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The Perceptions and Experiences of Faculty Teaching a Mix of Traditional and Nontraditional Students in Online Classes

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THE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF FACULTY TEACHING A MIX OF

TRADITIONAL AND NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS IN ONLINE CLASSES

by

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this interpretive qualitative research study was to explore how faculty perceived and experienced teaching multigenerational (having traditional and nontraditional students) online classes. The online classes researched served only undergraduate students and had at least thirty percent of traditional students in the class. Ten tenured faculty were drawn from a four-year institution of higher education in the Midwest of the United States. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews. Findings revealed that research participants relied on their own personal experiences as students to inform their teaching and morph the definition of teaching as it relates to online education from their face-to-face teaching experiences. The difference between preparation and teaching becomes blended in the online format. In addition, online teaching is viewed as secondary to face-to-face instruction, especially in their interactions with colleagues. Finally, and most surprisingly, participants experience a disconnection with their online students because of how they view their own presence within the online classroom. How faculty perceive their role as teachers focuses on relationships, identity, motivation, and access. Conclusions from these findings and how they relate to the literature is discussed. Practical implications of the research are provided for administration, faculty, and students. Suggestions for additional academic research is also offered.

To

My Dad and Mom, Floyd and Heidi

My sisters, Liz and Pam

My best friend, Carrie

All of whom made this possible

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Online education has become an indelible component of higher education, evidenced by a report on online education from Babson Survey Research Group who reported that the majority of chief academic leaders view it as a critical component to their institutions' long-term strategy (Allen & Seaman, 2014). When it first began, online education was an entry point in higher education for nontraditional students, a population that heretofore were place- or time-bound and unable to access higher education (McFarlane, 2011; Melkun, 2012). As more institutions continued to increase online access to all of their students, classrooms became more age diverse. A clear understanding of faculty perceptions on age diversity is needed because these experiences can inform preparation and development to ensure that faculty are provided with the skills necessary to perform at their best.

A report from the Babson Survey Research Group (Allen & Seaman, 2017), working with Pearson and Sloan-C, found that more than two-thirds (68%) of students enrolled in "At Least One" distance course do so at a public institution, stating "while public perception has often equated distance education with the for-profit sector of higher education, public institutions actually command the market (Allen & Seaman, 2017, p. 13)." In 2014, all public education institutions in the United States began offering online courses to their students (Allen & Seaman, 2014). Online education is no longer just an entry point for nontraditional students, but rather a normal educational delivery format and an acceptable way for all students to attend class.

With 100% of public institutions offering online education (Allen & Seaman, 2014, 2016), a greater number of traditional students have access than ever before. Online classrooms that were once filled with nontraditional students are now welcoming their on-campus, traditional peers. While research has shown that there are perceptions and challenges to a

multigenerational classroom, the research has largely focused on face-to-face classrooms. In addition, there is conflicting research regarding whether faculty believe that assignments and other classroom activities should be changed to accommodate an intergenerational classroom or specific student populations (Robison, 2012).

In the 1990s, when adults began returning to higher education in record numbers, Bishop-Clark and Lynch (1992, 1995, 1998) studied the integration of traditional and nontraditional students in the classroom and the implications regarding teaching multigenerational classrooms. At the time of that research, however, the advent of online education had not yet had its impact on institutions and students. With the advent of a multigenerational online classroom, how have faculty been affected by this change?

Problem Statement

If everyone approached their education with the same bias, the same perspectives, and the same experiences, then teachers could approach each classroom with the same game plan. However, as the following research shows, different groups of students bring much more than just an open mind into their classrooms. There have been decades of research regarding the differences between younger and older students, spurring several different approaches to teaching adults through formal and informal means (Knowles, 1980; Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007) that are now labeled under the umbrella of adult learning theory.

Adult learning theory is rooted in the belief and assumptions that nontraditional students participate differently in their educational experiences (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007) from their younger counterparts. The configuration of an adult learner, as well as the process and context, influence how adults process information. (Merriam, Caffarella &

Baumgartner, 2007). The issue, then, is whether the approach historically used to teach

nontraditional students can also effectively engage traditional students in the online environment.

As the ensuing literature and research show, a difference exists in teaching an 18 to 22-year-old student and a student that is over the age of 25. Teaching for either group in higher education can be confounded further as faculty are not normally familiar with literature on the different teaching approaches for these groups, as most faculty in higher education are employed because of their subject matter expertise rather than instructional design knowledge or experience (Day, Lovato, Tull & Ross-Gordon, 2011).

Nontraditional students have long been recognized as having differing characteristics than their younger educational peers. Specific characteristics in nontraditional learners are shown including tenacity, commitment, assertiveness, and focus (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1998; Day et al., 2011). Researchers have expanded upon the characteristics to include the belief or perception that nontraditional learners also work harder in both face-to-face and online classrooms, spend more time participating, posting, reading, asking for help, and other activities than traditional students (Donavant, Daniel, & MacKewn, 2013; Howard & Henney, 1998).

If there is one area of agreement within all of the research, it is that motivational factors are a principal difference in qualities between nontraditional and traditional students (Donavant, Daniel, & MacKewn, 2013; Jinkens, 2009; Willging & Johnson, 2004; Yoo & Huang, 2013). Specifically, ample research defines and confirms that nontraditional students are intrinsically motivated, while traditional students are more extrinsically motivated (Willging & Johnson, 2004; Yoo & Huang, 2013).

Intrinsic motivation is represented by the internal drive of nontraditional learners or rather, their own self-expectations for achieving the learning outcomes for their course.

Conversely, external motivators that drive traditional students include grades, peer pressure, and family repercussions to do well in their courses (Donavant, Daniel, & MacKewn, 2013; Yoo & Huang, 2013). In the basic of views, nontraditional learners seem to appreciate the educational experience for the sake of what they learn whereas traditional students are more responsive to how they will be graded. Additional research (Hast, 2013) indicates that these perceptions can lead to problems within the classroom, including the perception of traditional learners as disrespectful, disruptive, and rude by nontraditional learners. Hast's (2013) doctoral research studied the interactions between returning adult students and traditional students and the impact these interactions may have on the learning experience. Hast (2013) highlighted that nontraditional learners may lose respect for instructors if they perceive the instructor cannot or will not control the classroom. Willging and Johnson (2004) argue that these motivational differences can only be applied to the classroom and not to the success or retention of full programs. The authors did not find any significant differences regarding age that predicted the likelihood of retention in online programs.

Faculty perceptions also play a key role in how nontraditional and traditional students are taught in both face-to-face and online classrooms. Day et al. (2011) through the use of interviews found that faculty acknowledge that they had developed strategies to work with their nontraditional students in the classroom, including drawing upon the experiences of nontraditional students and connecting the learning to realistic case studies – strategies that one could argue are an application of the andragogical methods. Faculty members who teach in online classes see differences in the way traditional and nontraditional students learn and approach teaching nontraditional students in an online class differently than traditional students in a face-to-face classroom (Miller & Lu, 2003). If faculty perceptions are such that differences

between nontraditional and traditional learners exist as well as differences between an online and face-to-face modalities, and that these impact teaching methods and techniques, then the case can be made that a multigenerational classroom delivered through online technologies would suggest yet another variable for how they provide instruction.

Nontraditional students have their own identities as learners, as researched by Bishop-Clark and Lynch (1992) in their studies on multigenerational face-to-face classroom. Through the use of non-participatory observation, interviews, and surveys, the authors were able to determine how nontraditional learners viewed themselves in relationship to their traditional peers and to faculty. Nontraditional learners did perceive a barrier between age groups and offered the recommendation that faculty should encourage personal contact between traditional and nontraditional students in the class. The recommendations to decrease barriers between age groups seem straightforward and easily applied within a physical classroom. Do faculty consider different teaching strategies or practices for multigenerational students in an online classroom? Faculty who have traditionally taught online may not consider the effectiveness of course design and teaching a multigenerational online class. Faculty also may not distinguish how teaching multigenerational students in a face-to-face class transition into the online environment.

Researchers examined age as an independent factor in educational experiences in several studies over the past decade, with both positive and concerning results that confirm the differences in learning experiences for nontraditional and traditional students while also guiding the teaching methods and strategies for the faculty faced with a multigenerational classroom. Through statistical analysis, researchers determined that age plays a large role, over all other demographic factors including gender, in the participation of students in a class (Howard & Henney, 1998). Although the study is somewhat dated compared to the other research in this

review, it does provide quantifiable differences in how age groups respond differently in the classroom by observing and reporting how much time and how often students responded in classes. The study found that traditional students participated half as much as did their nontraditional counterparts in the same classes.

Some additional key findings included indications that different age groups also diverged in their preferences in the instructional design of a course, preferring different educational activities and different classroom environments (Fengfeng, 2010; Gregoryk & Eighmy, 2009). Diversity in age also allows for opportunities for a richer discussion in the classroom, as this diversity reflects different life experiences, which produces valuable differences in perspectives among students in a class (Ayers & Narduzzi, 2009).

Though some might be willing to accept that the differences between traditional and nontraditional students and their impact on face-to-face classes will apply similarly to online classes, the research shows that complexities in fostering online teaching effectiveness indicates that growth in multigenerational online classrooms presents a new set of challenges. Faculty may be challenged by new perplexities in teaching multigenerational students in online classes. Variances in teaching evaluations and student satisfaction may be a direct result of the mix of traditional and nontraditional students in the class.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this interpretivist qualitative study was to describe the perceptions and experiences of tenured faculty teaching traditional and nontraditional students in online classes at an urban, public, comprehensive university. My intention was to capture the spirit of these experiences in the participants' own words. The faculty members who were selected for this

sample were engaged in teaching online classes with at least a third of the class represented by traditional students.

Much of the literature on the increase in heterogeneous classrooms either focuses on the traditional, face-to-face classroom, such as Bishop-Clark and Lynch's seminal work of the 1990s or concentrates on the student perspective and perceptions. Bishop-Clark and Lynch (1992, 1993, 1995) did a series of studies on multigenerational students in the 1990s to investigate the differences in teaching traditional and nontraditional students. They found a series of differences including that "Little attention has been directed toward how faculty experience such a learning environment and little exploration of the advantages and disadvantages of the mixed-age college classroom" (p. 749). Past research has focused on multigenerational face-to-face classrooms. With the increase in online education, the multigenerational online class is of interest, especially since early online classes had a more homogenous nontraditional population of students.

Realizing optimal results in the classroom are the responsibility of the faculty and understanding the factors that inform the success of an intergenerational online classroom includes understanding the characteristics of the students (Donavant, Daniel, & MacKewn, 2013). My study will provide faculty members and higher education administrators an in-depth look at faculty responses to heterogeneous online classrooms in universities. The research will contribute to the limited body of knowledge that is currently in existence, providing faculty with additional information on how to address these new learning environments.

Research Questions

The major question explored by this study was "What are faculty perceptions and experiences with teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in online classes?" Additional questions for this study were:

- How do faculty experience teaching online?

- How do faculty perceive their students view them as online teachers?

- How do faculty view their colleague's perceptions of their online teaching?

- How have faculty learned about online teaching?

Significance of the Study

The results of this study can inform the practices and research in teaching a more heterogeneous online class and spur an intentional discussion on the best practices for teaching traditional and nontraditional students in online classes. Furthermore, the results should inform research based on data to increase student satisfaction and the achievement of learning outcomes in this mode of delivery. In addition, this study adds to the general body of research on teaching and faculty roles in online education. With additional research, instructional practices can evolve, and practitioners and administrators can use the results of this study to aid in developing online courses that meet the learning needs of both traditional and nontraditional student populations.

As online classes become the new norm for students seeking higher education, the melding of these two student populations will continue to spark changes in teaching. Understanding the perception of faculty as this change takes place will add to the limited body of knowledge in this area while also informing a more definitive research base that can have a positive and practical implication on teaching online classes in the future. The growth in research will benefit faculty, administrators, and students in online education in institutions of higher education.

Methodology

My study explored how faculty viewed their experiences as university online classes became more heterogeneous, specifically in regards to a blending of traditional and

nontraditional students. In particular, the study examined faculty perceptions of their experiences in teaching as more traditional students enrolled in classes that primarily served nontraditional students and how this dynamic affected their teaching. The experiences of the faculty who lived through the merging of traditional and nontraditional students in their online class are central to the study.

Data were collected from 10 faculty members through semi-structured, in-depth interviews. With the qualitative approach and use of interviews, faculty were able to express their experiences in their own words. They were able to reflect on both the positive and the negative effects and convey struggles and changes that have arisen by teaching students of different ages online. My study adds to the limited literature about how the growing trend of traditional and nontraditional students enrolled in the same online class influences faculty teaching in the online environment to help inform best practices and additional research.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following are the definitions of key terms used. Definitions were kept simple and straightforward as a way to find the best literature for support and to help streamline what can become a complicated relationship.

Nontraditional student are students who are 25 years of age or older and enrolled in an undergraduate degree program. This definition is relevant as it is the age defined by universities for reporting purposes and recognized as a standard in research. The parameters of enrolled in an undergraduate degree program is to ensure that the research used applies to one population, instead of graduate students or non-formal or workplace training programs. Adult learners and adult students are synonymous with the term *nontraditional student* for the purpose of this study. Nontraditional students normally have several priorities in their life, including children and jobs;

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typically have not moved directly from high school to post-secondary education; and do not rely on others, such as parents, in their decision-making.

Traditional students are students between the ages of 18 and 22 and enrolled in an undergraduate degree program immediately after high school. Again, this is the typical definition used by most universities for reporting purposes and is the standard in published research; the parameters are used for the same reasoning as the nontraditional students to certify that we are comparing data from the same student populations. Traditional students typically live on campus, go to school full-time, do not have a break in their education, and have limited responsibilities in regards to family, children, career, or community (Pascarelli & Terenzini, 2005). This was the working definition during the interview process; I recognize that the definition has been updated since the writing of the dissertation.

A **multigenerational classroom** is a classroom that has a blend of traditional and nontraditional students. A classroom can be physical or virtual.

Online teaching is the ability to teach a class via a virtual classroom, either synchronously or asynchronously, using the internet. While online education is an example of distance education, the terms are not interchangeable. For the purpose of this study, only classes that were taught completely online will be used there are no physical face-to-face components to the education.

Online learning is participating in a class, either synchronously or asynchronously, using the internet. There are no physical meetings or in-person contact with the teacher.

Student-centric teaching is considering student needs first when designing a class, moving towards a model where "students are more actively engaged in the learning process" (Wright, 2011, p.94) and the instructor role is more facilitative.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Faculty perceptions and experiences with traditional students, nontraditional students, and online education are important components informing this study. The purpose of this literature review was to examine the factors that affect faculty experiences teaching multigenerational classrooms in online education. In the review of the research regarding faculty experience, the studies focused only on the delivery (online classes versus face-to-face classes) or the student makeup (traditional versus nontraditional). A deficiency existed in the research that applied both factors to faculty perceptions.

Literature Review Methodology

The review of the literature was conducted primarily using online databases including ABI/INFORM, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, ERIC, and Google Scholar. Article references were also used to locate sources. Emphasis was placed on empirical research and peer-reviewed articles.

Initially, the search focused on three individual terms: *online education*, *faculty development*, and *multigenerational classrooms*. It quickly became apparent that each of these terms had several variations. For *online education*, *online learning* and *web-based learning* appeared synonymous. *Multigenerational classrooms* as a search term also highlighted the use of *intergenerational classroom* and *multi-age classroom*, although *multi-age classroom* was used more frequently for elementary and secondary education. *Faculty development* as a term was somewhat limiting, so *professional development* and *staff development* were also used in my research.

Using these search terms individually resulted in an impractical number of references to consider. For instance, there were a high volume of research studies about online education and

online learning. In Google Scholar, the search for online education returns almost three and a half million articles.   With the overwhelming number of results using each search term individually, additional searches combined the terms and used at least two out of the three terms. A search for all three terms, in any of their variations, provided no results. *Adult students* and *nontraditional students* were also used to determine a concentration within a broad scope of results.

Reports from specific organizations that track and measure online education in the United States were also reviewed. There are three organizations that have been at the forefront of online learning in higher education and are recognized for their research in this industry: Babson Survey Research Group, Pearson, and Sloan-C. Published reports from these organizations have also been included in this review to ensure the most up-to-date statistics regarding online education were being used.

Once the general search was completed, the goal was to further narrow the parameters to stay current with changes in technology, Therefore, sources regarding online education that had been published from 2005 to present-day were identified. However, to identify literature on multigenerational classrooms the studies of Bishop-Clark and Lynch conducted in 1990s served as a foundation.

The following is the review of the pertinent literature regarding the growth and relevant changes of the online learner, the differences in teaching multigenerational classrooms, faculty perceptions regarding multigenerational classrooms and online education, and faculty development. No research was found regarding faculty development for teaching multigenerational classrooms, either face-to-face or online. In total, 74 sources were used for this literature review.

The following section presents the main themes the literature provides regarding faculty development for teaching multigenerational online classes. The first is the growth and change regarding online learners as students, and the impacts these changes have on higher education. The second theme centers on faculty perceptions of multigenerational classrooms. This section highlights the research done by Bishop-Clark and Lynch (1990, 1995, & 1998). The final section discusses the literature regarding faculty preparation, including studies on professional development for online education.

Distance Education and Growth in Online Learning

This section presents research and concepts regarding the changing demographics of online learners. First, literature examining the growth of online learning in higher education is presented. Next, research on changing demographics of online learners is reviewed.

Online learning has had a meteoric rise in higher education. Although distance education has been around for over a century, the introduction of the Internet increased access and availability of education around the world (Bold, Chenoweth, & Garimella, 2008, Hirner & Kochtanek, 2012; Mariasingham & Hanna, 2006). More than 5.8 million students were taking at least one distance education course in 2014 (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Although distance education has always provided access to students who have no plans to step onto a college campus, the Internet has shortened the time and effort needed to connect to a college classroom. Currently, online delivery of education is used more than any other distance education strategy, including Interactive Television (ITV), correspondence, and live-remote location combinations (Hickman, 2003).

The surge of nontraditional students into higher education has as much to do with the access that online education provides than perhaps any other variable (Conceição, 2007; Melkun,

2012). Online education has allowed higher education institutions to open their doors to a completely new segment of students, allowing them to fulfill their responsibility and mission to provide an education to a broad population. Online education does not keep students place-bound, and perhaps more importantly, time-bound. Online education allows an asynchronous classroom, removing a limiting restriction for working nontraditional students who cannot commit to a specific timeframe for each course (Melkun, 2012; Yoo & Huang, 2013). Barriers of time and distance are no longer constraints for students who work, have families, or do not live within a commutable distance to the educational institution or program of their choice.

Although more and more public institutions of higher learning are providing Internet-based distance education programs, little pragmatic planning for the programs has been provided (Shelton, 2010; Watkins & Kaufman, 2007) including efforts to increase understanding of the characteristics and needs of the students who enroll in them and the faculty who teach them. For example, Shelton (2010) discussed the lack of instruments for evaluating quality online education, "…quality indicators for traditional education are clearly defined but applicable standards are needed for benchmarking quality assurance in distance education" (p. 5). Additionally, Watkins and Kaufman (2007) indicated that strategic planning for online education by administrators has focused on the growth of enrollments that online education can provide with little or no planning provided for faculty development to support online teaching. Online learning was initially offered to reach out to a new audience of students who may have not otherwise attended a post-secondary institution (McFarlane, 2011) ensuring that the bulk of the students in these classrooms were nontraditional students.

At the same time, online learners are no longer a homogenous group and their demographics have been changing steadily for the past decade (Yukselturk & Top, 2013). While

nontraditional students flocked to online learning because of the ability to fit higher education into lives already burdened with responsibilities (Gagne & Walters, 2009), traditional students are finding that convenience of online classes is also beneficial, such as accelerating their time to degree (Bocchi, Eastman, & Swift, 2004; Young & Norgard, 2006). In 2007, Dabbagh already had noted that "the profile of the online learner population is changing from one that is older, mostly employed, place bound, goal oriented, and intrinsically motivated, to one that is diverse, dynamic, tentative, younger, and responsive to rapid technological change" (p. 217). As the popularity of online classes has grown and institutions have offered more of them, traditional students have begun to include them in their programs (Allen & Seaman, 2016; Dabbagh, 2007). While a traditional student may not complete an entire degree program online, they will include online courses into their studies. An overwhelming majority of bachelor degree seekers indicated that they were either likely or very likely to take at least one online course in 2016 (Allen & Seaman, 2016).

Traditional students have incorporated online classes into their programs (Allen & Seaman, 2016). Faculty no longer teach a homogenous online learner base, suggesting the need to advance and support changes to serve a multi-age classroom (Conceição, 2007). As the profile for the online learner continues to change, previous studies that identified strategies based on the characteristics of a homogeneous group of nontraditional learners may no longer apply and these shifting profiles pose a considerable challenge for research. Insights on issues of multigenerational online classrooms can be drawn from earlier research on multigenerational face-to-face classrooms.

Multigenerational Classrooms

Bishop-Clark and Lynch spent much of the 1990s researching the advent of multigenerational classrooms on campus. At that time, there was a marked growth in nontraditional students returning to university campuses. Several of their studies focused on faculty perceptions of intergenerational classrooms. In 1993, the authors concluded that faculty enjoyed and preferred teaching in a mixed-age classroom and that they believed a mixed-age classroom provided benefits for the students, including different perspectives that each population of students provided in the classroom.

In another study, Bishop-Clark and Lynch (1998) explored the similarities and differences in faculty perceptions in intergenerational classes. The overwhelming majority of faculty did not favor either the traditional or nontraditional students, but almost a quarter of respondents did admit to a preference for older students. In open-ended questions, faculty often referenced the contributions provided by older students and indicated frustration with younger students. The authors concluded that the perceptions of faculty teaching in these classrooms were extremely positive (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1998).

Bishop-Clark and Lynch's (1998) findings from several studies support the indications that a multigenerational class presents specific rewards and challenges for faculty although faculty did not perceive a need to alter their teaching of these classes. The authors noted, "Faculty seem to be aware of problems unique to the mixed-age classroom, but it is not clear that they are addressing them" (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1995, p. 756). Not only did their findings support this assertion, but also additional research confirmed that the perceptions of faculty were that students of different ages behaved and learned differently in the classroom (Bourland, 2009; Day et al., 2011; Kasworm, 1990; Robison, 2012).

The seminal works produced by Bishop-Clark and Lynch (1992, 1995, 1998) provided a basis for understanding the challenges and benefits of a multigenerational classroom. In their research published in 1995, several key findings laid the groundwork for understanding how faculty perceived students from different age groups and their experiences of teaching in these classrooms. More than a third of the faculty surveyed agreed that they interacted differently with traditional and nontraditional students, although only 11% said that they were friendlier with older students. The survey substantiated previous research from Bishop-Clark and Lynch (1992) indicating that faculty attitudes to teaching a multigenerational classroom were extremely positive. It is also worth noting that faculty also believed that traditional students were less serious about their coursework and more disruptive in classes. Bishop-Clark and Lynch (1995) concluded their research with the advice, "Only by becoming aware of our attitudes and our treatment of both groups of students can we begin to incorporate strategies and techniques that will benefit our students' learning" (p. 760).

Numerous studies have determined that faculty perceptions regarding traditional and nontraditional students have implications on how they teach (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1998; Donavant, Daniel, & MacKewn, 2013). Recommendations for changes include increasing interactions between age-diverse groups within a classroom (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992) as well as the emphasis placed on identifying the class student base for successful design of the courses (Simonsen et al., 2012). These recommendations inform how classes can effectively engage all students in multigenerational classrooms.

However, Donavant, Daniel, and MacKewn's (2013) research has shown that while faculty have specific perceptions regarding the differences between traditional and nontraditional students, they did not change their instruction for a mixed-age classroom in a face-to-face

setting. Furthermore, faculty did not believe that a multigenerational classroom warranted any changes in teaching styles or educational methodology. Moreover, Robison (2012) stated that while both faculty and students indicated a preference for a mixed-age classroom, students and faculty perceptions differed on the learning design for these courses. Students agreed that assignments should not be changed to accommodate students of different ages, but faculty members believed that assignments should be changed for a multigenerational classroom (Robison, 2012), although the research provides no reasons for these beliefs.

With no consensus on the most effective strategies, the obvious implications are that course design affects both students and faculty in multigenerational classrooms. However, the research only applies to multigenerational students in a face-to-face class and less is known about multigenerational online classrooms.

The Multigenerational Online Classroom

Online classrooms are experiencing increased diversity including the age of their students (Gregoryk & Eighmy, 2009). Multigenerational online classrooms have grown as traditional students now incorporate these courses into their programs of study (Allen & Seaman, 2016). Moreover, with almost 50% of students in higher education defined as nontraditional and almost one hundred percent of all students planning to incorporate at least one online course in their program in the next year, the blending of traditional and nontraditional students in these courses will continue. In short, online learners are becoming more heterogeneous and any shared characteristics are diminishing (Dabbagh, 2007; Gregoryk & Eighmy, 2009; Meyer, 2014).

The multigenerational online classroom differs from the face-to-face classroom in several essential ways that may affect design, effective instruction, and student satisfaction. As the Sloan Consortium Report to the Nation "Five Pillars of Quality Online Education" (Lorenzo &

Moore, 2002) noted student satisfaction is a "vital aspect" (p. 4) in any education. Yet, limited research on age differences in online classrooms makes it difficult to know just how student satisfaction is fostered by faculty.

Unlike face-to-face classrooms, where student satisfaction and engagement can be more easily read through both verbal and physical cues, asynchronous online learning fundamentally puts a barrier between the instructor and students, increasing the challenge for an instructor to connect with the students on this level (Chyung, 2007; Conceição, 2006). Blondy (2007) suggested in her review of the application of teaching strategies with nontraditional learners in the online learning environment, adult learning theory assumptions used as a starting point in the approach of developing online coursework for nontraditional students can help guide faculty choices for design such as discussions, assessments, and outcomes in multigenerational classrooms.

In addition, several studies support the assertion that traditional and nontraditional students approach learning differently (Day, et al., 2011; Donavant, Daniel, & MacKewn, 2013; Howard & Henney, 1998; Meyer, 2014) which may hold true in the online environment. Howard and Henney (1998) found a statistically significant difference in the participation rates between traditional and nontraditional students. Although their study was limited by the environment of the sample (only one campus studied), the research supported their findings. Yoo and Huang (2013) determined that age was a contributing factor in engagement and motivation for online learners.

Yet, the research is limited on how the mixing of nontraditional and traditional students in online courses has impacted faculty teaching, the learning experience, or students' satisfaction. Moreover, research on the multigenerational face-to-face classroom suggests that

faculty and students may have differing views of optimal course design, and it is unclear whether faculty see age diversity as something to consider in course design and instruction (Donavant, Daniel, & MacKewn, 2013).

Growth in Faculty Teaching Online Courses

Online learning is quickly becoming normalized in higher education. Faculty who were more technically savvy and enjoyed the digital format were the first to begin teaching online, but this was a small subset (Seaman, 2009). However, as online education continued to become more mainstream and more students seek online classes, faculty who were at first hesitant have now joined the online format (Allen & Seaman, 2014). Newer data in a survey of approximately 50,000 online instructors provide the following (Seaman, 2009):

- Nearly one-quarter of all faculty responding (23.6 percent) were teaching at least one online course at the time of the survey.

- Over one-third (34.4 percent) of faculty have taught online.

- The most experienced faculty, those with more than 20 years of teaching experience, are teaching online at rates equivalent to those with less teaching experience.

A primary motivator for faculty to teach online is to "meet student needs for flexible access" or the "best way to reach particular students" (Seaman, 2009, p. 7). However, faculty also view online education as having barriers to successful teaching, including social interaction with students, time management or the effort to develop/design an online course, and technical support (Seaman, 2009; Haber & Mills, 2008).

Effective Online Instruction and Faculty Support

As in all planning for courses, whether offered in a traditional face-to-face classroom or via the internet, careful consideration must be placed on the design and should include the activities, assessments, delivery, and learning outcomes (Simonson, Smaldino, Albright, & Zvacek, 2012, Cennamo & Kalk, 2012; Dell, Low & Wilker, 2010, Gagne, Briggs, & Wager, 2005). A thoughtful, well-planned design provides a successful learning experience for all students, but faculty believe that online education requires that students also be more adept and self-directed in the learning experience (Brown, 1997). The distance between faculty and the students in an online class adds a layer of anonymity; faculty do not "see" their students, but rather a series of discussion posts and homework assignments. Faculty struggle to connect with their students in this context (Totaro et al., 2005).

McKee and Tew (2013) state that "Faculty members tend to teach as they were taught and accordingly have little experience with new instructional pedagogies and delivery systems" (p. 4). Furthermore, the role of instruction in online classes is vastly different from that in a face-to-face class (Conceição, 2006, 2007; Gagne & Walters, 2009). Conceição (2007) explains that the "successful online instructor [is] an instructional designer, facilitator, catalyst, and learner" (p. 6).

One of the areas that is challenging to mirror in the online environment is the face-to-face interaction. This can be an important component for faculty in their decision to teach online (Bruner, 2007). In a quantitative analysis by Tanner, Nosser, and Totaro (2009), business undergraduate faculty were surveyed on their perceptions regarding online learning. Faculty, on significantly high levels, agreed that they would miss the contact with students in an online class.

Faculty teaching online cite these barriers and more to their perceived effectiveness or success in the online classroom (Haber & Mills, 2008; Maguire, 2005; Terantino & Agbehonou,

2012). Faculty rated factors such as technological support, strategic planning for program/course development, time and compensation, and rapid change due to technological advances as barriers to their teaching satisfaction in online classes (Haber & Mills, 2008). There is also the perception that online classes do not mirror the experience of a face-to-face class, or even more concerning, that the class does not provide the same learning outcomes for the students (Allen & Seaman, 2014; Maguire, 2008).

The online teaching environment can also be overwhelming for faculty with the sense that the work is never-ending (Gagne & Walters, 2009; Haber & Mills, 2008; McLean, 2006; Perry, 2008; Portugal, 2013). In addition, a faculty member's comfort level with technology has a direct impact on their willingness to teach an online class (Betts & Heaston, 2014; Maguire, 2005). Keeping up with the ever-changing technological updates is viewed as a distinct challenge for faculty considering teaching online classes. Amro, Maxwell, and Kupczynski (2013) were clear in their findings that "Faculty members, as well as students, need to be ready for the rapid changes associated with technology" (p. 301).

The new role for effective faculty teaching online is much more student-centric in its approach (Baran, Correia, & Thompson, 2013; Conceição, 2006; Wright, 2011) and is a "guide on the side" (Baran, Correia, & Thompson, 2013, p. 4), allowing students to have more responsibility within the class. Gagne and Walters (2009) further explain that "contrary to the assumption that teachers should know how to teach online since they are actually doing it, the findings of their study suggested that faculty need to be provided with continuous support that includes appropriate technology, ongoing training, and technical assistance in making the transition to the online environment" (p. 586).

More faculty are gravitating to the online environment, with little or no preparation or training (Ali et al., 2005; Gregory & Salmon, 2013). For example, a needs assessment for faculty development in nursing (Ali et al., 2005) found that faculty rated themselves as novices, beginners, or competent. None of the faculty, even those who were currently teaching online, reported themselves as proficient or expert; furthermore, most faculty believed that they would eventually have to teach online. Given the differences between face-to-face and online teaching and what is known about teacher improvement, it is not surprising that faculty often lament the lack of training for teaching online courses (Haber & Mills, 2008; Hoffman & Dudjak, 2012).

Chaney (2010) found that there is a positive relationship between the intent to teach online and the intent to participate in faculty development. Moreover, in her doctoral research regarding faculty perceptions of professional development for online teaching, Kennedy (2015) found an increased satisfaction with online teaching by faculty who participated in formal professional development. She provided three results from a regression analysis that assessed the best indicators of professional development that increased faculty satisfaction with online teaching, "faculty willingness to participate in formal professional development, satisfaction with institutional support for online teaching, and perceptions of usefulness of formal professional development" (p. 79). Furthermore, faculty who rarely participated in development activities still reported an increased satisfaction with online teaching. Her research showed that professional development for faculty, even with brief participation, had an impact on the participants, yielding greater satisfaction for faculty.

With such a crucial shift in the role of teaching between face-to-face and online classes, programs which allow faculty to work on this transition would be a welcomed practice, and "transform their perspectives by engaging in pedagogical inquiry and problem solving" (Baran,

Correia, & Thompson, 2013, p. 35). How faculty become better teachers was the purpose of Bain's (2004) fifteen-year study. Bain and his partners interviewed 63 college professors, reviewed the professors' presentations and written discussions; read their syllabi, assignments, and other class materials; observed them teaching; interviewed their students and collected rating sheets; and listened to their colleagues. While Bain (2004) presented several conclusions from his research, he summarized his findings on what he characterized as the best college teachers thusly, "Fundamentally, they were learners, constantly trying to improve their own efforts to foster students' development, and never completely satisfied with what they had already achieved" (p. 20). Although Bain (2004) did not address it directly in his research, in one sentence, the case for faculty development is incredibly clear.

Impact of Faculty Preparation for Online Instruction

Faculty who are trained produce a classroom that is conducive to learning and generate more successful and satisfied students (McKee & Tew, 2013). While professional development was shown to increase faculty satisfaction with online teaching (Frankel, 2015; Kane, Shaw, Pang, Salley, & Snider; 2016; Kennedy, 2015), did it help increase student satisfaction in online classes? Kane et al. (2016) researched the relationship between student satisfaction and activities faculty used for preparation for online teaching and found no relationship. However, they did find that activities that helped in preparation did have a positive impact on faculty retention, suggesting that investing in faculty support may be "worth the cost" (Kane et. al, 2016, p. 10).

Several factors are necessary for successful faculty development plans (Murray, 1999), including institutional support, structured programs and activities, reward structures, and faculty ownership. In his study on faculty development in community colleges, Murray (1999) found that the overwhelming majority of colleges met only half of the factors for a successful

professional development plan. In addition, most development programs had little cohesion, and

many faculty focused their efforts on increasing their content knowledge rather than

strengthening their teaching skills or preparing for the future of education.

Professional development for increasing faculty ability to teach effectively in the online

environment generally covers two areas: (1) technology training to develop the courses (Ali et

al., 2005; Bolliger & Wasilik, 2009; Kennedy, 2015; Padgett & Conceição, 2000) and (2)

training in online instructional practices for delivery, especially for asynchronous delivery

(Chiasson, Terras, & Smart, 2015; Kennedy, 2015; Koszalka, & Ganesan, 2004; Portugal, 2013)**.**

Dysart and Weckerle (2015) discuss how technology and pedagogy can intersect with formal

activities for faculty preparation with the TPACK (technological, pedagogical, and content

knowledge) framework. This framework provided an "approach to build instructors' ability to

integrate technology with the pedagogical strategies that best serve the content they are teaching"

(p. 255).

While it did not address multigenerational classrooms per se, Dysart and Weckerle's

(2015) work at least connected the approach to teaching with the inclusion of creating knowledge

sets to better integrate technology into teaching. This may be at the core of developing faculty

for teaching multigenerational online classes. That is, by addressing teaching and not just

technology, issues of design that engage age-diverse learners may be realized. The professional

development to support the TPACK approach included learning by design, peer coaching, and

communities of practice.

A case is made for increasing the support of faculty teaching online classes, especially

since "the needs of faculty teaching solely online varies considerably from their face-to-face

counterparts" (Elliott, Rhoades, Jackson, & Mandernach, 2015, p. 177). Research done by

Meyer and Murrell (2014) reported the areas that faculty valued most in training for online teaching. Assessment of student learning, creating community, critical thinking, instructional design models, and creating community rated highest out of 18 distinct categories among faculty surveyed (Meyer & Murrell, 2014). Professional development approaches to the needs of faculty teaching online is strongly correlated with the quality of the online programs offered (Baran & Correia, 2014), so faculty development should be a critical component in an institution's strategy for online education.

In general, faculty training and preparation is essential to the successful implementation of a class (McKee & Tew, 2013). Faculty members today need a comprehensive toolbox to manage an increasingly diverse student body and the changing delivery formats used in higher education. Faculty development must contend with staying abreast of the technological changes that impact higher education and the changing demographics of students.

Issues for Effective Faculty Instruction in Multigenerational Online Classrooms

The growth of multigenerational online classrooms adds another layer of complexity for faculty development strategies for effective online teaching. As online classrooms have become more heterogeneous, faculty understanding of their role and their impact on the mix of traditional and nontraditional students is an important factor for effective online teaching and learning. Faculty preparation and development may be able to provide tools to support teaching in the multigenerational online classroom. Yet, there is little research regarding faculty development for teaching multigenerational students, although the student population has been blending for the last decade.

One factor that supports that faculty can become effective in multigenerational online teaching is the growing recognition that overall effective online teaching is student centered.

The role of faculty in face-to-face learning is different from faculty teaching an online class (Conceição, 2006, 2007; Gagne & Walters, 2009), although faculty teaching online view their students as the most important element in their overall satisfaction (Bolliger & Wasilik, 2009; McLean, 2006). This signifies that faculty believe student needs are their first consideration, independent of the means of delivery.

Another strategy for conceptualizing effective online teaching in the multigenerational classroom is to consider age differences from the lens of diversity. As noted by Faust and Courtenay (2002), "'Age' is commonly treated as an important characteristic of diversity [as well], yet, very little attention has been given to age as it results to student success in the college experience" (p. 402). Eppler et al. (2000) stated that "Research efforts could facilitate this transition to increasingly diverse classrooms by providing a more detailed understanding of factors which motivate students of various ages to learn and strive for academic success" (p. 353). Increased knowledge of motivational factors in the online multigenerational classroom aligns with the general need for a student-centered approach to teaching.

Finally, building on adult learning theory may inform effectiveness in the multigenerational online classroom (Knowles, 1980; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Cercone (2008) noted that the influx of nontraditional learners at the beginning of online education increased the need for integrating adult learning theories into the design of online classes as a specific recommendation for ensuring student satisfaction. Now that traditional students are entering the online classroom, it is important to reconsider how adult learning theory methods and concepts are used in online courses to enhance the satisfaction of the nontraditional students who fill the majority of the classes. Adult learning theory may inform multigenerational teaching practices in ways not previously considered.

However, there is a need to better understand faculty perceptions about multigenerational online teaching before formal activities to support preparation can be designed. While studies on faculty development for online instruction have demonstrated that some perceived barriers can be overcome, less is known about factors associated with multigenerational online teaching.

Formal activities and professional development in online teaching can provide support for faculty who struggle with external barriers, such as time and technological support. While much of the existing professional development literature focuses on existing barriers, growth in the online multigenerational classroom suggest that it also important to address this dimension of online teaching.

Summary

With the absence of research encompassing the interaction of the growth and change of online learners, multigenerational classrooms, and faculty development, there is a significant gap in the knowledge base. The research on multigenerational classrooms only references face-to-face classrooms (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1998; Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992), and it is inconceivable that findings based on such differing experiences can be applied or remain relevant to today's online students. Current research regarding online education abounds, including substantial support for the changes and trends as they relate to online learners. Consequently, the research establishes that online learners as a distinct population are becoming more heterogeneous (Dabbagh, 2007) and thus, more challenging to apply predictable and standardized attributes concerning their educational experiences.

Although online education has been a growing part of higher education for over the past 10 years, its innate state of flux keeps the research from being relevant for very long. In addition, the structures established for higher education were developed for an in-person

experience, prior to any consideration that communication, let alone teaching, would be possible otherwise. The effects of online education and online learning on students, especially nontraditional students, has been well documented (Allen & Seaman, 2016; Conceição, 2007; Melkun, 2012). Online education has correspondingly had an impact on faculty, including the necessity of adapting to changing and dynamic student populations, new areas of professional development and training, changing technology in classrooms, and increased workloads with limited resources.

Developing this base of knowledge will have long-term ramifications on the teaching practices and the administration of online programs for the near future. Contributions to the literature will help promote understanding to the practice of teaching, especially in an online environment. Adding to the research in this area will assist faculty in their preparation for teaching a more diverse student base; administration will be able to plan and support the faculty to meet the challenges that online education and a more heterogeneous classroom create.

The following chapter focuses on the methodology for my study, including reviews of the qualitative interpretivist methodology and Brookfield's (1995) conceptual process for critical reflection and the justification for their use in this study. A review of both the research and interview questions is included. In addition, data design, data collection, and data analysis will be detailed. Finally, strategies for quality control to corroborate interpretation and mitigate researcher bias will be offered.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

My interpretivist study explored and interpreted faculty perception of an event (Creswell, 1998), namely teaching traditional and nontraditional students in online classes. Understanding how faculty experience teaching online classes with traditional and nontraditional students can inform instructional designers, faculty, and administrators and have a positive impact for online students. This qualitative interpretive study focused on the following questions.

Major question:

- What are faculty perceptions and experiences with teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in online classes?

Sub-questions:

- How do faculty experience teaching online?

- How do faculty perceive their students view them as online teachers?

- How do faculty view their colleague's perceptions of their online teaching?

- How have faculty learned about online teaching?

Methods

An interpretive qualitative methodological approach was used to conduct my study. Interpretivists "see action on research results as a meaningful and important outcome of inquiry processes" (Guba, Egon, & Lincoln, 2005, p. 201) and focus on the construction of the meaning that participants make of their experiences. In this study, I focused on the participants' experiences and perceptions teaching traditional and nontraditional students in online classes.

Creswell (2007) further refines interpretive qualitative research by stating "it recognizes the self-reflective nature of qualitative research and emphasizes the role of the researcher as an interpreter of the data and the individual who represents the information" (p. 248). An

interpretivist approach acknowledges the role of the researcher and the influence over the analysis the role has. The interpretivist model identifies that a rigid standard of objective assessment of any study cannot exist because of this relationship (Broom & Willis, 2007; Glesne, 2011).

The interpretivist's central purpose for the research is to understand the meaning that is made by the research participants (Broom & Willis, 2007; Glesne, 2011). As Glesne (2011) states, "The ontological belief that tends to accompany interpretivist traditions portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex, and ever changing" (p. 8). Thus, the research began with an open mind-set to a plethora of perspectives, rather than a specific hypothesis, allowing for participants' interpretations of their experiences.

The interpretivist approach to research listens for the meaning people make from their own experiences that informs their actions and decision-making, recognizing that people construct their reality. According to Broom and Willis (2007) in their review of the interpretivist approach to health research, interpretivist researchers rely on qualitative techniques, such as interviews and focus groups. The interpretivist researcher does not look for patterns in group behavior, rather "seeks to understand individual experiences of interactions, events, and social processes and identify patterns in these subjective experiences" (Broom & Willis, 2007, p. 25).

To fully understand the experiences of teaching multigenerational students in online classrooms, faculty stories and anecdotes are used to share their perspectives. I, as the researcher, provided my interpretation in the analysis.

Conceptual Framework

Brookfield's (1995) conceptual process for Critical Reflection was used for my study, including his use of four lenses – autobiography, students, colleagues, and theoretical literature.

Critical reflection is the process of "identifying and questioning processes … with the aim (expressed or not) of seeking improvement. The analysis of one's beliefs and assumptions is at the heart of critical reflection" (Privett, 2002, p. 8). Brookfield (1995) defines it further by clarifying that there is a difference between reflection and critical reflection

> …reflection becomes critical when it has two distinctive purposes. The first is to understand how considerations of power undergird, frame, and distort educational processes and interactions. The second is to question assumptions and practices that seem to make our teaching lives easier but actually work against our own best long-term interests. (p.8)

Understanding that critical reflection relies on more than a cursory review of events is essential to its use. This conceptual process will guide my study.

Faculty learn to teach through a myriad of efforts, including graduate work, professional development offered through their institutions, and academic conferences (Brookfield, 1995, 2002). However, faculty spend the bulk of their training efforts on becoming subject matter experts, not necessarily better instructors of those subjects (Brookfield, 2002). Critical reflection provides a base that allows the researcher to focus on the participants' views of their experience as teachers, supporting faculty to reflect on their experiences teaching multigenerational online classes. Brookfield's (1995) critical reflection process stresses that faculty move beyond their own assumptions and look externally to confirm their beliefs. The process of critical reflection allows faculty to identify their own assumptions regarding practice and power. As Brookfield states (1995), "It never occurs to us (teachers) that what needs questioning is the assumption that neat answers to our problems are always waiting to be discovered outside our experience" (p. 1).

The principles undergirding critical reflection as a teaching practice include identifying and challenging the assumptions regarding teaching in the efforts of making improvements. Brookfield (1995) identifies distinct categories of assumptions:

- **Paradigmatic Assumptions** are those that people believe to be true; they are the axioms that are used to provide order by placing what is believed to be true into "fundamental categories" (p. 8).

- **Prescriptive Assumptions** are those that help determine what should happen or how one ought to behave within a particular circumstance.

- **Causal Assumptions** provide an understanding of how processes work and what conditions are needed. These assumptions are usually stated in predictive terms, such as if students are put into small groups, overall student participation will increase. Causal assumptions are easiest to identify.

- **Hegemonic assumptions** are those that people believe are in their own best interests, but have been designed by more powerful interests. An example is that teaching is a vocation rather than a career. This assumption, when believed, will have faculty working much longer hours at their own expense.

Understanding assumptions and their impact on behavior is necessary for successful critical reflection. Critical reflection provides four lenses in which to view the teaching practice: autobiographical, student, colleague experience, and theoretical literature. The following are the definitions for each lens as provided by Brookfield (1995, 2002):

Autobiographical: The faculty member puts him/herself in the role of the learner and uses his/her own experience as a student.

Student: The faculty member gains insight into how students perceive the learning experience through feedback and empathy.

Colleague Experience: The faculty has critical conversations with colleagues to gain self-awareness from their experiences.

Theoretical Literature: Academic and educational literature either confirms or invalidates the assumptions and beliefs that shape practice.

These four lenses provided the foundation for the questions used in my research and created a framework by which to assess the answers. Figure 3.1 provides a model for how these lenses provide input into the critical reflection process and affect the assumptions that make up the teaching practice. Each lens provides the input for how faculty understand their own beliefs and insights.

Figure 3.1
Foundation of Four Lenses

Self	Students	Colleagues	Theory
Using one's own experience	Using student feedback and empathy	Using colleagues to gain self-awareness	Using literature to confirm assumptions

Perceptions and Experiences
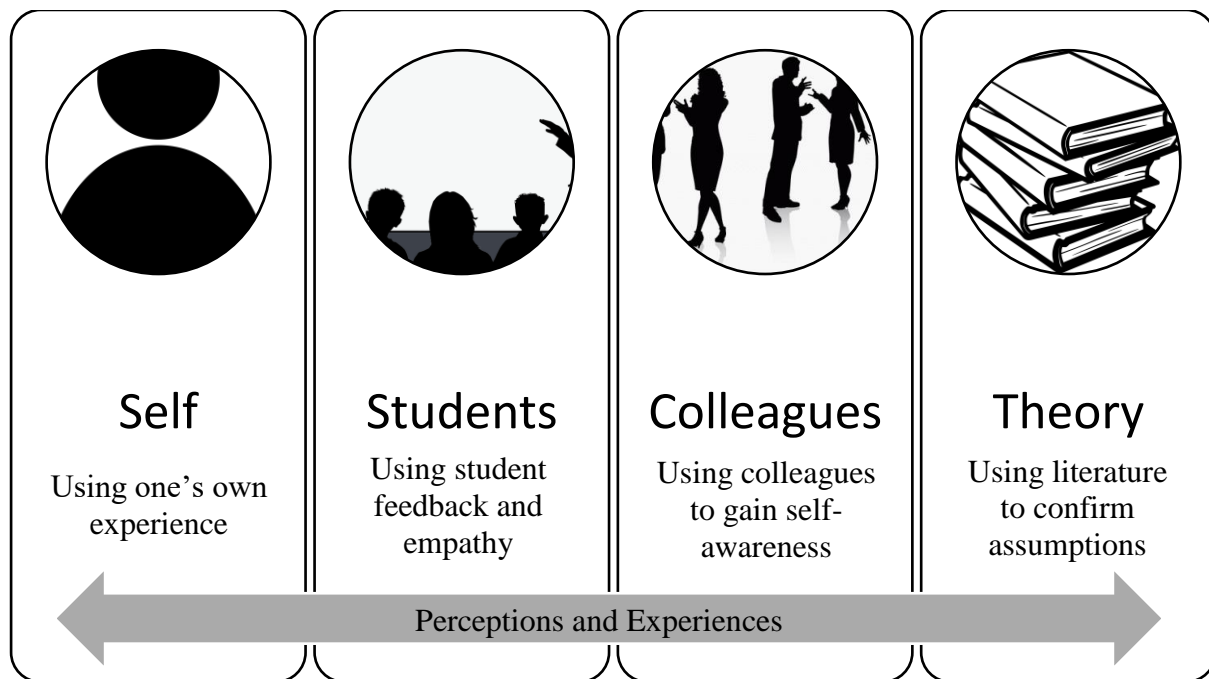
The successful use of Brookfield's (1995) critical reflection process states that faculty should move beyond collecting feedback through each lens. Rather, the feedback should assist the faculty in questioning and revising their assumptions to alter their teaching methods. Brookfield (1995) argues that excellent instructors continually attempt "in a deliberate and sustained way" (p. 44) to develop their methods for a better learning environment.

Context of the Study

This study is based on the experiences of a small public comprehensive university, located in the Midwest of the United States. The institution offered a distance learning degree program for adults over the past 30 years. In 2011, the program began offering two degrees completely online. In the last five years, university leadership modified the policy allowing traditional students access to the online classes that had previously been reserved solely for students who were in these online degree programs and who were prodigiously nontraditional students.

Traditional students at this campus typically complete their coursework in a face-to-face environment, are between the ages of 18 and 22, and either commute to or live on campus. These traditional students are further defined as students who have limited life responsibilities, such as full-time jobs, children, financial obligations beyond education, and civic or community commitments (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). This is the definition used at the time of the study; this definition continues to evolve through time.

Prior to the change in policy, traditional students needed faculty approval to gain access to the online courses reserved for the nontraditional students in these degrees. The shift in policy resulted in traditional students enrolling in record numbers with a six percent increase in traditional student enrollments the first semester. In two years, traditional student enrollment in

the online classes grew from 27 percent to 38 percent. For the first time in the program's history, faculty had a substantial mix of nontraditional and traditional students in their online classes.

The impact of this policy change became apparent as the course evaluations were completed. As the evaluations were compiled, each course had a wide variety of responses, with standard deviations of eight on a ten-point scale. Before this, evaluations were typically within acceptable ranges without such large variances. These wide fluctuations in answers suggested that students were having completely different experiences in the same online class.

In eight out of the nine questions in the student evaluation, there was a significant difference in the responses between the two student populations, nontraditional and traditional. Traditional students rated the courses significantly lower in eight areas. Students also supplied answers that were in direct opposition when responding to the open-ended questions. For example, some students raved about how much the class discussion affected their satisfaction in the course and how much they gained from the virtual interaction. Others stated that there simply was no discussion in the course. From an administrator's standpoint, this was perplexing and faculty members were struggling with the same issues.

Faculty were beginning to express concern with the challenges of teaching a mixed-age student classroom. Faculty reported more emails and phone calls related to student challenges, increased student complaints, and more students dropping courses or withdrawing. A separate, in-house quantitative analysis found that the majority of students dropping classes were from traditional students. It was quickly becoming apparent that different populations of students were not experiencing the same satisfaction with the courses. Even more apparent were that faculty, who had become accustomed to teaching nontraditional students, were struggling as well and becoming very concerned with the integration of traditional students. Based on this history,

gaining an understanding of how faculty are trained and experience heterogeneous online classes would benefit both and administrative planning efforts, class design, and faculty instruction.

In addition, the debate continues on best practices for teaching, online or otherwise, and whether demographics such as age should factor into an approach to teaching. A noticeable shift in the frustration levels of faculty who were teaching online classes with a more heterogeneous student base was apparent, although anecdotal. As online populations continued to become more heterogeneous, the teaching challenges continued to increase as indicated by a recent faculty Facebook post that queried, "Is there some rule that Online Adult Learners have to be jerks?" yet a review of her class showed a clear mixing of ages in her class. Alternatively, "If age is even a small factor in the success or failure of a student, then the assumptions of the characteristics of adult learners may offer some insight into how the adult student behaves and performs in the classroom" (Clemente, 2010, p. 19).

Design Considerations and Sampling

For my study, it was imperative that all of the participants experienced teaching an online class in which the student population shifted from mostly nontraditional students to more than a third of the class becoming traditional students. To achieve this, I used purposeful sampling, which allowed the selection of faculty members whose online classes had become more heterogeneous. Purposeful sampling permits the researcher to choose members as data sources of the study based upon their ability to meet the research criteria (Creswell, 2005).

I used the following criteria to identify faculty to participate in the study:

- Participants had taught the same online class for at least one semester (including summers, but not January or Interim terms) in each of the three years policy shifted allowing traditional students into online classes.

- Student populations in these classes showed that at least a third of the class were traditional students.

- Participants were tenured, full-time faculty members at the institution, rather than ad hoc or adjunct faculty or lecturers.

- Participants had over 10 years of experience teaching face-to-face at the university level.

- Participants have five or more years of experience teaching online classes.

These criteria were set to provide a shared experience among participants. In this way, chosen participants had a similar background, such as experience in teaching at the university level and faculty status. This kept their teaching experiences and perceptions focused on the shifting student populations rather than the challenges confronted by faculty who are either new to teaching or new to teaching an online course. This was an important consideration for the research, in that the meaning participants made from their experiences focused on teaching a new mix of traditional and nontraditional students.

Participant Recruitment

The institution maintains a database that includes online courses, student enrollments, student demographic data, and instructor information. The online courses were analyzed based on student enrollment to identify the courses where traditional student population had grown to 30 percent or more. With that list, I was able to further delineate those courses that were taught by faculty who met the criteria for the research. That list identified 21 faculty members who were sent emails (see Appendix A) with an attached consent form (see Appendix B). Four faculty responded to the first set of emails. Multiple emails and phone calls were sent to those faculty who had not responded. In all, 10 faculty agreed to participate in the interview process.

The sample of faculty had diversity of gender and came from a variety of disciplines. Having a strong sample from a multitude of disciplines helped to focus the analysis on the perceptions and experiences of a heterogeneous student population and facilitated comparisons between faculty (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Of the 21 faculty identified by the criteria, 10 faculty agreed to participate in study. Table 3.1 provides a profile of the participants with rank, gender, and age. The participants have been identified by pseudonyms to protect confidentiality. Sixty percent of the participants were female. Participants ranged in age from 41 to 64. Ninety percent of the participants were Caucasian; one participant was an instructor of color. The table does not include ethnicity as it would provide identification of the instructor. The table also identifies the participants' disciplines, showing a diverse mix of social sciences, arts, humanities, and natural sciences. Attempts were made to include faculty teaching quantitative disciplines, but none met the established criteria. Specific disciplines were not named to protect confidentiality.

Table 3.1
Participant Profiles

Name	Discipline	Faculty Rank	Gender	Age
Rita	Social Sciences	Professor	Female	50s
Emma	Art	Associate Professor	Female	40s
Carmen	Social Sciences	Professor	Female	50s
Mary	Art	Associate Professor	Female	50s
Dexter	Natural Sciences	Professor	Male	40s
Edward	Natural Sciences	Professor	Male	60s
Lisa	Humanities	Professor	Female	50s
Tony	Humanities	Associate Professor	Male	30s
Roger	Professions	Professor	Male	40s
Moira	Social Sciences	Professor	Male	50s

Data Collection

The study was conducted with faculty from a small comprehensive urban university with an approximate population of 6,500 students and located in an urban community with a population of 140,000 and a greater metropolitan area of 250,000 people. Interviews were conducted to gain insight into the perceptions and experiences of faculty who were teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in an online class. I had established acquaintanceships or prior work relationships with all of the research participants.

Data were collected from 10 faculty members through semi-structured, in-depth interviews, through Skype, over the telephone, or in person. Interviews were completed between December 2017 and February 2016. The interviews ranged between 56 and 87 minutes in length, although most were approximately 75 minutes. The interviews were digitally audiotaped or video recorded with permission to ensure accuracy and then transcribed, either by me or by a private contractor. I did take notes during each interview, allowing me to recall follow-up questions and highlight specific quotes or potential codes and themes. I placed each transcript and all interview notes in individual participant files. I also kept a field log where I included any additional notes, including my personal thoughts and reflections on each interview during the data collection process (Creswell, 2012).

These interviews allowed the assessment of the attitudes, perceptions, and views of the participants (Broom & Willis, 2007) and created a narrative that identified patterns of behavior (Glesne, 2011). Interviews were semi-structured to allow for a rich exploration of their experiences (Creswell, 2005). Interviews were recorded with permission (see Appendix B). The use of Skype was used for seven of the 10 interviews. Using Skype allowed me to view body

language and facial expressions to better capture participants' responses. All of the participants were provided a pseudonym for analysis and the presentation of findings.

Table 3.2 provides the research and interview questions, although the semi-structured approach allows for additional, undocumented questioning for additional exploration of the subject matter:

Table 3.2
Research and Interview Questions

Research Question	Interview Questions
How do faculty experience teaching online?	• Please describe your experience teaching an online class. • How do you prepare for teaching online classes? • How do you adjust your teaching based on student participants? • What have been your biggest challenges in teaching online classes currently, especially concerning a mix of students' characteristics in age? • Why do you teach online classes? • What changes have you noticed in teaching online classes? • Please describe an incident that made you adjust your teaching based on what you learned.
How do faculty perceive their students view them as online teachers?	• How do you think students respond to your teaching in an online class? • What have you learned about your teaching from your student evaluations? • How do you seek other forms of student feedback? • How does student feedback influence your teaching? • How does knowledge of student development impact your teaching?

Research Question	Interview Questions
	• How do students help you become a better online teacher? • Please describe an incident where student feedback for an online class helped you adjust your teaching strategies.

How do faculty view their colleague's perceptions of their online teaching?	• Tell me about how you speak with your colleagues regarding your experiences teaching online?
	    ○ What do you discuss?
	    ○ Do they share your experience?
	• What do your colleagues say about your online teaching?
	• Tell me about your participation in reviews of your online classes with your peers?
	• What was the best advice you received from a colleague regarding teaching online?
	• Please describe an incident where a colleague's feedback helped you teach an online class better.

How have faculty learned about online teaching?	• How did you learn to teach? • How did you learn to teach online classes? • Tell me about the resources you use to teach online? • Tell me about what do you do to improve as an online teacher. • Tell me about the tools you rely on to learn about online teaching. • How have you adjusted your online teaching based on what you learned?

These questions provided the foundation for each interview, while also allowing me to probe participants to further explain their answers (Glesne, 2011). I designed the questions to allow participants to reflect upon their experiences in teaching multigenerational online classes while also constructing their own meanings from their experiences. In this way, I identified themes from their knowledge construction process (Broom & Willis, 2007; Glesne, 2011) and built the narrative.

I sent a transcript of the interview to participants via email for their review and to provide them with an opportunity to correct or clarify any of their remarks should they want to do so. I provided a follow up phone call or email, so that participants were able to clear up any points within the interview and allowed the opportunity for additional questions after review. Dialogue in a semi-structured interview has the potential to create points of confusion or unfinished thoughts. Follow-up questions included clarifying points of confusion for the researcher, potential issues with the recording, unfinished descriptions from the participant, and the opportunity for the participant to add to the interview after his/her review of the transcript. Only two participants made changes to their interview transcripts.

Data Analysis

I used an interpretive analysis to ensure that the data reflected the participants' construction of meaning from their experience (Glesne, 2011). The data analysis began with my own recorded insights from each interview to ensure that the research went "beyond the transcript" (Glesne, 2011, p. 186). These thoughts were kept in my field log. I used Creswell's (2012) recommendations for data analysis and representation for analyzing and interpreting qualitative data. Creswell (2012) provides six steps in the analysis and interpretation of data:

1. Prepare and organize the data for analysis

2. Explore and code the data

3. Code to build descriptions and themes

4. Represent and report qualitative findings

5. Interpret the findings

6. Validate the accuracy of the findings

Specifically, the following steps were taken in developing the study's themes and identifying its patterns:

1. The analysis began with listening to the audio and video recordings, transcribing or reading through the transcriptions, and re-writing field log entries and personal notes to get a good sense of the data. This allowed me to gather initial thoughts and ideas as codes. This process was iterative and continued through all of the following steps, with constant referral back to the research questions to confirm relevancy to the research (Glesne, 2011). It also began before all interviews were completed, after the fifth interview.

2. Analysis was done manually and with Nvivo to identify topic codes and major themes using interview transcripts, personal notes, and field log entries. Using both methods to code allowed for a full immersion into the data, ensuring that clear themes emerged. Coding allowed for a framework of relationships (Glesne, 2011). My approach used codes to build themes and followed the iterative process as detailed by Creswell (2005) and visually shown in Figure 3.2.

3. As certain words or phrases were identified as being used frequently, such as "student contact" or an idea that was generated based on a commonality from interviews, such as "organization of the class in preparation" (Creswell, 2007), those were reviewed for use

in subsequent interviews. Each interview was analyzed individually. I read through transcripts, log entries, and personal notes to look for keywords and patterns. Keywords and patterns corresponded to each research question for final codes and were developed into a descriptive unit. Keywords and patterns were added to the units for each individual interview.

Figure 3.2
Coding Process

Read through transcripts/field notes		
Segment text Identify commonalities	Identify codes from segments	
	Find common words and phrases Reduce redundancies in codes	Collapse codes into themes
		Link common themes Ensure themes answer research questions
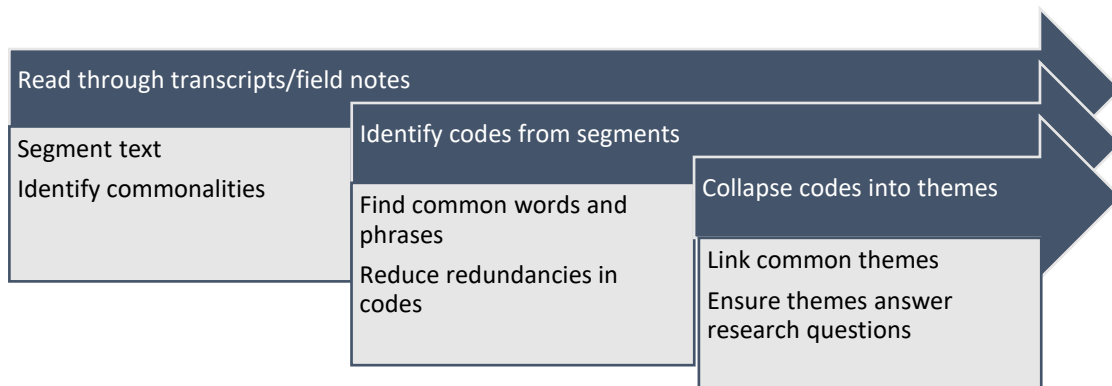
4. I reviewed and gathered codes and patterns under unique descriptions or themes. The process is iterative, being repeated for each of the interviews with new data confirmed against themes that had already emerged.   Each new interview was also reviewed for identification of new themes. With each identification of a new theme, the process would be repeated with each interview (Creswell, 2005).

5. Several patterns and themes emerged from this data. Themes were then reviewed and joined to reduce redundancies until four themes were established. A final review of the themes tested them against the research questions.

Quality Control

Creswell (2012) provided recommendations for quality control to ensure findings and interpretations of data are accurate. Although interpretivists recognize the role of the researcher in their studies, validation of the research was critical to the findings. To ensure trustworthiness of my research, Lincoln and Guba's (1986) recommendations on quality control for a qualitative interpretivist research study was used.

- All 10 participants were able to member check their interviews. Member checking was done by sending the transcripts of the interviews to the participants, allowing them the opportunity to review and clarify any of the information therein.

- Thick descriptive data (Lincoln & Guba, 1986,) was developed so that others can see the process and make determinations regarding the transferability of the information to their own contexts.

- An audit trail was developed where two Ph.D. candidates reviewed the data interpretation to check the interpretation of the findings. The doctoral candidate reviewers were sent a synthesis of my study and a copy of chapter four to read. I asked them to provide their feedback specifically regarding if the data provided in chapter four supported the identified themes. Their feedback helped corroborate my interpretations and also identified any potential bias within the interview process. They both agreed with the themes generated from the data and were unable to identify any bias.

- I kept a table that provided the information of contact dates, participant characteristics, transcript approvals, interview dates, and additional pertinent information to ensure all steps were followed (see Appendix D.)

Summary

The qualitative methods that were used in this study provided me with an opportunity to explore and interpret faculty experiences with teaching an online, multigenerational class. I attempted to understand how faculty perceive their experience as online classrooms become more heterogeneous. Understanding how faculty experience teaching traditional and nontraditional students online can inform teaching strategies and support administrative decision-making. Analysis through the process of developing themes within the data helped me interpret the findings and develop meaning from faculty experiences.

Chapter four introduces us to the study participants, provides an overview of the data, and examines the four themes that were developed to answer the research questions. Quotes from the interviews with the participants are used to support the themes. The themes that emerged were my interpretation of the data using interpretive analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The purpose of this interpretive qualitative research was to study the perceptions and experiences of faculty teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in online classes. Findings from the research are presented in this chapter. The research question was developed by focusing on the lived experiences of these faculty, with additional questions utilizing the lenses of self, students, colleagues, and development (Brookfield, 2002). The major research question used for this study was "What are the experiences of faculty teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in online classes?" Additional questions were:

- How do faculty experience teaching online?

- How do faculty perceive their students view them as online teachers?

- How do faculty view their colleague's perceptions of their online teaching?

- How have faculty learned about online teaching?

Data were collected through interviews with a purposeful sample of 10 participants who met predetermined criteria set for the study.

Chapter four offers four themes that emerged from the data as my interpretation via an interpretive qualitative analysis and using Brookfield's (2002) lenses in gathering the data. Faculty perceive and experience teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in the online classroom in similar and shared ways. The themes are defined and supported through the use of participant quotes. The following provides a detailed analysis from interviews with 10 participants, beginning with an introduction to the faculty who are currently living the experience of teaching heterogeneous online classes.

Introduction of Study Participants

Ten tenured faculty members with almost 200 years of teaching experience among them participated in this research study. The participants, six female and four male, teach in different units at the same campus. All have been teaching online classes for five or more years, and have taught the same online class at least once a year since 2013. In addition, all have also experienced a changing dynamic of student populations within those classes. These faculty are instructors who have at least 10 years' experience in the traditional classroom, at least five years' experience teaching online, and have achieved the rank of professor or associate professor. Several of the participants have won their institution's teaching award in past years, several have written or co-authored books, and many are recognized in their fields.

It is worth noting that all of the participants began teaching an online class as either a summer session or an overload during fall or spring semester. While a few have incorporated their online class into their normal teaching load, the majority still teach the online class as an added course for additional payment. This is an important consideration as almost all of the participants indicated that at least part of their motivation to teach online was financial. While budgetary or financial considerations or motivations do not apply directly to the research, this is a common thread among all participants and as such, should be documented.

Table 4.1 provides participant descriptions showing how the participants fit the criteria included in the purposeful sampling. Those criteria for inclusion include years teaching both face-to-face and online, most recent class reviewed, and percent of traditional and nontraditional students within their online classes. The table shows a fairly equal mix of experience teaching in-person classes. Of the participants, only one participant had five years of experience teaching

online and three had 10 years' experience. The class percentages of traditional and non-

traditional students range from a low of 30 percent traditional students to the high of 71 percent.

Table 4.1
Participant Criteria Descriptions

Name	Years Teaching	Years Teaching Online	Semester of Class Measured	% Traditional	% Nontraditional
Rita	25+	10	Fall 2016	45	55
Emma	15+	7	Summer 2017	57	43
Carmen	20+	8	Spring 2017	65	35
Mary	15+	8	Fall 2017	49	51
Dexter	10+	7	Fall 2017	32	68
Edward	30+	10	Fall 2017	71	29
Lisa	25+	6	Fall 2016	30	70
Tony	10+	5	Spring 2018	50	50
Roger	30+	9	Fall 2016	34	66
Moira	20+	10	Summer 2017	40	60

Study Findings

Four themes emerged from the data regarding the major research question of what are the

perceptions and experiences of faculty teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students

in online classes:

1. Participant experiences as students inform teaching

2. The morphing definition of teaching

3. Online teaching viewed as secondary to face-to-face teaching

4. The disconnection with students

The first theme, **participant experiences as students inform teaching,** encompasses how

faculty learn to teach, both in face-to-face and online classes. The spirit of this theme relates to

the experiences of how participants began teaching and how their lived events as students directly influenced their teaching strategies. Their own history as students and the faculty they perceived as either good or bad instructors had the strongest influence on their teaching strategies. Learning to teach online was a similar occurrence for the participants, but without the assistance of their personal experience as most had never taken online classes.

The second theme, **the morphing definition of teaching,** speaks to the shifting meaning of what teaching is in an online class. The spirit of this theme identifies how participants describe the work of teaching an online class. Participants suggest that strong online teaching has as much, if not more, to do with the design and organization of the class than what happens when the class is actually in session. It is further defined by how participants used student evaluations and feedback after the class is finished.

The third theme, **online teaching viewed as secondary to face-to-face teaching,** describes how participants interact with their colleagues and departments regarding their online teaching. The spirit of this theme speaks to the support that participants experience for their online teaching. Faculty have a stronger motivation for working on educational pursuits that are both shared and valued by their peers.

The final theme, **the disconnection with students,** describes how faculty perceive their roles as instructors and the challenges an online class can present. It is supported by the recognition from the participants of the differences in traditional and nontraditional students. The essence of this theme provides the positive and negative aspects regarding teaching online classes and includes relationships, identity, motivation, and access.   Overall, it very much speaks to how the participants believe they are viewed by their students, what the participants identified as an important aspect to the overall satisfaction of their performance.

Theme One: Experiences as Students Informs Teaching

This theme is supported by three distinct concepts that are shared by most or all of the participants as they reflected on how they became faculty: learning to teach by their own undergraduate experiences with faculty, not having that student experience as online instructors on which to rely, and little if any professional development for teaching, either online or face-to-face. The participants shared their own experiences as students and instructors and built a narrative of what it was like to start teaching in a new delivery mode without having the experience as a student.

Learned to Teach from Their Own Experiences as Students

All of the participants described their own experiences learning to be teachers. They all shared an almost dishearteningly similar story in that they learned on the job. There was little, if any, actual coursework preparing them to be teachers while at graduate school. Roger states simply that you learned to teach "on the job." Some participants began as teaching assistants, others began to teach as adjunct or tenured faculty.

Mary describes it this way, "How did I learn to teach? I was a graduate teaching assistant when I was in grad school so I taught stage make-up for two years when I was there. So I got my feet wet doing it there. And then the rest, I was just kind of thrown into the deep end of the pool." Emma echoes that experience. "I just kind of learned by having to get up in front of the group every day and figure out how to make something work, and I got better at it because I had to."

Rita, Carmen, Mary, and Emma all used the same phrase, "trial and error," immediately. Nine of the participants described learning to teach by modeling the styles and techniques after the faculty they learned from the most. Additionally, four participants described learning what

not to do from other faculty they experienced as students. Overall, being a student was a common link on their roads to becoming faculty members. Their own experiences as undergraduate students had the most influence on how they learned to teach. Tony provided a sentiment that was shared among many of the participants:

… doctoral programs don't teach people how to teach. Like, they are training faculty members but they don't teach people how to teach. It's such a glaring error in the whole system, and a lot of "learn by doing," right? It's sort of seeing and taking what I've seen other people do that I thought was good. Taking what I thought certain people do that I thought that was terrible and trying to find some kind of middle ground.

Learning to teach by modeling faculty they experienced as students was a shared experience. Roger admitted that he shamelessly took what the people he admired were doing and made their strategies and techniques his own. Dexter adds to this:

So then the answer to the question, how did I learn to teach, is really I thought about who – it goes back to my modeling thing. I thought about who the best teachers were and I just did what they did. And I can tell you who they were. It was [my adviser] in graduate school who I think is fabulous in the classroom and I just kind of tried to do what he does. Then there was another professor from my undergrad who I just thought, "okay that person is really good; I'm going to do that." … I don't know, it wasn't enough.

While the participants modeled their teaching after the people who they had as teachers, they did not speak about getting additional information on those strategies and tactics, from assessments or other students for instance. Study participants used the tactics and strategies that worked for them as students and moved forward into teaching roles hoping that the same things would work for those who would eventually become their own students.

Little to No Experience as Online Students

The participants experienced the same "sink or swim" situation when learning how to teach in an online environment. Yet, with this new format of teaching, most of the participants could not model online teaching strategies from others, as the participants had never experienced being an online undergraduate student. Roger, Tony, and Dexter have no experience as online students. Nonetheless, they tried to find substitutions to support their role of online teachers, such as reviewing online classes taught by their colleagues or finding other suitable resources or even stand-ins. Dexter was able to find a substitute close to home:

My wife is getting her master's degree right now and she has been taking a lot of online classes and so I think I have learned a lot from watching her kind of do this and be a student in online classes, especially a student who went to college at a time when online classes weren't a thing. And you know I have watched her kind of have to deal with a lot of these challenges and so it's been, I think in a sense, a learning experience for me to get a feel for like why and how students make that stuff work.

Several participants had a brief experience of being an online student long after they had been online teachers, by taking an online instructional design course that was offered at their institution. The course was four-weeks in length, but despite the short duration, it did provide some insight. Being a student in a training seminar is hardly the same experience as being an undergraduate in an online class. Moira had already been teaching online for six years when she finally had her first experience of what it is like to be an online student. The term Dropbox here is used as a verb which means that the assignment is submitted into the Learning Management System (LMS) feature called dropbox:

Only in that Quality Matters [four-week online instructional design course], it was actually a little online course, where we had to post discussion posts, do a homework [assignment], and dropbox it. Other than that, no, I have not [been an online student], but it was really eye-opening, even in that tiny little segment, like tiny. It was very eye-opening, especially the discussion part, and that also happened right around the time that I learned [a] lesson about me not responding to everybody's discussion post. That happened a semester after I did Quality Matters and I was like, "Why did I not learn this? How did I not see this coming?" after having been an online student.

Emma was the only participant who had experienced being an online student and also had some professional development for being an online instructor. It is not required at the institution where she currently teaches, but was required at a previous campus. As she described, she used the same modeling strategy for teaching online as participants did for teaching overall:

I had to undergo training before I would be allowed to teach online [at a previous institution] … And they were pretty great, that I learned not only through the course content but by the modeling of one particular instructor, whose name I actually remember, her name was […]. And she was great. Just like really engaged, made you feel like she was paying attention. And like I said, that you're not like typing into the void. Responded to people, demonstrated multiple ways of engaging the students. Her courses were always super well organized and I know that there are things that I do because I saw her do them in-in her class. … I felt confident enough with what I had learned there that I was ready to try to-to do it here … I knew enough to jump in and then I'll get better.

Training after Teaching Online

When training for online teaching became available, eight of the participants had already been teaching their online class for at least a few years and only Carmen, Emma, Moira, Lisa, and Rita participated in the training. The training offered through the institution was from Quality Matters, a company that has developed training for online instruction and rubrics to gage quality assurance for online education. None of the male instructors participated in this training opportunity. At the time that online programming began to ramp up, the perception of the participants revealed that if someone wanted to teach online, they could so with no oversight or experience. Rita explained how she became an online teacher, after noting that she also learned by "trial and error." She stated:

> Our chair came to us and said that they are ramping up these online programs, and they wanted to do an arts focus so we needed classes. Did people have classes they feel they could teach online? … So I created a 300 level course that fit everything I needed. So what my course did online, which was good, it was a writing emphasis because art majors needed writing emphasis, it was women-based so it fit the needs in my other department. And also it was really just a ramped-up, an intensified version of a class that I had taught twice in the summer time. … Coming up with a class to teach online was an opportunity to kill like four birds with one stone, both in Art and also in Women and Gender studies. So that's how I started teaching online, and I did not know at all what I was doing when I started, at all.

Four participants looked for resources to help them in developing their courses, mainly in the form of instructional designers and instructional technologists. Participants who utilized these

services were able to talk about content and course design as well as find fixes to technical glitches. Carmen found assistance through these resources before teaching online:

> Well, the first time I was going to do it … I sat down with one of the technology people back when we had a dedicated group here for [online programming], and advisers that could help students but also walk faculty through the process of how to create a class and what all needs to be in it. I remember spending quite a bit of time with those advisers helping me to create the class in terms of the content. We'd also have to set up the [LMS] site for the students.

Nonetheless, it was not until she went through the professional development the institution offered years after teaching online that she recognized what a good online class might look like:

> Except that when I started doing it, like most people do, I was fairly clueless, and I had what I thought was a good online class. And then, I went to the Quality Matters program and learned what a really good online class looks like, and did a giant, you know, revamping of my syllabus, my aligning learning outcomes, and expectations for students and all of these other things.

> Roger also looked for resources to help him teach online, noting that it was the technology that was the biggest issue for him. Never having taught online was not going to keep him from trying, though, he explained:

> To me, it was mastering the technology. That was the hard part. That's probably where I came – I pretty much used the same approach. Some people that are doing some stuff that everybody likes. I'll give it a shot and then, I quickly did experiments, and over the course of time, I discovered what works, what doesn't work for me. It's the same thing. [It] was on-the-job training.

But reliance on these resources was spotty, and not every participant had either the opportunity or knowledge of how these resources could be utilized in the beginning. Tony stated his early experience with teaching online, "I think early on my approach was, well, I just take everything that I did in the classroom and I dump it online." All of the participants acknowledge that it was their responsibility to design and teach their online classes, with little or no assistance or guidance from departments or the institution.

To sum up, the participants of this study had a direct relationship to learning to teach and the experience or lack of experience as a student. Although they recognized how their own experience as students influenced their teaching, they did not identify their lack of experience as online students as a hindrance to their online teaching. For some participants, additional training was helpful for online teaching, but just as many did not pursue any additional training. For those who did not participate in additional training, the reasons were varied, including time constraints, internal motivation, and limited availability of seats. Nonetheless, established practice and workload considerations are significant factors that impact this theme. Learning to be a good teacher, whether in-person or online, is not the ultimate goal of earning a doctorate, so new faculty are left to their own maneuvers for gaining the skills necessary for success in the classroom. In addition, the participants in this study also had full workloads. For most of them, the online classes they designed and taught were outside of the scope of their normal work. Any development or training to increase their skills as online teachers created additional work for them as well.

Theme Two: The Morphing Definition of Teaching

The participants themselves acknowledged the theme of a morphing definition of teaching when discussing how they teach online and what teaching online means to them. One

of the most compelling factors demonstrating the changing definition of teaching was that oftentimes, before answering a question regarding teaching, the participants would make the distinction by asking, "Teaching online or teaching face-to-face?" This indicated that the answers would be different depending on the mode of delivery. Carmen stated explicitly when discussing teaching online, "It's obviously very different from teaching a face-to-face class."

The theme is evidenced by the varying approaches the participants take to teaching in the different modalities, and how and when they prepare. This theme is supported by four core components: the distinction between teaching online and face-to-face, the significance of preparation overshadows teaching, end-of-class feedback informs the next class, recognition of student differences does not incur adjustments. The following provides the support for each component and how the components support the overall theme.

Distinction between Teaching Online and Face-to-Face

The participants perceived teaching as different between online delivery and face-to-face delivery. During the interviews, most questions needed to be clarified for the participants regarding whether the question applied to one delivery method or the other. When asked if it mattered, most participants responded in the affirmative. Dexter was honest about his feelings regarding the distinction between teaching for each mode of delivery:

> One of the things I think we might need to stop doing is [making] the distinction and just start talking more about teaching period and including online and in-person in that conversation as we do it. Part of the reason why that's particularly relevant, particularly important to me is that I include so many online elements in my in-person courses that it's dishonest to claim that my teaching in my in-person courses is *just* in-person.

Later in the interview, he added this example:

When I won the [institution award] for teaching a year ago, nothing that they talked about in that teaching award had to do with my online teaching. It was about individualized learning stuff, it was about my in-person. I mean nothing- none of it was untrue with my online teaching but that wasn't what the focus was.

His frustration about this was clear in this tone of his voice and facial expressions. Over half of the participants reverberated Dexter's thoughts, saying that they had applied many of their online teaching strategies or tools into their in-person classes. However, both Dexter and Tony were quick to note that it did not always work both ways, and some of the things that they did in-person were difficult to move into the online class.

One of those challenges was mirroring the synchronous communication that happens organically in a face-to-face environment. The participants often commented on this as a struggle. As Moira stated:

The biggest challenge in teaching that course is to create that two way street, the two way communication or I feel the same connection to them that they feel to me from watching me in video so that I don't run into them at Target and they know exactly who I am, that I've never even seen their face or know anything about them. Using technology to create that two-way street is still a challenge. It's getting better with technology and with the assignments that I've made, but it's still not two-way; it's still a lot just me giving to them and not them giving back.

When discussing teaching online, participants tended to discuss the materials they selected, the PowerPoint slides they created, and the way they structured the assignments and due dates. The asynchronous nature of the online classes was extremely apparent in how the participants discussed the effort they would put into the classes and how they would respond to

student assignments. Creating community or developing paths of learning were not mentioned by any of the participants, unless the struggles with developing group projects online is counted which three of the participants identified. Rita described teaching an online class this way:

> My presence is in my PowerPoints which are every week, but they are individual PowerPoints that kind of fill in the blanks. The materials that I select, and I work really hard on selecting materials that fit the learning objectives … And then feedback. Heavy amounts of feedback that I provide each individual student when they hand in their writing assignment every week. … What they do is they review. They have an essay or film or some combination of that, maybe a PowerPoint focusing on one issue. And then I ask them two or three questions … You know I'm really getting them to write and to illustrate comprehension. So individual feedback is where they really get my voice online and then often students will email me with other things or they'll make contact with me or send me links.

Six of the participants described teaching online as if it were almost a formula. They provided a video, PowerPoint lecture, or article was to be watched or read; required some type of assignment such as a discussion post or paper; and then provided an assessment. How much the faculty member participated in these varied, such as responding to discussion posts or how much and what type of feedback they provided. However, the formula hardly varied from this description between participants.

Significance of Preparation Overshadows Teaching

When discussing teaching online classes, the conversation routinely centered on the preparation required for teaching online. All of the participants noted the sheer volume of work

that is needed to put a class online and the idea that the work needed to be done prior to the class starting. Mary described it:

> Because it was it was a lot of work … I feel like I wrote a book. It's a ton of work. So, you know, people that think that, "Oh, you just whip up that online class." … I was still finishing lectures, module lectures, as I went through the class like a couple weeks ahead of what they were learning. So it just took so much time to do it.

Although all of the participants agreed that the preparation for teaching online was substantial, they varied considerably in why they thought the preparation was necessary. Carmen commented on why she prepares her online class:

> What I find that students need is immediate feedback, and they need to know what's going to happen ahead of the game. So I make sure that my entire class is set up before the semester starts. So students can go online right now to look at what's going to happen in [the class] starting next Monday and they can see exactly what the assignments and quizzes and everything, what the expectations are.

Lisa perceived that she has a promise to keep that the structure of the class will be maintained based on the class design as it is offered in the syllabus, a promise which does not exist in her face-to-face classes:

> Because the online class is designed from the get-go, I don't think that content-wise or requirement-wise, I don't think that I make kind of a lot of changes … But you have promised to deliver [what is on the syllabus]which is what they can see the first day. I mean, in a face-to-face class, you can go faster or slower. I mean you can go more with the crowd, right? With online, it's like you have to follow what is there.

When and how the participants prepared for class was a defining factor in teaching online as compared to face-to-face. Seven of the participants noted that in the face-to-face setting, the participants did not work to complete the entire class prior to the class starting. Rather, their experience had the preparation for class being done throughout the semester, usually a day or two prior to the class period. Indeed, Moira described some of the best advice she ever received for teaching online:

> Have the whole entire class done before the semester starts. That is the best way. Staying just one week ahead of the material you're presenting to students is not a life you want to live. It's hard and you can do that in the face-to-face class, I can prepare what I've been doing this for so long I could do it in my sleep, but I feel you can go in and fake it in the face-to-face class with a solid knowledge base of some good teaching techniques. You can't fake it in the online class you have got to have it locked down before they begin or it's a roller coaster of emotional wreckage.

Lisa stated a similar experience when teaching online:

> I think that the online class requirements require me to think in advance about questions way in advance before I had an interaction with the students. You know, when you are in a face-to-face class, the questions that you're asking the students are kind of like a follow-up of what you see they're not understanding. In the online class, I have to think about all that beforehand. I have to have all my questions already written about a particular material or a film or an analysis. And that's the part that the preparation for an online class is greater, I would say, than for a face-to-face because, in the face-to-face class, you read and prepare before the class, and in online you to have the entire semester thought

out before the semester starts. So I think that that's the part that is different in terms of preparation.

Again, it is important to note that when asked about teaching, the conversation with participants commonly reverted to course preparation. Roger states that "it was learning a whole new way to teach," before discussing preparation. Teaching online classes had as much to do with the preparation that happened before the course as it did with what happened after the course began. In addition, because of the intense preparation, participants were unlikely to change anything during the class, based on student make-up or other variables.

End-of-Class Feedback Informs the Next Class

Although participants rarely made teaching adjustments while online classes were in session, participants would use their class evaluations to make adjustments to the overall course once it was over. For Mary, it is a standard practice, "Every semester I take comments from the previous semesters or the previous sessions' course reviews …" Again, this is in large part due to the perception on the part of the participants that the online class should be fully uploaded by the first day of class.

Emma acknowledged that this promise of explicitly delivering what is communicated in her online class syllabus can add more complexity and complications to the course, and she wants to ensure a thorough understanding of the class by her students. She continues to add to the syllabus to ensure that the class and she in her role as instructor are understood:

> Every time I teach the online class, the syllabus gets longer and more complicated. I think about how I can protect myself. And I require as a graded participation assignment that they write me with an acknowledgement that they have read the syllabus and they agreed to the policies because then when somebody is upset about their grade, I can point

to both the policy and the fact that they agreed to it and that helped me in terms of student

dissatisfaction.

While nine out of the ten participants agreed that they make few if any adjustments to a

course once it has started, Roger said he takes a different approach. Roger asked his students to

do an introductory assignment, which he termed an instruction manual. The assignment asked

students to describe how they best work and also describe themselves. Based on this input,

Roger then adjusted his teaching to ensure that the students are getting the best interactions:

> I think, from that opening gambit, I have a pretty good understanding of what type of
>
> people I'm dealing with. Fundamentally, it kind of breaks down into, for me at least, are
>
> they young, or are they experienced? Are they young people, or have they had work
>
> experience? … One of the most fundamental things is there a level of experience. And
>
> so a lot of young people haven't worked in organizations. Even a lot of professors haven't
>
> worked in organizations long enough to have a real feel for the types of issues that they'll
>
> be dealing with. … My adjustments occur less before when I get the roster, and they
>
> occur a lot as the students are interacting, as I get information at the beginning. Then,
>
> throughout the course, I do a lot of adjustment as I get feedback from them.

After getting this feedback, Roger used examples in the class that he believed resonated with the

students.

Recognition of Student Differences Does Not Incur Adjustments

Most of the participants recognized that the student make-up in their online classes had

changed to include a mix of traditional and nontraditional students. Some participants review the

class roster prior to the course and are able to infer traditional and nontraditional students based

on major. For example, online nursing majors and degree-completion majors have historically

been nontraditional students. With the advent of some new online degrees that were first offered face-to-face, this is getting to be more difficult to do. Roger had his own definition for the differences in students in his classroom, "[It] Depends on the students too … I call them hoop jumpers – versus people who are really there to seize on something. The hoop jumpers, not so much, but the other people walk away, I think, with some really profound insight."

Four additional participants utilized introductory exercises within the first week of the class, like Roger. These exercises often elicit information that help teachers determine if students are traditional or nontraditional, such as referencing living on campus, having a full-time career, or having children. Tony asked them to post a picture within their account, giving him access to a visible representation. While a picture was not required, he indicated that most students complied. Carmen, on noticing the more heterogeneous classes, stated, "I do find … when I would teach [in the early start of the online programs], there would be primarily your nontraditional [students]. I find now that even some students on campus would prefer to take a class online."

Although the mix of traditional and nontraditional students is recognized, the experience of the participants is to treat the students the same, even if the different groups of students may have discrete needs in the class. Part of the challenge is having the class fully designed prior to knowing who is in the class. It is too late to make any adjustments, even if the faculty would want to, which none of the participants indicated. Carmen responded again:

> Now, the student has an issue and they email me, and let's say they are one of the
>
> nontraditionals [students] and their boss made them work overtime and their children
>
> have the flu or something like that, and they weren't able to get something in on time. I'm
>
> flexible. But I tend to be that way with all of my students, if you come to me and say,

"Hey, I knew this was due," and explain that – I give everyone one freebie, because I tell

you, life happens to everyone. But I think especially with your nontraditional students,

you have to understand that sometimes life is going to happen to them.

Because Carmen began teaching with nontraditional students, this flexibility for one

assignment's due date has now become part of her strategy. Traditional students may enjoy the

flexibility of this, but sticking to one strategy can create some disorder in other ways. Moira

provided this example, again using Dropbox to describe the act of turning in an assignment:

There have been issues based on due dates and how those due dates happen, that's a

challenge for me. My philosophy is that I make all assignments in that class due at noon

on Wednesday because I can monitor and remind students who haven't dropboxed things

a couple of hours before. … For the traditional students that seems like a great due date,

and it's fine. For people who are working, I received some complaints like, "Why isn't it

midnight on Sunday night? like every other online class that I take because I do all of my

work on the weekend." My response is, "You should do your work whenever you do you

work and submit it. You have a week from Wednesday to Wednesday, if Sunday works

for you then do it [then]." …. That has been a real challenge about due dates. I think it's

very split between people who are working full time which I'm going to make the

assumption that they're older, and traditional students taking online classes.

This section has shown how teaching is defined by the participants by whether they are

teaching face-to-face or online. There is a distinct difference in their views based on the mode of

delivery. This is further complicated by the perception of workload and feedback for online

classes, keeping the participants from being as focused on student needs in online classes as they

believe they are in face-to-face. How the study participants viewed traditional and nontraditional

students and how they believed they were able to adapt their teaching practices are at the crux of this theme. Again, instructor workload becomes a consideration in this theme. Study participants developed classes that they perceived provided the best learning experience for their students with little support to adjust to a dynamic student population and changing technology in their online classes. Thus, they are constrained by the pace of change and the effort they are able to commit to classes outside of their normal workload.

<p style="text-align:center">Theme 3: Online Teaching Secondary to Face-to-Face Teaching</p>

During the interviews, the participants noted many times not only the differences in teaching online versus face-to-face, but also how teaching online was viewed and appraised differently by others at the institution. The presumption by many of their colleagues, especially in the earlier years of the online programs but still currently, was that online education was not as rigorous or laudable as in-person classes and programs. The perception that was shared by the participants was that the quality of a class is still very much attached to the mode of delivery when it comes to higher education.

The theme is demonstrated by the communication the participants had with their colleagues. Additional support is provided in how online education began and grew at the institution and the perception of lack of institutional guidelines and standards. The following exhibits the support for the theme.

Start and Growth of Online Classes

As mentioned previously, when the opportunity came to teach online, many of the faculty were motivated, at least in part, by the chance to earn additional income. Rita stated it very plainly, "The honest answer is at first I had to teach online so we could afford to send someone to college. So. Yeah I needed that overload money. But also because if I didn't teach that class

online we couldn't offer it for the Women's and Gender Studies students." Carmen's answer was the same, "To be perfectly honest, when I first started doing it, I was looking for ways to enhance my income." Although additional payment was a motivator, participants' experience with online classes had changed their motivation for teaching them. Carmen continued with her answer:

> But the other thing I like and I realize is, it is a huge access issue, and for people who want to finish their education but cannot come to a college campus full-time, part-time, they live a hundred miles away from someplace, this provides them an opportunity that they wouldn't rather have. And I find that really appealing, to open the doors of education to people who cannot physically come to a campus environment. … You understand exactly why it is that you do this, that these are people who have a long-term goal. Without access to the online environment, that would be an unmet goal in their life, but we can make that possible for them.

How the online programs at this institution grew had a strong influence on the motivation to teach online. Not only did the payment factor in, but also the flexibility that teaching online can provide. Overall though, once teaching online, most of the participants found internal motivators to continue. Participants described things such as the ability to provide access to students, teaching with a diverse group of students, and adding new skills as some of the benefits to teaching online. Lisa shared her experience:

> I mean I have to be very, very honest with you. Here at our campus, it is in an overload. I usually teach online when I'm not teaching face-to-face. So I can do January interim or summers because it's a way of continuing working, and it offers me the opportunity to have another knowledge. Over the years, I also appreciated, having a different type of a

student. There [are] a lot of students who cannot come to university, whether they're

traditional or nontraditional [students] … I have students who are deployed because

they're in the army, or I have students who live on a little farm. And I really appreciate

having those insights. It enriches classes, enriches the discussion. So, my initial interest

was curiosity about how this online world of teaching works. Then the reward was the

money, and then the additional reward over the years has been reaching out or having the

opportunity to teach students that I wouldn't reach otherwise.

Not all of the participants had such a dramatic foray into online teaching. Two of the

participants had a more gradual approach to online teaching. Both Moira and Edward started

teaching in an adult degree-completion program that started out as weekend courses which

slowly converted into hybrid courses. Edward explained his experience with this slower

transition to online teaching:

I had to buy my own computer back early on, before the university supplied them. I was

teaching in that environment. It was prior to wide spread use of computers or online for

education. When the internet became available, I had some things online and I just kept

slowly working it in. When the online finally blossomed and became a way of doing

things, it was just a normal transition for me. It was just a couple more pieces to put an

entire class together online.

Whether systematically, as with the start of a new program launch, or organically, as with

the adult degree-completion program, the changes the participants experienced were strikingly

similar in that there was little thought as to how instruction factored into teaching an online class.

Tony stated it this way:

I get a little weary, I'll be quite honest, when we start saying, "Okay, let's go from

teaching these classes as a part of this program over here." to, "Hey, go create your own

online program, right? Take everything you're doing face-to-face and put it online." To

me, that's not a process that just happens overnight, but that's kind of the direction that I

feel like we're headed where – I'll be honest, I've walked to, in the last six months,

meetings where somebody says, "So let's talk about creating an online program." And my

inner voice goes up like, "What, why, and then how?" … There is the eagerness to create

a program without, to me, addressing the logic behind the program and then the logistics

of actually implementing that kind of program.

His summation seemed to mirror the experience of all of the participants' individual entrance

into online teaching. Rita mentioned the request for online classes to support a specific program

that was growing rapidly. Dexter and Moira talked about moving a program online to help grow

enrollment. The request for teaching online was more administrative push than faculty interest.

Perception of Lack of Institutional Guidelines or Standards

While the participants shared many of the same experiences and held several of the same

perceptions regarding teaching online classes, it was just as apparent that they did not have the

same experience of how their teaching was viewed as part of their merit or peer reviews. There

was a large disparity within the institution when it came to online classes were included within

these governance structures. Participants shared widely differing stories about how and if online

classes were included in their promotion packets and whether the classes were seen as a viable

part of their review.

For eight of the participants, the online classes were included in both their merit and promotion reviews, but there did not seem to be a standard process for their inclusion or how they were weighted. Emma stated this:

I do know that during their reviews, when we talk about scores, much less weight is put on the [evaluations] from online classes than in-person classes, and that's because of the issue I brought up before that the online classes are just so much more all over the place and there are fewer responses. So, it's a smaller sample size in the whole thing. There's much less discussion of those evaluations and much less weight put on those scores when we talk about overall teaching area and then all that kind of stuff.

Lisa shared a similar experience within her department:

Because my classes are online and have been primarily overloads, I think that there is still, at least in my department, I don't know if that's across the board, probably there's unconscious understanding that the bulk of your teaching is face-to-face as your primary responsibility. And then online is something that you do if you want to.

However, Edward's department appeared to have had a different set of criteria for reviewing online classes as part of review. Moreover, in his experience, all classes were reviewed at the same level, regardless of mode of delivery, although he acknowledged that he did not know if that was the case across the institution:

Yes, in my unit, in human biology, we put information from all of the courses that we taught in our files, so that information was always there. So, every what we used to call a budgetary unit on the campus had their own way of dealing with reviews. Just because my unit did it that way doesn't mean that other units did it that way. … But, the group that I was with had a very high commitment to high-quality instruction.

Rita's experience was one of uncertainty. She did not remember if the online classes were a part of her merit files. Even if they were, it was clear that it was not a strong component as she stated:

I'm not even sure my evaluations have made it into my merit files. I would have had to put them there, and I would have had to print them off in hard copies I think. There have probably been a few semesters where I've not even bothered. I don't actually think the faculty who evaluate me for merit promotion care that much about my online teaching. So that is completely separate from everything else. But I don't know.

Without standardization across the institution regarding reviews of online teaching, it stands to reason that this type of discord within an administration would also become noticeable to students. Certainly curriculum is the purview of the faculty, but programs still must adhere to programmatic outcomes and are assessed institutionally. In addition, face-to-face teaching is assessed through reviews following standards set up through governance. However, both Dexter and Tony shared stories of how a lack of institutional standardization for online classes and programs became apparent to their students. Dexter had this experience:

Students in my online class said that my online class was way harder than other online classes they have taken. So when they compare my online classes to other online classes, they said that it was harder. Students in my in-person class say that my in-person class was about the same as other in-person classes they've taken, and so earlier on I was having this expectation issue from some of my online students where they seem to think that my class was way harder than it should be. … I think that may have been a testament frankly to other online classes that existed at the time and that they were taking

their online classes were just – I don't mean to say this, I don't approve of it, but maybe too easy or easier than some in-person classes.

Tony had a specific experience that perfectly illustrated how student expectations became a challenge for teachers, especially when the student experiences are so far out of sync within the same campus. He had a student who he felt continually pushed back. In this online class, Tony believe that it was set up typically, with course materials beginning on Mondays and assignments due the following Sundays. This particular student was not doing good work or not doing the work at all. In addition, Tony was receiving several complaints from this student regarding the amount of work. Since this was a traditional student, Tony set a meeting to meet the student on campus. What he learned was that the student's expectations from his experience in other online classes was not in line with Tony's design for his online class. Tony describes the conversation with the student:

> I said, "Well look, this is how online classes run. You know, a lot of them this is how they run." [The student replied,]"Well, no it's not." [Tony,] "What do you mean no, it's not?" [Student,]"Well, I've been in this other online class and on day one we got the syllabus and we were told to just hand in all the work whenever we got it done so long as it was in by finals week."

Tony talked about his feelings regarding that discussion:

And that became, because it was his preference, the student point of reference for online education. That was what he thought online education was, and I just looked at him, I said, "That's not online." … That's not an educational experience. My classes, is my class perfect? No. Are there things I can change? Yes. And I think for me, what that taught you was that we've got all these students, this goes back to my earlier point, we've got all

these students rushing into online education and one, they don't really know what to

expect, and so if they encounter these two different models, I mean, we really needed to

do more in terms of oversight and instructional development on online education.

Otherwise, people are going to set up classes like this, and they will be popular because

students saw that and saw what it demanded of them and saw it didn't demand much, and

then they would come to my class and take my class online, and I would be that person

who is out of line.

Communication with Colleagues

Participants described many different experiences with how online teaching was

reviewed, how classes came to be scheduled, and how they became online teachers. This

description suggests that there are challenges with how institution guidelines or standards are

either implemented or developed. The perceived lack of institutional guidelines or standards by

the participants in regards to online teaching foreshadows how it may be viewed as less than its

face-to-face counterpart. This viewpoint of online being an inferior form of education is also

paralleled in the conversations that many participants had with colleagues across their campus.

Several of the participants shared clear cases of conversations with colleagues that illustrated

how online teaching was viewed. Edward stated how online education was first viewed at this

institution, "In the early days, there was a strong bias that online just wasn't any good."

Participants were quick to point out that they had many colleagues who also taught

online and even championed the format. Nonetheless, the fact that so many of the participants

could also highlight at least one example of a colleague who discussed online education as less

than quality at an institution where almost a fifth of their student population were online students

is indicative of how much online education still has to overcome. Dexter had this conversation early on when he started teaching his online summer class:

> I won't use the person's name, but I went out with a friend one time … He asked how I was teaching my summer class or if I was teaching this summer and this is like eight years ago and I said, "Yeah." And he said, "Oh, when do you teach?" And I said, "Well, it's online." His response was, "Oh, so click, click, click. That's your teaching? Click." This is a person who'd never taught online. … That's not a very engaging, fulfilling collegial conversation about teaching. That's not like the kind that I get to have now with people.

The irony of these types of discussions among faculty is that faculty themselves are responsible for the quality of their classes. Although online education may have an inferior reputation among some of the faculty at this institution, Carmen was quick to point out that academic rigor is the responsibility of the teacher, an opinion she shared with a colleague regarding the quality of online education. She said:

> I had this conversation with another colleague on campus who says, "Oh, I'll never teach an online class because it dilutes the quality of the course." And my answer to that now is, "Well, you are the one who creates your course. If there's a dilution of quality, that is your fault." This [is a] person I've had this conversation a number of times, and I reiterate over and over, "Nobody has ever told me what to teach, what assignments to give, how much to give, how little to give, how stringently or not stringently to teach."

Edward talked about how he approached colleagues regarding teaching online:

> My general thought was, "You got everything working well for a face-to-face lecture and you don't want to learn a new trick. … You kind of know that if you're going to go online

you have to learn some new ways of communicating and doing things and you don't

know if it's going to work yet." As you get older you don't like taking those risks. … I

would gently try to encourage trying online teaching. Initially they would say, "Go away.

I know how to teach my classes. Don't disturb me." This was because they were

successful in what they were doing, and they just didn't want to have to learn a lot of new

tricks. So, that is how I would interact with my colleagues. It was gently trying to help

them be open to the possibility of online courses, give them a try.

However, if the definition of teaching is different for teaching online, and there are no

guidelines or standardized review processes, then it is easy to see how perceptions can become

skewed among an institution's faculty. Furthermore, if departments vary on the importance of

teaching online classes, then the teaching experience is not shared in the same way as perhaps in-

person classes. Roger was in a leadership position at the institution, but recognized the issue:

I don't really have a lot of conversations about it, to be honest with you. We don't talk too

much about it, other than, how's it going, and I'm trying to keep up with it, and that type

of stuff. I should, I'm the department chair, I should have conversations about it, but I'm

so consumed with what's going on face-to-face, I don't have many conversations, to be

frank.

Many of the participants stated that most of their conversations regarding teaching online

focus around technology issues, in a search for a technical fix to a problem within the Learning

Management System (LMS). These conversations regarding online teaching are much different

than conversations colleagues might have about their other in-person courses. Dexter clarified:

It feels a little different than some of the conversations I had or - put it this way, after a

really great class, in-person class, I'll pop into someone's office and say I had a really

great class. Like there was so much fun you know, blah blah blah. I don't ever do that about an online class. I have never to my knowledge, never once walked into someone's office and I'm like my online teaching is just going awesome and I want to share with you. And so I think that that's like the difference. That my online teaching conversations are more like, "Hey I'm having an issue that I need help fixing. How do you do this?" Whereas we'll have just much more impromptu conversations about the joy of teaching in-person that I don't necessarily have with online.

In summary, the support for theme three lies in the perceptions of the participants, especially in their interactions with colleagues and others. Their experience with teaching online classes has also colored their perceptions of online education's value. The participants do not see a complete standard across the institution for online teaching, and so interpret this as a reflection of online's secondary status to face-to-face. In addition, participants are constrained by a silo effect caused by lack of opportunities to share strategies, further inhibiting the ability to view online classes in the same way as their face-to-face equivalents across the institution.

Theme Four: The Disconnection with Students

Participants had mixed emotions when talking about teaching online, although it was apparent that some of the faculty enjoyed it more than others. Those that seemed to really enjoy it had learned to use the technology to their advantage, such as Dexter and Moira, who included weekly personal videos, or as Moira coined them, "selfie videos." Others had found a style of teaching that seemed to work well for them within the online environment and found satisfaction in the organization of a well-planned class. Still some participants still struggled both with the technology and with external factors that appeared to be stressful in teaching online, which they did not experience in the face-to-face classes.

All of the participants acknowledged several factors that presented challenges within the online environment. Theme four shows the challenges unique to teaching online classes at this institution and how these participants have reacted to them. This theme is supported the following components: the readiness of traditional students, no rapport with students, and the loss of faculty's identity. For the purposes of this study, identity will be defined as how the faculty view themselves not only as teachers, but as humans with distinct personality traits and behaviors.

Readiness of Traditional Students

Seven of the participants discussed having traditional and nontraditional students in their online classes. As stated previously, although they recognized the differences, they either did not have the opportunity or see a need to adjust teaching strategies to accommodate both groups based on their particular needs as students. However, several of the participants did discuss specifically whether online was a good option for traditional students, as they saw that group have specific challenges in that delivery mode. Regarding traditional and nontraditional students in online classes, Tony revealed:

> And so, a lot of times, it's the adult students who thrive in classes because maybe they
> are outside of what they're [traditional students] used to, but it's because they
> [nontraditional students] understand the demands of online learning. At least, they
> understand the sort of, the kinds of juggling acts, that are applicable to online learning,
> and I think, and I mean this semester is a really good example. I'm advising a lot of
> freshmen. And I was again saying, "Don't take online classes, don't take online classes."
> They want to because they feel like it's easier or works for their schedule, which I get,
> but they don't understand how different that is. And the … traditional students take those

classes, the more it's going to become being common upon faculty to educate them as they go. Not just about the class but about the nature of online learning.

Dexter provided some additional feelings about why online may be different between the groups:

I will tell you early on my feeling was always that online education, the advantage was access and that's an important advantage and a noble goal, but I didn't feel like it had any other advantages. That my sense was that everything you do in an online environment you can also do in an in-person environment. And I still think that's by and large true, but there's a lot you can do in an in-person environment that is awfully hard to do in an online environment, maybe impossible.

Motivation for taking online classes also seems to play a part in how ready the participants believe traditional students are for taking online classes. Several participants expressed concerns that traditional students did not display the responsibility and self-discipline that online classes demand. The perception of the participants was that traditional students could add more credits into their schedule, not necessarily that what they wanted was the online format. Moira explained:

I also think that traditional students are mixing in online classes with their traditional classes without really choosing or knowing why they have chosen it. They just, "There was no other classes that fit into my schedule and I am taking this one online". They're not choosing it like, "I'm so excited to take an online class." It's more like, "I have to take this class and the only way I can get it, is [if it is] online." They're not totally pumped about taking an online class and they are certainly not prepared for about the rhythm of it. When you mix that in with face-to-face process, they'll take four face-to-face classes, and then they cannot find another space at work and they take one online. They tell me that

it's hard to motivate themselves to do that online class because the one where they have

to look the professor in the eye and say, "I didn't do the homework," that's a lot harder

than just not dropboxing something. … I feel like online students don't have the same

access to help, that face-to-face students do and because I know them from my face-to-

face classes, then it makes me sad that I'm not helping them in the same way. I think it

exacerbates the unfair access between face-to-face and online students and their access to

university-wide help.

The perception of the participants is that the nontraditional students have the maturity and self-

reliance to be able to overcome some of these obstacles or that they do not have the same

obstacles to overcome. In either case, the worry does not exist in the same manner for

nontraditional students.

No Casual Rapport with Students

All of the participants except for one commented on the difficulty in creating casual

rapport with students in the online environment. Some of it has to do with the inability to

physically see the students, or as Dexter stated, "When they smile or not, I like to see that. And

when they frown or scowl, I like to see that too." Participants also perceive that the

asynchronous nature of an online class limits the ability to really connect with students. Carmen

said, "Yeah, you miss the rapport with students. And I do miss that, I wish, I wish there was a

way that we could capture that."

The limits of how the participants interact with students in an online class was a common thread.

Emma reflected:

In person, it's really easy to do it casually at the end (of class) and say, "Hey, you know,

how are people feeling about this research paper that is coming up? And can I answer

questions?" You know, it would just take a couple of minutes at the beginning. You're in a class, so people just say what's on their mind. When I run into students, you know, in the hallway, I can just kind of check in on, "How's it going?" And I'll ask them about this or how it's going and not just in my class and that kind of thing. With online, it's harder because they don't have that kind casual rapport. I don't have those incidental meetings that come up in the hallway or whatever.

Rita echoed the same feeling in discussing how in-person classes have a more organic nature and how, again, the physical presence can provide clues into a student's state of mind:

The biggest challenge is how when I teach live, I can improvise, and I can direct things on the fly and answer questions instantly. Or discussion happens super organically. Whereas online I have to manufacture opportunities for the students to engage in discussion. And then I have to monitor their discussion. I don't have the power to really jump in there, if things are going weird [in the class]. I also can't see their faces straight ahead. I can't tell whether they are being sarcastic or if they are genuinely confused. Or I don't know, in the classroom if I look at a student who says something in a snotty way and I notice they're in their sweats and their hair is all messed up, their eyes are all puffy, I think ah, it's not me. There's something else going on there. [It's] none of my business. I'm just going to answer the question, right?

Casual relationship building appeared to be an important component to the participants' joy of teaching. During these discussions, the participants' expression of how much they enjoyed these interactions with students was genuine. They smiled, they nodded, and they wanted to express how important this component was to their jobs. In addition, the lack of physical presence also interfered with how well they felt they could do their jobs. Echoing

Moira's sentiments earlier about whether she was fully able to help online traditional students, Mary said almost the same thing regarding online students in general:

> If a student is having difficulty in the class, it's harder to meet with them one-on-one, especially if they're a nontraditional student and they're off-campus, and I've had students as far away as Israel be in my online class over the summer. And you know I can't say, "Hey, come on down into my office and let's meet and talk about this and go over assignments" when they're so far away or, as you said, when their priorities are quite different than a traditional student.

One participant did have a very different perspective when it came to building relationships and interacting with students in an online class. For Edward, sharing and communicating were satisfied in different ways:

> What is missing is the classroom interaction. To make up for this, I have those seven mini papers that they have to share with the class. That is a sharing and that might be even more sharing that could ever happen in a classroom. So, it's a different kind of sharing. The online professor is a little bit less of a performer because you're only performing for one person at a time. … So, for an online course it becomes a one-to-one communication and much more like a dialogue even though it's being recorded and they're going to listen to it at another time.

Loss of Identity

Part of the challenge participants experience when trying to building relationships in an online class was their struggle to inject their own identity into it. Identity, for the purposes of this study, is defined as how faculty see themselves as people, with their own unique personality traits and behaviors, such as funny, sincere, or sarcastic. As they reflected on these challenges,

words like "passion," "energy," and "humor" were used many times. Many of the participants were perplexed as to how to show more of themselves to their online classes, and believed that this failure had a direct impact on the overall enjoyment of the class, for both themselves and the students.

Several participants included mini videos that were more personal or at least informal in nature. Others utilized feedback on assignments to help inject a more individualized component. Several commented that the use of humor can be difficult in itself as it can be misinterpreted easily. Lisa found this lack of identity in online teaching very different from her experiences with in-person teaching:

> But it seems to me that the role of the … the personality of a professor, their passion about a subject, the energy is not so – there's always that difference between the comments that an online student will do that it - they're always strictly about the content, yeah. I don't think that the students mention, "Oh yeah, your video lecture was really fascinating."… I hate to say this, but I'm very funny. I'm funny in class and use humor. I light up a lot, you know. When a class is being tense, I'll always crack a joke in face-to-face interaction. Those things cannot happen online. … I disclose more about myself online because I want the students to feel that level of comfort that the students face-to-face might get from other means like a joke. Online I have to tell them a little bit about my family, my hobbies, just to create that proximity.

Tony relayed an experience that came from a student who had taken both an online class and an in-person class with him. The student expressed that s/he only got "a part" of Tony as a teacher in the online class. The student's perception was that she got to know more of Tony as

both an instructor and another person in the face-to-face class than she did in the online class.

Tony reflected:

> So, they're not getting from me so much of what I do, so much of what I teach, um, I think my effect just in the classroom is to convey to students that passion because if I'm passionate if I'm energetic, they're going to share that. But how to get that, how to replicate that or find some way to deliver that and communicate that in an online experience. … I'm so sort of struggling with that.

Moira echoed her own thoughts on how students respond to teachers' efforts to bring their identity into the online classroom:

> I think I learned that the students appreciate when you're real, when you're authentic – like they can smell a fake a mile away. I think that I learned that making those silly selfies videos and posting dumb poses with me and my dog, doing silly things or when we're out walking, that making myself real makes them want to learn more.

All of the participants had five or more years of experience teaching in an online classroom, yet the struggle to find their own voice was still very real. Likewise, they believed that their ability to share their identity was a strong factor in providing a better teaching experience for their students.

In summary, there are unique factors in teaching online classes that are still very challenging to the participants that can be explained through a feeling of disconnection to the students. The challenge of fulling assessing the readiness of the students for online learning and the inability of informal or casual encounters established barriers to connection. Furthermore, participants perceive that students are unable to get to know them as people in the online setting, creating additional obstructions to connecting with their online students. Keeping up with the

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technology is also difficult, as participants made the choice between becoming experts in one or two areas and trying to gain as many new skills as possible. Finally, learning management systems do have limitations in what they will allow instructors to accomplish and the amount of preparation work for each change made for a class. As several of the participants noted, the institution was converting to a new LMS in the following year and they were anxious about the additional workload that would cause.

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced the 10 faculty participants of the study. I presented the study findings in the four themes that emerged from the research conducted. I showed how the faculty participants experienced and perceived teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in their online classes. These findings are based solely on analysis of interview transcripts. Findings were discussed in four parts that correspond with the major themes that emerged from the data. Each of the themes presented included the detail of core components.

In the next chapter, I will analyze the relationship to the existing literature of these findings and their implications. I will provide practical recommendations for administrators, faculty, and students and theoretical recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

With online education's growth in student demand at institutions of higher education (Allen & Seaman, 2016, 2017), online classes will continue to become more heterogeneous in terms of student age (Brau, Cardell, Holmes, & Wright, 2017; Dabbagh, 2007, Yukselturk & Top, 2013). The purpose of this research was to explore faculty perceptions and experiences in teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in online classes. This research provided the opportunity to learn more about faculty perceptions and experiences while gaining insight into what is needed to strengthen the teaching practices and administration of online programs, especially since early online classes had a more homogeneous, nontraditional student population.

In chapter one, the identification and validation of purpose for this dissertation research was presented. Faculty are responsible for realizing optimal results in the classroom, so understanding the factors that inform the success of a multigenerational online class can have long-term benefits. Chapter two provided a comprehensive literature review regarding the delivery (online classes versus face-to-face classes) and the student makeup (traditional versus nontraditional). Although there is literature on faculty perceptions of traditional and nontraditional students in face-to-face classrooms (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992, 1995, 1998; Bourland, 2009; Day et al., 2011; Robison, 2012) and literature on faculty experiences in online classes (Bolliger & Wasilik, 2009; Conceição, 2006, 2007; Gagne & Walters, 2009, McLean, 2006), the limited research available about the experiences and perceptions of faculty teaching a mix of students in online classes was noted. Chapter two also provided the definitions for the terms used in this study, including traditional students, nontraditional students, and online learning.

In chapter three, the methodology with which this research was conducted was supplied. The methodology was based on the justification and literature described in chapters one and two. A summary of the conceptual framework, Brookfield's (1995) four lenses for critical reflection, was provided. The research questions used were well suited for the qualitative interpretivist design of this study. The major research question and sub-questions were:

- What are faculty perceptions and experiences with teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in online classes?"

  o How do faculty experience teaching online?

  o How do faculty perceive their students view them as online teachers?

  o How do faculty view their colleague's perceptions of their online teaching?

  o How have faculty learned about online teaching?

In chapter four, the findings from this study of faculty perceptions and experiences of teaching multigenerational online classes were identified and shared. The four major findings were:

1. Faculty participant experiences as students informed both their teaching in face-to-face classrooms, but their lack of experience as online students made teaching online more challenging.

2. Faculty participants perceived a morphing definition of teaching as they described the work of teaching an online class as aligned with preparation prior to a class.

3. Faculty participants described their experience of online teaching viewed as secondary to face-to-face teaching in regards to what is shared and valued by their peers.

4. Faculty described their perception of being disconnected with online students because of a lack of their own personal identity and the ability to assess students' readiness.

In the following sections of this chapter, a summary of the major findings and a discussion of the results are addressed. Implications for practice are provided for faculty and administrators. In addition, the study limitations, contributions to literature, and areas for future research are identified.

Summary of Major Findings

Through interviews with 10 tenured faculty members, the impact of teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in online classes was described in positive and negative ways across the entire group. Regarding readiness for teaching online, participants indicated that they were unprepared for teaching an online class, but the experience was comparable to their readiness with teaching face-to-face classes where study participants had little to no actual training to teach. Regarding teaching online, participants indicated that they enjoyed gaining new teaching skills, but were challenged by the amount of work that online teaching required. Regarding value of online education, participants indicated that quality of education is still attached to mode of delivery, but were hopeful that this may change as online education continues to grow. Regarding access to age-diverse students, participants indicated that online allowed them to work with student populations who were not represented in university classes before online, but identified a disconnection to all students in an online class. Regarding institutional guidelines, participants perceived a lack of standards that also impacted online students because of varying expectations and degrees of quality.

The faculty who participated in this study had the opportunity to reflect on teaching of a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in their online classes, but their reflection did not focus much on the students. Rather, the preparation and organization of online classes and their effects on students were addressed more fully. The processes by which they trained, taught, and

shared their experiences tended to combine into one narrative at times, in that their perceptions

and reflections were so similar. There were many shared experiences when they described how

they learned to teach, how they interacted with students, how they prepared their classes, and

how they communicated with their colleagues. The following table summarizes the findings for

answering each of the corresponding research questions.

Table 5.1
Research Questions and Findings

Major Question	Finding
What are faculty perceptions and experiences with teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in online classes?	Participants recognize that the mix of traditional and nontraditional students has increased in their online classes. However, they struggle with being able to adapt to the changing student populations. There are a number of factors that made adapting to this trend more difficult for the participants: • a lack of training to teach face-to-face and teach online, • the immense preparation of designing and developing an online class, • faculty perception that an online class should not vary from the syllabus once it has been posted, • the perceived disconnection with students in an online class.
Sub-Questions	**Findings**
How do faculty experience teaching online?	Participants experience teaching online is very differently from teaching face-to-face. An emphasis is placed on the preparation and organization of the class. Engaging with students that may not normally be in their classroom is often cited as a benefit, yet they struggle to connect with these students in the online classroom.
How do faculty perceive their students view them as online teachers?	Participants labor with creating their presence in an online class, so that they do not perceive their students get to know the "real" person. Many are beginning to experiment with more personal videos and informal postings where they share more of their own lives. Their perception is that they are seen differently by

	students who take in-person classes and students who are online.
How do faculty view their colleague's perceptions of their online teaching?	This varies greatly by department. Some participants have meaningful dialogue regarding teaching online, while others say that online is barely noted within their department. Participant experience is that online teaching is viewed differently by departments for review and merit. This perception can be emphasized because many teach online as overload, so participants believe the importance is placed on face-to-face classes.
How have faculty learned about online teaching?	All participants learned to teach online similarly to how they learned to teach overall. Participants learned on the job. Learning to teach online had one key difference in that faculty were never online students themselves. This difference becomes a challenge for faculty, as many use their own experiences to inform their teaching. Without their own experience as online students, the participants had little on which to rely when developing and teaching their first online courses.

The findings show the impacts on key elements for faculty teaching a multigenerational class online and highlights the tensions they experience. For example, faculty want to be very mindful of the requirements of their students when teaching their classes, but the workload of preparing their online class and lack of training keeps them from being able to adapt for students during the class. These tensions presented by teaching heterogeneous students in online classes clarify the challenges faculty face and illustrate opportunities that may be present for future professional development and strategic administrative planning.

Discussion of Results

Adult learning theory supports the concept that traditional and nontraditional students participate differently in their educational experiences (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Because of the historically homogeneous, nontraditional student-based nature of online classes, how does the mix of multigenerational students impact faculty teaching those classes?

Much of the literature on the increase in heterogeneous classrooms focus on face-to-face classrooms (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992, 1993, 1995) or the student perspective (Donavant, Daniel, & MacKewn, 2013; Day, et al., 2011; Robison, 2012). The faculty perspective in teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in online classes has been under-researched. This study was targeted to fill that research gap. In this section, the major findings of the study are reviewed and discussed in connection with the pertinent literature. Within this discussion, the conceptual framework of Brookfield's (2002) four lenses (self, students, colleagues, and theory) will provide the structure for discussion.

Brookfield's (1995) critical reflection, including his identification of distinct categories of assumptions, was used to frame understanding of faculty perceptions and experiences. Brookfield's (1995) four lenses of critical reflection are self, students, colleagues, and theoretical literature and describe the different ways faculty can gain insight into their roles as teachers. The assumptions that critical reflection encounters are:

- **Paradigmatic assumptions** are those that people believe to be true.

- **Prescriptive assumptions** are those that help determine what should happen.

- **Causal assumptions** provide understanding of what conditions are needed.

- **Hegemonic assumptions** are those that people believe are in their own best interests.

The online classes taught by the faculty participating in this study have mirrored the growth seen in the past decade regarding student diversity in age (Allen & Seaman, 2017; Yukselturk & Top, 2013). As more traditional students sought online classes, study participants were beginning to notice the effects of a more heterogeneous online class. However, while the changing demographics began to be recognized, none of the participants appeared to perceive this change necessitated modifications to their teaching strategies. In addition, participant

perception regarding the process for how online education had been developed at their institution aligned with the development of online education overall, with little practical planning for programming and effort for understanding the needs of students (Shelton, 2010; Watkins & Kaufman, 2007).

Theme One: Experience as Students Informed Strategies

The first theme states that the faculty participants' experience as students informed both their teaching in face-to-face and online classrooms, but their lack of experience as online students made teaching online more challenging. Using Brookfield's (1995) autobiographical (self) lens of critical reflection provided the most insight into this finding. Viewed through this lens, the perceptions and experiences of the faculty supplied additional support to what the literature determined.

How faculty learned to teach within the online environment is a critical element into their reflection on online teaching. The participants in this study had either no or limited professional development to become online educators. One participant had participated in some online training modules prior to teaching. All of the other participants had no training until after they had started teaching online, if they had any training at all. The participants' experience is mimicked at many higher education institutions (Ali et al., 2005; Gregory & Salmon, 2013).

Participants experienced learning how to teach online in the same way as they had for teaching face-to-face, with one major difference. The participants' personal experience provided very little actual preparation to becoming a teacher. However, in the face-to-face environment, the participants could rely on their own histories as undergraduate students, duplicating teaching strategies from their own mentors. As mentioned earlier, nine of the ten participants could not

rely on that same history to teach online, as they had never experienced being an undergraduate student in an online class.

However, the role of the online instructor is different from teaching face-to-face (Baran, Correia, & Thompson, 2013; Conceição, 2006; Gagne & Walters, 2009). Research has shown a positive relationship between professional development and teaching online (Chaney, 2010; Kennedy, 2015; McKee & Tew, 2013). Keeping up with the technical aspects of online teaching can also be challenging (Amro, Maxwell, & Kupczyinski, 2013; Betts & Heaston, 2014; Maguire, 2005), as participants in this study commented. For effective teaching online, faculty need opportunities to continue their development in several areas, including technology (Gagne & Walters, 2009).

Through reflection on their own roles and experiences as learners through the autobiographical (self) critical reflection lens, faculty gain a better understanding of student needs, but perhaps not as successfully in an online class format. The participants of this study, excluding one, had no experience as online students prior to teaching an online course. To increase understanding, I argue that faculty should seek out opportunities for online learning. The more faculty can experience this type of a classroom as a student, they will be able to more fully challenge their assumptions regarding preparation and workload.

Theme Two: The Morphing Definition of Teaching

Faculty participants identified the changing definition of teaching, often interchanging preparing and/or organizing a course with teaching a course. Using Brookfield's (1995) critical reflection lens of theoretical literature illuminated how current research can benefit faculty who are teaching online. This lens refers to the ability for scholarly literature to be used as a reliable mirror to hold up against teaching practices.

Study findings show faculty unable or incapable to adapt their teaching strategies to a multigenerational, online class. This finding reflects Bishop-Clark and Lynch's (1995, 1998) research of multigenerational, face-to-face classes. In their work, faculty did not perceive the need to alter their teachings based on a mix of traditional and nontraditional students. The findings veer, however, on the reasons why faculty believe changes to their teaching strategies based on student age are unwarranted. In Bishop-Clark and Lynch's study (1995), the results were inconclusive on why faculty held these perceptions. In this study, there were several factors that impacted faculty perception, including a lack of training, the belief that changes to the syllabi were undesirable to students after class started, and the enormous amount of preparation online classes demanded.

Faculty perceptions regarding traditional and nontraditional students do have implications on how they teach (Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1998; Donavant, Daniel, & MacKewn, 2013). Yet the participants in this study did not recognize that a multigenerational classroom would impact their teaching strategies based on the ages of the students. I argue that the faculty held on to a prescriptive assumption, believing that general strong class design and teaching strategies would appeal to all students, regardless of age and perhaps, regardless of method of delivery. Reflection through the theoretical and student lens could have shown them that the assumption was incorrect as detailed by the participants' own experiences. In discussing the mix of students during the interviews, participants remarked on differences student groups displayed and how nontraditional students responded to specific factors of the class as compared to traditional students and vice versa.

Research provides examples of the implications for teaching traditional and nontraditional students and includes recommendations for changes in face-to-face classes

(Bishop-Clark & Lynch, 1992; Simonsen et al., 2012). Effective multigenerational online teaching is student-centered. To achieve that, faculty must learn a new role, distinct from their face-to-face teaching (Conceição, 2006, 2007; Gagne & Walters, 2009; Lehman & Conceição, 2010a). My study has shown that faculty have had limited opportunity for training to become better online teachers and, like most faculty in higher education, their professional development is focused on subject matter expertise.

Theme Three: Online Teaching Viewed as Secondary to Face-to-Face

The participants of the study varied on their interactions with colleagues regarding teaching online. Candid discussions with colleagues is an essential component of Brookfield's (1995) critical reflection and is the third lens. The participants' discussions or lack thereof with their colleagues, both within their departments and across the institution, provided support for the third theme. Brookfield (2005) suggests that creating safe spaces to have critical conversations with colleagues enable faculty to "check," "reframe," and broaden teaching practices.

The study participants had varying experiences regarding discussing online teaching with their colleagues. When participants did have discussions, they happened solely within their departments. As one participant commented, there was no communal "space" where online faculty could gather to share and talk across disciplines. Over one-third of faculty in the U.S. have taught online (Seaman, 2009). Some of the participants of this study had been teaching online for 10 years. Yet, participants still did not have a systematic and inclusive way to communicate with each other.

Participants shared their perception of the institution's lack of consistency pertaining to academic and operational guidelines or standards with an online class' incorporation into their

workload. Most of the decisions appeared to have been determined at the department level, such as how classes were evaluated as part of their promotion or merit reviews or what the expectations were for academic rigor. Faculty participants described their uneasiness, frustration, and uncertainty that this perceived lack of consistency created. In addition, if faculty were unable to understand it, then they believed that their students were equally confused.

For the participants in this study, one had identified a teaching technique allowing him to be more adaptable based upon the student needs within his online classroom. However, that knowledge had not been shared with other colleagues, within his department or the institution, who had been teaching online. Peer-to-peer learning or sharing models assist faculty in incorporating student-centric teaching approaches (Samek, Ashford, Doherty, Espinor, & Anna, 2016; Wood, 2015; Wright, 2011), such as the teaching approaches and strategies that address distinct learning needs of individual or groups of students, that parallel their teaching activities in face-to-face classrooms.

Theme Four: The Disconnection with Students

Using Brookfield's (1995) student lens of critical reflection provides understanding for the final theme. Reflecting on student feedback can illuminate valid and reliable evidence for practices as teachers and in particular how students are learning (Brookfield, 1995). Using the student lens, faculty can determine what students' value in their interactions with teachers.

Faculty participants realized a clear disconnect with students taking their online classes, a perception that supports current research (Banner, 2007; Blondy, 2010; Chyung, 2007; Conceição, 2006; McKee & Tew, 2013; Tanner et al., 2009; Totaro et al., 2005). Faculty participants in this study believed that they were very student-centered instructors, independent of delivery mode for education. However, as participants reflected through the student lens, they

identified their own disconnection to the students in their online classes, but except for one participant, no one spoke as to whether they believed the students also felt the same disconnection. A large factor that influenced this disconnection was their perceived loss of their personal identity in the online classroom.

By their own admission, excluding one participant, they did not change their teaching strategies based on the makeup of students in their classes in regards to age allowing more focus on student needs. Yet, studies state that motivational factors are impacted by student age (Eppler et al., 2000; Faust & Courtenay, 2002; Yoo & Huang, 2013), and understanding these factors aligns with a learner-centered approach to teaching. Beyond one example provided in the interviews, faculty also did not indicate any knowledge if their students felt the same disconnection or how important this variable was in the students' satisfaction or success in the online classes participants taught.

Faculty may be acting on the beliefs of a causal assumption. According to Brookfield's (1995) definition, causal assumptions are usually stated in predictive terms, such as if one thing is done, then the following will happen. In this instance, faculty believed that a strong and well-prepared course design that did not stray from the published syllabus provided a teaching experience that resonated with the students in their online classes and helped them achieve the class outcomes. Faculty appeared to be establishing a hegemonic assumption as well, in that their syllabus could not be adapted during the class because it defied what they knew of adult learners. This assumption kept them from becoming more adaptable to the needs of the students. With a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in one class, either assumption or both were not applicable. If one or both of these assumptions were held, then there was insufficient ability

for teachers to adapt a course based on the students' needs. A student-centered approach would have consider each class independently.

The use of the student lens would have allowed faculty to learn how important connection was to students in their online classes and whether the students were sharing the same experience. Successful implementation of the student lens would have incorporated multiple student feedback opportunities. In this way, faculty would have had greater interaction with their students and gained a better understanding of what their needs were in real time, not after the class was completed.

Practical Implications for Faculty and Administrators

In addition to filling a gap in the literature and determining additional areas of research, this study has practical implications for faculty and administrators. To gain insight into online student needs and to strengthen the ability for self-reflection, this study has shown that faculty can benefit from professional development experiences that are online. Participating in online education bolsters faculty's ability to empathize with online students. Administrators should contemplate supporting professional development opportunities that provide faculty with both the opportunity to develop skills as an online teacher and to generate experience as an online student.

This type of experience strengthens faculty's capacity for critical reflection, especially in the use of the autobiographical lens. They can gain insight into online students' perception of the learning experience. Faculty participants discussed their reliance on mentoring with their own undergraduate and graduate faculty for their face-to-face teaching. Modeling the behavior of their own teachers was a significant factor in the creation of their own teaching knowledge. Seeking opportunities to emulate those types of strategies will reinforce faculty teaching skills in

the online environment. Online professional development and training will open possibilities to replicate mentoring for them in online education. Participants can determine what strategies and techniques that work well in their experience. In fact, the one study participant who had experience as an online student used that in developing her own courses. Factors that can support both formal and informal faculty development include institutional support, structured programs and activities, and reward structures (Murray, 1999), areas that are the purview of administrators.

Faculty discussed a lack of support for online teaching, whether in professional development or within the resources available to them. Faculty would benefit from opportunities to learn and use the literature to better their experiences in teaching multiage, online classes to combat their own preconceived assumptions impacting their teaching. The participants mentioned receiving some support from their center for scholarship and teaching. But there was little opportunity or current resources available for faculty to learn. In addition, the lack of consistency regarding online teaching created new challenges. Faculty had to find their own resources and learning experiences, rather than having an institutionally-driven strategy.

There are several opportunities for administrators to provide resolution to the disorder caused by these inconsistencies. For study participants especially, having the bulk of the online classes taught outside of their normal workload created many of the deviations from processes regulating their face-to-face classes. Administrators should incorporate online teaching into faculty workloads, or at least have an equal mix of face-to-face and online classes taught as overload to lessen the perception that teaching online is separate from the institution. In addition, when online courses and programs are designed for online delivery, an equitable

workload compensation policy that addresses the additional work required of faculty should be considered.

Administrators can provide and support efforts to connect faculty who are teaching classes online. In this way, faculty can share best practices so that great ideas do not stay within the silo of one department, or worse yet, within one class. Actively engaging faculty in discussions across the institution also allows for the growth of an informed and developed faculty, which can strengthen the teaching satisfaction for the faculty. Support, facilitation, and planning to ensure that faculty can engage with these types of discussions should come from administrators. Discussions can take the forms of learning communities, communities of practice, peer coaching, and discussion groups. This type of experience also allows faculty to participate in critical conversations with their colleagues, an important lens for critical reflection (Brookfield, 1995). Dialogue with colleagues similarly puts the emphasis back on teaching, instead of technology or preparation.

Administrators should consider developing and communicating policies and practices on assessing rigor and expectations for online classes, such as including online classes in the promotion and merit reviews for faculty. Likewise, administrators should strengthen the communication and implementation of how existing policies and practices apply equally to online classes. It may be that faculty are simply unaware of the policies and need to be educated. Employing the same academic and operational policies, procedures, and practices to classes, irrespective of their means of delivery, would reinforce the belief that there is no value difference between online and face-to-face classes.

Critical feedback where faculty can learn from their students can strengthen their knowledge and abilities, increasing their adaptability and responsiveness in online classes.

Faculty should consider instituting student feedback mechanisms that not only routinely ask for this type of information, but also go beyond student satisfaction queries, providing data that faculty can use to inform their teaching. Only two of the participants sought feedback from their students beyond the institutional course evaluations, and both of them used the information of this feedback minimally while the class was in session. Since online education has now become a mainstay of how higher education classes are delivered, development of feedback mechanisms that can help guide both the preparation and delivery of online education should become a priority.

<h3 style="text-align:center">Contributions to Literature</h3>

Research on the mix of traditional and non-traditional students in online classes is exceedingly limited. Despite the increase in heterogeneous online classes and the projection of growth in online classes, the actual impact of the changes to online has been minimal. The following identifies three areas in which this study contributes to the literature:

1. Participants recognized a loss of personal identity teaching online classes

2. Systems and practices of higher education were developed for face-to-face classes

3. Consistency of standards is important to perceived value of online teaching

Participants Recognized a Loss of Personal Identity Teaching Online Classes

Participants in this study communicated their struggle with connecting to their students in their online classes. Their perceptions regarding these feelings were very internal and personal. In sharing their feelings regarding this loss of connection, what participants identified was their own personal identity. To better understand, a clear definition for identity is needed. Identity as the participants discussed is their own understanding of who they are as an individual. It is the personal traits and quirks that they believe makes them who they are. Words used by the

participants provide more definition – funny, sarcastic, warm, engaged, helpful, and caring. Participants believe that students are unable to experience these traits within the online environment.

Identity, as it is used within the context of this study, may be better understood by what it is not. Identity is not the same as a sense of presence, as defined by Lehman and Conceição (2010a) as "being there and being together with online learners throughout the learning experience" (p. 3). The authors continue that a sense of presence provides the feeling that the online learner is at the core of the development and execution of the online class, and that the instructor and learners are accessible to each other without the presence of technology. However, while identity and sense of presence are not the same, a strong sense of presence is needed within an online class to provide the connection to an instructor's identity (Lehman & Conceição, 2010; Samuel, 2016).

Identity is also not seen as a specific role for the instructor of an online class. There are many roles in which the participants engaged regarding the online class. Roles identified by participants included organizer, facilitator, designer, preparer, assessor, teacher, and resource. Online instructors can take on several different roles within the same online class, and student satisfaction varies for each of the roles (Liu, Bonk, Magjuka, Lee, & Su, 2005). Although these roles are necessary to the delivery of an online class, they do not provide a personal identity for the faculty teaching online.

Although the faculty participants determined that sharing their personal identity with students was an important component in the success of their online class, they did not determine why they believed that or if they knew this to be true to their students. They perceived sharing their personal identity as an important component for their own satisfaction in teaching.

According to Young (2010), in her study of 199 online students, seven items rated highest for effective teachers:

- Adapting to student needs

- Using meaningful examples

- Motivating students to their best

- Facilitating the course effectively

- Delivering a valuable course

- Communicating effectively

- Showing concern for student learning

None of these variables are actual personality traits, but rather specific actions and course design attributes for the students. Dunlap and Lowenthal (in press) did a case study of their own online social presence and determined "… student's perception of social presence is not enhanced by just one instructional strategy or tool, but instead by a carefully crafted set of instructional strategies and tools that reinforce social presence as a valued part of the teaching-learning experience" (p. 12).

The loss of identity is a contributing factor to the faculty participants' ability to adapt their teaching to a heterogeneous class and become more adaptable in their teaching approach. The participants did not check with their students' experiences, nor did they indicate that the student evaluations reflected this as a concern, yet the loss of identity inhibited their ability to be student-centered teachers. In fact, one participant who did study the evaluations and feedback between his face-to-face and online classes did not note any significant differences between them. Yet, he clearly remarked on the challenges regarding his loss of identity within an online class and identified this distinction as a teacher. Faculty identifying their own loss of identity and

its impact on their perception of their role in online teaching is an important contribution to the literature.

Systems and Practices of Higher Education were Developed for Face-to-Face Classes

Findings from this study call attention to the practices and systems of higher education, especially those that support the increased demand for online learning, such as technology, teaching, and workload. The systems, policies, and practices for higher education were developed for a homogenous, synchronous, face-to-face learning experience with no contemplation regarding the impact technology might have. The challenge includes the overall method of ensuring faculty are equipped to become educators. Research shows that this is a challenge that cuts across gender, disciplines, mode of delivery, and career phase (McKee & Tew, 2013). Teaching online brings its own set of unique issues that calls for a review of how higher education adapts to the multitude of changes.

As with almost all things, technology has had a substantial effect on higher education (Allen & Seaman, 2014, 2016; McFarlane, 2011; Melkun, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2015). One of the largest changes technology has created for higher education is shifting from a synchronous to an asynchronous classroom format. The asynchronous format has instigated new complications in instruction, including "issues involving time, organization, and interactions between student and teacher and student to student" (Chiasson, Terras, & Smart, 2015, p. 235). Faculty who taught online synchronously were not as challenged to change instructional tools or strategies (Chiasson, Terras, & Smart, 2015). As such, an asynchronous format requires adaptation to a new view of teaching. How these new teaching methods are being shared and assessed within higher education will be a major shift in the scholarship of teaching and learning practices at institutions of higher education.

Professional development for faculty will also need to adapt (Baran & Correia, 2014). Providing a strong foundational skill set for teaching both face-to-face and online would allow faculty to more aptly test their assumptions regarding dynamic student populations and obviously would make them more effective online instructors. There is a positive relationship between professional development and satisfaction with teaching online (Chaney, 2010; Kennedy, 2015). This study also makes the case that professional development would improve faculty's abilities for adjusting to meet the needs of a more heterogeneous online class, something that is a continuous struggle for faculty who want to be learner-centered instructors. Continuous professional development, especially in regards to the asynchronous nature of online learning, would assist faculty in confronting the issues that were identified with teaching multigenerational online classes, such as the disconnection felt when teaching and finding the balance between preparing and teaching an online course.

McKee and Tew (2013) studied how faculty members became teachers and noted that faculty tended to teach as they were taught, a point that is emphasized in this research. Therefore, because faculty's experience as students informs so much of what they do as instructors, the professional development offered to faculty should be delivered online. Providing different means of delivery for training faculty will allow them to experience learning as an online student. I argue that this type of experiential learning would have great impact in faculty's teaching strategies while expanding their own skill sets as online instructors.

Finally, instructor workload and what that means becomes ever more complex, especially as the very definition of teaching shifts when discussing online versus face-to-face classes. As the participants in this study noted, preparation for online is a different process than a face-to-face class. One study estimates that on average, it can take 18 hours of faculty time to develop

one hour of online instruction (Crews, Wilkinson, Hemby, McCannon, & Wiedmaier, 2008).

The same study also discusses the numerous roles needed for successful design and delivery of

an online class, including designers and administrators. The type of work is different as well,

according to Lehman and Conceição (2010b) depending on the different components of the

design process, such as content type, course format, strategies, instructor role, technology, and

support, which can vary greatly between higher education institutions. Current workload

practices at higher education institutions may form constraints for accurate planning and

compensation of online teaching. Time commitment is a highly rated barrier for teaching online,

yet institutions want more faculty teaching online classes because of the increased demand

(Lloyd, Byrne, & McCoy, 2012). Yet, there is limited reward to motivate faculty to take on the

additional work. For the participants in this study, it is feasible that the efforts they put into their

online classes will not be rewarded through merit and promotion, as many of the courses taught

were not included in the review process.

Building a system and developing administrative practices that understand the impact

online education has had on teaching, professional development, and instructor workload is

necessary to finding a successful outcome. The systems and practices in place require rethinking

in this new era of asynchronous online education and to help prepare for what changes will take

place. Given the increased demand for online education, these issues must be addressed so that

faculty can more successfully meet the needs of their students, both online and in person.

Consistency of Standards is Important to Perceived Value of Online Teaching

This study adds to the current literature on online teaching to show that for faculty

participants, there is a perception of the value of online education as it compares to in-person

education. Historically, there has been little pragmatic planning for online education (Shelton,

2010; Watkins & Kaufman, 2007). In this study, participants experienced the impact of little

planning for their online programs with multiple standards and guidelines, including how

teaching online was reviewed and incorporated into teaching workloads. Participants

independently made the distinction between teaching online and teaching face-to-face.

To begin with, all of the participants began teaching online courses outside of their

normal workload. They either taught the class during the summer months for additional income

or they taught an online class for a program outside of their own discipline, which generated

additional income as well. Because of this, the academic and operational standards that would

normally apply to the courses they taught were perceived to be separate from the online courses.

Currently, the majority of online courses taught by the participants still are outside of their

normally scheduled workload.

Without a consistency of standardization, faculty were also able to develop, design, and

teach their online courses as they wanted, with no academic or administrative oversight and little

assessment or evaluation. At most, the faculty might receive student satisfaction evaluations at

the end of the course. Research suggests that specific factors such as strategic planning for

program development, course development, workload, compensation, and technical support can

be barriers to teaching satisfaction in online classes (Haber & Mills, 2008).   There is also

concern that online classes do not meet the same learning outcomes as face-to-face classes (Allen

& Seaman, 2014; Maguire, 2008).

The findings of this study also highlighted the wide variances of how online courses were

evaluated as part of a faculty member's job performance or tenure review. Departments were

able to determine how much online teaching should be included in these reviews, with most of

the participants receiving little or no feedback regarding their performance teaching online. This

variance from their face-to-face teaching emphasized that the focus of the institution was on their traditional students and their in-person classes. It also added to the confusion and stress for the faculty because there were little to no expectations recognized across the institution.

Administration of institutions of higher education would do well to apply the policies and practices established for teaching and programs for all classes, regardless of method of delivery. Specific issues that relate solely to online education should have institution wide policies developed and implemented (Kress, Thering, Lalonde, Kim, & Cleeton, 2012). Faculty and departments would have no recourse but to manage online classes by the same set of standards and practices. Online education continues to be a normalized part of higher education (Allen & Seaman, 2016, 2017; Hirner & Kochtanek, 2012). Building and implementing consistency in standards of practice will help faculty members to plan and teach online courses.

Areas for Future Research

This research was intended to explore perceptions of tenured faculty members teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in online classes. The findings from this study similarly suggest additional areas of research.

The participants from this study were from one institution of higher education. The findings are from their perspective. Further exploration of faculty perceptions and experiences in teaching heterogeneous online classes is needed to gain greater insight into how they might affect the findings from this study. The experiences and perceptions of faculty from multiple institutions might provide a different narrative that would add to the research. In addition, participants from a variety of employment status, including adjunct, may also have different experiences that could shed light on this area. Within this area, the impact that a department or

institution's culture has on faculty or instructor perceptions and experiences would also be valuable.

In this study, factors such as class size, number of classes taught online, and student demographics except age were not identified as contributing to the experiences and perceptions of faculty. Other factors may influence these. Research that studied the impact on online teaching that online professional development provided faculty is strongly encouraged. Moreover, in a few years' time, faculty who teach online classes will have experience as online students; a similar study with their perceptions and experiences would provide a beneficial contrast.

There is a need to determine how administrative guidelines and institutional practices and standards influence teaching online classes. In this study, the participants were unaware of how online classes were viewed across the institution, and practices appeared to vary from department to department. Learning how institutional policies and standards influence support and development of faculty teaching online would create some needed best practices and go far in developing understanding in this area.

Finally, additional research on how professional development supports faculty teaching diverse student populations in online formats is needed. Further research that looks at both mode of delivery and the mix of traditional and nontraditional students will provide greater insight into how these variables affect teaching. Online education is becoming a mainstay in higher education and students are diverse. Future researchers might explore how professional development can help faculty better teach these classes and the different ways to design professional development.

Study Limitations

Identifying the limitations of a study helps to inform the reader and enhance the credibility of the research (Glesne, 2011). Most of the limitations of this study are within the study sample, but there also exists a limitation in the data collection. The following section addresses these.

Participation in this study was voluntary, and participants were faculty who had an interest in online education. Study participants had been teaching online classes for several years and planned to continue to teach online. Eleven additional faculty were invited to participate in the study with 10 who did not respond and one who declined. Whether they were unable to participate due to schedule conflicts or a negative opinion of teaching online is unknown. Nonetheless, they could have reactions that are vastly different and not represented in this study.

The research sample is made up of experienced faculty who have taught online for at least five years. Faculty who may be new to teaching online or teaching overall have no voice in this study, so their perspectives are not addressed. In addition, adjunct faculty are also not represented, although they teach a sizable percentage of online classes with less access to the resources and support systems than their tenured colleagues.

Data were collected through interviews which can be open to self-reporting bias. Participants may not have been at ease sharing all of their perceptions or experiences with someone they knew. Alternatively, participants may not have wanted to appear unprofessional or to provide some other negative portrayal of themselves as teachers. Some of these limitations can be addressed through additional research.

While these limitations do exist, their impact on the findings is not significant. The experiences and perceptions of the faculty participants provide important insight into this area

and builds a foundation for additional research. In addition, the factors that created the environment in which the faculty were teaching, including an extreme growth in the mix of traditional and non-traditional students in online classes, provided a clear opportunity to examine their experiences.

Conclusion

Online classes will continue to become more heterogeneous as traditional students continue to incorporate at least one online class into their higher education plans (Allen & Seamen, 2016, 2017; Dabbagh, 2007). However, the concept of multigenerational online classes remains under-researched. The purpose of this study was to understand faculty perceptions and experiences of teaching a mix of traditional and nontraditional students in an online class. The interviews revealed that perceptions and experiences were influenced by how the faculty conceptualized teaching online as a whole. They described how different teaching online was to face-to-face, especially in how they became teachers and how they connect with their students. Their stories revealed the challenges they experience in the preparation for online teaching and how they are viewed as online teachers, especially concerning a loss of identity in the online environment.

Through the study, I was also affected in my roles as an administrator and instructor. Planning, managing, and maintaining online programs has made me re-think my assumptions about faculty requirements for teaching a successful online class. My administrative process is now informed by what these participants shared with me. Their stories broadened my understanding of online teaching and what requirements would best support faculty teaching in online programs.

As an example, faculty have been hesitant about participating in some professional development because of the online nature. I have heard several requests to provide the training face-to-face. However, after learning how faculty become teachers and how their personal experiences as students informed their own teaching, it is apparent that faculty need some experience as an online student. This was a major transformation for me. I have often acquiesced to providing in-person training for faculty.

During my interviews, three things struck me. First, participants' experiences were strikingly similar across all disciplines. They faced similar challenges and appreciated an opportunity to talk about them with me. As they did so, it became very clear that faculty have limited opportunity to reflect on their roles as teachers. Also, they seem to view several of their experiences as unique, not realizing that colleagues were experiencing the same challenges.

Second, through the process of interviewing, the participants began questioning some of their own beliefs about online teaching. They became aware that some of their perceptions were merely assumptions and often, they would comment on how they were going to check or follow up to ensure that their belief was accurate. It was apparent that participants needed a place where they could freely discuss these questions and concerns freely with their peers. They would have the ability to support and learn from each other, but they currently do not have that opportunity. Although the study answered the research questions, it also raised practical issues that need to be addressed for the benefit of faculty.

Finally, online teaching continues to change at a rapid pace (Allen & Seaman, 2016, 2017). Technology persists in changing the landscape of online education. Upcoming generations are much more comfortable with "screen time" and integrating online classes into their degree plans will remain common, ensuring that online classes continue to become more

heterogeneous. Current research has not kept up with this (Brau, Cardell, Holmes, & Wright, 2017; Dabbagh, 2007, Yukselturk & Top, 2013). Literature is still looking at faculty transitions from face-to-face to online teaching, and developing competencies, such as building presence and engaging online students (Conrad & Donaldson, 2011; Lehman & Conceição, 2010a, Dunlap & Lowenthal, in press). As more faculty enter higher education, this may lessen since they are likely to have had experience as an online student, strengthening their personal understanding and informing their teaching. Online education will continue to change in many ways, from how it is delivered to how it is taught. Taking time to critically reflect on how those changes impact the people involved is a good first step in the process.

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APPENDICES
Appendix A: Participant Recruitment Letter

Dear (Name),

You are invited to participate in a research study, entitled *Faculty Experiences with Teaching a Mix of Traditional and Nontraditional Students in Online Classes*. The study is being conducted by Christina Trombley, a doctoral student of the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee.

This study explores how faculty viewed their experiences as university online classes became more heterogeneous, specifically in regards to a blending of traditional and nontraditional students. In particular, the study examines faculty perceptions of their experiences in teaching as more traditional students enrolled in classes that were previously open to nontraditional students and how this dynamic affected their teaching. The experiences of the faculty. Approximately 10 subjects will participate in this study. Your online class (name of class) was chosen since traditional students attending has grown to more than a third of the class attendance.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in one in-person interview and possibly a follow-up phone call or email exchange. This will take approximately 60-90 minutes of your time.

Risks that you may experience from participating are considered minimal. There are no costs for participating. Benefits of participating include reflecting on your teaching strategies.

Your information collected for this study is completely confidential and no individual participant will ever be identified with his/her research information. Data from this study will be saved on password protected computer and destroyed after the study is completed. My advisor, Simone Conceição, and I are the only individuals who will have access to the information. However, the Institutional Review Board at UW-Milwaukee or appropriate federal agencies like the Office for Human Research Protections may review your records to protect your safety and welfare.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part in this study, or if you decide to take part, you can change your mind later and withdraw from the study. You are free to not answer any questions or withdraw at any time. Your decision will not change any present or future relationships with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

If you have questions about the study or study procedures, you are free to contact the investigator at the address and phone number below. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant or complaints about your treatment as a research subject, contact the Institutional Review Board at (414)229-3173 or irbinfo@uwm.edu.

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must be 18 years of age or older. By signing the consent form, you are giving your consent to voluntarily participate in this research project.

Thank you,

Christina Trombley

(UWM School of Education, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee, WI, 53201, Phone 920-366-2263, E-mail tromble3@uwm.edu)

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MILWAUKEE
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Study title: Faculty Experiences with Teaching a Mix of Traditional and Nontraditional Students in Online Classes

Study description:
The purpose of this qualitative interpretive research study is to explore how faculty experience teaching multigenerational (traditional and nontraditional) online classes. The online classes researched serve only undergraduate students. Understanding how faculty perceive teaching a more heterogeneous population in the online format can inform faculty development practices and administrative support of development activities for faculty.   The study will involve 10 faculty teaching online classes at an urban, public, comprehensive university. Participants will need to commit approximately 60-90 minutes of their time to participate in the study and possibly a follow-up email or phone call if the interviewer needs clarification after reviewing the transcript. The interviews will be audio-recorded via digital recorder with the participant's consent and transcribed.

What will I be asked to do if I participate in the study?
If you agree to participate you will be asked to participate in one 60- 90 minute, in-person interview in a place agreed upon by you and me. You will be asked to reflect upon your teaching and interactions in the online education environment. Your words will be audio-recorded via digital recorder and transcribed so that I can reference your interview in written form. I may email or call you after the interview if I need your clarification of part of our interview.

What risks will I face by participating in this study?
You may encounter a psychological risk of your own reflection on your teaching processes and knowledge construction. It is unlikely that you would be harmed as a result of this reflection.

Will I receive any benefit from my participation in this study?
Reflecting on how you teach may give insight into your own choices and teaching style. There is no compensation for participation.

What happens to the information collected?
All information collected about you during the course of this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. Results may be published or presented in scientific journals or at scientific conferences. Information that identifies you personally will not be released without your written permission. Only the Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator will have access to the information. However, the Institutional Review Board at UW-Milwaukee or appropriate federal agencies like the Office for Human Research Protections may review your records.

All information will be recorded using pseudonyms, rather than participants' actual names. Any identifying information (name, city) will be washed from the interview transcription and a pseudonym will be inserted in the typed transcript.

Audio recordings of the interviews will be stored electronically on the UWM Panther File with a back up on a password protected computer until the end of this project at which time the digital file will be destroyed and the back-up copies of the interview transcripts will be destroyed. Printed copies of transcripts will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the co-principal's office during the study

Are there alternatives to participating in the study?
There are no known alternatives available to you other than not taking part in this study.

What happens if I decide not to be in this study?
Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part, you can change your mind later and withdraw from the study. You are free to not answer any questions or withdraw at any time. Your decision will not change any present or future relationships with the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the PI will destroy all of the information collected about you.

Who do I contact for questions about this study?
For more information about the study or the study procedures or treatments, or to withdraw from the study, contact:

> Professor Simone Conceição or Susan Yelich Biniecki
> Department of Administrative Leadership
> University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Education
> P.O. Box 413
> Milwaukee, WI, 53201
> (414) 229-4615

Who do I contact for questions about my rights or complaints towards my treatment as a research subject?
The Institutional Review Board may ask your name, but all complaints are kept in confidence.

> Institutional Review Board
> Human Research Protection Program
> Department of University Safety and Assurances
> University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee
> P.O. Box 413
> Milwaukee, WI 53201
> (414) 229-3173

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:
To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below. If you choose to take part in this study, you may withdraw at any time. You are not giving up any of your legal rights by signing this form. Your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, including the risks and benefits, and have had all of your questions answered, and that you are 18 years of age or older.

Printed Name of Subject/ Legally Authorized Representative

Signature of Subject/Legally Authorized RepresentativeDate

Research Subject's Consent to Audio/Video/Photo Recording:

It is okay to audiotape me while I am in this study and use my audiotaped data in the research.

Please initial: ____Yes   ____No

Appendix C: Interview Guide

After confirming that the participant has signed the consent form and agreed to be recorded, the interviewer will check the digital recorder to make sure it is working and begin the interview.

Interviewer will begin by stating the date, time, place, and the pseudonym for the person being interviewed so this information is recorded at the beginning of each interview. Bullet points indicate probes which may be used by the interviewer to help the participant tell his or her story.

- *Ice breaker:* Tell me about your journey to becoming a faculty member?

- Please describe your experience teaching an online class.

- How do you prepare for teaching online classes?

- How do you adjust your teaching based on student participants?

- What have been your biggest challenges in teaching online classes currently, especially

concerning a mix of students' characteristics in age?

- Why do you teach online classes?

- What changes have you noticed in teaching online classes?

- How do you think students respond to your teaching in an online class?

- What have you learned about your teaching from your student evaluations?

- Do you seek other forms of student feedback? What are they?

- Does student feedback influence your teaching, and if so, how?

- How do students help you become a better online teacher?

- Do you speak with your colleagues regarding your experiences teaching online?

  - What do you discuss?

  - Do they share your experience?

- What do your colleagues say about your online teaching?

- Do you participate in reviews of your online classes with your peers?

- What was the best advice you received from a colleague regarding teaching online?

- How did you learn to teach?

- How did you learn to teach online classes?

- What do you do to improve as an online teacher?

- What tools do you rely on to learn about online teaching?

Interviewer will thank the participant for giving his or her time. After participant leaves, interviewer will immediately record reflective or analytical notes about the interview process

Appendix D: Participant Schedule

Pseudonym	Discipline	Discipline	Pseudonym	First Contact	Second Contact	Third Contact	Response	Thank you
Rita	Social Sciences	Social Sciences	Rita	11/29/2017			11/30/2017	X
Emma	Arts	Arts	Emma	12/18/2017			12/20/2017	X
Dexter	Social Sciences	Social Sciences	Dexter	12/18/2017			12/18/2017	X
Mary	Arts	Arts	Mary	12/18/2017	12/29/2017		1/13/2018	X
Carmen	Natural Sciences	Natural Sciences	Carmen	12/18/2017			12/18/2017	X
Edward	Natural Sciences	Natural Sciences	Edward	1/22/2018			1/23/2018	X
Tony	Humanities	Humanities	Tony	12/18/2017	12/29/2017	1/17/2018	1/23/2018	X
Lisa	Humanities	Humanities	Lisa	1/22/2018			1/26/2018	X
Roger	Professions	Professions	Roger	1/30/2018			1/31/2018	X
Moira	Social Sciences	Social Sciences	Moira	2/9/2018			2/9/2018	X

Pseudonym	Interview	Consent Form	Transcribed	Approval	Formatted
Rita	12/8/2017	12/8/2018	1/13/2018	1/20/2018	1/27/2018
Emma	1/10/2018	1/12/2018	1/23/2018	1/28/2018	1/27/2018
Dexter	1/5/2018	1/6/2018	1/29/2018	1/31/2018	1/30/2018
Mary	1/22/2018	1/13/2018	1/28/2018	2/4/2018	1/28/2018
Carmen	1/16/2018	1/26/2018	1/27/2018	1/28/2018	1/27/2018
Edward	1/25/2018	1/15/2018	1/29/2018	2/24/2018	1/29/2018
Tony	2/8/2018	2/10/2018	2/10/2018	2/12/2018	2/10/2018
Lisa	1/31/2018	1/26/2018	2/3/2018	2/5/2018	2/3/2018
Roger	2/13/2018	2/20/2018	2/14/2018	2/16/2018	2/14/2018
Moira	2/10/2018	2/10/2018	2/11/2018	2/11/2018	2/11/2018

NOTE: If you are unsure if your study requires IRB approval, please review the <u>UWM IRB Determination Form</u>.

Instructions: Each Section must be completed unless directed otherwise. Incomplete forms will delay the IRB review process and may be returned to you. Enter your information in the **colored boxes** or place an **"X"** in front of the appropriate response(s). If the question does not apply, write **"N/A."**

SECTION A: Title

FACULTY EXPERIENCES WITH TEACIHNG A MIX OF TRADITIONAL AND NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS IN ONLINE CLASSES

A1. Full Study Title:

SECTION B: Study Duration

B1. What is the expected start date? *Data collection, screening, recruitment, enrollment, or consenting activities may not begin until IRB approval has been granted. Format: 07/31/2011*
06/01/2017

B2. What is the expected end date? *Expected end date should take into account data analysis, queries, and paper write-up. Format: 07/05/2014*
12/31/2017

SECTION C: Summary

C1. Write a brief descriptive summary of this study in Layman Terms (non-technical language):
The purpose of this interpretive qualitative research study is to explore how faculty experience teaching multigenerational (traditional and nontraditional) online classes. The online classes researched serve only undergraduate students. Understanding how faculty perceive teaching a more heterogeneous student population in the online format can inform faculty development practices and administrative support of faculty preparation. Data will be collected through ten to fifteen semi-structured, in-depth interviews and analyzed with qualitative methods.

C2. Describe the purpose/objective and the significance of the research:
This study explores how faculty viewed their experiences as university online classes became more heterogeneous, specifically in regards to a blending of traditional and nontraditional students. In particular, the study examines faculty perceptions of their experiences in teaching as more traditional students enrolled in classes that were previously open to nontraditional students and how this dynamic affected their teaching. The experiences of the faculty who lived through the merging of traditional and nontraditional students in their online class are central to the study.

This study adds to the limited literature about teaching multigenerational online classes through in-depth interviews with the faculty. With the qualitative approach and use of interviews, faculty are able to express their experiences in their own words.

C3. Cite the most relevant literature pertaining to the proposed research:

Bishop-Clark, C., & Lynch, J. (1992). The mixed-age college classroom. *College Teaching*, 40(3), 114-123. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/27558543

Bishop-Clark, C. and Lynch, J. (1993). Traditional and nontraditional student attitudes toward the mixed age college classroom. *Innovative Higher Education*, 18(2), 109-121. doi: 10.1007/B01191889

Bishop-Clark, C. and Lynch, J. (1995). Faculty attitudes toward the mixed-age college classroom. *Educational Gerontology*, 21(8), 749-761. doi: 10.1080/0360127950210803

Bishop-Clark, C., & Lynch, J. (1998). Comparing teacher and student responses to the mixed-age college classroom. *Community College Review*, 25(4).   doi: 10.1177/009155219802500403

Allen, I., & Seaman, J. (2016). Online Report Card: Tracking online education in the United States. Babson Park, MA: Babson Survey Research Group and Quahog Research Group, LLC, 1-62. Retrieved from onlinelearningsurvey.com/reports/onlinereportcard.pdf

Amro, H., Maxwell, G. M., & Kupczynski, L. (2013). Faculty perceptions of student performance in the online classroom. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, 10(3), 294-304. doi: 10.2304/elea.2013.10.3.294

Conceição, S. (2006). Faculty lived experiences in the online environment. *Adult Education Quarterly.* (57)1, 26-45. doi: 10.1177/1059601106292247

Conceição, S. (2007). Understanding the Environment for Online Teaching. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education.* 113, 5-11. doi: 10.1002/ace.242

Robison, M. (2012). *Perceptions of teaching and learning in an intergenerational classroom: A mixed methods study of traditional and returning adult learners* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1024561145).

SECTION D: Subject Population
Section Notes…
• D1. If this study involves analysis of de-identified data only (i.e., no human subject interaction), IRB submission/review may not be necessary. **Please review the UWM IRB Determination Form for more details.**

D1. Identify any population(s) that you will be specifically targeting for the study. Check all that apply: (Place an "X" in the column next to the name of the special population.)

	Existing Dataset(s)		Institutionalized/ Nursing home residents recruited in the nursing home
	UWM Students of PI or study staff		Diagnosable Psychological Disorder/Psychiatrically impaired
	UWM Students (but not of PI or study staff)		Decisionally/Cognitively Impaired

Non-UWM students to be recruited in their educational setting, i.e. in class or at school		Economically/Educationally Disadvantaged
UWM Staff or Faculty		Prisoners
Pregnant Women/Neonates		International Subjects (residing outside of the US)
Minors under 18 and ARE NOT wards of the State		Non-English Speaking
Minors under 18 and ARE wards of the State		Terminally ill
Other (Please identify):		

D2. Describe the subject group and enter the total number to be enrolled for each group. For example: teachers-50, students-200, parents-25, student control-30, student experimental-30, medical charts-500, dataset of 1500, etc. Then enter the total number of subjects below. Be sure to account for expected drop outs. For example, if you need 100 subjects to complete the entire study, but you expect 5 people will enroll but "drop out" of the study, please enter 105 (not 100).

Describe subject group:	Number:
UWGB faculty	10 - 15
TOTAL # OF SUBJECTS:	10 - 15
TOTAL # OF SUBJECTS (If UWM is a collaborating site for a multi institutional project):	

D3. For each subject group, list any major inclusion and exclusion criteria (e.g., age, gender, health status/condition, ethnicity, location, English speaking, etc.) and state the justification for the inclusion and exclusion criteria:

- Participants have taught the same online class for at least one semester in each of the last three years (when policy shifted allowing traditional students into online classes).
- Student populations in these classes show that at least a third of the class are traditional students.
- Participants are tenure-track, full-time faculty members at the institution, rather than ad hoc faculty or lecturers.
- Participants have over five years of experience teaching at the university level.

SECTION E: Study Activities: Recruitment, Informed Consent, and Data Collection

Section Notes…
- Reminder, all recruitment materials, consent forms, data collection instruments, etc. should be attached for IRB review.

In the table below, chronologically describe all study activities where human subjects are involved.

- In **column A**, give the activity a short name. Please note that Recruitment, Screening, and consenting will be activities for almost all studies. Other activities may include: Obtaining Dataset, Records Review, Interview, Online Survey, Lab Visit 1, 4 Week Follow-Up, Debriefing, etc.
- In **column B**, describe who will be conducting the study activity and his/her training and/or qualifications to complete the activity. You may use a title (i.e. Research Assistant) rather than a specific name, but training/qualifications must still be described.
- In **column C**, describe in greater detail the activities (recruitment, screening, consent, surveys, audiotaped interviews, tasks, etc.) research participants will be engaged in. Address **where**, **how long**, and **when** each activity takes place.
- In **column D,** describe any possible risks (e.g., physical, psychological, social, economic, legal, etc.) the subject may *reasonably* encounter. Describe the **safeguards** that will be put into place to minimize possible risks (e.g., interviews are in a private location, data is anonymous, assigning pseudonyms, where data is stored, coded data, etc.) and what happens if the participant gets hurt or upset (e.g., referred to Norris Health Center, PI will stop the interview and assess, given referral, etc.).

A. Activity Name:	B. Person(s) Conducting Activity	C. Activity Description (Please describe any forms used):	D. Activity Risks and Safeguards:
Recruitment	Christina Trombley, dissertator	At UW-Green Bay for 2 weeks; review of online classes offered at least once a year over the past five years and instructors for those courses	Minimum
Screening	Christina Trombley, dissertator	At UW-Green Bay for 2 weeks; classes will be assessed for mix of at least 35% inclusion of traditional students	Minimum
Obtaining Consent	Christina Trombley, Dissertator	At UW-Green Bay for 3 weeks; email and phone requests followed by consent form for signature.	Minimum; participants can opt out at any time
List all other study activities in the following rows			
Interview	Christina Trombley, dissertator	Interviews in private location, data is stored on private computer with password protection in locked home with security system.	Minimum
Reporting	Christina Trombley, dissertator	Pseudonyms will be assigned	Minimum

E2. Explain how the data will be analyzed or studied (i.e. quantitatively or qualitatively) and how the data will be reported (i.e. aggregated, anonymously, pseudonyms for participants, etc.):
The data will be analyzed qualitatively and reported using pseudonyms provided for participants.

SECTION F: Data Security and Confidentiality

Section Notes…
- Please read the IRB Guidance Document on Data Confidentiality for more details and recommendations about data security and confidentiality.

F1. Explain how study data/responses will be stored in relation to any identifying information (name, birthdate, address, IP address, etc.)?   Check all that apply.

　　[__] Identifiable - Identifiers are collected and stored with study data.
　　[__] Coded - Identifiers are collected and stored separately from study data, but a key exists to link data to identifiable information.
　　[_X_] De-identified - Identifiers are collected and stored separately from study data without the possibility of linking to data.
　　[__] Anonymous - No identifying information is collected.

If more than one method is used, explain which method is used for which data.

F2. Will any recordings (audio/video/photos) be done as part of the study?

　　[X] Yes
　　[__] No [SKIP THIS SECTION]

If yes, explain what activities will be recorded and what recording method(s) will be used. Will the recordings be used in publications or presentations?
Interviews will be audio recorded using digital audiotape recorder. Quotes from recordings will be used in publication.

F3. In the table below, describe the data storage and security measures in place to prevent a breach of confidentiality.

- In **column A**, clarify the type of data. Examples may include screening data, paper questionnaires, online survey responses, EMG data, audio recordings, interview transcripts, subject contact information, key linking Study ID to subject identifiers, etc.
- In **column B**, describe the storage location. Examples may include an office in Enderis 750, file cabinet in ENG 270, a laptop computer, desktop computer in GAR 420, Qualtrics servers, etc.
- In **column C**, describe the security measures in place for each storage location to protect against a breach of confidentiality. Examples may include a locked office, encrypted devices, coded data, non-networked computer with password protection, etc.
- In **column D**, clarify who will have access to the data.
- In **column E**, explain when or if data will be discarded.

A. Type of Data	B. Storage Location	C. Security Measures	D. Who will have access	E. Estimated date of disposal
Audio recordings	Flash drives	Locked house with security system	Dissertator	3/15/2018

F4. Will data be retained for uses beyond this study? If so, please explain and notify participants in the consent form.
No

SECTION G: Benefits and Risk/Benefit Analysis

Section Notes… • Do not include Incentives/ Compensations in this section.

G1. Describe any benefits to the individual participants. If there are no anticipated benefits to the subject directly, state so. Describe potential benefits to society (i.e., further knowledge to the area of study) or a specific group of individuals (i.e., teachers, foster children).
Some participants may find benefit from discussing their processes. Potential benefit to faculty in developing knowledge that may inform future professional development.

G2. Risks to research participants should be justified by the anticipated benefits to the participants or society. Provide your assessment of how the anticipated risks to participants and steps taken to minimize these risks (as described in Section E), balance against anticipated benefits to the individual or to society.
Risks for participants are minimal; potential to become frustrated with resources available to support their teaching. Participants may opt out if frustration becomes emotionally burdensome.

SECTION H: Subject Incentives/ Compensations

Section Notes… • H2 & H3. The IRB recognizes the potential for undue influence and coercion when extra credit is offered. The UWM IRB, as also recommended by OHRP and APA Code of Ethics, agrees when extra credit is offered or required, prospective subjects must be given the choice of an equitable, non-research alternative. The extra credit value and the non-research alternative must be described in the recruitment material and the consent form. • H4. If you intend to submit to Accounts Payable for reimbursement purposes make sure you understand the UWM "Payments to Research Subjects" Procedure 2.4.6 and what each level of payment confidentiality means **(click here for additional information).**

H1. Does this study involve incentives or compensation to the subjects? For example cash, class extra credit, gift cards, or items.

[__] Yes
[X_] No [SKIP THIS SECTION]

H2. Explain what (a) the item is, (b) the amount or approximate value of the item, and (c) when it will be given. For extra credit, state the number of credit hours and/or points. (e.g., $5 after completing each survey, subject will receive [item] even if they do not complete the procedure, extra credit will be award at the end of the semester)**:**

H3. If extra credit is offered as compensation/incentive, please
describe the specific alternative activity which will be offered. The alternative activity should be similar in the amount of time involved to complete and worth the same number of extra credit points/hours. Other research studies can be offered as additional alternatives, but **a non-research alternative is required**.

H4. If cash or gift cards, select the appropriate confidentiality level for payments (see section notes):

[__] **Level 1** indicates that confidentiality of the subjects is not a serious issue, e.g., providing a social security number or other identifying information for payment would not pose a serious risk to subjects.

  ▪ For payments over $50, choosing Level 1 requires the researcher to collect and maintain a record of the following: The payee's name, address, and social security number, the amount paid, and signature indicating receipt of payment (for cash or gift cards).

  ▪ When Level 1 is selected, a formal notice is not issued by the IRB and the Account Payable assumes Level 1.

  ▪ Level 1 payment information will be retained in the extramural account folder at UWM/Research Services and attached to the voucher in Accounts Payable. These are public documents, potentially open to public review.

[__] **Level 2** indicates that confidentiality is an issue, but is not paramount to the study, e.g., the participant will be involved in a study researching sensitive, yet not illegal issues.

  ▪ Choosing a Level 2 requires the researcher to maintain a record of the following: The payee's name, address, and social security number, the amount paid, and signature indicating receipt of payment (for cash or gift cards).

  ▪ When Level 2 is selected, a formal notice will be issued by the IRB.

  ▪ Level 2 payment information, including the names, are attached to the PIR and become part of the voucher in Accounts Payable. The records retained by Accounts Payable are not considered public record.

[__] **Level 3** indicates that confidentiality of the subjects must be guaranteed. In this category, identifying information such as a social security number would put a subject at increased risk.

  ▪ Choosing a Level 3 requires the researcher to maintain a record of the following: research subject's name and corresponding coded identification. This will be the only record of payee names, and it will stay in the control of the PI.

  ▪ Payments are made to the research subjects by either personal check or cash. Gift cards are considered cash.

  ▪ If a cash payment is made, the PI must obtain signed receipts.

  ▪ If the total payment to an individual subject is over $600 per calendar year, Level 3 cannot be selected.

 If Confidentiality Level 2 or 3 is selected, please provide justification.

SECTION I: Deception/ Incomplete Disclosure (INSERT "NA" IF NOT APPLICABLE)

Section Notes…
• If you cannot adequately state the true purpose of the study to the subject in the informed consent, deception/ incomplete disclosure is involved.

I1. Describe (a) what information will be withheld from the subject (b) why such deception/ incomplete disclosure is necessary, and (c) when the subjects will be debriefed about the deception/ incomplete disclosure.
N/A

IMPORTANT – Make sure all sections are complete and attach this document to your IRBManager web submission in the Attachment Page (Y1).

CURRICULUM VITAE

Christina Trombley

CURRENT POSITION
Executive Director, Online Programs
Drake University, 2507 University Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50311

Position Summary: Responsible for the leadership, integration, and coordination of student recruitment, enrollment, and retention efforts for online programs at Drake University. Serve as the liaison for the campus with the Online Program Management company. Oversees all aspects of online student admissions, marketing, budgeting, and student support. Works collaboratively with others in senior campus administration, the deans of academic units, faculty leadership, and related campus partners to promote online degree programs as a comprehensive approach toward meeting Drake's strategic goals. Develops and implements strategic planning initiatives and performs these responsibilities in an ethical manner consistent with the institutions mission, vision, values, and goals.

- Lead the development and implementation of online degree programs
- Analyze data, both quantitative and qualitative, to shape enrollment priorities and develop a culture that is systematic, rigorous, highly strategic, and fully accountable in its approach and execution
- Ensure office is in compliance with all State and federal regulations and campus policies
- Foster a campus-wide culture focused on online student success, services excellence, and data-informed decisions.

EDUCATION

Ph.D.	Urban Education (anticipated graduation May, 2018) University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
M.B.A.	Business Administration (December, 1995) University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
B.A.	(CCommunication (May, 1990) University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE
University of Wisconsin – Green Bay (2006 – 2017)
- Associate Vice Chancellor, Division of Enrollment Services
- Interim Dean, Outreach and Adult Access
- Director, Adult Degree Program
- Director, Small Business

Development Center University of
Wisconsin – La Crosse (1997 – 2006)
- Business Education Outreach Coordinator

Professional (1992 - 1997)
- Marketing Director, Courtesy Corporation McDonald's (1996 - 1997)
- Office Manager, Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center (1992 - 1996)

PUBLICATIONS
- "An Investigation of the Role of Multiple Consumption Values in Consumer Cooperatives," with Jim Finch, Ph.D. and Bart Rabas, published in The Journal of Marketing Management, Spring/Summer, 1998
- Monthly column for *The Business   News*
- Monthly blog for *InBusiness Wisconsin*

TEACHING AND CURRICULUM

- ILS 198, Adult Learning Seminar, 3 credits
- BUS ADM 472, Leadership Development 3 credits
- Developed 12-credit Entrepreneurship Certificate for UW-Green Bay
- Non-credit, online business plan writing class
- Non-credit marketing seminars and workshops for entrepreneurs
- Non-credit Entrepreneurial Training Program (NextLvl Curriculum and FastTrak Curriculum Certified)

GRANTS (FUNDED) AND AWARDS

- Small Business Development Center (2007 – 2012)
  - Small Business Administration; $109,948; Program Investigator (Annually)
- Young Entrepreneur's Program (2009 - 2011)
  - U. S. Dept. of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs; $273,873; Program Partner
- East Central European Scholarship Program (2000 – 2006)
  - U.S. Agency International Development (USAID); Program Administrator
- Title VI Program Grant (2006)
  - U.S. Department of Education's Business and International Education; $174,562; Program Manager
- Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce 25 People You Should Know (2010)
- 2006 Recipient of ASBDC "State Star" Award for Wisconsin
- 2005 Award Winner in Business Administration - YWCA Tribute to Outstanding Women
- Finalist for *La Crosse Tribune's* Person of the Year for 2005
- 2005 University Continuing Education Association Award of Excellence Program

PRESENTATIONS

- "An Analysis of Adult and Traditional Student Satisfaction in Online Courses" 2015 ASRR, Madison, WI
- "Developing Data Dashboards" 2014 UPCEA Regional Conference, Denver, CO
- "Reaching a New Audience" 2011 UPCEA International Conference, Toronto, Canada
- "Programming Best Practices" co-presentation 2008 ASBDC Annual Conference in Chicago, IL
- Panelist for "Building the New Wisconsin Economy" University of Wisconsin System Economic Summit, August, 2005, Milwaukee, WI
- Keynote, W.A. Roosevelt Annual Amana Dealers meeting, June, 2005
- "Low-Cost Marketing Tips" session, Wisconsin Area Campground Owners conference, March, 2005
- Keynote Presentation to National Association for Women Business Owners La Crosse Chapter in 2003

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- UPCEA regional and national conferences (2012 – present)
- LERN "Programming Institute" successfully completed (2008)
- UW-Madison "Leadership: Beyond Management" leadership training successfully completed (2007)
- Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce Leadership Training (2007 – UWGB staff scholarship awarded)
- Recognized as a "Top 20 Business Leader Under Forty" by the *River Valley Business News*
- Several courses in economic development through the International Economic Development Corporation
- Certified Peerspectives and NxLevel facilitator
- Several professional development seminars, including four ASBDC national conferences
- Greater La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce Leadership Training (2000)

Turbocharge Partnership
Steering Team and Implementation Core Team member, 2016-2017. Turbocharge is a collaborative early college initiative between Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Green Bay Area Public Schools, and UW-Green Bay

Downtown Green Bay, Inc.
President, 2/2017 to 8/2017; Board Member 2006 to 2017

Green Bay Packer Mentor-Protégé
Board Member 2012 - 2014

New North, Inc.
Served on the Small Business and Entrepreneur Council 2006 - 2010; served as Council Secretary and chaired the Leverage Sub-Committee

Northeast Wisconsin Regional Economic Partnership (NEW REP)
Served as judge and presentation judge for NEW REP Regional Business Plan Competition 2007 - 2011

7 Rivers Region Alliance
Served as Community Liaison, paid staff position. Served as founding President of the Board of Directors. Led and developed new organization promoting a regional brand and multi-organization board for regional collaboration in economic development. Have been actively involved since its inception in 2001

Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Inc.
Board member from September, 2003 to August, 2006. Served on the Economic Development Task Force that is focused on development of resources for area manufacturers and other economic development strategies

Coulee Region Humane Society Board of Directors
Served as President from June, 2002 to February, 2005. During my tenure as President, the Humane Society led a successful capital campaign raising $1.7 million, built a new shelter, and hired a new Executive Director

WI SBDC Technology Operations Committee (Founding Chair)
Served as Chair of new committee since March, 2007 to develop solution-based strategies to utilize the potential of our data management system

UW-L and UWGB Legislative and Regents Committees
Served 3-year terms and chaired committees at both institutions