. Thompson] would do his best to make sure the class isn't boring, he would stick to the topic but he would relate it to the outside world like the outside the classroom with different chains of restaurants different stores it, it would keep our attention. He would show us a clip of a video every once in awhile of something that relates to the class just so it wouldn't seem like a constant lecture and that would keep me motivated at least I wouldn't be falling asleep in class. – Tom, 19 year-old White male, first year student, contact stage

Regardless of how the integration of theory and practice was perceived (i.e., connecting theory to real world examples or keep one's attention) by Elvita, Kim, and Tom to enhance learning, all participants were provided with alternative learning tools, which served to make the class material more interesting and relevant.

By providing tools such as video clips or referring to informative news items, students also became more aware of topical issues relevant to their course work. As Quinton, a 21 year-old African American male in initial level of ethnic identity development indicated, Mr. Thompson's continued reference to newsworthy issues prompted students to read the newspaper and watch the news.

He'd encourage us to read articles or the New York Times or Times magazine or watch 60 Minutes 'cause almost every week and every chapter he would always refer to 60 minutes or the New York Times so it made some people start watching 60 minutes as the semester went. Eventually he'd refer to it again... He actually pulls you in when he's teaching sometimes... 'cause when he brings in those examples from the newspaper or the documentaries it makes you interested in more

Connecting course work with real-world examples made the topics more intriguing. Mr. Thompson took the concept of integrating theory and practice to a new level in the upper division course he taught. According to Paul, a 21 year-old White senior at East Coast University, Mr. Thompson was his first professor to focus on learning by having students actively participate in a project with a concrete and real product as the goal. Paul indicated Mr. Thompson taught them “not everything is in the book...” and there are things out in the world such as fundraising for a national children’s charity, where one can take concepts from class and put them toward something positive and real.

....He really was the first professor that it was like, okay not everything is in the book...there’s things out in the world... the whole [class project] thing you could take the concepts you learn in class and put it towards something positive so the things we were learning in class through the lectures and the power points and all that other stuff we were able to put into [the children’s charity]...and at the end when you get to present that check its nice to see... - Paul, 21 year old White male, Senior

In addition to using multi-media and projects as opportunities to generate interest in the course work, faculty shared personal experiences, which also made course material more “real” and relevant for the students. For Matthew, Mr. Thompson’s use of personal events and storytelling helped him learn the material.

...he definitely helped me because I remember a lot from lectures. So like when I had questions on the test and I’m like, “Okay, well, I remember his story about this.” So I’m like “Okay, this is the answer.” – Matthew, 20 year old White male, Junior, contact stage

The sharing of personal experiences created an intimate environment that allowed students to feel connected to their assignments. For example, Kim, a participant in the stage of disintegration, shared her experience in an African American Literature course

also taught by an African American instructor. Kim reflected upon the significance of this experience:

..she [African American faculty member] had so many personal experiences that it came more naturally to her to teach a class. And she was so passionate about it and so engaged in it that it really was very interesting...she really got in depth a lot... Bringing her firsthand experiences of racial segregation and everything, especially hearing about her mom and her grandmother – she was probably around 50 or something. So, she's seen her share of different racial situations. So when she was telling...she talked about how she used to not be able to go to certain restaurants and stuff, even her. And it just make it more real life and it really helped to relate it to the readings and everything and made it a much more interesting class...She would sit on the desk and she would get people so engaged and just he way she talked about it , she was so passionate about it.

The personal accounts and passion regarding the subject made a significant impact on Kim's experience and learning in the classroom. As a Jewish woman, in the disintegration stage of White identity development, Kim was receptive to learning about the racial disparity of Blacks and Whites in American history. Hearing the personal accounts of her African American instructor provided her with a context that she may not receive from a White faculty member.

In addition to faculty sharing personal experiences to enhance learning, participants describe how they were encouraged to integrate their own personal interests into course assignments. Kenton stated:

The thing I like about it, it was that he was just encouraging us to apply it to what we were doing. I did extra credit assignments that were just research in the aquaculture facilities on the business side. Um...You didn't have to get bogged down in just memorizing terms and definitions and everything. It was, all right here's the information. Let's apply it to what you're doing and what you're going to be doing. –Kenton, 22 year-old bi-racial male, Junior

In addition to being encouraged to apply personal interests to coursework, participants also stated as faculty facilitated class discussions, they often wove student interests into

conversations. As Andi stated, once Mr. Thompson knew something about a students' personal interests or goals, he would always refer to them at appropriate times in class.

...ya know the thing about him is when something came up that had to do with something you've told him in the past, he'd go right to you. Ya know what I mean...he asked us at the beginning of the year, "What do you all want to do?"...I told him I wanted to be a cop but I wanted to minor in professional studies. I want to own a business. And he was like, "Yeah, that's cool." He always remembered that...like a girl wanted to open a salon. He'd tell her, when salons came up in certain things and hair products and stuff like that, he pointed out like on the graphs and what to invest in and how it worked. He'd always remember certain things you told him.

Beth, a sophomore in the contact stage, further stated that by continuously referring to the participants' interests and goals Mr. Thompson displayed how much he cared about students. Beth stated:

He cared enough to know some extras in people's life and he would use that as an example when talking to them and talking to the class and trying to get everybody involved. And he'd say, "Well, what do you think about his?", or, "What do you feel about this?"

Participants stated the faculty often asked for their opinions and perspectives. According to Levina, a bi-racial senior, when Mr. Thompson asked her for her thoughts on a subject she was excited to share her experience. She stated,

I was more excited [by] the fact that I know what he's talking about because I do it [banking industry] in real life. So everything he would bring up in subject, I had something to say and I was so excited...I've got something to say because I've read it or somebody told me or I seen it somewhere...I know what I'm talking about

As this passage illustrates, Levina felt confident in her ability to contribute in class by sharing her experiences and opinions. Mr. Thompson created an environment for students to make a strong connection between the materials presented in class with real world examples. The next sub-theme explores what faculty did that led the participants to feel

that the classroom environment was a safe place to openly share their personal opinions and experiences in class.

“It was a safe place”

Participants described how faculty supported and valued their participation by encouraging them to share their experiences and perceptions. As Kim, a 22 year-old White female in the disintegration stage stated, the classroom was a “safe place to express your opinions and ask questions”. According to Levina, a 21 year-old biracial female in moratorium or exploration, when students spoke up in class, Mr. Thompson supported them by stating, “That’s awesome. That’s good,” This verbal support created an environment in which she felt comfortable contributing in class. Levina also stated, when students spoke up in class, Mr. Thompson thanked them for their contribution. In this manner, Mr. Thompson displayed a genuine appreciation for student participation. For Levina this also created an environment in which she felt she was a valued participant in the learning environment. In addition to showing students appreciation for their participation, Quinton, a 21 year-old African American male, stated Mr. Thompson would never negate a students’ comment, rather he would weave their thoughts and perceptions into the class discussion.

...he liked the class to get involved and to... give their input in the class and stuff like that...[]... he wouldn’t like bash your idea or anything like that... he would just ya know try to fit your idea in what’s going on...

By including all of the students’ thoughts and viewpoints in the class discussion, Mr. Thompson created a learning environment in which participants felt they were an

important part in the learning process. According to Isabella, a senior, Mr. Thompson created an environment that made it safe for everyone to participate.

But it was one of those classes you could tell people actually liked going to. It wasn't boring. It was just like exciting, a fun class and you could tell. Most of my classes you have people that like don't talk, you just sit there and you learn. But in this class, every person would give their opinions about things and you could tell it was a very open atmosphere. No one felt nervous. It was just open. There was a girl in my class that I've had like four classes with her before. She never talks. But in that class she would open up... and I thought that showed a lot about him too. He made sure we all felt comfortable enough to agree or disagree with whatever we were learning or his opinion or something

Isabella indicates Mr. Thompson promoted an environment that encouraged all students to share their differing opinions and he was very careful not to insert his own personal opinions into classroom discussions. Andi, a White male, further stated Mr. Thompson “just stood in the middle” when students were engaged in classroom debates. Andi believed Mr. Thompson's ability to remain impartial in the classroom was beneficial because it encouraged students to openly share their perspectives in class, critically analyze information, and formulate their own opinions. Thus, by encouraging students to express themselves, and by weaving their differing view-points into the classroom discussion, Mr. Thompson created a learning environment in which students felt they mattered and they were valued members of the class.

In addition to making students feel valued by incorporating their opinions and perceptions into class discussions, faculty were respectful when challenging students to reframe their thinking and use of language. Elvita, a 23 year-old Hispanic female, shares her interaction with Professor Norton after she naively used a derogatory term in class.

“So I think she's really open to listening and she's nonjudgmental and she really um...tries to point out your strengths and validate your good points. And she...I

like the way she corrected me. I could notice sometimes when she corrected me. Like one time I said um... 'Islam guys' or something like that, something not politically correct and she was like, 'Oh, Muslim men'. You know what I mean... she helps correct you but not in a way that puts you down or anything. Like when you say something that could be offensive, she says it in a way that she thinks in her opinion is like a more neutral way to say it and I like that... ya know... 'cause she's kind of leading through example"

For Elvita, the way Professor Norton approached her and challenged her to think about the use of language made her feel supported and respected. It is also apparent that Elvita felt safe and comfortable during this interaction. As Elvita indicated, Professor Norton taught by "leading through example" as she exemplified the methods in which human development professionals should educate others about their preconceived notions, stereotypes, and use of language.

For one participant, Ariela, a 21 year-old Hispanic female, in addition to feeling she could openly express herself in class, she described how meaningful it was to have her ethnic identity included in the course curriculum. According to Ariela, during high school she experienced feeling isolated and alienated when an African American teacher failed to recognize the Hispanic experience when presenting information about diverse populations. In Professor Norton's class however, all ethnicities were represented in the curriculum and Ariel states she felt included and comfortable.

Yeah, I did feel different because I felt that Amy [Professor Norton] focused like – she talked about everything, and she included all of us. She didn't just neglect all the Hispanics and White. She talked about like everybody; the Blacks, the Whites, the Hispanics. All the ethnicities were included"

As Ariela indicated, when the experiences of Hispanic men and women were acknowledged in the classroom, she felt that her personal experience mattered in the learning process. For Ariela and many of the other participants, the classroom was an

inclusive and welcoming environment where they could fully participate, learn about themselves, and prepare to live in a global society. The fourth and final theme explores how the participants' interactions with African American faculty, in the context of the classroom environment, shaped their learning.

"I Learned A Lot"

Participants indicated their participation in class and their interactions with African American faculty provided them with the opportunity to examine their personal values, beliefs and attitudes. For many, the experience of being in a class taught by, and interacting with, African American faculty allowed them to expand their global perspectives, experience personal growth, and give back to their community.

Expanded global perspectives

When asked to reflect upon their interaction with faculty and their experience in the classroom, several participants indicated they developed a new awareness to global concerns. More specifically participants in professional studies courses described a more developed sense of personal responsibility and contribution toward the awareness of global and societal issues. Participants in the human development courses discussed an expanded appreciation and understanding of multiculturalism, which influenced their professional and personal development.

Awareness of global and societal issues. Participants in Mr. Thompson' introductory professional studies courses stated they were exposed to topics that are relevant to understanding the complexity of a global economy. Tom, a 19 year-old White

first year student, majoring in computer science, indicated Mr. Thompson had a profound impact on his appreciation for other areas of study. Tom stated his experience in the course enabled him to begin connecting his coursework to a broader perspective as he was learning how the field of professional studies “makes up the world.” Similarly, Quinton, a 21 year-old African American sophomore, indicated that his awareness of global economic issues expanded due to being in Mr. Thompson’s class.

I’ve become a lot more interested in what’s going on around me....like I have, I try to read a lot more, what he reads because he’s always knowledgeable yeah I’ve just become a lot more interested in what’s around what’s going on...around the world...economically....

As Quinton stated, in addition to an expanded general awareness, his personal interest in global issues expanded due to the influence of interacting Mr. Thompson. Michelle, a 24 year-old White female, further spoke about how Mr. Thompson influenced the development of her self-confidence and her ability to formulate and support her own opinions.

I guess I’m really kind of ignorant to all the subjects we learned in there except for the accounting...[].but he kind of lead me on a path to create my own opinions about things, um...learning about capitalism and things like that, things that I really had no idea what they were or how they pertained to me and you know he helped you create opinions...

Finally, Kenton, a 22 year-old transfer student, who grew up in “an anti-capitalist” household, described participating in Mr. Thompson’ course as, “slowly peeling back all that apprehension” and “a helpful exercise” as he explored different perspectives presented in the classroom. For Kenton, examining his chosen major of aquaculture, through the lens of a professional studies course, was as he stated, “coming to terms with the ways of the world.” Kenton indicated he and Mr. Thompson had several

conversations regarding the concept of sustainability from both an environmental and business perspective. Kenton stated sustainability is “just being socially and environmentally responsible period” and the professional studies model is defined as “being socially and environmentally responsible enough to keep the business going”. He further indicated that his conversations with Mr. Thompson challenged his personal belief that big business is not a sustainable entity.

We went back and forth about that and just how they [definitions of sustainability] conflict and just from a business side trying to meet, mostly just to satisfy public opinion because especially its just trendy now to be green on top of anybody looking at your books

As Kenton indicates, his beliefs and values were challenged in a manner that allowed him to examine them from the context of a “real world” application. Kenton, Michelle, Quinton and Tom all expressed their interactions with the faculty member, Mr. Thompson, in the and outside of the classroom environment, provided them with the opportunity to develop self-confidence in expressing opinions, examine personal values and beliefs, and understand how they can contribute to a global society.

Multicultural awareness. Material presented in the human development courses provided participants with the opportunity to discuss issues of diversity (i.e., race, racism, cultural differences, sexual orientation, poverty) in a safe and supportive environment. Participants in these classrooms expressed that as a result of their participation in class and their interactions with faculty, they became more knowledgeable in the areas of multiculturalism and their opinions and behaviors changed. For example, Elvita, a 23 year-old Hispanic senior in the stage of achieved ethnic identity, states that she became more cognizant of the power of language,

I think I'm more aware – from watching her, I'm more aware of how I want to say things um...and I have to...I think she made me aware that you really have to be careful of how you say things because people can interpret your words however they want and if your trying to get a message across and you say something that someone interprets as offensive, the wall goes up ya know...and your not going to be able to reach through them. She never said anything to me about this, but just from me watching her and the way she talks to people, she showed me like a better way of communicating...

As a student of color, Elvita is at the stage of her identity development in which she wants to emulate the behaviors of her professor of color in order to better communicate her opinions and perspectives. Kim, a Jewish women in the stage of disintegration, further expresses she has become more aware of the use of language and she recognizes that she has grown in her ability to critically think before engaging in hurtful language and racist jokes.

I feel like maybe I'm just becoming more aware of other peoples struggles and everything. And it's easy. Sometimes I can find myself kind of falling into stereotyping I guess...I think the thing that's changed the most about me is I really, at this point, can take a step back before saying and doing something, and just kind of processing it and critically thinking about what is going to – like saying a racist joke or something....

Similar to Elvita and Kim, Ariela shared her experience in the classroom had a profound impact on her awareness of multicultural issues. Ariela, a 21 year-old Hispanic female, grew up in a sheltered environment in which she was not provided the opportunity to learn about issues such as race and sexual orientation. Her experience in Professor Norton's class however began to broaden her perspectives. In describing her sheltered up bringing Ariela stated:

I felt that I was like – I didn't know a lot about the world. I felt that I now... I should definitely start reading and watching the news and seeing everything because I feel like everything she [Professor Norton] talked about did happen

once or is occurring now, and I'm not familiar with it because I'm just in a box. I just focus on my getting As and Bs. I really don't look outside the world

Ariela's experience in class, and her interactions with Professor Norton, provided her with new knowledge. It was due to this new knowledge that she was able to critically examine the perceptions and beliefs that have been instilled in her due to strong cultural values within her family. As a result of being in Professor Norton's class, Ariel stated:

I feel like I understand where people are comin from now...cause before its just like what my dad said...like gay people are bad, like they shouldn't do things and now like talking with Amy [Professor Norton] and seein...watch'n the videos she gave in classes its like there's more to than just being a gay person. And I feel like they're just like any other person.

As Ariela indicated, her perspective of the world changed as she interacted with Professor Norton and as she began to delve deeper into the course material.

She further stated:

Now I think, now I look around my surroundings and I'm like, "Wow, I learned that in class so I've heard about that". Now like when people talk about it I can respond to it...[]...my doors are open now to these things.

As Ariela described, after taking the course and interacting with Professor Norton, she felt more open to issues of diversity and she recognized her awareness provided her with the self-confidence needed to express her new viewpoints. For example, Ariela was raised in a strict Hispanic home and her father was homophobic. After taking Professor Norton's class Ariela was able to articulate her ability to talk about the subject of sexual orientation with her father.

So my household is like no gays allowed basically so bein' out here at East Coast University and taking courses, I feel like I am more open so when he is saying stuff I can be like, 'back it up' ya know... I say my opinion even though he gets upset...

Ariela recognized the knowledge she acquired in class allowed her to begin to formulate her own opinions. More importantly, she stated she gained the self-confidence to express herself and challenge the opinions of her father. In the next sub-theme participants describe how their diverse interactions, with course work and their faculty member, informed their personal growth, which influenced their behavior.

Personal growth

Participants described how they began to self-examine their abilities, beliefs, and behaviors due to their interactions with African American faculty within the context of the classroom. For example, when asked what she learned over the course of the semester, Isabella, a 21 year-old biracial female in the stage of unexamined ethnic identity, stated she developed an awareness of who she is as a newly emerging leader.

I learned a lot about like my own style, how if later on I decided to be a manager how I would lead and how like...why I'm a follower sometimes and why I'm a leader sometimes...[]...I learned more about myself personally in that class than I did in other classes ever...[] It could possibly be why I like it so much – Isabella, 21 year-old bi-racial female, Senior

As Isabella indicated, she enjoyed the class because she was afforded the opportunity to analyze her personal style and assess her abilities to be a leader and future manager.

Similarly, Kim and Sheila, stated due to their experience they felt more prepared to enter the field of human development. Kim, a Jewish woman in the stage of disintegration, indicated Professor Norton helped her to think about how she would confront situations of prejudice and stereotypes as a professional. Sheila, the only participant in the stage of reintegration, further stated Professor Melton taught her “how to interact with people on a more personal level.” Sheila also stated Professor Melton’s supportive nature “taught me

more about [human development] and made me want to go out and now do it, since I'm almost to that point." As Isabella, Kim and Sheila indicated, the knowledge gained through their interactions with faculty, in the context of the classroom, better prepared them for their future professional roles. This preparation included examining and altering personal behavior.

Kim, for example, indicated as a result of taking courses taught by Professor Norton and Professor Melton she began to "really look at people in my life and myself and...see more of the broader picture of people and not ...pass quick judgments." This awareness also transcended to Kim examining her behavior when confronted with stereotypes and hurtful language. The following passage exemplifies how Professor Norton and Professor Melton influenced Kim's thinking and behavior:

I've been faced with, obviously in my life, a million different situations where I've heard awful things said about Jews and everything. I don't know...having them [Professor Norton and Professor Melton] share their own life experiences and how they dealt with them has really helped me to think about my own life and think about how I deal with situations and how that makes me feel, and how I'm uncomfortable with not dealing with situations. They've helped me to think of the words to deal with those kinds of situations... – Kim, 22 year-old White female, senior, disintegration

Kim stated that as Professor Norton and Professor Melton shared their experiences and challenges in the classroom, she was afforded the opportunity to critically analyze her own personal experiences. Kim further described how Professor Norton's class in particular gave her the knowledge and self-confidence to confront her peers:

I feel like I've become more involved. When my friend the other day said something, and I was like "You know what? That's not something that I really –". I really became more active and I think that this class helped me to kinda have... a something like... a structure behind me, really having the words to use to be able to be like, "All right, that's not really how you talk about it. And I really

would appreciate you not saying that.” And then if they are like, “Oh, whatever. I’m not serious.” Ya know...it’s easier...this class made me want to stick to my guns more, I guess. – Kim, 22 year-old White female, senior, disintegration

As Kim illustrates, her thinking and behavior changed as a result of being in Professor Norton’s class. Similarly, Andi, a 23 year-old White male in the contact stage, shared that during the fall 2009 semester Mr. Thompson gave him concrete advice and taught him how to be a better manager of a local franchise. Andi shared a personnel matter with Mr. Thompson and over the course of several conversations Mr. Thompson gave him strong advice on how to treat employees with respect. Andi explained that his behavior, as it relates to managing his temper, changed due to Mr. Thompson’s guidance.

He explained to me my methods with the employees are wrong and ya know, I got a positive reaction out of my employees now that I don’t just burst out.... He helped me out with how I treat employees, ya know what I mean, basically maybe how I treat people in general because I always flip out and yell. I have a very bad temper. But maybe like him telling me its humiliating and degrading doing it in front of people ya know maybe that’s better

Andi indicates that due to his conversations with Mr. Thompson, his behavior in and outside of his responsibilities as a manager, was examined and altered. Mr. Thompson’s conversations with participants were often directed toward helping students in a concrete and supportive manner.

Kenton, a 23 year-old biracial male in the stage of moratorium or exploration, described these interactions with Mr. Thompson as “connected support”. For Kenton, interacting with Mr. Thompson and experiencing “connected support” had a profound impact on his transition to East Coast University.

I probably talk to my professors more. It probably helped me to get into the position I am with the job that I’m going to have lined up for the summer working [within the fishing industry]. So just having that connected support has definitely

helped me transfer from the West Coast, from earlier learning experiences, like the earlier ideas, just all the transfer over to where I'm going now. Probably not until you just asked did I think about how much it impacted that.

Levina, a 21 year-old senior also in moratorium or exploration, further described how the support Mr. Thompson provided had a significant impact on her plans for the future.

Over the course of the fall semester, Levina and Mr. Thompson had several conversations about furthering her education. It was not until her conversations with Mr. Thompson had she ever contemplated continuing her education to pursue a Ph.D. Mr. Thompson talked with her about teaching assistantships to offset the cost of her graduate education and he offered to help her set up lunches with faculty at different institutions and write letters of recommendation. Mr. Thompson extended himself to counsel Levina and provide her with guidance. Levina stated:

So I felt like – I was like, ‘Oh my God. He just gave me like a genie’s bottle.’ He just rubbed it off for me, it was good. So every time we talk about it – he used to always bring something in to light up my eyes. – Levina, 21 year-old, biracial female, senior, moratorium or exploration

For Levina, Mr. Thompson provided her with a gift of awareness and a connection to the possibility of a new future filled with meaningful aspirations that until this point she was completely unaware of. According to Levina, as they met during the semester, Mr. Thompson helped her plan for her education and assisted her maneuver the graduate school application process. Although it was overwhelming for Levina to contemplate continuing on with her education and all that it provided for her future she stated, “I felt like he like boost me up...And I’m like, I can actually picture this...” Levina’s interactions with Mr. Thompson afforded her the opportunity to explore new possibilities.

Community service

Mr. Thompson's upper-division professional studies course focused on integrating theory and practical application. When asked to talk about what they had learned due to their participation in class, several participants referenced the importance of giving back to the community. For example Paul, a 21 year-old senior in the contact stage, found personal satisfaction working on a project that made a difference in another person's life. He indicated, by working on the fundraising project, he became more aware of "other people's worries and concerns". He also stated that it "was kind of eye opening to me to think, oh my God other families go through this..." Paul realized that by putting in a little time and initiative, he was able "to make something happen" for someone else. Thus, Paul's awareness of his good fortune as well as a more developed sense of altruism was achieved through this class project. Jack, a 22 year-old senior, who also participated in the fundraising project further stated:

It kind of makes me want to get more involved now like with community or something like that because I realize how good it can make you feel.... I guess I can say I changed....I want to get more involved in helping out or go to a soup kitchen...I don't know lead by example...

In addition to giving back to the larger community, and leading by example within his community, Jack indicated that one day he would like to give back to Mr. Thompson in appreciation for all he received. Jack stated:

I mean I don't really stay in contact too much with other professors but he would definitely be someone I would check in with and see how every thing's going...so I mean maybe a few years down the line if he's still here and everything... cause I mean he taught me everything so I'd like to try and help him out and give back what I can too...

For Paul and Jack learning about other populations and having the opportunity to give

back to other members of the greater community was a significant learning opportunity. For these two participants, both seniors at East Coast University, learning about the intrinsic value of community service was a powerful experience.

Summary of Findings

My study examined “what “ students experienced and “how” they experienced their interactions with African American faculty within the context of the classroom environment. Two research questions guided this study, “How do students experience and make meaning of their interactions with African American faculty?” and “In what ways, if any, do students perceive their interactions with African American faculty influence the examination of their own personal values, beliefs and perspectives?”

The voices of participants presented in this study reveal how racial and ethnic identity development influences students’ perceptions of, and interactions with, African American faculty. Findings suggest students’ perceptions of African American faculty vary as the racial or ethnic identity of the student develops. The majority of students felt that the three African American faculty, who served as a resource for this study, went out of their way to get to know students on an individual basis. Students felt these faculty members were genuine, open, caring and passionate which made students feel respected and trusted. Participants also described the active teaching techniques used by African American faculty as well as how the faculty members created a learning environment that encouraged students to be engaged in their own learning. Finally, participants shared how their interactions with an African American faculty member, in the context of the classroom environment, provided them with the opportunity to examine their personal

beliefs, values and perceptions. More specifically, for many students, the experience of interacting with African American faculty provided the opportunity for them to develop an expanded global and multicultural perspective as well as a new sense of civic responsibility.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined the experience, and associated meaning students made from their interactions with African American faculty. The context of this study occurred within the classroom environment at a predominantly White university in the Northeast. Twenty-two student participants shared how their African American faculty member impacted their educational experience. All of the participants were traditional-aged (19 to 24 years) undergraduates and they reflected the student population at their institution; 27% of the sample identified as students of color and 56% were women. The participant sample included nine seniors, nine juniors, three sophomores and one first year student. This chapter provides a brief summary of the study, including the methods and the four emergent themes. A discussion regarding the experiences and perceptions of the participants compared to the published literature is then followed by practical implications for college administrators and faculty. This chapter concludes with recommendations for future research on how policy makers, institutions, and faculty members, of all races and ethnicities, may influence the educational experience of college students and prepare them to live and work in a diverse and global society.

Summary of the Study

Increased racial segregation within the United States (Orfield, 2001) and criticism of U.S. higher education to prepare students to live and work in a diverse and global economy served as the impetus for this study. To better prepare students to live and work within a pluralistic society, leaders within higher education suggest it is necessary to make significant changes in curriculum, course design, teaching techniques, and assessment (Bikson & Law, 1994). African American and other faculty of color, who together represent just 15.2% of the full time tenured or tenure track faculty in the U.S (U.S. Department of Education, 2006b) are more likely than their White colleagues to utilize active teaching methods (Milem, 1999; Umbach, 2006), conduct research on topics related to race, teach diversity related coursework (Milem, 1999), and place importance on the affective, moral, and civic development of students (Antonio, 2002). Thus the diversification of faculty creates rich opportunities for students to engage with diverse ideas, information, and interactions (Milem, 2003; Smith, 1989), which contribute to preparing students to live and work within a pluralistic society (Hurtado, 2001; Smith, 1989; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000; Umbach, 2006).

This qualitative study addresses the need to understand the ways in which faculty of color, particularly African American faculty, influence the students' educational experience. More specifically, my interest in conducting this study was to determine how, if at all, African American faculty provide students with the opportunity to examine their preconceived values, beliefs and perspectives in an effort to prepare them to live and work in the 21st century. Two research questions guide this study, a) "How do students

experience and make meaning of their interactions with African American faculty?” and
b) “In what ways, if any, do students perceive their interactions with African American
faculty influence the examination of their own personal values, beliefs and perspectives?”

Phenomenology was the methodological approach used for this study as it
enabled me to examine the “lived experience” of the student participants (Moustakas,
1994). My goal for this study was to understand “what” students experience as they
interact with African American faculty in the context of the classroom environment and
“how” they make meaning of that experience and talk about it with others.

Through the process of analysis, four themes emerged. The first theme, entitled
“Racial and Ethnic Identity: Acknowledgement of Race” examines how the students’
racial and ethnic identity development influences their perspectives and interpretations of
their experiences when interacting with African American faculty. The second theme,
“Breath of Fresh air” explores how the open and caring nature of the faculty, as well as
their genuine desire to teach and be engaged with students, made students feel welcomed,
respected, and trusted. The third theme, “It was a warm experience” examines the active
learning techniques used by faculty and the open classroom environment that was created
by each of the faculty members. Students describe how they felt their learning mattered
to each of the faculty members and the classroom was a safe place to explore personal
perspectives and opinions. Finally, the fourth theme, “I learned a lot” focuses on
awareness students gained regarding their personal responsibility as global citizens.

Discussion

The voices of twenty-two students, representing different racial and ethnic groups, described the experience and associated meaning they made from their interactions with African American faculty. Students overwhelmingly reported a positive and supportive experience, which encouraged them to engage in the classroom. Findings from this study also illustrate the inherent complexity within the student-African American faculty interaction, once the students' racial and ethnic identity development was explored. The use of Helm's (1990) theory of White identity development and Phinney's (1996) model of ethnic identity development served as the lens from which to examine "what" students experienced and "how" students' perceived those experiences, as they interacted with African American faculty. Although the majority of students expressed positive perceptions of their experiences and interactions with African American faculty, it is apparent the students' racial and ethnic identity development contributed toward overall feelings and dispositions toward those faculty members. Findings from this study not only support, but advance previous research as the voices of students shared how African American faculty influenced their educational trajectory. Results of this study have implications for policy, practice and future research.

The influence of racial and ethnic identity development

This is the first study to utilize the framework of racial (Helms, 1990) and ethnic (Phinney, 1996) identity development to examine how students perceive and make meaning from their experiences with African American faculty. The incorporation of both theories provided the opportunity to explore how students of all races and ethnicities

view the salient nature of race as they make meaning of their diverse interactions. The use of Helm's (1990) theory furthers that understanding as it provides a framework to explore how the concepts of power and privilege influence White students' perspectives when interacting with an individual of color, who is also an authority figure in the classroom.

For many of the participants, their first experience of taking a course with an African American faculty member occurred when this study was being conducted. The students' experiences, shared in this study, shed light on the implications of racial and ethnic residential and educational segregation in the United States. Although several participants indicated they were from diverse residential communities, it is apparent that being raised in a structurally diverse community does not necessarily provide students with opportunities to interact with teachers of color. Furthermore, findings reveal students at different levels of their identity development perceived African American faculty, and experienced their interactions with African American faculty, differently.

As indicated by several of the participants, White students and students of color, in the initial level of their identity development minimized or failed to recognize the salient nature of race in their lives. Students of color at this initial level of development recognized their faculty member was African American, however they also stated race and ethnicity was not something they spent a considerable amount of time talking about with family. These students were also ambivalent regarding how they identify as individuals of color. Several White students at this level of development displayed a naïve sense of "color-blindness" and insisted they "treat everyone the same" regardless of

race. White students were particularly concerned about being perceived as racist and the use of language by some White students indicated a general lack of awareness regarding how language re-enforces societal racism. Mathew, a 20 year-old, for example used the term “colored” when referring to how open he was to people of different races and ethnicities. It is possible the use of such language is a residual effect of being raised within highly segregated residential communities. Mark, a 21 year-old, further commented that the diversity and acceptance within society today is unlike “back in the slavery times.” Mark’s use of this metaphor, for how we have progressed as a society, however still brings forth the subtleness of how racism permeates American society. Language frames deep-rooted perspectives and until White individuals begin to critically examine their beliefs and values, the use of such words and phrases will continue to divide communities and individuals.

Language further illustrated the prevalent dynamic of power and oppression, which was most notably portrayed by two White students, who struggled with the notion of a person of color serving as an authority figure in the classroom. Both of these students were in the initial level of racial identity development. Beth, a sophomore, admitted she almost withdrew from her course because she did not believe an African American man could teach her. When talking about her immediate reaction to seeing his name on her course list, Beth stated she was not “racist or anything” however her perception of African Americans was that they wore “baggy jeans” and they were “not educated”. Beth’s reliance on racial stereotypes immediately framed her expectations of her African American faculty member, Mr. Thompson. After describing what Mr. Thompson did in

class to make her feel safe enough to be “herself” however, she justified his abilities in the assumption he was bi-racial. Beth’s expressed beliefs and attitudes is a good example of how a White student, in the initial level of racial identity development can be naïve or unaware of how racial stereotypes influence their perceptions of faculty of color.

The second student, Lee, the only male in his classroom, expressed anger towards his female faculty member because she did not readily accept his views and opinions as equal to her own. This student expressed anger toward his professor because she negatively evaluated his performance in class. Rather than take personal responsibility, he blamed this professor for his poor grade. Lee appeared to struggle with the concept of an African American woman evaluating him and making the determination that he did not warrant a satisfactory grade in the course. The perspectives shared by Beth and Lee illustrate the concepts of power and oppression are woven within the White students perceptions of and experiences with individuals of color.

A relatively small number of the participants were at the intermediate and more advanced levels of their racial and ethnic identity development. At these levels of development students were able to express a greater appreciation for racial diversity. Although the students of color at the intermediate level of development stated they did not feel a strong connection to their ethnic identity, they did sense a bond with their professor due to the shared aspect of being individuals of color. Only one student of color advanced to the highest level of ethnic identity; achieved ethnic identity. This student, Elvita, expressed an understanding of different Hispanic cultures and she stated she felt a “connection” to her professor because “she’s [a] Black American [and] I’m a Puerto

Rican American.” The voices of the participants in this study illustrate that as students of color develop a stronger sense of ethnic identity, they begin to appreciate other cultures and feel a stronger connection with individuals from different ethnic groups due to a shared minority status.

White students at these more advanced levels of development could express an appreciation for racial diversity however they struggled when recognizing the inherent benefits of being White in society. Kim shared that as a Jewish woman, she understood the ramifications of living within a society that imposes negative stereotypes and slurs on minority populations. As Kim self-identified as a minority due to her religious and cultural background, Kim felt a connection to her African American faculty members, Professor Norton and Professor Melton. Kim was also however, able to express the inherent differences between racial and religious justifications of oppression and she indicated that as a White woman she did not experience the same level of oppression, as did her professors and other individuals of color. Kim was at the stage in her identity development in which she could articulate the advantages of being a white woman in society. A second student however, who was the only White student to advance to Helm’s (1990) stage of reintegration, shared the residual feelings of guilt due to her White identity. This student, Sheila, indicated she felt isolated and alienated when an African American faculty member talked about issues of race in the classroom. Sheila took two courses with African American faculty members during her undergraduate career and she shared very different perceptions of these faculty members due to how they personally expressed their own ethnic identity. According to Sheila, one faculty

member did not “make herself out to be an African American woman” and the second faculty member was “a very strong African American woman who just feels like she’s still like enslaved by white women.”

Sheila’s differing perceptions of these faculty members and the shared experience of other student participants raise three important conclusions regarding the influence of race and ethnicity on the educational experiences of students. First, results of this study reveal that although our society is becoming more diverse, our young adults raised in segregated communities, do not recognize the salience of race in their lives. Young people believe they are “open” to diversity, and they “treat everyone the same”, however it is apparent racial stereotypes and negative images infect the perceptions of our nations youth. Second, the student participants’ level of racial and ethnic identity development influenced their perceptions of, and interactions with, African American faculty members. Third, how African American faculty express their ethnic identity and how they address issues of race and oppression in the classroom, have a tremendous impact on students who are at varying levels of their own racial and ethnic identity development. These conclusions add to the literature as they identify how race influences students’ experiences and their perceptions of those experiences. More specifically, previous research indicates African American students report being treated differently in the classroom more often than students of other races and ethnicities. This differential treatment also influences how African American students make meaning from their experiences and perceive their relationships with White faculty (Anaya & Cole, 2001; Ancis, et al., 2000; Chang, et al., 2005; Cokley, et al., 2006; Hernandez, 2000; Kuh &

Hu, 2001; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004; Mayo, et al., 1995). This study furthers this research as it brings to light how the racial identity of the faculty member, and the racial or ethnic identity of the student, add to the complexity of what students experience and how students experience their interactions with African American faculty. This study illustrates that White students, at different levels of their racial identity, also report feeling isolated and alienated when they perceive the African American faculty member is teaching from an Afro-centric perspective. Sheila, for example, felt that her professor was only connecting with and talking to students of color in the classroom. Thus, racial and ethnic identity significantly influences the educational trajectory of all students as they experience diverse interactions with faculty from a different race or ethnic group than themselves. The influence of race and ethnicity on the dynamics inherent within the student - African American faculty interaction is further examined in relation to how students took advantage of and challenged faculty in the classroom.

Students challenging behavior and dispositions toward faculty

Students of all races and ethnicities have high expectations for faculty, which due to their limited number of interactions with African American teachers, are primarily based upon their experiences with majority faculty members. Results of this study indicate African American faculty build relationships with students that are based on care and support. Regardless, White students and students of color want a faculty member who can address behavior and hold students accountable for their actions. Observations and participant reflections of student behavior in the classroom however, indicated students of all races and ethnicities took advantage of, and at times blatantly challenged,

the African American faculty members. A few participants also expressed disappointment in the manner in which the African American faculty managed the course, addressed student behavior, or failed to meet their personal expectations. Generally speaking, the degree of challenge students exhibited varied based upon the student's race or ethnicity.

Students directly challenged the faculty in a number of ways. A female student of color was observed holding onto a quiz longer than any of the other students in the class. When the faculty member knelt down, to talk to the student and take the quiz from her, the student argued and then rolled her eyes. Male students of all races and ethnicities often walked in and out of class at various times and rarely apologized to the professor for causing a disturbance. White students were observed surfing the Internet as the professor was talking in class. One White male was brazen enough to surf the Internet while his professor sat next to him in for an extended period of time. Students of all races and ethnicities were observed texting in class and talking with their peers, however White students were the most blatant in this behavior. Often times they did not hide their phones while texting and they talked over the faculty members during a lecture.

Only three students stated they were concerned their peers took advantage of the caring nature of the faculty. Michelle, a White student in the initial stage of her racial identity, was upset that a White male in her class left early most class sessions. Michelle indicated she was aware that some students might "try to test" a new professor however, she clearly stated that she did not like this type of behavior. Michelle's comments revealed she was concerned students disrespected Mr. Thompson. She did not however

make the connection that the racial identities of the student and professor could help explain why students behaved in such a manner. Elvita, however, the only student of color to achieve the highest level of ethnic identity, recognized students did not give Professor Norton the respect she “deserved.” Elvita further expressed that she understood how challenging it was for her faculty member to address behavior in the classroom, however she felt her professor let students “get away with it.” As a woman of color herself, Elvita related to how difficult it was to manage disrespectful individuals. She indicated Professor Norton may not have known “how to deal with it.” Although Elvita recognized her peers were being disrespectful, she also indicated a sense of disappointment in Professor Norton because, she would not or could not, address student behavior in class.

Three White females also shared the sentiment of disappointment in their professor due to her addressing disrespectful behavior in class, by email. When discussing the email, which addressed texting and talking in class, these three females justified their behavior and stated the professor’s method of confrontation was “inappropriate and immature.” One of the women indicated that “out of spite” she did not stop texting in class. This student Samantha further justified her behavior due to the importance of her leadership position within a student club on campus. Samantha’s indignant response to an email from her professor is an example of how some White students struggled with African American faculty possessing power and authority in the classroom.

Thus, the manner in which students interpreted how African American faculty addressed behavior in the classroom varied depending upon the students' racial and ethnic identity development. Students of color felt a common bond with the faculty member based on their ethnic identity. Elvita sympathized with the unspoken struggle of power Professor Norton experienced when students would not listen to her as they talked over her in the classroom. White students, on the other hand, readily spoke about how they challenged the authority of the African American professor. These White students also expressed disapproval for how their behavior was addressed in the classroom. The blatant disrespect and challenging behavior exhibited toward African American faculty by some White students is an example of how power and oppression in society can influence student interactions with African American faculty. Due to not wanting to give up power and privilege to a person of color, White students denied their personal responsibility for their behavior and placed blame upon the professor.

These findings provide additional evidence in support of African American faculty who shared students of all races and ethnicities challenge them in the classroom (Benjamin, 1997; Hendrix, 2007). It also supports the perspectives shared by African American faculty that White students more harshly judge and resist African American faculty (Benjamin, 1997; Myers, 2002; Vargas, 2002) and students of color attempt to establish a "kinship" based on their perception of shared experiences with prejudice in hopes of gaining an "in" with faculty of color (Hendrix, 2007). As this study is the only one of its kind to examine the experience of the student through the lens of racial and ethnic identity development, it also provides insight as to why White students and

students of color may perceive African American faculty differently (Guiffrida, 2005; Hendrix, 2007; Lee, 1999) and challenge African American faculty in the classroom (Hendrix, 2007). It also brings to light the complexity inherent within the student - African American faculty interaction, especially when the students' level of racial and ethnic identity development is acknowledged. Findings from this study illustrate an interesting paradox in how students experience and make meaning from their interactions with African American faculty. In addition to understanding how race and ethnicity influenced student's initial perceptions of faculty, and how students justified their behavior when interacting with an authority member of color in the classroom environment, findings suggest students of all races and ethnicities felt African American faculty expressed genuine care for and interest in their personal and academic success. For all but two students the personal characteristics of the faculty and their willingness to show interest in students created an environment in which students felt trusted and respected.

The influence of faculty engagement

Students of all races and ethnicities became actively engaged in the classroom environment when they felt the African American faculty member genuinely cared about them and their overall success. In fact, the manner in which faculty personally interacted with students in the classroom influenced the students' perceptions of faculty, made them feel connected and engaged in the classroom environment, and provided them with the opportunity to develop self-confidence in their abilities. Thus, the level and quality of

faculty engagement created a learning environment for students of all races and ethnicities to feel like a partner in the learning process.

Observations of student-faculty interactions, within the classroom environment, indicated faculty addressed students by first name, talked with students informally before and after class sessions, and shared personal stories with students during class sessions. Students of all races and ethnicities indicated their relationship with the three African American faculty members was different than their relationships with majority faculty.

Students described the African American faculty as excited to be teaching and passionate about their subject matter. The passion faculty shared, for the course topics and for students deeply understanding the material, encouraged students to be engaged members of the course. Thus, students described how the genuine and caring nature of the African American faculty created an air of informality and equality that did not exist in their interactions with other faculty members.

Most students felt the African American faculty extended themselves to get to know them as individuals. Students also indicated the African American faculty made them feel trusted and respected, which positively contributed to their overall experience and engagement in the classroom. More specifically, students shared their faculty members cared deeply about their success and displayed an interest in helping them with personal and academic matters. For example, Kenton, a biracial student, indicated the level of interest and concern his professor exhibited for his academic success was “above and beyond” what his majority faculty offered to him as a student.

Students also stated the African American faculty remained open, and non-biased to differing opinions, which made them feel comfortable in expressing their opinions in class. Two White students however, Lee and Sheila, reported very different experiences and feelings of disrespect and alienation.

Lee, a White male in the initial stage of his identity development felt his female professor “talked down” to him. More specifically, Lee felt that his professor did not like him because she did not readily accept his opinions. Lee was the only White male in his classroom and observations suggested that he was generally not prepared for class. As a White male, it appears Lee struggled with the notion of not only an African American person being an authority in the classroom, but perhaps more specifically, an African American woman. The second student, Sheila, indicated she felt isolated and alienated in a classroom taught by an African American woman who “came off as racist toward anyone who wasn’t an African American or who wasn’t a minority”. She also felt that this professor was biased in how she presented material in the classroom. Sheila, in the intermediate stage of her identity as a White woman, was clearly struggling when faced with the privileges associated with being a White individual. Both Lee and Sheila illustrate how the perceptions of African American faculty, and the reasoning behind those perceptions, can greatly depend upon the students’ level of identity development. Lee struggled with the notion of an African American individual having more power than he. Sheila struggled as she began to realize how she had benefited from power and privilege in society.

Findings from this study not only support but also advance the previous research, which asserts faculty attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors play a role in creating an atmosphere that fosters student learning (Umbach and Wawrzynski, 2005). This study sheds light on how faculty behaviors, attitudes, and engagement with students in the classroom, creates a learning environment for students of all races and ethnicities, to feel comfortable and respected. This study provides further evidence that students, regardless of race or ethnicity, appreciate faculty that are perceived to be “student-centered”, which is defined as exhibiting a high degree of concern for student academic integration, showing support, advocating for students and genuinely caring about a student’s well-being (Cole & Barber, 2003; Guiffirda, 2005; Hernandez, 2000; Jackson, Smith and Hill, 2003; Nettles, Thoeny & Gosman, 1986). More specifically, the voices of students further the work conducted by Guriffrida (2005) who reported African American students perceived African American faculty to be “student centered” and willing to go “above and beyond” to assist them with academic, career, and personal issues. This study also makes a significant contribution to the current body of literature as it enables us to begin to understand how the students’ racial and ethnic identity development influences the complexity of the student – faculty interaction. More specifically, depending on the level of racial or ethnic identity development, students perceive and make meaning of their diverse interaction with African American faculty, differently. Participants in this study, representing students of color and White students, perceived African American faculty as genuine, open, passionate, and caring. In fact, results of this research study found the personal qualities exhibited by the African American faculty, who served as a resource

for this study, fostered a learning environment in which most students could “be themselves” in the classroom. Findings however highlight that identity development influences student worldviews, their perceptions of others during diverse interactions, and the associated meaning they make from those interactions.

The influence of active teaching strategies by African American faculty

Students of all races and ethnicities positively responded to the level of commitment African American faculty displayed toward student learning. African American faculty did three specific things in the classroom, which made students feel safe and enabled them to actively participate in class. First, the faculty used real world examples in order to present course topics. Faculty asked students to pay attention to newsworthy items in the media, they shared personal stories to connect students to the coursework, and they encouraged students to share their own opinions and personal experiences. For example, Quinton shared that his faculty member encouraged all of the students to watch the television show “60 Minutes” or read the “Wall Street Journal.” According to Quinton, by encouraging the class to watch and read newsworthy media, “it makes you more interested.” Thus, using real world examples allowed students to connect the course work with timely and societal topics. Second, African American faculty used a number of active teaching techniques, including videos, Internet simulations, case studies, and a classroom project designed to fundraise for a national children’s charity. Activities such as these encouraged students to work together, solve group problems, and relate theory to practical application. Third, students indicated faculty remained open to their opinions and thanked them for their participation in class.

The faculty also remained flexible and adjusted class assignments to meet the educational needs of the students. Isabella, a biracial student, called the classroom an “open learning” environment because it was inclusive and welcoming.

These findings support the literature that posits African American faculty, and their colleagues of color, are more likely to promote teaching strategies that encourage students to interact with and challenge one another in class (Umbach, 2006). It is also apparent from the voices of students that African American faculty do this in a manner that makes students feel safe and valued in the learning process. Results of this study also provide additional evidence regarding the impact of “accessibility cues” (Cole, 2007; Wilson et al., 1974) on the student experience. Accessibility cues are behaviors exhibited by faculty that enhance student learning, student-faculty interactions, and intellectual self-confidence. These “cues” include engaging students in the learning process, valuing students and their comments, linking out of classroom activities with curriculum, allowing students to express their opinions, and intentionally creating racially/ethnically structured student groups (Cole, 2007). In this study, these “cues” are interwoven within the participants’ description of their experience as they engaged with African American faculty in the context of the classroom environment. More specifically, findings from this study indicate the existence of these “accessibility” cues positively influence the educational experience and create what the student participants, called a “warm experience”.

In addition, the use of active learning techniques, in conjunction with the African American faculty members desire to build relationships with students, and help them

understand how their course work was directly applied to real world situations, enabled students to examine or re-examine their preconceived beliefs, values, and attitudes.

Several students shared how their participation in the classroom and interactions with their African American faculty created an opportunity for them to learn something about themselves, gain an appreciation for civic involvement, expand their global perspectives, and develop new perspectives and skills in order to work within a diverse population.

Examples of this include; two White men, both in the initial stage of their identity, indicated feeling a new sense of responsibility for giving back to their community after fundraising for a national charity; Quinton, a 21 year-old African American male gained a better understanding and appreciation for the world economy; two women developed a sensitivity to the power of language and an understanding of how to better communicate within a diverse society; and Ariela, a 21 year-old Hispanic female gained the knowledge and self-confidence to speak up to her father when he espoused racist and homophobic beliefs.

Findings from this study illustrate students examined or re-examined their personal values and beliefs due to their participation in class and interactions with African American faculty. Therefore, this study significantly contributes to the literature, which stipulates African American faculty make a unique and significant contribution to pedagogy, active learning techniques, and curriculum within the academy (Antonio, 2002; Milem, 2003; Umbach, 2006). Findings from this study also provide evidence that the African American faculty, who served as a resource, fostered a learning environment that allowed students to become more self-aware, open to global and multicultural issues,

and self-confident in their knowledge and skills to interact with others in pluralistic society.

Implications

The African American faculty, who served as a resource for this study, focused on the personal interests of students, used active learning techniques in the classroom, and incorporated issues of race and culture into the course curriculum. These faculty members devoted a significant amount of time and energy into teaching students and their efforts resulted in students examining or re-examining their pre-established values, beliefs and attitudes. Findings from this study have implications for institutional policy, practice, and future research.

Policy and practice

Academic administrators interested in encouraging faculty, of all races and ethnicities, to teach with the level of commitment exhibited by the African American faculty in this study should examine institutional policies related to tenure and post-tenure review. More specifically, as it relates to how the faculty member is expected to meet the expectation of teaching, research, and service, this study brings to light how important it is to students to have an engaged faculty member in the classroom. Students respond favorably to the faculty member who takes the time to know them by name, shows a personal interest in them, incorporates their opinions and experiences into class discussions, and creates active learning techniques to engage them in course material. Therefore, teaching in this manner should be required of all faculty as it has a positive

influence on student engagement and learning. The talent and dedication associated with teaching students, and creating an “open learning” environment for students to examine their personal beliefs and values, needs to be formally recognized in institutional policies.

In an effort to recognize and further develop the teaching efforts of faculty, designed to enhance student learning, academic leadership should develop resources which will provide support to faculty members, of all races and ethnicities, as they participate in this endeavor. Developing this approach to teaching and learning can be accomplished by all faculty members, regardless of race or ethnicity, and supporting a formal opportunity, such as a community of practice (personal communication, Kim Burns, March 5, 2011), could provide faculty with the tools and support necessary to enhance their teaching techniques. This formalized structure may also provide a foundation for faculty members, who have developed strong skills in this area, to provide guidance as their colleagues strive to meet new institutional expectations regarding teaching and learning initiatives. As African American faculty and their colleagues of color, are more likely than White faculty to use active learning techniques, conduct research on issues related to race and ethnicity, and develop an inclusive curriculum (Milem, 1993; Umbach, 2006), having such an opportunity could also formally acknowledge the benefit faculty of color bring to the institution and to the academy as a whole.

Findings from this study also provide additional evidence that African American faculty can experience some very challenging classroom environments. Academic administrators should provide African American faculty and their colleagues of color

with the support necessary for them to express their frustrations and hold students responsible for their disrespectful behavior. In order to provide faculty with such support, administrators and faculty must become more aware of how the classroom environment can be stressful and challenging for faculty of color, particularly for African American faculty. Thus, institutional leadership should require vice presidents, provosts, deans, administrators, and faculty, of all races and ethnicities, to attend trainings designed to educate the community on how to create a campus environment that is safe and inclusive for diverse populations, which include faculty, staff and students of color. In addition, institutions should develop efforts, such as support groups and tenure mentor programs to assist faculty of color successfully maneuver within the political and organizational culture. Tenure and post tenure review processes should also be modified in order to support the African American faculty member who receives negative feedback from students, or colleagues, due to an interest in furthering the campus discussion on issues of diversity, and racial understanding, which may make some community members uncomfortable. Campus employees should also be required to attend workshops on student development theory, specifically racial and ethnic identity development, in order to more fully understand why students behave in a disrespectful or challenging manner in the classroom. By understanding possible reasons for student behavior, the administration can then develop an appropriate strategy for how they can engage students in activities, such as thought provoking conversations, to explore their behavior in the classroom. It is through these activities the student may actually reflect upon and learn from his or her actions.

Future research

Results of this qualitative study reveal numerous topics that warrant future research. This study is the first of its kind to examine the student experience with African American faculty through the lens of the White (Helms, 1990) and ethnic (Phinney, 1996a) identity development. Exploring the students' experience from this framework broadens the perspective from which to examine all student-faculty interactions. By examining the relevance of racial and ethnic identity development, in relation to how students make meaning from their diverse interactions, this lens may also serve as a new approach from which to understand how students of color experience their interactions with White faculty members. Seeking to understand how students of color make meaning from their interactions with White faculty could help us to determine how majority faculty, who comprise approximately 90% of the professoriate (U.S. Department of Education, 2006b), can adjust their teaching style and approach to better meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population.

This study brings to light how the teaching methods utilized by African American faculty, and their interactions with students, create a comfortable, safe, and "warm" learning environment for students. It is still unclear however, how the active teaching methods versus the student-African American faculty interactions, influences learning outcomes. Results of this study therefore raise the question, "How does the use of active teaching methods versus the student's interactions with African American faculty most readily influence student learning and their awareness of global and multicultural perspectives?" This question warrants further exploration as the nature of this study was

to explore the meaning, and determine the “essence” of the student interaction with African American faculty within the context of the classroom environment. This study illustrates how faculty engagement, use of active teaching techniques, and the valuing of student opinions in the classroom encourages student engagement and makes students feel that they matter in the educational process. Further exploration of how these “accessibility cues” (Cole, 2007) enhance learning however, could greatly enhance the knowledge and teaching techniques of all faculty, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Future research can also more closely examine how students of all races and ethnicities respond to and perceive African American female and male faculty differently. Three African American faculty, one male and two females, served as a resource for this study. Although this study was not designed to understand how faculty gender influences the student-African American faculty interactions, it appears that students may have different expectations of African American male and African American female faculty members. Therefore, we need to more closely examine how the role of gender influences the student- faculty interaction when race is considered.

Future research can also seek to explore how a student advances within their racial or ethnic identity development due to taking a course taught by an African American faculty member. Expanding this qualitative study to one that would follow student participants throughout their undergraduate experience could provide further insight into the long-term benefits of African American faculty, and their teaching techniques, on the development of students and their preparation to live and work in a global society.

Finally, further qualitative exploration designed to examine how students' racial (Helms, 1990) or ethnic (Phinney, 1996a) identity development influences their experience as they interact with diverse institutional agents across campus would significantly advance the benefits of diversity literature. Administrators, counselors, and advisors also influence the students' collegiate experience. Seeking to understand how the students' experience with these members of the campus community could provide additional knowledge regarding how students perceive and make meaning from their experiences on campus. This research could offer administrators, staff and faculty new insight into how they could promote a campus environment, which would intentionally prepare students to live and work in a global society.

Summary

African American faculty make a unique contribution to the mission of research, teaching and service within higher education. In fact, Milem (2003) asserted African American faculty "play a specialized and fundamental role in the teaching and learning process" (p. 144). As African American faculty employ active teaching strategies, include issues of race and ethnicity in course curriculum, and promote students to interact with their diverse peers, (Umbach, 2006), findings from this study suggest they also focus on the individual needs of students. The student-centered perspective, of the three African American faculty members who served as a resource for this study, enabled them to connect with students and create a learning environment in which students felt comfortable expressing themselves. Most student participants indicated they perceived

the African American faculty to be someone they could be “friends” with, however students also stated the faculty remained professional and dedicated to their success. African American faculty displayed a genuine interest in students making them feel respected. Results of this study illustrate African American faculty value what students bring to the learning environment as they actively share in the teaching and learning process. The faculty in this study encouraged students to share their experiences and opinions, which ultimately created an engaging classroom environment. Most notably however, results of this study illustrate that African American faculty are instrumental in creating a learning environment that encourages students of all races and ethnicities to examine or re-examine their preconceived values, beliefs, and attitudes. Through this examination students became more aware of how they can contribute in a diverse society. Thus, it is apparent the value a diverse faculty, and African American faculty in particular, bring to the academy, is perhaps much greater than institutions realize.

APPENDIX A

EMAIL/INTRODUCTION COMMUNICATION TO FACULTY

Dear Faculty member:

My name is Kathleen Marie Neville and I am a doctoral student at the University of Massachusetts Boston. I am conducting a research project that seeks to understand the meaning and “essence” of students’ interactions with African American faculty. The title of my dissertation is: “*The individual and shared meanings students make of their interactions with African American faculty: A phenomenological study*”. This research project has been approved by the (IRB OR VP of Student Affairs) at your institution as well as the Institutional Research Board at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. I am the principal researcher for this study. The purpose of this letter is to explain aspects of this study and seek your assistance.

To carry out my research I need assistance in order to; a) conduct classroom observations, which serve as the context of this study and b) recruit a subgroup of the students in these classes to participate in in-depth individual interviews. **The student is the focus of this study. Faculty members will not be identified in the dissertation or any subsequent publications or presentations.**

For the purpose of this study, African American faculty is defined as: U.S. born, Black/Non-Hispanic, tenure or tenure track, Assistant, Associate or Full Professors, teaching undergraduate students. Students interviewed for this study must be traditional aged (18 – 22) undergraduate students. If you are willing to assist me with this study, by granting me access to your classroom and students, I am requesting the following:

1. You will be asked to complete a short questionnaire seeking information including; your contact information, your professional degree, the courses you are teaching during spring 2009, summer 2009 and fall 2009, and your use of active learning techniques and inclusive curriculum.
2. The ability to observe your classroom on two or three occasions during the Spring 2009, Summer 2009 and/or Fall 2009 semester. The purpose of these sessions is to observe students as they interact with you during the context of the classroom.
3. The ability to distribute recruitment materials to all students in your course, which asks for students to volunteer to interview with me. These interviews will occur once the semester is over.

Enclosed in this email is the rationale and purpose for this study. I hope you will consider supporting this research. I would like to schedule a time to have a phone conversation

with you to answer any questions that you may have. I can be reached at Neville_k1@yahoo.com or 978-420-2092 (cell). My dissertation advisor, Dr. Tara Parker can also be reached at 617-287-7728 if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you!

With warm regards,
Kathleen M. Neville, Principal Researcher

APPENDIX B

EMAIL TO DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

Dear Dr. (NAME),

My name is Kathy Neville and I am a doctoral student at the University of Massachusetts Boston. I am conducting a research project that seeks to understand the student experience as they interact with diverse faculty.

Specifically, I am interested in talking with students who have been or will be taught this coming fall by African American faculty. As a Department Chair I am hoping that you can help me identify African American faculty so that I can recruit students.

I hope that you are willing to help me. I have been trying to contact faculty at your institution, with little to no success. If you or someone you know is an African American faculty member, I would greatly appreciate it if you would help in identifying students who will be interacting and taking a course taught by African American faculty this fall.

My research project has been approved by the (IRB OR VP of Student Affairs) at your institution as well as the Institutional Research Board at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Please contact me, or ask an interested faculty member to contact me at 978-420-2092 (cell) or email me at Neville_k1@yahoo.com. I realize this is a busy time of year, so if I do not hear from you I will give you a call in the next two weeks to tell you more about my study and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you in advance for your help! I really appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Kathy Neville

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO FACULTY

University of Massachusetts Boston
Department of Leadership in Education
100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA. 02125-3393
DATE

Dear Faculty Member;

Thank you for showing interest in my research, which is designed to examine college students' interactions with African American faculty members. The title of this dissertation research is; *The Individual and Shared Meanings Students Make of their Interactions with African American Faculty: A Phenomenological Study*. For the purpose of this study African American faculty is defined as: U.S. born, Black/Non-Hispanic, tenure or tenure track, Assistant, Associate or Full Professor, teaching undergraduate students. This research project has been approved by the Institutional Research Board at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

As you are aware, I am asking for your assistance so that I may gather data for this important study. Specifically I am requesting permission to conduct observations in your classroom (2 – 3 observations this semester) and recruit students in your class to participate in interviews. The students will be informed that interviews will be conducted after they have completed your course, that you will not have access to their interview transcript, and their participation will in no way impact their course grade.

The attached documents include a disclosure form for you to sign and a short questionnaire for you to complete before I schedule times with you to conduct in-class observations. Please feel free to contact me with any questions. I can be reached at; cell phone 978-420-2092 or Neville_k1@yahoo.com. If for any reason you wish to speak with my dissertation advisor you may call Dr. Tara Parker at 617-287-7728

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Neville
Principal Researcher

APPENDIX D

FACULTY DISCLOSURE FORM

The Individual and Shared Meanings Students Make of their Interactions with African American Faculty: A Phenomenological Study

The purpose of this study is to examine students' perceptions of how their interactions with faculty have impacted them during their college experience. More specifically, this study seeks to understand how and in what ways African American faculty challenge students' personal values and beliefs.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT:

The researcher would like to conduct classroom observations (two or three observations) in your class(s) during the spring 2009, summer 2009 or fall 2009 semester. The researcher is also requesting permission to speak to members of your class and recruit students to participate in interviews, which will be scheduled after your course is completed.

The researcher is also requesting that each faculty member completes a short questionnaire. This questionnaire seeks demographic information as well as information on courses taught by the faculty member, their teaching techniques, and their interactions with students.

BENEFITS:

This study will provide insight regarding the student experience and the meanings they associate with their interactions with faculty, or more specifically African American faculty. As a result of this study, faculty, administrators and other higher education officials may be better prepared to assist students in and outside of the formal classroom environment.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your identity will remain confidential throughout the duration of the study and it will not be published or presented in a way that would allow anyone to identify you. The specific title of your course will not be referred to in any documentation. As parts of student interview transcripts will be included in published and non-published materials, you will be assigned a pseudonym to protect your identity. The only information that may be documented in published and non-published materials is your discipline of study.

Information gathered for this project will be stored in a locked file cabinet and only the principal researcher will have access to the data. All identifying information, such as completed questionnaires, student interview audiotapes and researcher notes, will be destroyed on or before June 1, 2011.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:

The decision whether or not to assist the researcher is voluntary. If you do decide to provide the researcher with access to your course and students, you may terminate participation by canceling scheduled in-class observations. If you wish to terminate your assistance, you should contact the principle researcher, Kathleen Neville at 978-420-2092 or Neville_k1@yahoo.com.

CONTACT:

You have the right to ask questions about this research before you sign this form and at any time during the study. You can reach the principle researcher, Kathleen Neville, at 50 Orchard Street, Salem, MA 01970. The researcher can also be reached at Neville_k1@yahoo.com or 978-420-2092.

You may also contact a representative of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, which oversees research involving human participants. The Institutional Review Board may be reached at the following address: IRB, Quinn Administration Building-2-080, University of Massachusetts Boston, 100 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, MA 02125-3393. You can also contact the Board by telephone or e-mail at (617) 287-5370 or at human.subjects@umb.edu.

I HAVE READ THE DISCLOSURE FORM. MY QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. MY SIGNATURE ON THIS FORM INDICATES THAT I AGREE TO ASSIST THE RESEARCHER OF THIS STUDY AND I UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY.

Participants Printed Name: _____
First Last

Participants Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal Researcher Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX E
FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Personal Information

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Office Phone () _____ Cell () _____

E-Mail Address _____

Summer Contact Information *(if different than above)*

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Summer Phone () _____

Alternative E-Mail Address _____

Nationality

Born in the United States ___ yes ___ no

Gender

___ Male ___ Female ___ Transgender

Academic Information

___ Tenure ___ Tenure Track

___ Assistant Professor ___ Associate Professor ___ Professor

Campus Name: _____

Number of Years of service: _____

Terminal Degree

____ PhD. ____ EdD. ____ JD Other: _____

Discipline: _____

List all your undergraduate courses for Spring 2009:

<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Day/Time</u>
1 _____	_____
2 _____	_____
3 _____	_____
4 _____	_____

List all your undergraduate courses for Summer 2009:

<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Day/Time</u>
1 _____	_____
2 _____	_____
3 _____	_____

4 _____

List all your undergraduate courses for Fall 2009:

<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Day/Time</u>
---------------------	-----------------

1 _____	_____
---------	-------

2 _____	_____
---------	-------

3 _____	_____
---------	-------

4 _____	_____
---------	-------

Please check all statements that apply. If there are any statements that are MORE true for certain courses that you teach, please list them under each statement.

___ I integrate research on race/ethnicity in my course readings.

Courses: _____
.

___ I utilize active and collaborative teaching methods in my classes.

Courses: _____
.

___ I attend campus and/or community events with students outside of the formal classroom.

___ Students come to see me during my regularly scheduled office hours.

___ I value the goal of promoting racial understanding.

___ Students share with me their personal stories, successes and problems.

___ I conduct research on topics related to race.

___ I meet with students outside of my regularly scheduled office hours.

___ I place importance on the affective, moral and civic development of students.

Please answer and then elaborate on the following questions:

1. How many students did you meet with this past semester? _____
 - a. How many of these students were: Students of color: _____
White: _____
 - b. How many of these meetings were during regular office hours? _____
 - c. How many of these meetings were outside of regular office hours? _____
 - d. When meeting with students outside of office hours, where do you meet? _____

2. If applicable, what type of campus or community events do you attend with students?

3. Do you advise a student group or club? ___ Yes ___ No
Please share the name of this group or club. _____
4. Do you teach an ethnic studies/diversity/or women's studies course?
___ Yes ___ No
Please share the name of this course(s): _____

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please email it to
Neville_k1@yahoo.com.

APPENDIX F

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Section I: Background Information

Professor Profile Number: _____ Date of Observation: _____

Class Number: _____

Section II: The Participants

Number of students in class: _____

Female students: _____

Male students: _____

White students: _____

Students of color: _____

Section III: The Setting

Physical environment:	Comments
size of room	
Temperature	
Lighting	
furnishings	
other 1 (specify)	
other 2 (specify)	

Classroom Diagram and location of students (by race/ethnicity and gender) sitting in classroom in relation to the Professor:



Section IV: Classroom discussion and students' interaction with faculty

General Comments:	Specific Observations of Students:	Researchers Thoughts (Epoche):
Content of class discussion		
Incidents that bring about silence		
Student nonverbal behavior Examples: Sitting low in seat Head down Rolling of eyes Hats covering face Sitting up in seat Passing Notes to other student Text messaging	Student: Student: Student: Student:	
Displays of Engagement Asking questions – who initiates question Raising hand to gain attention Nodding head when listening Direct eye contact Volunteering in class	Student: Student: Student: Student:	

<p>Displays of Dissonance Cues</p> <p>Silence</p> <p>Aggressive Tone</p> <p>Physical changes indicating comfort level</p> <p>Engagement in discussion</p> <p>Posture</p> <p>Resistant to new knowledge</p> <p>Visual discomfort</p>	<p>Student:</p> <p>Student:</p> <p>Student:</p> <p>Student:</p>	
<p>Student Perception of Role of Authority (Perry scheme)</p> <p>Agreeing with faculty comments</p> <p>Disagreeing with faculty comments</p> <p>Challenging faculty comments</p> <p>Interacting in aggressive manner</p>	<p>Student</p> <p>Student:</p> <p>Student:</p> <p>Student:</p>	

Section V.: Faculty comment/action and individual student response

Student Non-Verbal Cues: Posture (i.e., folded arms, position in chair or table); Movement (i.e., flinching, posture change, shift of weight, invasion of someone else's personal space); Gestures (i.e., pointing or jabbing fingers, arms in air); Facial Expressions (i.e. rolling eyes, lack of eye contact)

General Comments:	Specific Observations of Students:	Researchers Thoughts (Epoche):
	Student: Verbal Response/Tone: Non-Verbal: Dissonance Cues:	
	Student: Verbal Response/Tone: Non-Verbal: Dissonance Cues:	
	Student: Verbal Response/Tone: Non-Verbal: Dissonance Cues:	

Section VI: Researcher and Epoche

How is role of the researcher affecting the scene?	
What thoughts am I having?	

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APPENDIX G

STUDENT PARTICIPANT LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

University of Massachusetts Boston
Department of Leadership in Education
100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA. 02125-3393
DATE

Dear Student Participant;

Thank you for showing interest in my research by volunteering to participate. I am asking you to take part in a research project that seeks to understand the meaning and “essence” of students’ interactions with African American faculty members. My name is Kathleen Neville and I am a doctoral student at the University of Massachusetts Boston. I am also the principal researcher for this study.

The attached document is a consent form that you must sign if you wish to participate in this study. This study is examining college students’ interactions with faculty members. The title of this dissertation research is; *The Individual and Shared Meanings Students Make of their Interactions with African American Faculty: A Phenomenological Study*.

Please read this information and feel free to ask questions. If you have questions I will be happy to discuss them with you. My cell phone number is 978-420-2092 and my email address is Neville_k1@yahoo.com. If for any reason you wish to speak with my dissertation advisor you may call Dr. Tara Parker at 617-287-7728

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Neville
Principal Researcher

APPENDIX H

CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

The Individual and Shared Meanings Students Make of their Interactions with African American Faculty: A Phenomenological Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to examine your perceptions of how your interactions with faculty members have impacted you during your college experience. More specifically, this study seeks to understand how and in what ways African American faculty may challenge or affirm your personal values and beliefs.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT:

The researcher would like to conduct one or two face-to-face interviews with you between Summer 2009 and spring 2010 semester. Each interview will last approximately 90 minutes. If two (2) interviews are necessary, both interviews should occur within a three-week period to minimize your time commitment. In these interviews you will be asked to describe and reflect upon your experience when interacting with an African American faculty member.

Interviews will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time and location, preferably in a public space on your college campus, which provides some privacy for the interview to occur. Ultimately, your comfort and feeling of safety is of the outmost concern.

You will be asked to sign a waiver allowing your interview(s) to be audio taped. Notes will also be taken during each interview. Audio recordings and notes will be destroyed on or before June 1, 2011. There will be approximately 30 undergraduate students from six public institutions in Massachusetts participating in this study.

At the conclusion of your series of interviews you will be given a \$30 gift certificate in appreciation of your time and assistance.

BENEFITS:

This study will provide insight regarding the student experience and the meanings they associate with their interactions with faculty, more specifically African American faculty. As a result of this study, faculty, administrators and other higher education officials may be better prepared to assist students in and outside of the formal classroom environment.

RISKS:

The potential risks associated with this research are minimal, however, negative or distressful feelings during the interview process may emerge. For example, you may experience distress when discussing your interactions with a faculty member who is an authority at the institution. You may speak with Kathleen Neville, about any distress or other issues related to study participation. If you wish to discuss concerns with a counselor, you are encouraged to contact the Counseling Center at _____ X University. This office can be reached at phone number _____.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your identity will remain confidential throughout the duration of the study and will not be published or presented in a way that would allow anyone, including your faculty members to identify you. You will be assigned a participant identification number, which will only be known to the researcher. The ID number will be placed on all audio recordings to distinguish you from the other study participants, but will not be published in any written documentation. Furthermore, you will be assigned a pseudonym for all published and non-published materials. In addition, the faculty discussed during your interview(s) will not be referred to by name or course title in any documentation. They will also be assigned a pseudonym in all published or non-published materials.

Information gathered for this project will be stored in a locked file cabinet and only the principal researcher will have access to the data. All identifying information, such as audiotapes and notes, will be destroyed on or before June 1, 2011.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

The decision whether or not to take part in this research study is voluntary. If you do decide to take part in this study, you may terminate participation at any time without consequence. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is complete your data will be destroyed. If you wish to terminate participation, you should contact the principle researcher, Kathleen Neville at 978-420-2092. Whatever you decide will in no way penalize you, affect your grades or impact your status as a student.

CONTACT:

You have the right to ask questions about this research before you sign this form and at any time during the study. You can reach the principle researcher, Kathleen Neville, at 978-420-2092 or Neville_k1@yahoo.com.

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you may contact a representative of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, which oversees research involving human participants. The Institutional Review Board may be reached at the following address: IRB, Quinn Administration Building-2-080, University of Massachusetts Boston, 100 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, MA 02125-3393. You can also contact the Board by telephone or e-mail at (617) 287-5370 or at human.subjects@umb.edu.

CONSENT:

I HAVE READ THE CONSENT FORM. MY QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. MY SIGNATURE ON THIS FORM INDICATES THAT I CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. I ALSO CERTIFY THAT I AM 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER.

Participants Printed Name:

First

Last

Participants Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal Researcher Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX I

CONSENT TO AUDIOTAPING & TRANSCRIPTION

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

Dissertation Title: The Individual and Shared Meanings Students Make of their Interactions with African American Faculty: A Phenomenological Study

Researcher: Kathleen M. Neville

This study involves the audio taping of your interview with the researcher. Neither your name nor any other identifying information will be associated with the audiotape or the transcript. Only the researcher team will be able to listen to the tapes.

The tapes will be transcribed by the researcher and erased once the transcriptions are checked for accuracy. Transcripts of your interview may be reproduced in whole or in part for use in presentations or written products that result from this study. Neither your name nor any other identifying information (such as your voice or picture) will be used in presentations or in written products resulting from the study. A pseudonym will be used in place of your real name.

Immediately following the interview, you will be given the opportunity to have the tape erased if you wish to withdraw your consent to taping or participation in this study.

By signing this form you are consenting to:

___ having your interview taped;

___ having the tape transcribed;

___ use of the written transcript in presentations and written products.

By checking the box in front of each item, you are consenting to participate in that procedure.

This consent for taping is effective until June 1, 2011. On or before that date, the tapes will be destroyed.

Participant's Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX J

STUDENT PARTICIPANT PROFILE FORM

Participant ID _____

Your Personal Information

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home/ Res Hall Phone () _____ Cell () _____

E-Mail Address _____

Hometown _____ State _____

Summer Contact Information (if different than above)

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Summer Phone () _____

Alternative E-Mail Address _____

STUDENT PARTICIPANT
PROFILE FORM
SECTION 2

Participant ID _____

Race / Ethnicity

___ Asian ___ Black/Non-Hispanic ___ Hispanic

___ Native American ___ White

___ Other _____
Please explain

Nationality

Born in the United States _____ yes _____ no

Month and Year of Birth Month _____ Year _____

Gender

_____ Male _____ Female _____ Transgender

Academic Information

Year in School

___ First Year ___ Sophomore ___ Junior ___ Senior

Major(s) _____

Minor(s) _____

Ultimate Degree Aspiration

☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ Ph.D. ☐ J.D.

☐ M.D. ☐ Other _____

Please Explain

High School Demography ☐ Predominantly White
 ☐ Predominantly Black
 ☐ Predominantly Hispanic
 ☐ Mixed/Balanced

High School Type

☐ Public ☐ Private ☐ Other _____

How many of your high school teachers were African American? _____

Undergraduate Experience

Since entering college, how many courses have you taken with an African American professor? _____

List all courses taken with an African American professor:

<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Semester</u>	<u>Name of Professor</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Do you have an African American faculty academic advisor?

☐ yes ☐ no

If you have had more than one African American faculty member, please answer the following statements as it relates to just one of these faculty members. **Please check all statements that apply.**

___ Professor X asked us to work in groups and make class presentations.

___ Professor X had us do a lot of reading on diversity issues (i.e. racism, white privilege).

___ I felt comfortable expressing my opinions in class.

___ I went to campus and/or community events with Professor X.

___ I went to see Professor X during his/her scheduled office hours.

___ Professor X values promoting racial understanding.

___ I am nervous or uncomfortable when I am talking with Professor X.

___ I feel comfortable sharing personal stories, successes and problems with Professor X.

___ I meet with Professor X outside of her/his regularly scheduled office hours.

___ Class discussions made me feel uncomfortable.

___ Professor X talked to me about topics like – school in general, my family, and my beliefs.

___ I would like to take another class with Professor X.

Name of faculty member I am thinking about: _____

Please answer and then elaborate on the following questions:

1. How many times did you meet with Professor X this semester?
 - i. How many of these meetings were during regular office hours?
 - ii. How many of these meetings were outside of regular office hours?
 - iii. When meeting with Professor X outside of office hours, where did you meet?
 - iv. What did you talk about?

2. How would you describe Professor X?

3. Does Professor X or another African American faculty member advise a group or club that you take part in ? _____Yes ____ No

Please share the name of this group or club. _____

APPENDIX K
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Describe a course that would represent the ideal learning experience for you. Please be as specific and concrete as possible about what this course would include; use as much detail as you think is necessary to present clearly this ideal situation. For example, you might want to discuss what the content or subject matter would be, what the teacher/s would be like, your responsibilities as a student, the evaluation procedures that would be used, and so on. Please explain why you feel the specific course aspects you discuss are "ideal" for you.
(Knefelkamp & Widick, 1974: Measure of Intellectual Development Essay Prompt)
2. When was the first time you had a teacher or faculty member who was a person of color?
 - a. Probe: Was it in High School or College? Can you tell me what it was like the first time you had a teacher that was a person of color?
3. According to your profile form since you came to _____ college you have taken _____ courses with Professor X. What is it like being in his or her class(es)?
4. What did you like about the course you took with Professor X?
5. What did you dislike about the course?
6. What is Professor X like?
 - a. Probe: What is his/her teaching like? How would you describe his/her style?
 - b. Can you give me an example? What did Professor X do to make you think this way?
7. Think about a time when you had to ask Professor X a question, or share a concern with her/him. What happened during your conversation?
 - a. Probe: Where were you when this interaction occurred? How did you feel during this conversation?

8. Tell me about a time when your professor said something that you didn't personally believe in or agree with?
 - a. Probe: What was the issue or topic?
 - b. How did you react when this happened?
 - c. How did you feel when this happened?
 - d. How did your reaction and feelings impact your interaction with your professor?
 - e. How did this influence your thinking on this particular topic?
9. Tell me about a time when your professor gave you support on something you believed in or felt strongly about.
 - a. Probe: What was the issue or topic?
 - b. How did you react when this happened?
 - c. How did you feel when this happened?
 - d. How did your reaction and feelings impact your interaction with your professor?
 - e. How did this influence your thinking on this particular topic?
10. In what ways did Professor X motivate you to learn in or outside of the classroom?
 - a. Probe: How did s/he do this?
11. Can you associate any negative/positive interactions with Professor X? Describe for me one of these experiences.
 - a. Probe: How did you feel during this situation?
12. What do you talk to Professor X about?
 - a. Probe: Have you talked about grades? Home? Your family? Your classes? Living on campus?
 - b. Do you talk with any of your other professors about these things? Why or why not? What makes Professor X different?
13. Overall, how would you describe your relationship with Professor X?
14. [Ask this question if the student is also an advisee]. What is it like being an advisee of Professor X?
 - a. Probe: Is it different when you are in class vs. when you are meeting outside of class? How so?

15. Think about your relationship with Professor X. How is it the same or different than your relationship with your other teachers?
 - a. Probe: Are there differences? Are there similarities?
16. On your questionnaire you self-identified as (Asian, Black/Non Hispanic, Native American, Hispanic, White, or Other), how has your racial/ethnic identity influenced your perceptions of Professor X?
 - a. Probe: How do you think your racial/ethnic identity has influenced your interactions with Professor X?
 - b. How do you think your interactions with Professor X have been, compared to others in your class?
17. How do you think your personal values and beliefs match up with those held by Professor X?
 - a. Probe: Did this ever come up in class? Did this ever come up outside of class?
 - b. Did you feel confident expressing your opinions and beliefs to Professor X? Yes or NO: Can you tell me why?
18. How have you changed due to your interactions with your Professor?
19. Is there anything else that you would like to share me about your relationship or interaction with Professor X?
 - a. Probe: Is there anything we didn't touch upon that you would like to share with me?

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