

DEVELOPING PROFESSIONALS: GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT
AND TUTOR PREPARATION AT HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTIONS

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is to my dad, Steve Granger, for always demanding my best and still supporting me all of those times when I wasn't, and, to my mom, Debbie Granger, for the countless lessons to help me see the power of my voice, but especially for encouraging me to write a letter to my principal when I was in the fourth grade.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a multisite case study exploring the preparatory experiences of graduate teaching assistants (TAs) and graduate writing center tutors who teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level writing and reading courses at three Hispanic Serving Institutions in Texas. This study examined the indirect and direct influences the participating TAs and writing center consultants encountered as they were prepared to work with students who are placed into developmental education courses. Major findings of this study are that both pre-semester training sessions as well as formal, regularly-scheduled training sessions throughout the semester were important for the participants to feel engaged and prepared to teach or tutor students. Furthermore, coursework, peers, supervisors, experiences in the classroom, and their multiple roles were all indirect and direct influences that ultimately shaped how participating TAs and writing center tutors developed as instructors and tutors. The conclusions of this study are that while being prepared to teach or tutor, TAs and writing center tutors are impacted by a wide variety of influences that ultimately determine how they perceive and approach students and, as such, faculty of TAs or writing center tutors should be aware of the impact they have. Also, developmental education stakeholders as well as policy makers should apply the findings from this study to improve training for TAs and tutors as well as to improve professional development for developmental educators.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Developmental education has been present and wide spread in America since the earliest days of higher education (Arendale, 2002; Boylan & White, 1994). In that time, the responsibility of preparing so-called *underprepared* students has ranged from private tutors (Arendale, 2002; Boylan & White, 1994) to preparatory academy professionals (Arendale, 2005; Boylan & White, 1994; Wyatt, 2003) and even to full-time faculty with terminal degrees (Paulson et al., 2012). Currently, part-time instructors and graduate students who work as teaching assistants (TAs) and tutors have a major role in the delivery of developmental education. While part-time instructors generally receive some form of training and preparation upon entering the classroom (Eney & Davidson, 2014), the current model often charges the least experienced with providing meaningful learning experiences for the least prepared students. What is lacking in the literature is a discussion of the preparation and experiences of graduate students who are charged with teaching developmental education coursework.

Context of Research

In Texas, developmental education professionals have come to the forefront; specifically, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has turned its attention to instructor preparation, which is evident in the 2012-2017 Statewide Developmental Education Plan. This plan consists of provisions directed toward both students and instructors. For students, provisions include using a new placement exam, using holistic advising, creating methods to accelerate instruction, mainstreaming, and exploring non-course competency-based options. For instructors, the THECB included a

goal to “increase the preparedness of developmental educators” through professional development (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2012, p. 12).

As of 2012, developmental educators in Texas were generally supportive of a professional development-based credential to teach in the field (Paulson et al., 2012). Currently, instructors of developmental education courses require no professional development and their preparation ranges from Bachelor’s degree holders to those with PhDs and EdDs. Paulson and colleagues (2012) surveyed, interviewed, and conducted focus groups with developmental educators in Texas; less than 60% of respondents were full-time employees, and fewer than one in four worked at a university. Although this is the most recent and most comprehensive study of developmental educators in Texas, the result was an incomplete view of developmental education instructors at four-year universities and, namely, an incomplete view of the involvement of graduate students who work with students placed into developmental education courses, making this report consistent with the general lack of information about the preparation of developmental education professionals.

Another important consideration when considering higher education in Texas is Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). Considering Texas’ most abundant type of Minority Serving Institution is important for three main reasons. First, students who identify as Hispanic enroll in developmental education at a disproportionately high rate (Parker, 2012). Second, as of 2014, Texas was home to 68 community colleges and universities designated as HSIs by the U.S. Department of Education. Texas’ HSIs account for more than 18% of all HSIs in the country making Texas second only to California for the most HSIs (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, 2014a).

The third reason it is important to study HSIs in Texas is because the THECB's (2000) *Closing the Gaps* initiative detailed goals to increase the rate of participation for Hispanics. By better understanding the delivery of developmental education at HSIs, I will be able to contribute to the general understanding of the rate of participation and retention for these populations.

Research on graduate students who work with students placed into developmental education is important in the national scope as well because developmental education and instructor preparation are two of the biggest concerns for administrators of HSIs (de los Santos & Cuamea, 2010; de los Santos & de los Santos, 2003). When surveying the presidents, chancellors, and CEOs of HSIs, de los Santos and de los Santos (2003) found two of the five biggest concerns for administrators were finding quality faculty and the preparation of students for college-level work. These concerns were echoed in a follow up study where de los Santos and Cuamea (2010) found student preparedness, student retention and success, and finding and retaining quality faculty members were three of the five biggest concerns for administrators. These two studies illustrate the timeliness and need for research focused on developmental education and instructor preparation at HSIs.

Problem Statement

The experiences of graduate students who teach and tutor students placed in developmental education coursework are generally under-researched. Furthermore, all research taking place at Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) is limited. This study explored the preparation of graduate students at HSIs who teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses. This study also

examined indirect and direct influences on TAs and writing center tutors as they were prepared to work with students who are placed into developmental education.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this qualitative multi-site case study was to understand the experiences of graduate students as they are prepared to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses at HSIs in Texas.

Understanding the experiences of TAs and writing center tutors is important because their preparation and education has the potential to directly influence the experiences of the students placed into developmental education courses. This study will make important contributions to the developmental education field generally and developmental literacy specifically because a current gap in the literature exists, as related empirical studies on this topic are unavailable. Furthermore, this study responded to the call for a better understanding and improvement of developmental education, HSIs, and instructor preparation on both the state and national level. Finally, understanding this population is important because many of the people who serve as TAs and tutors now will become the developmental education professionals of the future and as such, their preparatory experiences are the start of their academic becoming.

Research Questions

1. What are the preparatory experiences of graduate TAs and writing center tutors at HSIs who are assigned to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses?

2. What are indirect and direct influences on graduate TAs and writing center tutors as they are prepared to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses at HSIs?

Operational Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the following terms are defined as they are listed below.

Direct influences - Influences that affect or help to shape the experiences of participating TAs and graduate writing center tutors that are the result of explicit direction, instruction, or collaboration are direct influences.

Formal preparation - Preparation that is mandated and completed in alignment with the established rules and expectations of a participant's department are formal preparation.

Graduate TAs and writing center tutors who are assigned to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses - The TAs and writing center tutors participating in this study worked directly with students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses. I intentionally use passive voice ("who are assigned") to exemplify the powerlessness and lack of agency generally held by this group of students.

Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) - Two common definitions of HSIs exists (Laden, 2004). The first was created by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), which was founded in 1986 as an advocacy organization for Hispanic college students (Galdeano, Flores, & Moder, 2012; Laden, 2001). HACU defines HSIs as institutions where 25% of their total enrollment of either undergraduates

or graduate students is Hispanic (Galdeano et al., 2012; Laden, 2004). Conversely, the U.S. Department of Education defines HSIs as institutions enrolled 25% or more of full-time Hispanic students. Additionally, at least half of the Hispanic students enrolled must be considered in financial need, through measures such as Pell Grant requirements (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008). For the purposes of this study, all discussion of HSIs will refer to the federal designation.

Indirect influence - Contrary to *direct influences*, indirect influences are implicit or hidden messages that affect or help to shape the experiences of TAs and graduate writing center tutors.

Informal preparation - Contrary to *formal preparation*, informal preparation includes the preparatory experiences of TAs and graduate writing center tutors that occurs outside of officially scheduled and mandated formal preparation.

Students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses - State-mandated assessment scores are the determining element for student placement into developmental education-level courses. Parallel to *graduate TAs and writing center tutors who are assigned to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses*, I intentionally use the passive voice in describing this group of students. As placement is determined by assessment scores, few students elect to enroll in these courses and instead, they are required to do so by state and institutional policies. As such, similar to the graduate TAs and writing center tutors discussed above, powerlessness and a lack of agency is commonplace within this group of students.

Theoretical Framework

I approached this study from a transformative paradigm perspective, which

explicitly addresses issues surrounding power and social justice (Mertens, 2015) in an attempt to make visible the otherwise invisible forms of oppression (Mertens, 2009). Common characteristics of the transformative paradigm are (a) it situates the central focus of research on traditionally marginalized groups, which includes the experiences of those who have been oppressed as well as those who are oppressing; (b) it explores asymmetrical power relationships; (c) it examines the ways political and social action can be influenced by research (Mertens, 2009; 2015).

Understanding higher education through this paradigm is especially important because as Bailey (2010) argued, “the institutionalized position of all academic disciplines... saturates the teaching enterprise with power issues that affect its resources, mission, and expression” (p. 141). In terms of developmental education, institutionalized positionality manifests as developmental reading and developmental writing courses housed in different departments and, often times, with different goals, requirements, and discourses. The result is a disconnected literacy experience for students. Graff (1987) discusses the division resulting from these silos in terms of a lack of community and conversation.

One of the oddest things about the university is that it calls itself a community of scholars yet organizes its curriculum in a way that conceals the links of the community from those who are not already aware of them. The courses being given at any moment on a campus represent any number of rich potential conversations within and across disciplines. But since students experience these conversations only as a series of monologues, the conversations become actual only for the minority who can reconstruct them on their own. (p. 106)

The purpose of using this research paradigm is to identify and better understand the ways in which TAs, writing center consultants, and students placed in developmental education-level reading and writing coursework must handle the additional challenge of

managing and navigating the power structures as the result of the position of developmental education as a discipline: TAs and writing center tutors as oft undervalued, overworked graduate students (Austin, 2002; Bailey, 2010; Buehler & Marcum, 2007; Sales, et al., 2007; Smith, 1994; Wise, 2011) and students placed in developmental education coursework who must also manage a centuries-long history of institutional resistance to their very existence in higher education (Casazza, 1999; Casazza & Silverman, 1996; Lucas, 1996; Wyatt, 2003), all while also managing the diverse nature of literacy at most institutions.

To compound the difficulty of managing the power structures within higher education, the lack of understanding, or sometimes blatant ignorance of students' backgrounds creates an academic community in which individual accomplishments or failures are perceived to be the result of student effort alone. Ladson-Billings (2006) argues,

Our supreme reliance on individuals means that we look at students as individually responsible for their success in school. We lack complex understandings of how individual, family, community, school, and societal factors interact to create school failure for some students. (p. 106)

The result is an educational environment where there is little room for the uneducated or underprepared. This type of environment conflicts with the purpose of education, which is to help irradiate inequalities, not perpetuate them (Nieto, 1999). All students from the developmental education level to graduate students who are also instructors are expected to seamlessly function within the power structures of the academy, oftentimes without ever being explicitly told how to behave or what tools will help them to be successful. In the end, oppression is the outcome for students who are unable to learn the implicit knowledge and discourses of the academy and perform in the ways that are expected but

never explicitly explained. While research framed within the transformative paradigm cannot free the oppressed, transformative researchers seek to expose the secrets and power structures to support the powerless in helping them to locate themselves in the hegemony.

Understanding power structures within the academy is important; however, in terms of HSIs, having a clear understanding of the interaction of education and educational structures with the multitudes of individual student identities and values at these institutions is an inherent and unique charge of HSIs. As Laden (2004) argued,

At a minimum, these HSIs are establishing themselves as de facto multicultural institutions by virtue of who attends them. As such, they call even more for leadership recognition of and critical pedagogical approaches that are sensitive to diverse cultures and identities with and across these institutions. (p. 191)

Considering this argument, the unique responsibilities leaders of institutions designated as places serving minority populations are inherently aligned with the transformative paradigm. Identifying and critically interrogating the ways in which classes are taught and how students learn is not the normal pattern within higher education. Instead, this suggestion to revise the common hegemonic structure of higher education to focus instead on the individual needs of students requires a careful examination of the status quo, which is an important tenet of the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2007a; 2007b, 2009).

To conduct research with findings and implications that align with the transformative paradigm, which includes prioritizing social justice, I also approach the research design, data collection, and analysis from a constructivist approach (Creswell, 2013). In all aspects of this project, I approach knowledge as something that is socially and individually constructed. As such, although the participants in the study may have

had similar— and often shared— experiences, there were multiple constructions and understandings of those experiences. By merging the transformative and constructivist paradigms, my research focuses on the power of the voices of one traditionally marginalized group, TAs and writing center consultants, to help tell the story of other traditionally marginalized groups, students attending HSIs and students placed in developmental education with the goal of adding to the existing knowledge about these marginalized groups to contribute to the academic conversation and ultimately, initiate changes to better support and provide for all students in higher education.

History of Developmental Education in Higher Education

To remain within the framework of the transformative paradigm, the first step to answering my research questions is to understand the history of higher education and the existence of TAs, tutors, developmental education, and HSIs within that context.

Agreeing with the importance and influence of history, Armstrong, Stahl, and Boylan (2014) argue,

In order to navigate the current antidevelopmental education politics and stay on course for the future, college reading professionals need to recognize that our collective teaching efforts and our current research have all stemmed from a long-standing, rich history. (p.iii-iv)

The American university is touted as the “most significant creation of the second millennium” (Rhodes, 2001, p. xi). Based largely in the European tradition of Oxford and Cambridge (Hoeveler, 2002; Rhodes, 2001; Thelin, 2004), Harvard’s establishment in 1636 began the United States’ journey in higher education (Arendale, 2002; Boylan & White, 1994). From the beginning, however, the American university’s clumsy start differed from the entities they were created to emulate. Harvard and other early universities were intended to educate clergy and perpetuate the European culture, but

things did not turn out as planned. Although only the most elite were allowed to participate in higher education in what was still only a colony, it turned out elite status was not enough to ensure incoming students were prepared to be successful students, which was at this time determined by students' control of Latin (Casazza & Silverman, 1996). To keep the doors of these still-young universities open, students' lack of a control of Latin that made the underprepared was overlooked as long as tuition and fees were paid. In exchange, tutoring services were provided to help students master Latin, the language used for all lectures and textbooks at that time (Arendale, 2002; Boylan & White, 1994).

In the dawn of America, developmental education was created alongside higher education to support the soon-to-be country's most elite citizens. This is contrary to the often heard "antidevelopmental education politics" (Armstrong, Stahl, & Boylan, 2014, p. iv), which paints the picture of too many programs providing welfare-like services to too many students who just do not deserve to be in college. This conflict over the value of developmental education has been seen through the history of higher education in this country. Mertens (2007a; 2007b) argued realities are socially constructed by those in positions of power. For developmental education, the reality of its very existence has been interpreted by some as a savior to higher education by allowing more students to attend colleges and universities while also often being interpreted as acting as a detriment by lowering the standards of the academy by others.

Preparing the Underprepared

Stahl and King (2009) argued that "a professional field does not operate in a vacuum" (p. 13). The influence of social movements on higher education was evident in

the increased support given to the underprepared learner in the time of Jacksonian Democracy, popular from 1824 to 1848. In the height of the popularity of Jacksonian Democracy—the social construct that governments ought to prioritize how best to serve the common man—higher education was considered part of the government services; as a result, a host of universities were established, and, for the first time, institutions considered how to support students without access to private tutors (Arendale, 2002; Boylan & White, 1994). In antebellum America, certain underprepared learners were not a burden to the system, but rather, an important part of the population deserving of support.

Early in the 19th century, tutoring the college-going elite became commonplace to compensate for a lack of formal secondary schools (Arendale, 2002; Wyatt, 2003). This lack of secondary schools was especially problematic in the frontier of the country that is now considered the Midwest (Wyatt, 2003). In response, in 1849 the University of Wisconsin established the nation's first preparatory academy to support college-going students who lacked a quality secondary education and to prepare them for the demands of the university (Arendale, 2005; Boylan & White, 1994; Wyatt, 2003). Once again, serving underprepared students availed universities a source of revenue as well as a pool of applicants (Boylan & White, 1994; Casazza & Silverman, 1996; Soliday, 2002). By 1889, nearly 400 similar independent and university-affiliated programs were created nationwide, which is considered one of the first national pushes to serve underprepared learners (Wyatt, 2003).

Early Federal Interventions

In one of the first acts of federal intervention in higher education, the Morrill Act

of 1862 made the creation of new colleges and universities possible through federal land grants and created what is now commonly known as land grant institutions. The result was not only more colleges and universities but also more opportunity to access higher education for Americans who were not white, male, and property owners (Arendale, 2002; Boylan & White, 1994; Casazza & Silverman, 1996; Rhodes, 2001; Thelin, 2004). Most notably was Cornell University, which was awarded a land grant and opened in 1868 with the mission of educating all people in all subjects (Thelin, 2004). Radical for the time, “all people” included women and minorities (Rhodes, 2001; Thelin, 2004). Cornell University and other land grant institutions brought more diversity to universities but also more academically underprepared students who did not have access to preparatory academies (Arendale, 2002; Boylan & White, 1994), which led to the transition of preparatory academies to structured remedial courses (Arendale, 2002; Arendale, 2005; Casazza, 1999; Casazza & Silverman, 1996; Wyatt, 2003). With the passage of the Morrill Act, underprepared and traditionally underserved learners were not only deemed deserving of the opportunity to participate in higher education but also deserving of the support of federal monies to do so. This was extraordinary because in combination with the Jacksonian Democracy movement, the Morrill Act of 1862 began the transition of higher education from being a privilege to being a right for Americans.

The German approach to higher education in which scholarship and research is the prioritized purpose of the university was first realized in America in 1876 with the establishment of a university dedicated to both: Johns Hopkins University (Rhodes, 2001; Thelin, 2004). Less than a decade after Johns Hopkins University was established, the Hatch Act of 1887, which delegated federal monies to support research at colleges and

universities was signed. By the end of the 19th century, the American university as it is known today was born complete with learning communities, liberal arts and sciences colleges, graduate schools, and public service programs, all while prioritizing teaching and research (Rhodes, 2001). As post-Civil War enrollment boomed, for the first time, students and those closely involved with higher education voiced concerns about the teaching preparation of professors. The response for the next 100 years from university administrators was very simply “a good man will learn to teach by teaching” (Pytlik, 2002, p. 4). This orientation toward university-level instructor preparation programs held by powerful university administrators is what helped created the sometimes complete lack of instructor preparation seen into the following century.

In a third major intervention by the federal government, the Morrill Act of 1890 made higher education available for two groups who had previously not been granted complete access: women and freed slaves (Arendale, 2002; Boylan & White, 1994; Casazza & Silverman, 1996). In addition to having been granted access by the combined efforts of the writers and supporters of the Morrill Act of 1890 and the American Missionary Society, African Americans were also offered academic support. Some of these supports had not yet been seen in higher education. For example, bridge programs and remedial courses were used in addition to a program in which students from Yale tutored students at predominately Black universities (Casazza & Silverman, 1996). According to Boylan and White (1994), although the interventions at these universities have gone generally under researched, they were so profound that “some of the most amazing feats of developmental education were accomplished at historically black universities in the United States” (p. 7).

In 1892, the National Education Association assembled the Committee of Ten, consisting of college presidents, to research the curriculum at both secondary and postsecondary institutions, which resulted in a report suggesting a more structured secondary school curriculum to better prepare students for the academic demands of college (Casazza & Silverman, 1996). Partially in response to college presidents attempting to standardize secondary schools, an education system beyond their jurisdiction, the National Council of Teachers of English was formed in 1911 in attempt to regain control of high school curriculum choices (Berlin, 1987). While this was a tumultuous time for high school English teachers, the Committee of Ten meetings were historic because they were some of the first concerted efforts to focus on a pipeline-like model in which the matriculation from high school to college was recognized as a time to ensure students' preparation for higher education. This focus on students' preparation was timely. By 1898, remedial education spanned the country from Harvard to the west coast when the University of California, Berkeley created its first basic writing course (Wyatt, 2003). Also, the beginnings of what would become writing centers were born at this time. As early as 1904, there are reported instances of the laboratory method in which students wrote and shared their writing with their peers and with their instructors in a one-to-one conference. By 1910, the successes of the laboratory method made it to the pages of *English Journal* (Carino, 1995). At this time, the laboratory method was not yet conceived of as a place, as writing centers are thought of today, but rather, a method of writing instruction (Boquet, 1999). The laboratory method of focused instruction on writing, and other remedial courses of this time were often based on the medical model; students' deficits were diagnosed and education professionals identified a remedy to

solve those deficits. The laboratory method is the model that would dominate the field for approximately the next 100 years (Arendale, 2005; Casazza, 1999).

Also at this time, teaching writing was starting to become legitimized in the eyes of the academy as composition courses at American universities were taking shape. Not unlike modern composition courses, graduate students were for the first time involved in the grading of composition students' weekly themes. The demand for quality composition instructors became so high at some institutions that, around the turn of the 20th century, graduate students began formal training not only to grade papers but also hold classes of their own in order to relieve the already overburdened faculty members. One such course, English 67, was taught at Harvard and included instruction on writing and writing pedagogy (Pytlik, 2002). Although America has a long history of effective TA preparation programs (Park, 2004), English departments have been historically slow to offer preparation in both writing and literature pedagogy (Schilb, 2001). Furthermore, research on instruction for TAs on reaching and teaching students placed into developmental education writing courses is not available.

Emergent Systems of Access and Support

In addition to subject-specific remedial courses, supports beyond disciplinary instruction in a traditional classroom emerged. In 1934, the laboratory method of supporting student writing was transformed when the then-University of Iowa placed the lab into a place independent of the classroom. Stand-alone labs offering one-on-one support and group tutoring became increasingly more standard on college campuses by the 1940s. These labs that what would become known as writing centers offered support for all levels of writers, not just underprepared students (Carino, 1995). Another support

that differed from the traditional disciplinary-focused instruction is what would become known as “how-to-study” courses became popular in the early 20th century (Arendale, 2002; Casazza & Silverman, 1996; Wyatt, 2003). These courses changed the focus of remedial education from reading, writing, and math exclusively to the more general skills required for postsecondary success such as note taking, test-taking skills, and study reading. How-to-study courses were so popular that by 1909, approximately 350 colleges offered a version of the class (Casazza & Silverman, 1996).

Similar to the how-to-study courses, in 1938 an instructor at Harvard changed the name of the remedial reading course to “The Reading Course,” and the result was an explosion of enrollment, which even included graduate students interested in bettering their reading skills (Arendale, 2002; Casazza, 1999; Wyatt, 2003). By changing the title, students were able to access a reading support course without the stigma of being a remedial student. Together with the advent of the writing center and how-to-study courses, these interventions opened the availability of remedial education to considerably more students than before and foreshadowed the future mission of developmental education in which all students at all skill levels are reached and supported. The transition to developmental education as holistic development for students at all skill levels began at this time. While The Reading Course generated enrollment from all types of students (Arendale, 2002; Casazza, 1999; Wyatt, 2003), many writing center administrators continue to struggle to show how their services of support could be seen as intended for more than underprepared learners (Fisher & Harris, 2001; Grimm, 1996).

Possibly the greatest instance of opening access to higher education came with the passage of the GI Bill of Rights in 1944 (Casazza, 1999; Wyatt, 2003). In what became a

surprise to policy makers as well as university and community college administrators, so many veterans returning from World War II took advantage of their benefits that by 1946, more than one million veterans were enrolled in postsecondary education (Pytlík, 2002; Wyatt, 2003). Analogous to the elite who entered Harvard in the university's early decades, these students were granted access and funding to higher education, but that did not mean they were academically prepared and many of them required both academic and affective support to be successful in the classroom. With the influx of these unique and underprepared students came more and more supports, such as tutoring and counseling centers, that were first offered to veterans and today serve all students (Casazza, 1999). Writing centers became the home of Armed Forces English, a competency-based program in which officers could complete up to two years of composition coursework in two semesters. When the need for quickly educating officers was reduced with the end of the war, the writing centers stayed and continued to serve as a *place* for just-in-time intervention for writers (Carino, 1995). It is notable that in the 1940s, the writing center became most recognizable as a place, not an instructional approach, as it had previously been considered (Boquet, 1999). At that time, universities experienced an influx of students in writing courses and an influx of graduate students teaching them. However, generally speaking, the only preparation or support available for TAs at that time was a syllabus and a book to accompany their teaching assignments (Pytlík, 2002).

The Great American Higher Education Experiment

The Space Race of the late 1950s entered both America and higher education into an international competition of intellect and education. Just one year after Sputnik's success, the National Defense of Education Act was passed in 1958 to permit federal

money for fellowships, research grants, and loans for students to improve both opportunity to higher education as well as the quality of knowledge and research coming from America's higher education system (Wyatt, 2003). As education research is often impacted by the trends outside of the field, a behaviorist theory dominated reading research in the 1950s and into the 1960s (Alexander & Fox, 2004). This focus on the behaviorist theory of learning resulted in an experiment-based movement in which reading improvement was thought to be a result of repeated exposure to a controlled environment. The impact on education was an even more enhanced medical model where it was believed the deficiencies of students could be fixed with the appropriate cure: remedial coursework (Alexander & Fox, 2004). Not surprisingly, writing centers, which did not operate in a way consistent with behaviorism were all but absent from literature from 1955 to 1966 (Carino, 1995). Consistent with the experiment-based movement, university professors in the 1950s reserved the right to send any student back to the English department for more remediation should his or her writing be deemed too weak (Soliday, 2002).

The Civil Rights movement culminating in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 had a significant effect on both higher education and remedial education (Arendale, 2002; Arendale, 2005; Casazza & Silverman, 1996; Wyatt, 2003). The first movement away from the medical model of remedial education occurred during this time when the new focus was helping minority students who had just gained more access to higher education to compensate for their often segregated, generally inadequate public school experiences (Arendale, 2002; Arendale, 2005; Casazza & Silverman, 1996). As a result, remedial education became known as compensatory

education, which focused on the student as well as the surrounding academic and economic environments, which is consistent with the public health model (Arendale, 2005). This movement once again was supported by the reading research at the time that focused on language acquisition and comprehension (Pearson & Stephens, 1992). Noam Chomsky (1957; 1965) rejected the behaviorist theories that previously dominated the field and instead, argued for a nativist view of language acquisition. According to Chomsky's theories, the incredible complexity of language in conjunction with the fact children learn the language of the environment within which they live through meaningful use, not explicit instruction, must mean language acquisition and comprehension is an innate, natural process (Alexander & Fox, 2004; Pearson & Stephens, 1992). Furthermore, Chomsky's arguments meant the process of language development is not one that can be controlled or determined by repeated exposure to a controlled environment, as the behaviorists argued (Alexander & Fox, 2004). By the end of the 1960s, to better prepare TAs to address the diverse needs of new populations of students, modern TA preparation techniques were developed. Universities employed then-innovative ways to prepare TAs to teach composition courses, which included special courses, mentoring programs, and, in some instances, tenured faculty were given course releases to work specifically with TAs to help develop their teaching skills. The graduate courses incorporated advanced grammar and literature instruction as well as how to teach and grade students' grammar and literature analyses. Mentoring programs were included as either standalone programs or attached to the graduate courses. In these programs, faculty mentors supported TAs through holding regular meetings with TAs, observing TAs' classes, and discussing grading techniques (Pytlik, 2002).

Open Enrollment Movement

Also important and influential to developmental education in the 1960s were the social and political changes leading to the open enrollment movement of the 1970s (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010). Though established for “working-class Jewish boys of Eastern European heritage” (Soliday, 2002, p. 46), City College is now renowned as the birthplace of both the open enrollment movement as well as basic writing (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010). In addition to the enrollment boom resulting from returning veterans taking advantage of the benefits of the GI Bill, the demand for equal education opportunity changed institutions of higher education from exclusive, elite entities to sites of learning for everyone; in many ways, developmental education was central to that transition (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010; Soliday, 2002). As Soliday (2002) argued, “though remediation is always with us, it is never present in quite the same ways; it is organized differently to mediate the political needs of institutions at specific moments and places” (p. 67). Through the 1960s and 70s, remediation served the political needs of open enrollment institutions by availing educational opportunity to those previously disenfranchised from higher education. While providing the opportunity to higher education may have improved the lives of students, institutions also benefited through increased enrollment (Soliday, 2002).

One of the most influential educators of the open enrollment movement was Mina Shaughnessy (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010; Soliday, 2002). Hired as a basic writing instructor at City College in 1967, Shaughnessy became the supervisor of the basic writing program three years later (Soliday, 2002). As an instructor and supervisor of the basic writing program, Shaughnessy made significant changes to the system of

remediation at City College. In addition to capping classes at only 15 students, she also helped to increase the size and intensity of the program through hiring as many as 40 instructors at a time and then providing them with the training to give their students the best opportunity for success (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010). Shaughnessy guided instructors to use evidence-based approaches to help them make decisions about their teaching, such as researching their courses, studying the larger academic demands of students including the subsequent courses in which basic writers could enroll, and studying each students' writing to identify patterns in errors to help provide quality, personalized instructional approaches (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010). Shaughnessy herself argued that although she and many of her writing instructor colleagues had spent time teaching writing to traditional students, few instructors were actually taught how to teach writing (Shaughnessy, 1998). As such, Shaughnessy argued the student failures, often resulting from a lack of training, ought not to be considered the result of ill-prepared students, but rather, the responsibility of ill-prepared instructors (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010).

In addition to growing the basic writing program at City College, Shaughnessy also worked to expand both the definition and purpose of basic writing via open admissions (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010; Shaughnessy, 1973; Soliday, 2002). As Shaughnessy herself argued, "Open Admissions is forcing the real question—not how many people society is willing to salvage, but how much this society is willing to pay to salvage itself" (p. 404). In short, she considered both developmental education as well as open admissions as the start, not the end point, for students. As Soliday (2002) described it, "Shaughnessy's concern was to promote access to the liberal arts and to contest the barriers between remediation and traditional study" (p. 68). The goal was not getting

students into the basic writing course, but rather, getting students through the basic writing course to the ultimate goal of helping them to achieve cultural capital, professional knowledge, and ultimately, upward mobility (Soliday, 2002). As Shaughnessy (1977) explained, “Here the teacher, confronted by what at first appears to be a hopeless tangle of errors and inadequacies, must learn to see below the surface of these failures the intelligence and linguistic aptitudes of his students” (p. 292). Through her work, Shaughnessy was able to reconstruct basic writing and the purpose and value of open admissions, however, ultimately, the focus on error did not change (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010), the bureaucratic fight for access continued long after her death in 1978 (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010; Soliday, 2002).

Theory Informing Developmental Education

Through the 1970s and 1980s, developmental education, as it was understood in the first decades of the 21st century, began taking shape. In those decades, The then-Western College Reading Association, which would become the College Reading and Learning Association, had been publishing its newsletter for 3 years (College Reading and Learning Association, 2015), *The Writing Lab Newsletter* began in 1977, the *Journal of Basic Writing* and *WPA: Writing Program Administrator* followed in 1979, and *The Writing Center Journal* was created in 1980 (Pemberton & Kinkead, 2003). Access to postsecondary education was seen as a right, not a privilege for the elite (Casazza, 1999; Casazza & Silverman, 1996). Although higher education was still dominated by white males through the 1970s and 1980s, more and more non-traditionally aged students, women, minorities, English language learners, and first generation students were coming to college (Casazza, 1999; Casazza & Silverman, 1996), which was partially a result of

the open admissions movement (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010). Complementing the newly *en vogue* student-centered approach to instruction (Casazza & Silverman, 1996) was the cognitive psychology approach to reading research (Alexander & Fox, 2004; Pearson & Stephenson, 1992). With these theories there was a focus on students as individuals with complex and differing minds. Most notably, was schema theory, the idea that readers' background knowledge and experiences help them to construct meaning when reading (Alexander & Fox, 2004). The cognitive psychology approach was also evident in the implementation of the Brooklyn College Institute that began in 1980. Run by Ken Bruffee, the institute focused on why peer tutoring and collaboration was so valuable and how to apply those theories to writing centers (Bruffee, 1978; Trimbur, 2008).

Simultaneously, in both the writing center and the writing classroom, the student centered-approach was realized through the process movement, whereby the final writing product became secondary to the process by which the student took to create it (Carino, 1996; Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010). The process movement was also consistent with a different but important new focus, identifying who was a basic writer, how they could be identified, and ultimately, how instructors could reach those students. At many community colleges and universities, identifying who designated as a basic writer was, for the first time, effected through standardized testing (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010).

Researchers and theorists in the 1990s pushed cognitive psychology and the idea of the individual another step forward, which inspired socioculturalism (Alexander & Fox, 2004; Pearson & Stephens, 1992). As a result of this new sociocultural approach, for the first time ever, dialects were valued and seen as not bad but rather a different method of expressing the same language (Pearson & Stephens, 1992). Writing centers

became places, in theory, “where all students are welcome and are treated, regardless of ability, as writers with something to say” (Carino, 1995, p. 109). This invitation to all students was a method of distancing the writing center from being perceived as a place exclusively intended to serve the underprepared students for which they were initially created (Grimm, 1996). The transition to the writing center as a place only for underprepared learners to simply a place for writers made for a contentious and nuanced history and lead writing center administrators to carefully explain their position as a place for all writers (Fischer & Harris, 2001).

Aligned with a new interest in the writer as an individual, the interest and support of literacy narratives or “autobiographical accounts of education development and watershed moments in the acquisition of language and literacy” became a major focus of writing professionals, starting with Mike Rose’s autobiography, *Lives on the Boundary: A Moving Account of the Struggles and Achievements of America’s Educational Underclass* (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010, p. 28). Additionally, the idea of multiple knowledges was also supported. Most notably, Shirley Brice Heath’s (1983) exploration of school and home knowledge legitimized students’ experiences beyond the classroom (Alexander & Fox, 2004; Pearson & Stephens, 1992). During this time, developmental education advanced to a holistic approach to student development (Arendale, 2002; Arendale, 2005; Casazza, 1999; Casazza & Silverman, 1996). In the place of the medical or public health models was the learner-centered focus (Arendale, 2002; Alexander & Fox, 2004) on both cognitive and affective domains (Arendale, 2005) with the underlying principle that everyone can learn (Arendale, 2002; Arendale, 2005; Casazza, 1999;

Casazza & Silverman, 1996). Additionally, serving students of color became a priority included in the goal of serving all students.

The Creation of the Hispanic Serving Institution Designation

Founded in 1986, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) was established as an advocacy membership organization of colleges and universities with large populations of Hispanic students (Galdeano et al., 2012; Laden, 2001; 2004). By the end of their first year, HACU was composed of 18 colleges and universities and reached out to business owners and government agencies to work together to raise awareness of the importance of educating Hispanics (Galdeano et al., 2012; Laden, 2001). In 1988, HACU formally began participating in informing policy in hopes of creating legislation supportive of educational equity. A year later, HACU celebrated sponsoring two bills supporting Hispanic students but neither made it out of committee (Galdeano et al., 2012). In 1992, the work of HACU was rewarded with the inclusion of a federal designation of HSIs in the amendments to the 1965 Higher Education Act. (Galdeano et al., 2012; Laden, 2004). Although no funds were attached to the designation until 1995, the federal recognition of HSIs put Hispanic students and their needs on the national stage.

Since 1992, the definitions of HSIs have changed, as well as the amount of funding available for designated schools. Whereas originally designated for Title III funding, the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 included the move to Title V funding for HSIs. This move came with more regulations about what schools could qualify for the designation, but it also provided more funding for those who met the new definition of HSI (Galdeano et al., 2012; Laden, 2001; 2004). Although HACU

achieved their goal of having more attention paid to Hispanic students and their needs, in many ways, there is more to achieve. For example, HSIs had a specific federal funding stream and federal designation since 1995; however, the first national report focusing specifically on HSIs was not published until 2002 (Laden, 2004). Additionally, although HSIs now have access to Title V funds, they are still among the most federally underfunded institutions (Galdeano et al., 2012). This is especially noteworthy considering the number of students attending HSIs. By 2001, 203 colleges and universities in the U.S. and Puerto Rico were designated HSIs by HACU (Laden, 2001), and by the fall 2012 semester, there were 370 HSIs (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, 2014a) enrolling more than 1.5 million Hispanics, which account for 57.1% of all Hispanics in higher education (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, 2014b).

The Developmental Education Movement

Hispanics are among the short list of populations most likely to enroll in developmental education courses (Parker, 2012), which means developmental education at HSIs demands attention. However, the developmental education movement spans far beyond Hispanics and HSIs and includes consideration of balancing access and rigor. Lucas (1996) argued allowing more accessibility to higher education makes it more democratic, and the result is less academic excellence. Conversely, a less democratic, and, thereby, more selective education system produces more excellence. Very simply, elite institutions cannot maintain their excellence without also maintaining strict entrance standards. It is at this intersection of accessibility and rigor within the history of higher

education that the existence of developmental education has garnered both popularity and disdain.

Partially a result of this contention, developmental education professionals have expanded their focus to also consider and better understand the continually more diverse student body (Boylan, 2003), and creating and consuming more research to make evidence-based decisions about developmental education programs (Boylan & Bonham, 2007). The focus on research included understanding and improving students' academic motivation (Alexander & Fox, 2004), identifying instructional methods to support student use of hyperlinked and non-linear texts (Alexander & Fox, 2004), and creating innovative approaches to instruction such as linked and paired courses, (Arendale, 2002) new methods of support, and mainstreaming students (Arendale, 2005). Additionally, a focus on innovative approaches to developmental education (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010), often in the reaction to the political debates questioned the purpose and utility of developmental education (Soliday, 2002).

In Texas, in 2000, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board created the Closing the Gaps initiative detailing goals for matriculating more diverse students and successfully graduating them from Texas community colleges and universities and, ultimately, preparing them for placement in higher need positions globally. The College and Career Readiness Standards were created to give public education and higher education instructors a more detailed description of the knowledge and skills required for students to be prepared for college or a successful entry into the job market (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2009). To accomplish these and other goals, the 2012-2017 Statewide Developmental Education Plan was written and included provisions

for, among other things, a new placement exam, the move to holistic advising, accelerated instruction, mainstreaming, and non-course competency-based options (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2012).

Summary of Introduction

The history of developmental education and the ways in which the field has existed within higher education has changed in dramatic and important ways. In some ways, the history of developmental education tells the story of students' differences and how higher education changed and developed in this country. As Soliday (2002) argued, "...remediation helps to mark the historically shifting boundaries between institutions—one hundred years ago, between colleges and secondary schools; in the twenty-first century, between comprehensive and elite liberal arts schools, and between four-year and two-year schools" (p. 67). In other ways, the history of developmental education tells the story of higher education as a place of similarities because so many different kinds of students have received the same label: underprepared. Just as the children of rich, white, land-owners at Harvard were deemed underprepared (Casazza & Silverman, 1996), so too were the first freed slaves to attend historically black universities (Boylan & White, 1994; Casazza & Silverman, 1996) and World War II veterans (Casazza, 1999; Wyatt, 2003). While some disavow their developmental education beginnings, others, like writing center administrators, work hard to communicate their expanded scope of work to include the many different kinds of students who require the same thing, academic support.

In terms of this study, the story of underprepared students and traditionally underserved populations in higher education is an important starting point to

understanding the preparatory experiences of TAs and graduate writing center tutors as they are prepared to teach and tutor underprepared learners at HSIs. Considering the history of higher education is important because it would be difficult to fully understand the current power structures without first understanding how and why many of those structures exist. This is an important consideration and because both TAs and writing centers tutors must manage and navigate many power structures involved with teaching, tutoring, and being a graduate student.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

To better understand how graduate students are prepared to teach and tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses at HSIs, it is important to first understand the general experiences of graduate teaching assistants (TAs), and writing center tutors. As discussed in chapter 1, consideration of the “long-standing, rich history,” of developmental education within higher education is important to understanding the current state of developmental education politics (Armstrong, Stahl, & Boylan, 2014, p. iii-iv). In terms of understanding the current state of TAs’ and writing center tutors’ experiences, attention must first be paid to the larger movements in higher education that helped to create current trends.

The influence of the struggle between universities as places of research and places of teaching is still felt in the higher education community. Whereas in the early days of Cornell and Johns Hopkins Universities, 1868 and 1876, respectively, the focus was on either research or teaching (Lucas, 1996; Rhodes, 2001), the current trend is for universities to operate as both centers for teaching and learning as well as research and scholarship. Through simultaneously prioritizing research and teaching, university communities feel tension in two primary ways. First, autonomy of the professor or instructor is challenged with expectations to do more or less research or instructing than what is preferred (Lucas, 1996) and, second, the accessibility of higher education is impacted depending on the university’s dominating focus on either research or instruction. More specifically, an institution dedicated to teaching is more likely to be generally supportive of students, including those who are underprepared (Rhodes, 2001).

This also has implications for TAs and writing center tutors both while they are in graduate school but also as they prepare to transition into professional roles.

Just as life as a TA is a difficult one (Wilhoit, 2002), so too is the life of a writing center tutor. TAs are often shouldered with the responsibility of teaching large introductory courses (Lucas, 1996), and they also often do so with little preparation or support (Austin, 2002; Buehler & Marcum, 2007; Jensen, 2011; Sales, et al., 2007; Wise, 2011). This lack of preparation and support can lead TAs to have poor attitudes and low expectations of their lives as faculty members (Silverman, 2003). Comparably, writing center tutors experience the struggle of not only supporting peers to improve individual pieces of writing (North, 1982), but also supporting peers to become better writers (Broder, 1990), while cautiously avoiding explicitly telling writing center visitors what to do (Bell, 2001; Bruffee, 1978; Carino, 2003; Devet, 2014a). Writing center tutors also work in an environment with a high turnover rate (DeFeo & Caparas, 2014) and sometimes, with limited training (Bell, 2001; DeFeo & Caparas, 2014).

Socializing into Professional Roles

Both TAs and writing center tutors have the unique opportunity to directly apply their experiences as TAs and writing center tutors to their preparation for future professional positions.

Socialization of Teaching Assistants

The placement into a teaching assistantship is often sold as preparation for future faculty positions; however the experience of a TA often ends up looking different from the professional world of an academic (Austin, 2002; Sales et al., 2007). For example, while some TAs lead lectures, many are restricted to merely grading papers and leading

tutoring and review sessions (Lewis & Menefee, 2009; Park, 2004; Sales et al., 2007). Those who are given teaching positions are often only given the opportunity to teach courses based on departmental need, not on the actual interest of the TA (Austin, 2002). Should a TA be awarded a teaching position aligned with his or her interest, the experience is mitigated with the requirements to also complete class work and research. The resulting experience for TAs is one of a cheap laborer in which “abuse” and “exploitation” frequently occurs (Lucas, 1996, p. 25), especially when appropriate boundaries between TA and faculty members are not clearly established (Dunn-Haley & Zanzucchi, 2012). Ironically, at the end of the two or four years of their graduate program, TAs can leave with a terminal degree and, yet, by some estimates, they are less prepared for the pedagogical challenges of the classroom than an undergraduate student aspiring to become a public school teacher outfitted with a degree from a teacher preparation program (Jensen, 2011). This, arguably, is a result of a history’s-long devaluing of instructor preparation generally. As former Harvard president Derek Bok argued, “The most glaring defect of our graduate programs, however, is how little they do to prepare their students to teach” (2013, p. A36).

While preparation for a professional life in academia is lacking for some graduate students, for TAs, the teaching assistantship as a method of socialization into the academy is fitting because graduate students are exposed to the often prioritization of research (Lucas, 1996; Rhodes, 2001; Thelin, 2004; White & McBeth, 2005; Zinn, Sikorski, & Buskist, 2004), and the culture of their institutions specifically (Austin, 2002; Bardine, 2012; Buehler & Marcum, 2007; Silverman, 2003; Wise 2011), and academia generally (Anderson & Anderson, 2012; Austin, 2002; Zinn et al., 2004). As a result of

the still-present Germanic influence on graduate study where research is prioritized, faculty members are also torn between instruction and research (Rhodes, 2001; Thelin, 2004). This dual dedication often results in 40-plus hour work weeks, and even the best professors are clearly told to put pedagogical concerns second to increasing their publication numbers (Lucas, 1996; White & McBeth, 2005; Zinn et al., 2004).

Challenges and inconsistencies aside, the teaching assistantship serves as many graduate students' first and best introduction to teaching, researching, and the politics within the academy (Zinn et al., 2004). The result is an experience in which, for the better or otherwise, TAs are socialized into the profession (Anderson & Anderson, 2012; Bardine, 2012; Rhodes, 2001; Stancliff & Goggin, 2007; Thelin, 2004), exposed to teaching as a method to improve their research (Sales et al., 2007; Shulman, 2004), but ultimately, repeatedly told teaching is only the secondary professional responsibility of the scholar (Bok, 2013; Wise, 2011; Zinn et al., 2004).

Those traditionally responsible for socializing graduate students generally, and TAs specifically, into academia as a profession are graduate advisors (Anderson & Anderson, 2012; Austin, 2002; Silverman, 2003). In the best case scenario, the TA and his or her advisor will not only share interests and aspirations but also share pedagogical styles, instructional approaches, and research interests with each other, which creates the opportunity for both TA and advisor to learn from one another. Additionally, the graduate advisor is often responsible for exposing their TAs to all aspects of academia such as service, advising, and research (Anderson & Anderson, 2012; Austin, 2002), although other faculty members, such as TA supervisors also assume that role. While advisors are present to act as guides and mentors in a number of functions, these

relationships can do more harm than good when the interests of the TA do not match the interests of the advisor (Silverman, 2003). For example, not all TAs aspire to follow in the footsteps of their advisors and become faculty members. In these instances, a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching assistantships is not appropriate, and other opportunities ought to be sought for these students (Silverman, 2003). These other opportunities are overlooked as departments prioritize departmental needs over individual TA interest (Austin, 2002), which contributes to the TAs' powerlessness. In other instances, TAs find themselves much more interested in pedagogy and becoming better instructors than conducting research and are left without appropriate support from their supervisors and advisors. Powerful graduate advisors can either empower often powerless TAs with valuable experiences or ignore the interests and values of TAs. For TAs interested in becoming quality instructors, the latter is often the norm. Sometimes, this message is sent implicitly, and other times, TAs are explicitly told to spend less time focusing on teaching because other things like research ought to be considered paramount (Austin, 2002; Wise, 2011). Teaching is even belittled as a "personal rather than professional" interest (Wise, 2001, p. 144).

However, advisors are not the only people available to socialize TAs. For example, TAs at HSIs have the unique opportunity of being socialized at "de facto multicultural institutions" (Laden, 2004, p. 191). These institutions expose TAs to the unique environments of diverse institutions. For TAs hoping to enter academia after graduation, the appropriate socialization to a multicultural learning environment could make these TAs more competitive in the job market. Yet lacking in academia, and at HSIs especially, are administrators and faculty members who have a cultural awareness,

genuine concern, and professional ability to address the needs of underprepared students (de los Santos & Cuamea, 2010; Laden, 2001; 2004). In these terms, adequately and appropriately socializing TAs at HSIs to effectively work with underprepared learners becomes more important because the outcome of their preparation will not only better serve their current institution but also the universities and community colleges that will be their future workplaces.

Researchers have found learning community-like approaches to TA development are also helpful to orient graduate students to the instructor role in higher education (Austin, 2002; Bardine, 2012; Buehler & Marcum, 2007; Silverman, 2003; Wise 2011). One example of a formal community for the development of TAs is the Preparing Future Faculty program (Austin, 2002; Buehler & Marcum, 2007; White & McBeth, 2005). These programs are growing in numbers and success by providing both doctoral students as well as new faculty members with a community of support so valuable that many members credit their professional success to their involvement in the Preparing Future Faculty program (DeNeef, 2002). Other formal communities come in the form of TA preparation courses. In a study of two TA preparation programs across two universities, Taggart and Lowry (2011) found 92% of students participating in a TA preparation course defined the casual talk among classmates resulting from the formal class useful or very useful.

In addition to formal communities, TAs often create their own informal support structures as well. In a social network analysis approach, Wise (2011) explored the communication among two TAs and their respective classmates, professors, supervisors, friends, and family members. The findings of this qualitative study included the trend

that although most conversations about teaching were informal and unstructured, this type of communication about teaching was most influential to TAs. In what Wise (2011) called “convenient teaching communications,” TAs sought advice from one and other based on their shared roles and close proximity such as from the result of a shared office space. These conversations ranged from instructional techniques to venting about students to confidence checks.

Other important benefits of TAs being socialized in academia through supportive communities are multifaceted. To create a culture of continuous improvement for future faculty members, socialization can occur through formal instruction pertaining to pedagogy before and continuing during the TA’s appointment (Buehler & Marcum, 2007; Silverman, 2003), feedback and constructive criticism of instruction (Austin, 2002; Buehler & Marcum, 2007; Wilhoit, 2002), and the opportunity to critically reflect on one’s own teaching (Austin, 2002; Stancliff & Goggin, 2007). To take these interventions a step further, supervisors should “violate the sanctity of the classroom” and conduct observations to offer appropriate support and guidance to beginning instructors (Buehler & Marcum, 2007, p. 34; Wilhoit, 2002). Classroom observations are proven successful in K-12 teacher preparation programs although not as welcomed in higher education, despite the history of success (Buehler & Marcum, 2007; Jensen, 2011).

Teaching as a secondary responsibility. Although teaching is a major responsibility of faculty members, graduate programs including those preparing TAs often prioritize research over developing teaching competencies (Austin, 2002; Buehler & Marcum, 2007; White & McBeth, 2005; Zinn et al., 2004). An ironic byproduct of this imbalanced focus is that graduate students who are interested and even those who excel at

teaching are told directly or indirectly their interest in instruction is not likely to help them achieve the professional goal of entering the professoriate (Wise, 2011; Zinn et al., 2004). Awardees of the McKeachie Early Career Award, a distinction for graduate students who exhibit excellent teaching in psychology, report an imbalance with their experiences as graduate students and the skills required to be competitive in the job search after graduation. Although more than half of the awardees between 1980 and 2002 reported teaching as the most influential experiences in their development as aspiring faculty members, another 35% of respondents argued making research a priority because good teaching alone is not enough to secure a position in academia (Zinn et al., 2004).

In 1970 the Carnegie Foundation funded pilot programs to develop a Doctor of Arts (DA) degree to focus on interdisciplinary approaches to research and teaching as scholarship. As of 2005, the DA programs at Idaho State University were still vibrant since their 1971 inception; however, the experiences of the graduates do not always align with the mission of the DA degree. In a 2005 study, just over half of the students who graduated in the program's 34-year history were actually teaching. This number is unexpectedly low for a program focused on creating teacher-scholars. Part of the reason for this result could be the lack of professional identities facilitated by the program. Some graduates report reluctance of including "DA" after their names for fear of the negative effects on their academic careers, and others were told they were denied jobs for lacking a terminal degree (White & McBeth, 2005). The experiences of these DAs could be the result of these graduates holding a largely unknown degree or the result of holding a doctoral-level degree so focused on instruction. Either way, these graduates' concerted

efforts to improve their instructional techniques have gone generally unappreciated by the academic community, clearly communicating the lack of value placed in teaching.

Improving instruction to improve research. An often overlooked benefit of graduate students serving as TAs in a teaching capacity is the ways in which improving instructional techniques can also improve research and writing styles. The link between teaching and research is primarily found in the communication skills required of both (Pelikan, 1992; Sales et al., 2007; Wood & Smith, 2007). Although complex ideas and abstract concepts may be more easily accessible and understood by advanced teacher-researchers, undergraduates who are not as advanced require instructors to reconceptualize ideas so that they are understood (Pelikan, 1992; Sales et al., 2007; Wood & Smith, 2007). As Pelikan (1992) contended,

The scholar can have no better practice for the writing of (academic) books than a continued exposure to undergraduate teaching. For when undergraduates are puzzled, their wrinkled brows show it; when readers are puzzled, they decide not to buy the book. (p. 94)

Although the scholar understands his or her research, without having an accurate concept of how that research is interpreted or misinterpreted or not interpreted at all, the dissemination of that research is likely to suffer. For this and other reasons, the idea of teaching as a scholarship was developed (Shulman, 2004).

To improve both the research and teaching skills of graduate students at Emory University, the On Recent Discoveries by Emory Researchers (ORDER) program was created to develop “teacher-scholars” of selected TAs and postdoctoral students (Sales et al., 2007). In the ORDER program, 10 graduate and postdoctoral students in the sciences applied and were accepted as teacher-scholars, which entitled them to teach their original research in the form of a one-semester undergraduate course. Surveys of seven of the 10

teacher-scholars conducted before and after their semester teaching with the ORDER program showed the experience had a positive impact on these TAs' perceptions of their own research. Not only did the TAs report organizing and presenting their research in the classroom led them to reconceptualize their own research, but they also found teaching to help focus their research as well. As a result of this experience, one teacher-scholar's research was improved so much, the TA even suggested reducing the separation of teaching and researching at the graduate level. The TAs were not the only ones improving their performance, however. The undergraduates enrolled in ORDER courses also showed improved critical thinking skills and an increased interest in the sciences to the degree that their course served as a catalyst for some students to explore their own research interests. These findings are consistent with Pelikan's (1992) assertion that a primary responsibility of professors is to engage undergraduates so successfully the next generation of researchers will be recruited.

Socialization of Writing Center Tutors

Just as graduate students' experiences as TAs introduce them to the world of teaching in the academy, graduate writing center tutors are also socialized into both academia generally, as well as the writing center community specifically. Through serving as a tutor, graduate students are able to practice working with students (Broder, 1990; DeFeo & Caparas, 2014), assessing their needs (Ianetta, Camley, & Quick, 2007) as they develop a better understanding of the writing process (Harris, 2002; Ianetta et al., 2007), as well as how to best provide feedback (Harris, 2002; Ianetta et al., 2007) and reflect on their experiences to improve (Burnham & Jackson, 2002; Wilhoit, 2002). Additionally, both within the writing center and beyond the writing center in their

coursework, tutors learn about and apply the theories and philosophies of the university and discipline (Stancliff & Goggin, 2007). Broder (1990) goes as far as to argue that sufficient writing center tutor training can curtail the inadequate composition instructor preparation that can lead to preventing student success in writing.

As writing center tutors, graduate students encounter student writing from a unique perspective that allows insight into academia. Bruffee (2008) argues this experience is so valuable that, “it can be as important to your college education as your class work and your extra-curricular activities” (p. 5). This insight allows writing center tutors a more intimate look into the inner workings of many classrooms, which is the first step to socialization, understanding the culture. For example, when working with students, writing center tutors are also working directly with professors’ assignments (Clark, 1988). This gives writing center tutors the opportunity to interact with assignments from a different perspective than a student writing a paper. This exposure provides tutors an insider’s look into and experience with many classrooms and professors’ assignments (Devet, 2014a). Writing center tutors are also socialized into academia and writing center communities through working closely with and being supported by their fellow tutors. Through sharing experiences and ideas about practice and pedagogy, writing center tutors offer one another moral support, which ultimately improves their confidence in working with students (Broder, 1990).

Formal Preparation

In addition to being socialized into the academy through experiences that expose the culture of higher education and individual institutions, both TAs and writing center tutors have some sort of formal preparation for their roles. Moreover, the two groups are

similar in that there is not one consistent method of preparation for TAs and writing center tutors and so preparation styles and approaches vary widely.

Teaching Assistant Preparation

It is important to explore the ways in which TAs are prepared because the experiences of TAs, as they are prepared for the demands of the classroom, are not completely understood in the literature (Anderson & Anderson, 2012), and the experiences of TAs are also not accurately understood by their supervisors or the students they teach (Janke & Coldbeck, 2008; Tulane & Beckert, 2011). In a survey of 233 participants—instructors, the instructors' undergraduate students, and the instructors' TAs—55% of instructors thought the undergraduate students in their course took advantage of the knowledge and abilities of the TA while only 27% of students and 24% of TAs agreed. Similarly, 57% of TAs and 74% of undergraduates agreed that the TA was knowledgeable about the course, whereas only 50% of instructors had the same confidence in the TAs' knowledge (Tulane & Beckert, 2011). The role of these TAs is often an integral part of the teaching mission at universities, so it is important to have an accurate understanding of the experiences, knowledge, and abilities of TAs (Komarraju, 2008; Park, 2004).

The formal preparation of TAs is valuable and often their first introduction to teaching. In a study of 210 TAs participating in preparation workshops, Hardré and Burris (2012) found a link between TAs having a positive experience in preparation and the likelihood that these students would seek more learning or professional development related to instruction. The same study, however, found a relationship between voluntary aspects of the preparation program and lower levels of completion. The valuable

conclusions of this study are that effective preparation is important not only for the current and future development of TAs, but, also, preparation as a mandatory requirement produces the best results (Hardré & Burris, 2012).

This is not to say all TA preparation programs look the same. For example, programs vary in length from two three-hour sessions (Taggart & Lowry, 2011) to two-day workshops (Hardré & Burris, 2012) to week-long trainings (Komarraju, 2008), to summer- (Bubbenzer & Westphal-Johnson, 2003) and semester-long courses (Cowan, Traver, & Riddle, 2001; Gaia, Carts, Tatum, & Allen, 2003; McDonough, 2006; Stancliff & Goggin, 2007), as well as combinations of shorter sessions and semester-long courses (Bardine, 2012; Taggart & Lowry, 2011). Additionally, while many programs are exclusively intended for TAs within one department or college, some are interdisciplinary in which students across campuses are prepared together (Bubbenzer & Westphal-Johnson, 2003; Gaia et al., 2003).

Instructional approaches for TA preparation. The instructional approaches used in TA preparation also vary widely. Stancliff and Goggin (2007) define four different approaches to TA preparation courses: (a) functional approach, (b) organic approach, (c) conversion approach, and (d) multiphilosophical approach. It is important to note these four approaches do not exclusively function within a single TA preparation course or workshop. Instead, the process is a messy one that often borrows from all four approaches. First, the functional approach consists primarily of what-to-teach-tomorrow-type lessons (Stancliff & Goggin, 2007). This approach is consistent with Janke and Colbeck's (2008) idea of training versus education in which training is considered ways of doing instead of ways of learning. Examples of the function or training approach are

the nuts-and-bolts of education-type lessons like developing assignments or lecture style (Taggart & Lowry, 2011), practicing creating alternative activities for students following Universal Instructional Design (Ouellett, 2004), participating in technology trainings (Zhu, Groscurth, Bergom, & Herschock, 2010), receiving content-specific instruction (Schilb, 2001), as well as instruction design training (Hardré, 2003, 2005). Instruction design is a systemic way of planning and implementing curriculum to make connections to both content and pedagogical knowledge. Hardré (2003) found that after as little as six hours of Instruction Design training, TAs had statistically significantly higher teaching self-efficacy and competence perceptions in pretest/posttest analysis. Additionally, undergraduate students enrolled in courses with TAs trained in Instructional Design reported a statistically significantly higher evaluation of their teachers than before the training (Hardré, 2003).

Stancliff and Goggin's (2007) second way of preparing TAs is through the organic approach in which TAs' learning happens with experience. In TA preparation courses and workshops, the organic approach is employed when TAs are given the opportunity to either practice teaching a lesson or observe others' instruction (Bardine, 2012; Gaia, Carts, Tatum, & Allen, 2003; Komarraju, 2008). For example, in a summer training program followed by a semester-long course, students are not only expected to practice teaching in small groups, but they are also required to observe their professor instructing in an undergraduate course the following fall semester (Bardine, 2012). Students in similar programs reported appreciating the low-stakes environment of teaching their peers before entering the classroom (Gaia, Carts, Tatum, & Allen, 2003; Komarraju, 2008).

The conversion approach is Stancliff and Goggin's (2007) third approach to TA preparation. In this approach, TAs are taught how to convert to the theory and philosophies of the university where they will be teaching. In this approach, TAs are introduced to the academic community generally (Gaia et al., 2003) and the ways of individual programs and departments specifically. This includes being introduced to content-specific conventions and the ways in which those conventions exist in pedagogy (Schilb, 2001). This is an especially important time for TAs who will instruct developmental education courses to understand the field and the students who inhabit it (Eney & Davidson, 2014). Janke and Colbeck (2008) call this the "way-in" period based on observation and the guidance of a mentor. Mentoring is often easier said than done as the mentor, a faculty member or more experienced TA (Gaia et al., 2003), is responsible for maintaining a careful balance of guidance, support, and authority (Anderson & Anderson, 2012) so the TA can become an independent scholar (Buck, Mast, Latta, & Kaftan, 2009).

Stancliff and Goggin's (2007) final approach to instruction is the multiphilosophical approach in which TAs are encouraged to consider their role as instructor from the theories and assumptions with which the TAs align or create. Similarly to the previous three approaches, this approach can be put into practice in multiple ways. The first way is through direct instruction about pedagogical theories (Bubenzer & Westphal-Johnson, 2003; Janke & Colbeck, 2008; Taggart & Lowry, 2011). Incorporating theories can be accomplished through assigning TAs to find and bring to class the readings on pedagogy or learning theory that most resonated with them. This assignment allows students to authentically explore literature as well as their perspectives

toward multiple theories (Gaia et al., 2003). Another way to employ the multiphilosophical approach is with guided reflection, in which TAs are also able to explore their perspectives on theories and philosophies in two main ways: reflection on practice and reflection emerging from conflict. Formal reflection based on practice can help TAs understand the theories with which they align as well as improve on their practice (Buck et al., 2009; Burnham & Jackson, 2002). Conversely, reflection emerging from conflict requires TAs to develop lessons and curricula based upon their own experiences and ideologies and share these ideas with peers. This interaction creates situations in which TAs face opposing theories and philosophies and must negotiate and critically reflect to determine which theories and paradigms are truly best for them (Stancliff & Goggin, 2007).

Writing Center Tutor Preparation

Analogous to TA preparation, writing center tutor preparation varies; however, certain aspects of training are consistent throughout many writing centers. For example, as writing center appointments are often a short time commitment for graduate students, DeFeo and Caparas (2014) describe preparation as either training or professional development. Specifically, whereas training is utilitarian, that is, strictly for a practical, writing center application, professional development is preparation with an eye and mind toward future, professional experiences. Ultimately, DeFeo and Caparas (2014) found the utilitarian training aspect of writing center tutor preparation to be limiting and less meaningful than a professional development approach. Both forms of preparation, training and professional development, generally happen in three distinct forms, preliminary training, which occurs before a new writing center tutor interacts with

students (Broder, 1990; Devet, 2014b; Munger, Rubenstein, & Burow, 1996; North, 1982), regularly-scheduled session throughout the semester (Broder, 1990; Munger et al., 1996; North, 1982), and formal graduate- and undergraduate-level courses (Jackson, Leverenz, & Law, 2003; North, 1982). Formal coursework to prepare graduate students to work in writing centers is especially beneficial because it supports the professionalization of writing centers (Jackson et al., 2003) and courses provide the opportunity for a better structured preparation experience for tutors (Bell, 2001).

Regardless of how or when training or professional development (DeFeo & Caparas, 2014) happens, many writing center tutor preparation programs are guided by a training manual (Harris, 1984; Kail, 2003). With these training manuals, writing center directors and coordinators are able to make important and foundational commitments to the philosophies, objectives, policies, and procedures, of their writing center (Harris, 1984). In this way, training manuals are used with a two-fold mission, to provide a singular place for writing center resources and to establish the unique collection of philosophies and pedagogies that define each writing center. As Kail (2003) argued, for a writing center, tutor training manuals are “our collective knowledge of ourselves” (p. 74). Training manuals are not without problems, however. In many writing centers, these documents prescribe writing center practices and pedagogies rather than describe and encourage a flexible praxis. Shamoan and Burns (1995) have argued that the rules are so pervasive that they have become writing center “orthodoxy” (p.134).

Training manual or not, writing center coordinators and directors often use a variety of approaches in preparing tutors. One popular approach is for newer tutors to observe current, successful tutors (Devet, 2014b; North, 1982; Munger et al., 1996).

Additionally, observation could include observing peers in role-playing exercises (North, 1982), where writing center coordinators and directors can follow the exercise with critical discussion about what happened through asking critical and intentional questions. Intentional questioning is appropriate writing center training as they help stimulate growth and support critical reflection (DeFeo & Caparas, 2014). Some writing center directors invite former tutors back to the writing center to lead a preparation session and explain to current tutors the value of their work and the applicability of what they're learning to life beyond graduate school and the writing center (Devet, 2014a). This approach of using former tutor voices also supports critical reflection (Devet, 2014a), which is a valuable addition to tutor preparation (Bell, 2001; DeFeo & Caparas, 2014; Devet, 2014b). Guided reflection supports writing center tutors' identification of where they struggled and where they are successful (Devet, 2014b), and provides the opportunity for tutors to critically apply their experiences in the writing center to other aspects of their personal and professional lives (DeFeo & Caparas, 2014). Ultimately, however, experience in the writing center is one of the best forms of preparation (Bruffee, 1978; Munger et al., 1996).

Certain training topics are most germane to writing center tutor preparation. Those include understanding writing as a process (Broder, 1990; Munger et al., 1996), discovering how to talk about writing (North, 1982), learning how to focus on students as individuals (Broder, 1990), and learning how to work with all types of students' academic writing across many disciplines (Devet, 2014a). Through all of these topics, writing center tutors must also learn how to navigate the decision making process within each in a critical way (Grimm, 1996). These training topics are often taught in two ways,

through discussing how the topics apply in theory (Devet, 2014a; Kail, 2003; Simard, 1984) and how these topics apply in practice (Devet, 2014). Interestingly, although these topics are all consistent with many of the skills and knowledge necessary to be a successful composition instructor, Ianetta and colleagues (2007) argue writing center tutor training should not be used as a prerequisite for TAs entering the composition classroom. The researchers argue this approach is detrimental because it would only be a short time before writing centers become known “as the place for untrained graduate instructors” (Ianetta et al., 2007, p. 110).

Overall, tutor preparation is a central aspect of the writing center (DeFeo & Caparas, 2014; Kail, 2003; Munger et al., 1996) and irreplaceable at institutions with a diverse population (Munger et al., 1996). Bruffee (1984) argued training was so important to creating a collaborative learning environment that without it institutions would perpetuate “conformity, anti-intellectualism, intimidation, and the leveling of quality” (p. 97). In summary, a developed and organized preparation program shapes tutors (Kail, 2003) in a specific environment (Kail, 2003), where tutors understand expectations (Harris, 1984), the theories within which those expectations are based (Devet, 2014a; Simard, 1984), with the end result of becoming more successful tutors and future instructors (Burnham & Jackson, 2002; DeFeo & Caparas, 2014; Ianetta et al., 2007). As Bruffee (1978) argued, “peer tutors learn as much as they teach” (p. 463).

Navigating and Managing Power Structures

The teaching assistantship and the writing center consultancy are riddled with many examples of power struggles in similar ways that the history of developmental education in the United States is punctuated with knowledge and reality constructed by

those in positions of power. Through the centuries of higher education in America, those in power have defined underprepared in specific and vary ways (Arendale, 2002; Casazza & Silverman, 1996; Boylan & White, 1994) decided the ways to resolve a history of discrimination (Arendale, 2002; Arendale, 2005; Casazza & Silverman, 1996), overlooked academic underpreparedness in elite citizens (Casazza & Silverman, 1996), provided academic support to the “common man” (Arendale, 2002; Boylan & White, 1994)—and woman (Rhodes, 2001; Thelin, 2004)—all while they dictated the purpose of education (Casazza & Silverman, 1996; Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2000, 2009). In other words, TAs and writing center tutors, just like students placed into developmental education courses, rarely hold power in higher education and instead, what these students learn, how they learn it, and why they learn it is formally dictated by someone else.

Power and the Teaching Assistant

TAs must navigate and manage power structures. They must understand the power structures existing around them as graduate students (Bailey, 2010) as well as the power structures within which they participate as instructors (Smith, 1994). The challenge with these power structures is they are not always visible (Mertens, 2009). To make explicit the often hidden power structures within higher education, Bailey (2010) created two syllabi for her TA preparation course. One syllabus was the traditional document containing due dates and grading structures, and the other, what she aptly referred to as The “Other” Syllabus, contained a window into what she called hidden curriculum. For example, on The “Other” Syllabus, Bailey (2010) referred to the first class day as “The Somewhat Typical First Day” in which “We’ll wonder what the word

‘pedagogy’ means and whether others know” (p. 151); “We’ll wonder how much public speaking we have to do, how much the books cost, how many papers we have to write” (p. 151-152); and “We’ll feel hungry” (p. 152). In another example from The “Other” Syllabus, Bailey (2010) titles her class session focusing on grading as

“One of the Most Frustrating Things for a Beginning Teacher to Learn: Grading—In Other Words, Comparing and Ranking Students, Influencing Their Degree Progression, Wielding the Power of Red Ink, Learning about Institutional Grading Requirements; and Presenting the Impression of Objectivity” (p. 143).

Activities for the class meeting included “carry out a grading exercise in class, compare grades, and none of them will agree” (p. 145).

While written with obvious humor, these examples are an important, and often overlooked, aspect of TA preparation. The “Other” Syllabus that Bailey (2010) created reminds TAs that common classroom practices do not exist in a vacuum, but, rather, are the result of a history of institutional and social power structures so prevalent and powerful, they have been rendered unrecognizable in what Smith (1994) calls a game of Secret Basketball. Similar to Bailey, Smith (1994) argues the power structures and inequities within education are so powerful, it is as if instructors expect students to play a game of basketball in which

“They are on the court with the ball, but nobody will say where the baskets are, nobody wants to admit that, in fact, we are playing basketball. The refusal to admit, after all, is an important part of the game” (p. 19).

It is these hidden curriculum (Bailey, 2010) and secret basketball games (Smith, 1994) that make students placed in developmental education courses especially vulnerable and the preparation of the TAs working with these students so important. Smith (1994) argues the secret basketball games within higher education are least apparent to students

without educational experience like those often found in developmental education program (Eney & Davidson, 2014).

It is impossible for TAs or any other instructor to relinquish the power they hold as the authority in the classroom. Not only would the attempt be fruitless, as the power structures within which TAs operate are institutionally not individually held (Baily, 2010), but also, even attempting to get rid of power would be inauthentic (Smith, 1994), confusing, and could even result in further disempowering students (Buck et al., 2009; Smith, 1994; Stancliff & Goggin, 2007). As Nieto (1999) argued, in education, no actions made by teachers are neutral and furthermore, all actions are political as they are the result of the ontologies and life experiences of teachers. This is important because teachers' actions within the classroom have the potential to impact the educational and life experiences of their students. Renouncing power, or even refusing to acknowledge its existence perpetuates Smith's (1994) "secret basketball" games as well as contradicts the entire focus of education as an entity to perpetuate the status quo by teaching students how to operate within the boundaries of the power structures of society (Nieto, 1999).

Power and the Writing Center Tutor

Instead of trying to renounce power, the best, most responsible way to manage power structures is to make an effort to better understand them and make them visible through research, and, as McLaren (1995) suggests, making "critical judgments about what society might mean, and what is possible or desirable outside existing configurations of power and privilege" (p. 22). What is unique about power and the writing center is that tutors frequently have to work to find balance within these configurations of power and privilege. Within higher education writ large, the writing

center is a place on the margins (Jackson et al., 2003) where writing center scholarship goes unheard in most composition journals (Grimm, 1996). Additionally, on most campuses, writing centers “remain in subordinate service positions” (Grimm, 1996, p. 524). In this way, the power and privilege that must be managed is restricted to the power and privilege of others.

Within the writing center, however, the tutor is an inherently powerful position where their individual work and marginalized space create a “semiautonomous community” (Bruffee, 1978, p. 463). In this community, tutors are expected to function as the peers of students who come in to the writing center for support, which also creates a powerful connection through collaborative learning (Bruffee, 1984). However, the power dynamic between tutor and student is often asymmetrical (Bell, 2001; Carino, 2003; North, 1982). Specifically, in a tutoring situation, the authority, and thereby the power, between students resides within the person with the most knowledge (Carino, 2003). As North (1982) argues, “we are who we are as writers—and tutors of writing—because of who we have been” (p. 437), which not only includes tutors’ gender, race, and class, but also, who their command of academic writing. In this way, tutors who have been trained in writing center pedagogy and how to successfully support writers cannot put down their knowledge of writing because it is an integral part of who they are as individuals and as tutors. This inherently makes the successful writing center tutor powerful because they understand the writing process and how to support the writing of others. In short, writing center tutor preparation is empowering (Kail, 2003) and at times, the power tutors hold directly conflicts with the writing center as a place for peers to work collaboratively (Bruffee, 1978). To mediate this conflict, tutors are often trained to

be nondirective; that is, although a tutor may know exactly how to correct student writing, they are trained to use nondirective methods such as questioning to avoid doing the students' work for them (Carino, 2003). As a result, writing center tutors must carefully balance their power and knowledge with how they approach students and student writing to ensure a nondirective approach (Carino, 2003; Cogie, 2001).

Not all writing centers subscribe to the nondirective approach, however. Shamon and Burns (1995) were among the first to critique the nondirective approach, arguing that the approach were "articles of faith" resulting from a history's-long dedication to the practice had trumped any "material evidence" supporting the nondirective approach (p. 135). Instead, Shamon and Burns (1995) suggest designating writer centers as a place where "directive tutoring provides a sheltered and protected time and space for practice" with the ultimate goal of exposing all aspects of the writing process to provide a more enriching and educating experience for both tutors and students (p. 147).

Current consensus seems to be that tutors should have facility with both directive and nondirective approaches and should assess the situation to determine when and where to use them. Thus, some writing centers employ nondirective approaches in addition to directive approaches, which includes modeling, imitation, and the authentic sharing of both tutor and student knowledge.

Writing center scholars argue that because writing center tutors are also students and cannot give grades, they are inherently the social equals of the students they tutor (Bruffee, 1978). Additionally, to achieve the nondirective tutoring desired in most writing centers, tutors are often told even if they know the answer or what correction is

best, they ought to pretend they do not. They also should never hold the pencil, never offer wording choices, and never write on students' papers, all to achieve the illusion of equality (Carino, 2003). However, similar to the ways in which instructors cannot relinquish the institutional power they hold (Smith, 1994), nor can writing tutors relinquish their knowledge. Also, just as instructors attempting to relinquish their power is confusing and disempowering to students (Buck et al., 2009; Smith, 1994; Stancliff & Goggin, 2007), Carino (2003) argues the attempt to “divest the tutor of power and authority is at times foolish and can even be unethical” (p. 98).

Finally, for TAs and writing center tutors at HSIs, the challenge of understanding different power structures is heightened because these institutions are intrinsically multicultural and as Laden (2004) argues, instructors should critically interact with pedagogical approaches to better serve the many cultures and identities within each university. Comparatively, Munger and colleagues (1996) posit the responsibility of creating quality writing center tutor preparation programs at diverse institutions is significantly heightened to ensure appropriate services for all students. As such, when considering graduate TAs and writing center tutors who work with students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses at HSIs, it is important to understand how these graduate students are prepared, the power structures within which they are instructed—indirectly and directly—to function as instructors and tutors, and ultimately, the impact the TAs' and writing center tutors' preparation has on students. Understanding how power structures influence graduate TAs and writing center tutors who teach or tutor at HSIs will not change who has influence or what that influence looks like. Rather, understanding how these power structures exist and the reach of influence is

the first step to helping all students understand the power structures within higher education as well as how best to navigate them.

Summary of Literature Review

Researchers frequently publish the TA preparation procedures for specific fields such as political science (Buehler & Marcum, 2007), writing (Burnham & Jackson, 2002; Harris, 2002), science (Sales, et al., 2007), and literature (Schlib, 2001) as well as the experiences of undergraduate tutors (Bell, 2001; Bruffee, 1978; Devet, 2014b; Munger et al., 1996; North, 1982). However, there are important aspects of TA and writing center tutor preparation that transcends specific fields including being formerly introduced and socialized into the academy, experiencing some sort of formal preparation session that covers practical- and theory-based approaches to teaching and tutoring, all while balancing many power structures within the academy, classroom, and writing center. A thorough exploration of the ways in which TAs and graduate writing center tutors are prepared to teach or tutor students makes a gap in literature clear. What is notably missing is the preparation of graduate-level TAs and writing center tutors who teach or assist students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses. The following chapter will detail the methods of this study intended to fill this gap.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

In this chapter, I detail the theory and reasoning I used to rationalize using a multisite case study and other methodological decisions to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the preparatory experiences of graduate TAs and writing center tutors at HSIs who are assigned to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses?
2. What are indirect and direct influences on graduate TAs and writing center tutors as they are prepared to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses at HSIs?

I will also discuss the site and participant selection procedures as well as details about each, and the specific data collection tools I used in the study, which included pre-interview questionnaires, interview protocols, and observation techniques. Finally, I will explain the data analysis techniques, which included the methods I used to complete within-case analyses and a cross-case analysis. Specifically, I used initial coding (Creswell, 2013) as a first-cycle coding method, followed by code mapping (Saldana, 2013), and then pattern coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014) as a second-cycle coding method. Next, to create a cross-case analysis, I used stacking comparable cases (Miles et al., 2014) to compare the three cases in the study.

Research Design and Rationale

I employed a qualitative case study design for this research because answering the research question required closely examining specific data within defined boundaries,

which can be accomplished through case study design (Zainal, 2007). Additionally, the policy focus undergirding the research made case study the most appropriate choice because thorough explorations made possible through case study research are one way to understand educational processes and inform policy (Merriam, 2009). Conducting a case study of TA and writing center consultant preparation also provided the opportunity to “explore and investigate real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships” (Zainal, 2007, p. 1-2). Through this research, I tell the story of developmental educator preparation from the perspectives of those who have a major role in the delivery of developmental education coursework, graduate students who are TAs and writing center consultants. This study was not intended to serve as an evaluative tool for Texas’ current developmental educator preparation. Instead, the findings will help to inform Goal 5 of the Statewide Plan, which calls for an “increased preparedness of developmental educators” (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2012, p. 12), as the first step to increasing preparedness is to first understand the status quo.

In order to focus on individuals at multiple kinds of institutions, I used a multisite case study design (Merriam, 2009). A multisite case study method was ideal for the study because I was able to first describe the experience of each site before presenting a cross-case analysis of the three sites in the study (Merriam, 2009). Considering individual institutions as well as comparing differences among institutions was a valuable addition to the research because the federal HSI designation is awarded based entirely on quantitative measures (Galdeano, Flores, & Moder, 2012). Through presenting within-case and cross-case analyses, I was able to understand more completely the preparatory

experiences at individual HSIs as well as how those experiences compared across other HSIs.

Sites and Participants

The first step in developing any kind of case study is bounding the case (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014). The major aspects that bounded the cases in the study were the length of time I conducted research, the number and roles of participants I invited to participate in the study, and most notably, the type of institution where I conducted the research.

Field Sites

I conducted my research at three HSIs in Texas. HSIs are a type of Minority Serving Institution that the U.S. Department of Education (2013) describes as “postsecondary institutions enrolling populations with significant percentages of minority students.” This is an important definition because although the U.S. Department of Education considers HSIs just as minority serving as other Minority Serving Institutions such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges and Universities, how and why Hispanic students are served at their respective institutions is very different than other Minority Serving Institutions. With few exceptions, HSIs were not established with the specific purpose of serving Hispanic students in the way that HBCUs were established to serve African Americans and TCUs were created for Native Americans (Galdeano et al., 2012; Laden, 2001; 2004). Further, the federal HSI designation is awarded based entirely on quantitative measures; the mission, purpose, and history of a particular institution are not considered (Galdeano et al., 2012). As a result, a university that recently reached a student population composed of 25% Hispanic students is just as much an HSI as a community college with a century’s history of a more than

75% Hispanic student population. In other words, because the HSI designation can be applied to many different types of institutions, there can be significant differences among institutions who share the same HSI federal designation. As such, to answer the research questions, it was important that I studied multiple HSIs with a range of student demographics.

Further, I chose three HSIs to study because including more than one site increased the validity and generalizability of my findings and created the opportunity for an overall more robust study (Merriam, 2009). Additionally, in choosing a variety on institutions, I improved the transferability of my findings and conclusions (Merriam, 2009).

Site selection. In order to improve the generalizability and transferability of my study and to examine TA and writing center consultant preparation at multiple types of institutions, I chose three field sites that vary in size, location, and student demographics. For more information on the student demographics at each field site, see Table 1. The type and delivery method of developmental education-level reading and writing courses as well as TA and Writing Consultant training at each field site differs slightly, which reflects the contextual articulation of literacy at each institution.

Table 1: *Descriptions of Research Sites*

<u>Measures</u>	<u>HSI 1</u>	<u>HSI 2</u>	<u>HSI 3</u>
Total population	36,739	11,234	21,015
Total graduate students	4,562	2,176	3,157
Percent graduate students	12.4%	19.4%	15.0%
Percent of total population Hispanic	31.6%	44.7%	88.6%
Percent of total population White	51.7%	39.4%	3.6%
Four-year graduation rate	30.0%	20.4%	20.4%
Six-year graduation rate	64.6%	48.4%	49.3%

Note: All data was retrieved from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (2015) and reflects 2014 fall semester totals.

HSI 1 site description.

Demographics. At the time of the study, HSI 1 was an Emerging Research University where nearly one third or 31.6% of the students identified as Hispanic. Additionally, with more than 36,000 students, HSI 1 was one of the largest universities in the state, and the largest in this study.

Developmental education. Although placement into the developmental education-level reading courses at HSI 1 was determined by students' scores on the reading portion of the state mandated placement exam, TAs taught the developmental education-level reading courses as Integrated Reading and Writing courses.

TA preparation. The TAs teaching the IRW course participated in a mentoring model of training where one more experienced TA was given the responsibility to help train and mentor less-experienced TAs. Additionally, one participating TA was required to enroll in the department's Teaching in College course, which was required for all TAs teaching in their first semester.

HSI 2 site description.

Demographics. HSI 2 was the smallest university in this study. Of the 11,000 students at HSI 2, 44.7% of students identified as Hispanic. Although the university had not yet been designated as an Emerging Research University, the process to earn that designation was started during the time of the study.

Developmental education. HSI 2 was a unique field site in this study because unlike HSI 1 and HSI 3, the participants worked in the university's Writing Center. As the participants were not teaching developmental-education level courses, they served

students who placed into developmental education as well as any other student who needed assistance in writing.

Consultant preparation. Consultants who work at the Writing Center at HSI 2 went through an eight-hour training the week before the semester started and they met for one hour every other week for professional development sessions.

HSI 3 site description.

Demographics. HSI 3 was the mid-sized university in this study. The university also had the highest percentage of Hispanic students of any field site in this study. About 21,000 students were enrolled during the time of the study and more than 80% of those students identified as Hispanic.

TA preparation. At HSI 3, the TAs in the English Department were required to take a composition pedagogy course prior to teaching as a TA. However, all of the TAs in this study took the composition pedagogy course taught by the TA supervisor, Sean, concurrently with their first semester teaching. All TAs were also required to attend weekly TA meetings to discuss their teaching and ask questions or get guidance as needed. Finally, the TAs were required to attend twice-monthly first-year writing program meetings.

Developmental education. The developmental education writing courses at HSI 3 were taught as a combined studio course. In this model, developmental education writing courses were combined with the first college-level composition course. This approach meant students met for extended class periods, which made it so the single course met the requirements of both the developmental and college-level courses. The course was taught using the studio course pedagogical approach where the writing studio

environment is facilitated through a frequent in-class writing assignments, and peer review and group work is commonplace and valued. Additionally, to help facilitate this environment and instructional approach, students met in a classroom with small tables, instead of individual desks.

Participants

The participants in this study were TAs and writing center consultants and their respective supervisors. The participating TAs and writing center consultants included those who were in the process of being prepared to teach or consult students placed into developmental education-level courses. The roles of these participants included TAs teaching students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses and current and recent graduate students working as writing center consultants. The participating supervisors supported the preparation of the participating TAs and writing center consultants. The participating supervisors included professors teaching TA preparation courses, faculty members responsible for supervising TAs, and Writing Center administrators responsible for training and supervising consultants (see Table 2).

At each site, participating staff or faculty members also served as key informants for the study. Yin (2014) defined key informants as people who can provide insights, help to create access, and provide more information about evidence the researcher collects in order to help corroborate the evidence or provide contrary evidence.

Participant selection. While the roles of participants differed by field site, consistent across the study was the use of a staff or faculty key informant to access the names and contact information for potential participants. Initially, I intended to use a pre-interview questionnaire to assist in a purposeful sampling technique whereby I could

Table 2 *Participants by Field Site*

<u>Field site</u>	<u>Pseudonym</u>	<u>Role</u>
HSI 1	Haley	Veteran TA; mentor
	Paula	First-semester TA; mentee
	Olivia	Veteran TA; mentee
	Peter	Supervising faculty member
HSI 2	Liz	First-semester consultant
	Monica	First-semester consultant
	Alex	Professional consultant
	Laurel	Writing Center director
	Renee	Writing Center coordinator
HSI 3	Hilary	First-semester TA
	Melissa	First-semester TA
	Ana	First-semester TA
	Eric	Second-semester instructor; first-semester TA
	Sean	Supervising faculty member; Composition Pedagogy course instructor

select participants in order to show multiple perspectives of the preparation process as well as the experiences of TAs and writing center consultants (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). Specifically, at each field site, I planned to have graduate student participants with varied teaching experience; some with a semester or more of teaching or consulting, and some who were teaching or consulting for the first time. As Merriam (2009) posits, “Purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, gain insight and, therefore, must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 77). However, in execution of the study, the number of responses was lower than I anticipated so I invited everyone who showed interest in participating by responding to the recruitment email I sent. The recruitment email included a description of the study and the participation involved. Attached to the emails were pre-interview questionnaires and consent forms. Regardless of the length, frequency, or type of

participation, I provided all participants with a consent form and gained approval for the study by each institution's Institutional Review Board prior to contacting the graduate student participants.

Participants at HSI 1. Four people participated in the study at HSI 1. One participant was a faculty member and three were graduate TAs serving as instructors for the developmental reading course at HSI 1. Per my request, the participating faculty member emailed the name and contact information of each of the four TAs teaching the developmental reading course at HSI 1 in order for me to send recruitment emails. Of the four TAs, three participated in the study. All TAs were doctoral students specializing in literacy.

Peter. At HSI 1, Peter was responsible for supervising the TAs who taught developmental education reading courses. During the semester of data collection, he was scheduled to teach the TA preparation course for the Department of Curriculum and Instruction; however, days into the semester, the course was assigned to another faculty member in the department. Although Peter did not teach the TA preparation course during the study, he did teach graduate reading courses, served as the faculty supervisor for TAs teaching developmental education-level reading in the form of an IRW course.

Haley. Only one of the participating TAs, Haley, had taught the course in the previous academic year so she was appointed to serve as mentor to the other TAs teaching the developmental reading course. Haley had a background in composition and was in her second year of her PhD.

Paula. Paula was in her first semester of her PhD program and had never taught a class before. Paula had recently completed her master's degree in technical writing at HSI 1.

Olivia. Olivia was in her third year of her doctoral program and had taught in the two academic years prior to the study, however, she had never taught developmental education-level reading or an IRW course.

Participants at HSI 2. Five people at HSI 2 participated in the study. Two participants were staff members working in the Writing Center: the Writing Center director and the Writing Center coordinator. After explaining my preference to have a mix of participants who were all graduate students, but some with experience as well as some who were new to the Writing Center, the Writing Center coordinator, Renee, emailed me a list of names and contact information for six consultants. After emailing three experienced writing center consultants and three who were new to the Writing Center, one experienced consultant and two who were new to the Writing Center agreed to participate in the study. The Writing Center at HSI 2 employed 17 consultants. Of these 17, some were undergraduate students, some were graduate students, and some were recent graduates of the English master's program at HSI 2. These recent graduates were considered professional writing consultants and were on a higher pay grade than the student consultants. Of the 17 total consultants, three consultants participated in the study.

Laurel. Laurel had worked in writing centers since 1994 and assumed the director position at HSI 2 in 2010. During the time of the study, Laurel was also the director of

the learning center, which made her responsible for the Writing Center as well as assessment, tutoring, and supplemental instruction at HSI 2.

Renee. Renee worked as a writing center consultant as a graduate student at HSI 2, and then as a professional consultant and adjunct at the university before being offered the full-time Writing Center coordinator position in 2013. In her first year as the coordinator, Renee shadowed Laurel in training the writing center consultants; however starting the semester of the study, Renee became responsible for the planning and delivery of consultant training.

Liz. Fall 2014 was Liz's second semester as a master's student at HSI 2 and her first semester as a writing center consultant. Upon completion her master's degree in English, Liz planned to start working toward her PhD to eventually become a literature professor.

Monica. Monica was a first-semester master's student at HSI 2. The semester of this study was her first semester as a writing center consultant. Although she had a bachelor's in radio, television, and film, Monica planned to complete her masters in English and work in writing or editing after graduation.

Alex. Alex graduated with her master's degree in English from HSI 2 one year before this study. She was working as an adjunct faculty member and also served as a professional consultant at the Writing Center.

Participants at HSI 3. Four people at HSI 3 participated in the study. One participant was the supervising faculty member of the TAs, and the rest were TAs. The supervising faculty member sent me the names and contact information for all eight graduate students who were employed as TAs for developmental writing courses at HSI

3. Of the eight total TAs, four participated in the study. All four participating TAs were students in HSI 3's Masters of Arts in English as a Second Language program.

Sean. As the Writing Program Administrator, Sean was an associate professor who served as supervisor to the TAs who were teaching developmental education-level writing courses. He also taught the composition pedagogy course, which was the required course for graduate students who wanted to become TAs.

Eric. The only TA with prior teaching experience at the college level was Eric who taught English 1302, the second required composition course for first-year students. Eric taught the course in the spring semester prior to the study after the lecturer he was assigned to observe for a practicum was unable to teach the course. The course was assigned to him days into the semester. Eric was starting her second year as a master's student.

Hilary. Hilary was starting her second year as a master's student and her first semester as an instructor. Hilary came to HSI 3 from out of state to immerse herself into the language and culture of south Texas in order to better understand multilanguage environments and language acquisition. Upon the final interview, Hilary was preparing her law school applications and she aspired to work in civil rights law.

Melissa. Melissa was also in her second year of her master's degree and in her first semester teaching. Originally from out of state, Melissa also chose HSI 3 for graduate school to have a more authentic experience with English language learners. Upon the final interview, Melissa was preparing applications for PhD programs to continue her education in Spanish education.

Ana. The semester of the study was Ana's final semester of her master's degree but her first semester as a TA. Ana completed her degree in the semester of the study. After graduation, she planned to travel to Spain to teach English.

Research Method

To answer my research questions, I collected three sources of data and then utilized a two-cycle coding method (Saldana, 2013) to analyze the information gathered. Through each step of the research method procedure, I remained aligned with my theoretical framework with open-ended questions on the pre-interview questionnaires, semi-structured interview protocols that built on previous interviews, and observations in which I focused primarily on participant interactions. Additionally, I carefully analyzed the data to describe the subjective experiences of the participants.

Data Sources

The primary data sources for this study were pre-interview questionnaires, interviews, and observations. By using more than one source of data, I was able to increase the rigor of my research, address a broader range of information, and triangulate data to strengthen the construct validity of my case study (Yin, 2014).

Pre-Interview Questionnaire. My first step in data collection was to create and disseminate pre-interview questionnaires. Using the simple descriptive approach (Mertens, 1998), I used these questionnaires to understand the characteristics of TAs, writing center consultants, and their respective supervisors at the beginning of the semester. These initial questionnaires featured open-ended questions, which provided the opportunity for me to capture more subjective data than what is possible with multiple-choice questions (Mertens, 1998). For the participants who were TAs and writing center

consultants, the questionnaire included questions about each participants teaching position, preparation, and experiences as a graduate student (see Appendix A). For the participants who were staff and faculty members who supervised the graduate students in the study, the questionnaires included open-ended questions regarding the instructors' roles at their institution, preparation for that role, as well as their experiences as graduate students (see Appendix B). In the final question of each questionnaire, I asked if the questionnaire-taker was interested in participating in the study and if I could have their permission to contact them to schedule an interview.

Interviews. I gained insight into participants' experiences with TA and writing center consultant preparation through interviews. I conducted three interviews with each participant: the first interview was at the beginning of the semester in the last week of August and the first week of September, the second interview was at the midpoint of the semester in October, and the third interview at the end of the semester in November. Carspecken (1996) argues conducting multiple interviews is valuable because participants are likely to provide "richer and more self-disclosing information" than what is possible in a single interview (p. 166). Additionally, more interviews provided more information about each participant and their experiences, which availed more data and more opportunities for checks for consistency. The semi-structured interview protocols that I developed (see Appendix C) included primarily open-ended questions (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014). I chose to use semi-structured interviews because this structure offered flexibility and flexibility was important to understanding the individual perspectives and experiences of the participants of the study (Merriam, 2009). This data collection method was especially important to the study because interviews allowed participants to engage

actively in the knowledge construction of the research through sharing their subjective experiences.

Employing a constructivist approach, I used the data gathered through my questionnaires to inform my interview protocols for the first interview so that each interview served as an extension of the respective survey. This way, I was already informed about each participant and I had the opportunity to ask follow-up questions to the survey. Additionally, in the protocols I developed, I used each interview to inform the subsequent interview. As such, the following descriptions are only a guide as my protocol development was emergent. I recorded and transcribed verbatim all interviews for analysis.

TA/writing center consultant interview one. Each interview was divided into three main topic domains. The first TA interview included a topic domain with questions about participants' background, experiences preparing to become a TA or consultant, and finally, each interview ended with questions about the document the participant chose to discuss.

I first asked participants questions about their educational histories and experiences with literacy development. My questions included follow-up inquiries to participants' initial survey. In the first interview, I inquired about participants' memories about their educational history. Starting the interviews with question about participants' memories was most effective because these questions focused on more concrete and less abstract topics (Carspecken, 1996). Next, I asked questions about participants' expectations and opinions about the TA preparation course.

Prior to each interview with primary participants, I asked participants to bring a document that influenced their teaching or consulting in some way. These documents included reading assignments for a graduate class, course syllabi, and materials from training sessions. During the final section of each TA and consultant interview, I asked TAs to describe each document, explain who wrote it, their perception of the utility of the document, as well as their opinion of the document. I asked the same questions about the document at each of the three interviews.

TA/writing center consultant interview two. The three topic domains of TA interview two included questions about the participants' experiences as graduate students, questions about participants' opinion of their TA or consultant preparation, and finally, questions about the participant-selected document.

In keeping with Carspecken's (1996) suggestion to start interviews with a concrete topic, I started interview two by asking participants questions about how their semester was going generally, not focusing specifically on classes or teaching or consulting students. The purpose of starting the interview this way was to give participants the opportunity to share any aspect of their experiences. I used follow-up questions in this section to ask about the participants' experiences as a graduate student at the respective university and how they perceived the ways in which attending an HSI could impact those experiences. Similar to interview one, in the second topic domain of interview two, I asked questions about participants' preparation, this time with a focus on the topics the participants mentioned in the previous interview and the ways in which participants perceive the beneficence of the trainings they were receiving. Also similar to the first interview, in interview two, the final topic domain was the participant-selected

document. I asked participants to describe each document, clarify who wrote it, explain their perception of the utility of the document, as well as their opinion of the document.

TA/writing center consultant interview three. The three topic domains of the final interviews included questions about the participants' overview of their experiences as graduate students over the course of the semester, questions about the participants' opinions of their preparation, and finally, questions about the participant-selected course material.

The third interviews were held at the end of November 2014, just before the fall semester concluded, so I started the interview by asking participants questions about how the semester went and based on those experiences, how the participant anticipated what the following semester would be like both as a TA or consultant and as a graduate student. Similarly, the focus of the second topic domain was about the TA or consultant training sessions with a focus on how participants anticipated the experiences of the semester would influence future semesters. Specifically, I was interested in learning about how the participants described the benefit, or lack thereof, of both their experiences with students as well as their experience in the preparation course. Finally, the third topic domain was focused on the participant-selected document. During this final topic domain, I asked participants to describe each document, explain who wrote it, explain their perception of the utility of the document, as well as their opinion of the document.

Supervisor interview one. In a parallel approach to the TA interviews, I used multiple topic domains for the TA and writing center consultant supervisors that I interviewed. I asked questions about participants' backgrounds, participants' perceived

roles and responsibilities at their respective university, and the ways in which they are involved in the preparation of TAs or writing center consultants.

Following Carspecken's (1996) suggestion that starting interviews with concrete topics is best, I started the first interviews with questions about the educational backgrounds of the participants. In the next section, I asked participants questions focusing on their roles and responsibilities at the university generally, and in terms of preparing the primary participants specifically. I also asked participants if they perceived working at an HSI had any impact on their roles or responsibilities. In the third and final section of the first interview, I asked how the participant were involved in the preparation of primary participants, and specifically, the organization of that preparation and how the participant defined success.

Supervisor participant interview two. The three major topic domains of interview two were the same as interview one, with a slightly different focus. These topic domains included questions about how participants' semester was going generally, participants' perceived roles and responsibilities at their respective universities, and the ways in which they are involved in the preparation of TAs at the mid-semester point.

One of the benefits of interviewing the same participants multiple times is I was able to ask follow-up questions at future interviews to continue our conversation. In this respect, interview two served as an extension and follow-up of interview one. In the first topic domain of interview two, I asked participants how their semester was going, including questions about specific things mentioned in the first interview. In the second topic domain, I asked participants for examples of how their roles exist in terms of how they work with students. In the final topic domain of this interview, I asked questions

about the primary participant preparation in which they participated. Specifically, I asked for examples about what preparation looked like in the previous week as well as what success, if any, the participants were seeing.

Supervisor participant interview three. In the final interview with TA preparation course instructors and supervisors, I included only two topic domains, one focused on the semester generally, and one focused on the TA and writing center consultant preparation in which instructors and supervisors participated.

In the first topic domain, I asked follow-up questions referring to the semester as a whole. The questions included asking for an update on a particular project and research participants were working on at that time. In the second section, I asked questions about how the TA preparation went, if the preparation was successful, and how participants will be involved in TA preparation in the following semesters.

Observations. At each field site, I observed one preparation session. As HSI 1, I attended one mentoring meeting, at HSI 2, I attended one professional development session, and at HSI 3, I attended one class meeting of Sean's composition pedagogy class. I started each observation by drawing a rough sketch of the room making careful notes of where participants were sitting or standing, as well as the layout of the furniture of the room. To make the most of each observation, I was careful not to try to record everything at once and instead, I focused generally on interactions and reactions (Merriam, 2009). These interactions included face-to-face interactions or the interactions between participants or between participants and documents and the following reactions to those interactions. Interactions and reactions were important focal points for my

observations because in combination with subsequent interviews, these observations helped to inform my research questions, specifically, research question 2:

What are indirect and direct influences on graduate TAs and writing center tutors as they are prepared to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses at HSIs?

Through focusing on interactions and reactions, I was given insight into what was influential to the participants. For example, during an observation at HSI 3, a participant exclaimed they really liked a particular assignment, and after, another a participant responded they did not care for the assignment and explained why. During this interaction I learned more about the preferences of both participants as students, which prompted me to add questions to their respective following interview protocols about how their preferences as students influence their preferences as TAs.

By focusing on interactions and reactions, my observations were what Bogdan and Biklen (2007, p. 60) referred to as an “artificial act,” because the participants’ experiences and lives extend well beyond the context of their interactions I observed and the event I attended-- the mentoring meeting, professional development session, or class meeting. With this in mind, it was crucial to use subsequent interviews to ask questions about the interactions and reactions in the event I observed to get a clearer, more robust understanding of what I saw and heard.

Data Analysis

In order to achieve convergence of evidence and triangulation, I used as many relevant pieces of data as possible in conducting my data analysis, which required using multiple sources of evidence to describe the same phenomenon (Yin, 2014). My analysis

focused primarily on the experiences of the participating TAs and writing center consultants as they were prepared to teach students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses. Additionally, I framed this research within the transformative paradigm, using constructivist approaches to knowledge building and, as a result, an important aspect of the analysis was considering the ways in which participants understood and made sense of their experiences.

Merriam (2009) noted that the purpose of qualitative research is to “achieve an understanding of how people make sense out of their lives... and describe how people interpret what they experience” (p. 14). Following this idea, I analyzed the data to create findings to explain two major concepts: (a) how individual experiences combined to tell the story of TA and writing center consultant preparation and (b), the meaning the participating TAs and writing center consultants made as a result of their participation, specifically in terms of the indirect and direct influences through their preparation. To support my findings, I used detailed descriptions, field notes, memos, vignettes, and quotes, while focusing on the most significant aspects of the study, the three major pieces addressed in the research questions. This process helped me to create the analysis for my within-case analysis, and following this process, I focused on understanding my findings in a cross-case analysis. As Merriam (2009) argues, “The general lies in the particular; that is, what we learn in a particular situation we can transfer or generalize to similar situations subsequently encountered” (p. 225). I concluded my data analysis with a cross-case analysis to support the process of transfer and generalizing as well as to explore and understand how each case compared to others. By identifying these similarities and differences, I was able to draw larger conclusions based on the data I

gathered, which helped to deepen my understanding of TA and writing center consultant preparation.

Codes. My method of analysis was coding, which is the process of developing a type of shorthand to identify specific aspects within data (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014). While coding the data, I looked for patterns, built explanations, and conducted cross-case syntheses (Yin, 2014). To conduct a thorough analysis, I also considered themes, issues, and particular situations throughout (Creswell, 2013). More specifically, I analyzed the data I collected using a two-cycle coding method (Saldana, 2013) that featured initial coding (Creswell, 2013) in the first cycle, code mapping (Miles et al., 2014), and then pattern coding (Miles et al., 2014) in the second cycle.

Initial coding. The process of initial coding as a first cycle coding method began almost immediately after each interview ended. At that time, I reflected on the data I just gathered while also considering the contexts within which they occurred. I included these thoughts and observations in my post-interview writing and memoing. This cycle of interviewing participants and then analyzing the transcripts was recurring through the research. By analyzing my data as I went, I was able to identify emerging themes, which helped to guide the next interview I conducted (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I considered themes, issues, and specific situations throughout the initial coding process in order to get a complete understanding of the data and to provide the best and most thorough groundwork for my analysis (Creswell, 2013).

Code mapping. After I coded all the data, I used code mapping (Saldana, 2013) to start the process of organizing the codes I identified from my first coding cycle. This process included reorganizing all of the codes I identified through the initial coding into

lists of categories that helped me to answer the research questions. Specifically, I grouped the codes into three groups. To answer research question one, the first group were codes that pertained to the preparatory experiences of the participating TAs and writing center consultants. To inform research question two, the second and third groups were codes that related to the indirect and direct influences, respectively, that the participating TAs and writing center consultants experienced. To condense and organize the codes further, I develop a data display. This display included the research question, categories, and notes on the exemplars of codes at each site for each category. See Figure 1 for an example of an early iteration of a data display (Miles et al., 2014) that resulted from the code mapping.

RQs	Category	HSI 1	HSI 2	HSI 3
1. What are the preparatory experiences of graduate TAs and writing center tutors at HSIs who are assigned to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses?	FORMAL Pre-semester session	Semester-planning meetings	Summer institute	Three-hour orientation distribution of resources
	FORMAL Regularly-schedule sessions	Weekly mentoring meetings	PD sessions every other Friday	Weekly grad course, twice monthly dept. meetings, Weekly TA meetings
	INFORMAL Synthesis of roles	Student/TA /mentor/ mentee	Consultant/ student/ instructor	Goals/thesis/ teacher/student/ ESL student

Figure 1. Early iteration of code mapping data display.

Pattern coding. The final step in the data analysis preparation process was pattern coding. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) defined pattern coding as a method of grouping the codes created in the first cycle coding into a smaller, more concise units of analysis. To accomplish a more parsimonious understanding of the data,

I went through all of my data again looking for ways to further condense and combine the codes and categories I created during the code mapping. Through this process, I continued to simplify the data displays I created until I had three categories for research question 1 and seven categories and subcategories for research question 2.

Cross-case analysis. In order to better understand the three case studies in comparison to one and other, after completing the within-case analyses, I completed a cross-case analysis. Using the data displays I created during code mapping and refined during pattern coding process, I compared the three cases. Specifically, I looked for similarities and differences between the cases, which allowed me to further condense my data through systemic comparison (Miles et al., 2014). The result was a second data display, which included room for comparing the three sites and conclusions across each research questions. See Figure 2 for a sample of an early iteration of a cross-site data display. This final analysis helped to answer the research questions as the comparison of the three sites helped to highlight unique aspects of each, including the experience of participants and what influenced the participating TAs and writing center consultants.

Subjective Validity

Protecting the subjective validity of the analysis was an important aspect of this study. To capture an accurate understanding of the participants' experiences, I used peer and member checking and I interviewed the participants three times. I was also careful not to use leading questions in protocols and interviews, and encouraged participants to use their own terms and contexts during interviews (Carspecken, 1996). Additionally, my normative experience as a TA and graduate student at an HSI helped me to better understand and describe the experiences of participants.

RQs	Categories	Comparison by site	Conclusions
1. What are the preparatory experiences of graduate TAs and writing center tutors at HSIs who are assigned to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses?	FORMAL Pre-semester session	HSI 1: too short HSI 2: long enough HSI 3: too short	Timing was an important aspect to training experiences. This included trainings that were: long enough, regularly occurring, and consistent in length. Also, “light bulb” moments results in understanding big picture when roles changed.
	FORMAL Regularly-schedule sessions	HSI 1: weekly mentoring HSI 2: twice monthly meeting HSI 3: weekly meeting, weekly class, twice monthly meeting	
	INFORMAL Synthesis of roles	All synthesis inspired by newer role.	

Figure 2. Early iteration of cross-site data display.

Summary of Methods

The data collection process of gathering pre-interview questionnaires and conducting interviews was followed by analyzing the data through a two-cycle coding scheme. In the first cycle, I used initial coding (Creswell, 2013) to begin to understand the general themes of the data and identify codes across each of the data sources. Next, I used code mapping (Saldana, 2013) to start the process of reducing the many codes I identified through listing codes by research question and creating a data display (Miles et al., 2014). I then used pattern coding (Miles et al., 2014) to continue the process of reducing and collapsing the codes I identified into more concise categories. I refined the data displays I created through the data mapping process (Saldana, 2013) through the second coding cycle, which informed the within-case findings. Following the within-case analyses, I refined the data displays once more looking specifically for similarities and differences between the cases to complete the cross-case analysis. The findings detailed in the next chapter will feature exemplars detailing the categories and codes

within each site and in a cross-case analysis. Ultimately, these findings will help to inform the implications and conclusions of the discussion section.

CHAPTER 4

Findings

The purpose of this study is to better understand the preparatory experiences of graduate students who work as teaching assistants (TAs) and writing center consultants. More specifically, this study will answer the following research questions:

1. What are the preparatory experiences of graduate TAs and writing center tutors at HSIs who are assigned to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses?
2. What are indirect and direct influences on graduate TAs and writing center tutors as they are prepared to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses at HSIs?

The findings of this chapter are based on three sources of data: pre-interview questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and observations of regularly-scheduled preparation sessions across three universities in Texas. To protect the confidentiality of the participants of this study, I will refer to the universities as HSI 1, HSI 2, and HSI 3. The participants at HSI 1 were three TAs and one TA supervisor. At HSI 2, the participants were four writing center consultants, one writing center coordinator, and one writing center director. At HSI 3, the participants were four TAs and one TA supervisor.

This chapter contains the findings resulting from the three data collection sources organized by research question. I will discuss the within-case analysis of each of the three universities individually and then discuss the findings from the cross-case analysis.

Within-Case Analysis of HSI 1

HSI 1 had the largest total population and smallest percentage of students who

identified as Hispanic in the study. The participants at HSI 1 were involved in teaching the university's developmental education-level reading course, which they taught as an Integrated Reading and Writing course. The TAs were supervised by a graduate faculty member, Peter. The participating TAs at HSI 1 were Haley, who was an experienced TA who also served as the peer mentor, Paula, who had never been a TA before, and Olivia, who was an experienced TA.

Preparatory Experiences

In this section, I will describe the preparatory experiences of the TAs at HSI 1, which came in the form of both formal and informal experiences. Formally, TAs attended pre-semester training sessions and they also attended regularly-scheduled peer mentoring meetings. Informally, these preparatory experiences created the opportunity for participants to synthesize their experiences in multiple roles including TA, graduate student, and researcher.

Formal pre-semester training session. TA training began before the semester officially started in the form of course planning. Haley, the TA who served as peer mentor collaborated with the TA supervisor, Peter, to construct a syllabus and identify the theories that framed the course. Haley explained,

I hammered out the syllabus with my supervisor in a meeting that was ridiculously long. I put together resources for them, tried to talk to them about the, like, conceptual framework of the course and just kind of let them know what things were going to be like.

Similarly, Olivia described the pre-semester training as both theoretical and practical.

The first meeting was theory-focused and we were talking about different theories and readings that they would like to see inform our syllabi. The second meeting was a practical meeting talking about syllabi and what do to in the first day of class.

In these meetings Peter intended to provide the TAs with the foundation necessary to successfully teach the course. However, in some ways, the content of the first two meetings was best suited for more experienced TAs and not the more inexperienced TA.

Olivia said,

We sort of broadly threw out some names, which [Paula] had never heard of before so it's good for someone who already has some knowledge of theory in the area. So for myself, or for our peer mentor: great, but for the newbie who comes from a writing background, I don't know if support versus training...maybe she needs a balance of both.

Olivia's suspicion that the pre-semester training was not as helpful for the less experienced TAs was well founded. During the second interview, which took place during midterms, Paula was still not prepared for her new role. She explained she "hadn't put in an order for any books at the library for class and so I just— I'm very unprepared for teaching." Aware of Paula feeling less than prepared, Haley said, "I would have liked to provide more support before the semester started." In the two pre-semester meetings that covered the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching the developmental education-level reading course in an integrated reading and writing approach, Haley and Peter introduced the course and provided some guidance for how to teach the course.

Formal regularly-scheduled training sessions. Peter originally planned to attend the formal, regularly-scheduled mentoring sessions each week, however, as he explained, before the first meeting "[Haley] wrote me and said, 'I am going to mentor them this afternoon and I [would] rather you not be there.' She said, 'I would like to do it on my own.'" Upon acquiescing to Haley's request the TAs met for one hour each week. Haley facilitated mentoring sessions with Olivia, Paula, and one TA who chose not to participate in the study. During these sessions, the group discussed the course they were teaching, struggles they were having, and generally supported one and other. As the

mentor, Haley said she is, “just supposed to be here to help them out however they need so that they are set up for success as they teach for the first time in this class.” As the mentor, Haley was largely responsible for facilitating the mentoring sessions, as Paula described,

She takes notes and she keeps up with what we are doing and, you know, any kind of ideas, we are bouncing ideas off of each other and stuff like that. She kind of writes everything out so we know. She's like-- she keeps us all-- she's like the facilitator. She keeps us all kinda connected.

A defining aspect of Haley facilitating and keeping everyone connected was that Haley was not the supervisor or leader of the group discussions. Instead, she supported group discussions. Haley said, “We walk through it together and it’s not even just me. It’s like the whole group. We all talk through it together.” This group dynamic provided a place where the TAs were able to troubleshoot classroom issues and share their experiences.

Haley said,

I think that the meetings have been really successful. In terms of sharing ideas and problem solving and just having that space to process what’s been happening in your classroom and what you might do and steal ideas from each other.

While this set-up was generally successful, the just-in-time nature of support the mentoring provided did not allow time or space for discussing theory or exploring different teaching techniques. Olivia explained,

I like the moral support that we’re getting from the peer mentor system. I wish there was a little more training in terms of maybe some readings and discussions we can do about readings.

Olivia’s observation that the mentoring served more as *support* than *training* echoed throughout discussions of the mentoring sessions. This is not to say the support aspect of the mentoring sessions was discussed as a critique. It is noteworthy that all of the TAs found the support aspect to be valuable and later in the semester, some of the TAs even

found ways to incorporate more theory into the conversations in the mentoring sessions with the intent of incorporating more of a training aspect, which will be discussed in a later section.

In creating the mentoring system, Peter hoped the experience would be valuable for all of the TAs, but especially Haley. He explained what he was “trying to accomplish here is developing [Haley] to mentor people down the road and be a faculty member.” Ironically, “down the road” became the following semester as the mentoring was so successful that the three TAs decided to continue meeting. Olivia explained,

[Paula] has asked that we all meet again like we are as a group next semester, even though she’s the only one actually teaching the class so three of us are going to meet. We’re going to continue to support her.

Paula was not the only TA that benefitted from the mentoring sessions. Haley described the experience as something she saw as so valuable it contributed to her professional trajectory. She explained, “It’s made me feel more empowered as a professional, you know, like, I do have something to contribute to the conversation. This is something that can be a part of my career path in the future.” In summary, the weekly mentoring sessions were a combination of support and some training that impacted and influenced the TAs in their classrooms, but also how Haley perceived herself as a professional.

Informal synthesis. Throughout the semester, the TA’s participated in formal, regularly scheduled mentoring sessions to support their teaching and general growth as instructors. During this time, the TAs were also students themselves. While serving in both capacities, the TAs began understanding the connectedness of their roles in the form of synthesis. In discussing her role as both a teacher and a student, Olivia explained simply, “They’re intertwined. I don’t think that I could separate them.” Paula

experienced a comparable phenomenon. She said, “The first part of the semester, it was all separate. It was like my classes and then I teach. Now I think just because I’m understanding it more, really, like, truly understanding it, the theories themselves are making sense.” It is important to distinguish the experiences Paula and Olivia describe as divergent from application (which is featured in a later section) because application is something they also experienced. Very simply, synthesis included taking multiple pieces and converging them into one whole. As Paula described, her courses and her experience teaching converged to a degree she “could not separate them.” Although the courses Paula taught and took were once independent and “separate,” by the end of the semester, they were combined in a way that provided clarity to the theories she learned.

Indirect and Direct Influences

This section covers two sections. In the first section, I will discuss the indirect, hidden influences TAs experienced and in the second section, I will discuss the more explicit direct influences TAs experienced.

Indirect influences. The major sources of indirect influence are the larger governing system at the university and the supervisor’s approach. While in many aspects the supervisor’s approach fit into the larger governing structure at the university, it is important to explore the ways in which both structures indirectly influenced TAs to more completely understand both.

Larger governing structure. To fully understand the experiences of the TAs in the study, it is important to understand how they work and function within the larger structure of their university. As instructors, they were provided additional responsibilities not experienced by other graduate students who were not teaching.

However, because the TAs were graduate students *and* instructors, they were not afforded the same privileges as other instructors. Haley explained,

I'm not really one of the big stakeholders in what happens and so while I'm used to it, it's frustrating sometimes. Like, I'd like to affect more change in terms of how certain aspects of DE courses are treated by the university but I know that I really don't have a say at the end of the day, which is a little bit frustrating in certain aspects.

The privilege that Haley described she was not afforded is a voice in her community.

Without a voice, she does not have the agency to change aspects of the courses she taught. Haley went on to explain that although she's aware and "disheartened" by her lack of voice, she doesn't think about it much "because there's not much I can do at this point in my career." Haley's acknowledgment that it was the point in her career that prevented her from having a voice is an example of the way in which the larger university structure indirectly influenced TAs. It was not the quality of Haley's teaching or the feasibility of what she would like to change that prevented her ideas from coming to fruition. It was her role as a TA, instead of a "big stakeholder", that determined for Haley the change she thought she could create.

While TAs are largely not considered stakeholders from the perspective of leaders in the larger university structure, in some aspects, like in their classrooms, in front of their students, they are the most important stakeholder of all. Paula said, "I let them know that I'm a student as well, but I don't think they realize that most of the time. To them I'm just, like, someone who could potentially give them homework." Paula's recognition of her students' understanding of her role in the classroom was an important description of her part in the greater governing structure of the university. Even after telling her students that she's also a student, they saw her as the pinnacle of the governing

structure within their classroom because very simply, teachers are the leaders and as a teacher, Paula is a leader, too. Paula recognized that her students saw her as “someone who could potentially give them homework,” meant that Paula, if only indirectly, recognized her role as teacher within the larger governing structure meant that she was in a position of leadership.

Supervisor’s approach. From a more local perspective, Peter’s approach to how he supervised the TAs was also a source of carefully considered indirect influence. Peter described his approach as “instructional,” which meant he was interested in the TAs learning from their experiences but also, when appropriate, also learning from him. He said,

I look at it more like a parenting model where I will kind of let the leash out as far as they want to go and then teach them how to write solutions and answers but then be there if there if they need some help.

A great example of Peter “letting the leash out” was his acceptance of Haley’s request to not attend the mentoring sessions. As Haley said, “I tried to make it sound like I was asking permission without telling and also expressing how much I really do want to take the reins and he was very much okay with that.” Peter’s support of Haley taking over the meetings was an indirect influence because it helped Haley identify her role in the preparation of the TAs. Without Peter attending every meeting, the responsibility of facilitating the meetings and ensuring the success of the TAs was all hers. Peter’s absence from the weekly meetings also acted as an indirect influence for the other TAs.

As Olivia explained,

It hasn't been stated directly but because we meet with her weekly and not the supervisor weekly, there's just an informal, unstated, unsaid thing that drop it by her first, then it just goes to the top of the line.

Olivia's description of the unspoken protocol she felt obliged to follow indicated that the TAs also received the same unspoken message that Haley was in charge.

Peter was not only physically absent from the mentoring meetings. His general hands-off approach also extended to the TAs teaching. As Haley described, "I have autonomy in the classroom. There are some general guidelines I'm given but I'm not observed. I'm allowed to do my own thing, I'm trusted, really, to run things on my own." Haley's confidence that she is reliable to make good decisions while teaching because Peter did not observe or interfere is another example of Peter's indirect influence. He described his approach as "respecting autonomy within bounds" and so the reason Haley had the freedom she did was determined largely by the fact that she stayed within the bounds Peter set.

Direct influences. The major sources of direct influence on the TAs as they were being prepared to teach were multiple assigned roles, the supervisor's guidance, scholarship, academic experience, and the structures created to help TAs learn from their peers.

Multiple assigned roles. Although the primary focus of this study was the participants' roles as TAs, the participants were also graduate students who were taking classes, conducting research, and in their personal lives, participating as family members. Discussing her many roles, Haley said, "I mean primarily we're here to learn and take classes. We're also becoming emerging scholars, conducting research, and assisting faculty with research, so it's like we have a lot of hats that we wear depending on the situation." The many "hats" and "situations" that Haley figuratively referred to was a

great illustration of the ways in which her many roles directly influenced her. Put in other words, Haley changed behaviors depending on the role she was assuming.

As a first-semester doctoral student, Paula felt the pressure and time constraints of her multiple roles directly influence her as a student but also her as a mother and wife.

She explained,

The further we go into the semester, the less time I'm spending with my family because it's just a lot to get done. So I think they've kind of grown used to it just from the years that I spent at the masters-level work but I told them this is going to be even more intense.

Paula's experience is an important consideration of the direct influences of TAs because it shows that the preparation experience often goes beyond the classroom and campus and also impacts time spent at home.

Supervisor's guidance. While the approach of the TA supervisor, Peter, was indirect in many ways, his guidance was also very direct. Specifically, Peter's control over the course structure, which was determined, in part, by a research project he was conducting, which directly influenced the TAs.

Course structure. Although the TAs were given some leeway in how they designed their courses and executed lessons on a day-to-day level, in many ways, the course structure was determined by Peter. He explained,

I'm kind of setting the bounds with these TAs and giving them my goal for what I want, like at a minimum I want them to do integrated reading and writing. I want them to do multi-modal literature. I want them to do multidisciplinary. But from that, how they interpret integrated reading and writing is up to them.

Peter's decision to turn the developmental education-level reading course into an integrated reading and writing course was the most salient direct influence the TAs experienced that semester. Before deciding how they would interpret integrated reading

and writing, the TAs had to first understand what that concept was. Additionally, there were other “bounds” Peter set. Olivia explained,

We have a portfolio system: process over product orientation. Then we have the exams. They can't retake them once they take it that's it; that's their grade, which is product oriented so I had a little bit of a problem with that.

The additional “bounds” that Olivia described was a direct influence on the way she designed her course in three ways: she was required to use a portfolio system, give exams, and use two methods of assessment she perceived to be conflicting and problematic. She went on to say, “I would have never given them a test in an integrated reading/writing class.” However, the reason the TAs were expected to administer exams was because throughout the semester of the study, Peter was gathering data to research the integrated reading and writing courses the TAs were teaching, which was also a direct influence on the TAs.

Scholarship. As graduate students, the TAs in the study encountered scholarship that directly influenced their teaching through two important avenues, their coursework and their formal preparation session materials.

Coursework. The participating TAs named a variety of courses that directly influenced their instruction. In many ways, the TAs’ coursework also helped to train them to be better teachers, which-- as discussed in an earlier section-- was something Olivia noted was missing from the mentoring sessions. These courses mentioned as influential included Student Motivation, Foundations of Integrated Reading and Writing Pedagogy, Policy and Politics of Developmental Education, and Composition Pedagogy. The course most often mentioned by all three TAs was the Theory and Research of College Academic Literacy course that was running the semester of the study. This is

noteworthy because only two of the TAs were enrolled in the course. Of the course, Olivia explained,

I'm getting a lot of theory that I've been hungry for in the Academic Literacy course and if you took that element out we would, as reading instructors, really only get a lot of practical advice. We wouldn't have that theory to support or explain why we're doing things.

The course was especially influential for Olivia who learned more about the theory that helped to drive her course, which she also described as an important "supplement" to the mentoring sessions. Much in the same way, Haley was directly influenced by the theory she learned about in the Foundations of Integrated Reading and Writing Pedagogy course she took the summer prior to the study. She said the course, "really influenced me to think about, like, Rosenblatt's transactive theory of reading and writing." While Olivia was influenced by the introduction of theory generally, Haley was especially influenced by one theory in particular.

Just as the scholarship the TAs encountered in their coursework was influential, the courses the TAs taught were also directly influential because the course provided a space for the TAs to see the theories they were learning about in a real classroom and apply what they were learning. Haley explained, "How I conceive of literacy makes so much more sense now that I'm aware of what I do as a teacher and how I'm teaching my class." Olivia echoed Paula's observation and said, "That connection of taking what I'm learning as a student to help me as a teacher, that direct and obvious connection, has just exploded in terms of growth." As a result, what the TAs' are learning from the classes they were taking was supplemented and improved by what the TAs were teaching in their coursework.

Formal preparation session materials. As Olivia explained, most of the formal preparation session materials came in the form of “lesson ideas, activity ideas, writing prompts, reading assignments, reading techniques, writing techniques,” which were all directly influential to TAs’ because they were all tools to support TAs’ day-to-day instruction.

Unlike the influential scholarship the TAs encountered, which came from a professor, the scholarship shared in the mentoring sessions came from all the TAs. Haley explained, “there’s a lot of like, I’m sharing a lot of things that I see being taken and adapted and there are things that I’ve seen and taken and adapted.” In some ways, this made the resources the TAs shared more directly influential than the scholarship they encountered from their coursework because the TAs were all sharing resources to help teach the same course. Also important was Haley’s use of the word “adapted.” This suggests that Haley had been influenced by the resources that had been shared. This is an important distinction because in the process of adapting a resource, she took information or an assignment from another TA and changed it to fit her classroom and her instructional style. These additions also changed her schedule to fit the new resource. In the process of incorporating the new resource into the existing structure of her class, Haley was being influenced by the resource and the purported success of her fellow TAs experienced using the resource.

By the end of the semester, Olivia slightly altered the way she introduced new resources to the mentoring sessions. In an effort to “purposely add theory to the mix,” she said she “made it a point to bring in articles by big names in the field like Peter Elbow, like Bartholomae, Petrosky, Rose, so that should they be interested in looking up

more, they have some of the seminal names.” This was another example of Olivia attempting to incorporate more training to the already supportive mentoring sessions, which was something that Paula found successful. Olivia suggested Paula read *Facts, Artifacts, and Counterfacts* by David Bartholomae and Anthony Petrosky and Paula appreciated the suggestion because she “didn’t have to go out and do that extra research and wonder whether that’s something useful, you know. I know from them that that’s something that you use so that helped me.” Olivia’s book suggestion was directly influential to Paula because Paula trusted Olivia’s experience to know whether something was worth reading. The Bartholomae and Petrosky book is a seminal work for integrated reading and writing; however, Paula was not directly influenced by that as much as Olivia’s word. In this instance, the resource was directly influential because of who suggested it.

While everyone was invited to share during the regularly-scheduled mentoring sessions, Olivia made an explicit attempt to have the less experienced TAs share more.

We’re at that point in the semester where I would love to see those more inexperienced teachers take some-- have some agency because they’re not terrible teachers. They have good ideas. I just think that they don’t feel like they have the same agency as myself and the peer mentor who are more experienced so I would like them to because they do have stuff to share. It’s just a matter of making them feel comfortable to do so. Making them feel like their ideas are valued.

Although resources that had been shared were generally direct influences on other TAs’ teaching, Olivia wanting the less experienced TAs share more was also her attempt at indirectly influencing the less experienced TAs. As she explained, having them share the tools they use in their classrooms will help them to develop a sense of agency and ownership of their new identity as instructor.

Academic experience. As graduate students, the TAs each had an extensive experience in academia. The two most directly influential aspects of the TAs' academic experience were their experience with students and their experience as students.

Experience with students. Throughout the course of the semester, the TAs were learning more about how to become a successful teacher just by spending time in the classroom. As Paula explained, "This semester I am just kind of taking it in from everywhere and molding it into my own so I hope that next semester I'll have a clearer idea of what it is that I want early on." Paula actively decided to use the semester as a learning experience to help inform the direction she wanted to take when teaching in the following semester. In this aspect, her time in the classroom this semester will directly influence the ways in which she operates in her classroom in following semesters.

The semester of the study was the first time Olivia taught an integrated reading and writing course. In her years of teaching experience, Olivia taught primarily composition courses so this was her first time teaching reading. The experience informed both her understanding of reading and writing. She said, "As a writing instructor, I've been aware of the reason for why students write the way they do... but I never included in my mind their history with reading." She went on to explain that by requiring student to turn in notes on the texts they read, she was better able to see the way students were reading texts, which helped her understand the decisions students made as writers by considering how they were reading. In this instance, Olivia's experience considering students' skills as readers and writers was a direct influence not only on how she understood writers but also, how to approach writing differently. In another interview she explained very simply, "I will probably learn more by the end of this semester than

my students.” This is not an indicator of the quality of Olivia’s instruction, but rather how teaching was a rich and influential experience.

Experience as a student. All of the TAs mentioned using their current experience as students or remembering what it was like to be an undergraduate to help them better understand and connect to their students, which ultimately acted as a direct influence. Haley’s experience as a struggling undergraduate helped inspire her to want to give her students a better college experience. She said,

I didn’t have those supports as a freshman in college so it means a lot to me to be there to help them however they need in navigating the college experience as well as learning how to read and write more strongly.

Similarly, Paula’s time in a developmental education-level math course helped her to understand her students a little better as well. She said, “I just identify a lot with those kids. I remember going through all of that.” Both Haley’s and Paula’s experiences as an undergraduate became directly influential to how they approach their classroom. For Haley, her experience motivated her to support first-year students’ literacy development and for Paula, her experience helped her to better understand her students.

Just as the TAs’ previous experience as undergraduates was influential, so too was their experience as graduate students. Olivia explained,

I’ve actually been talking to my students about how hard quant has been to me and how I, for one instance, spent 14 hours doing my first computer assignment for that class and I think that that helps them to see me as a real human being and realize that everybody struggles.

Identifying the ways in which Olivia was a struggling student was directly influential to her teaching in two ways: first, it gave her the first-hand experience of what it was like to be a struggling student and second, it helped her find a way to identify with her students in an attempt to make them feel better about their struggles.

Structures created to help TAs learn from their peers. The mentoring sessions, which served as a formal structure for the TAs to learn from their peers was also an important and influential experience. Paula found the experience helpful because it gave her the experience of more classrooms than her own. She explained, “With the other TAs, it’s really what they’re doing in their class and the reaction from the students. So it’s like that hands-on experience, you know. They’ve done something and this is how [the students] reacted.” Through hearing about other TAs’ classrooms, Paula had a better understanding of the kinds of activities that could be successful in hers. In this way, the experience of other TAs was a useful resource that helped influence Paula’s decisions on what she could try to use in her classroom.

Another aspect of the mentoring sessions that was helpful was that the sessions changed based on the needs of those attending. Olivia explained,

Our meetings have morphed into something that I think is much more productive than what they were in the beginning. It's time for resource sharing instead of the time for our peer mentor to manage us, if that makes sense. She's actually getting some resources from us and vice versa. So it's really an exchange of sharing, which is nice.

Whereas Haley began the semester function in more of a management-type role with the other TAs, she changed her approach to better suit the needs of the TAs. In this aspect, Haley, and by extension, the mentoring sessions, were influenced directly by the needs of the TAs. The TAs were also directly influenced through the support and resources they received through the mentoring sessions.

Within-Case Analysis of HSI 2

HSI 2 had the smallest total student population in the study and approximately 45% of the students at HSI 2 identified as Hispanic. The participants at HSI 2 worked at

the Writing Center, which was housed within the university's learning center and led by Laurel, the Writing Center Director, and Renee, the Writing Center coordinator. The participating writing center consultants at HSI 2 were Liz and Monica, who were in their first semester working in the Writing Center, and Alex, who was a recent graduate of HSI 2 who worked as a professional consultant in the Writing Center.

Preparatory Experiences

In this section, I will describe the experiences of graduate students who are prepared to work as writing consultants in the Writing Center at HSI 2. The preparatory experiences of writing center consultants came in the form of both formal and informal experiences. Formally, consultants attended a pre-semester training session and they also attend regularly-scheduled professional development sessions. Informally, these preparatory experiences also created the opportunity for writing center consultants to synthesize their experiences in multiple roles including consultant, grader, graduate student, and adjunct.

Formal pre-semester training session. For new and returning writing center consultants, the Writing Center year began with an eight-hour training day referred to as the summer institute, as it took place before the fall semester officially began. Renee, the Writing Center Coordinator, planned and facilitated all trainings. She described the first training of the year as a "Writing Center crash course." She went on to explain it was,

...six to eight hours in the fall to kind of get everybody on the same page and lots of writing center history and theory and professionalizing and sort of making it, making it a community of people who are learning this field of study.

During this day-long training, Renee led new and veteran consultants through a binder of materials she prepared, which contained published research focused on writing

center scholarship. Monica found time spent on theory and research intimidating but helpful. She said, "...at least [we] would have a branch to hold on to, like, ok this is a foundation. This is where I start and I'll go from there. So I think it's helpful in that respect." In addition to theory, Renee also led discussions about practice such as the general rules of the Writing Center and how the most important rule was to "First do no harm." In addition to rules and procedures, consultants were also introduced to some of the pedagogy and philosophy that framed those rules and procedures, including what consultants should call students who visit the Writing Center. As Liz described,

We call them peers so we're helping a peer with the Writing Center and I thought, "Oh my God that is the coolest thing!" I really like that because I'm not better than them. Yeah, I have a bachelor's degree, who cares? They will soon have a bachelor's degree, hopefully. I don't think that makes me any smarter or more worldly than a freshman coming in. Everyone has something to bring.

Through Renee's guided discussion and activities, at the pre-semester planning session, the writing center consultants learned about theory, practice, and the pedagogy of the Writing Center.

Formal regularly-scheduled professional development sessions. Throughout the semester, professional development sessions continued in the form of hour-long all-staff meetings held every other Friday in the Writing Center. Renee organized the professional development session to meet the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) International Tutor Training Program Certification requirements, which included, among other things, the total number of hours of training to be offered, the format of the trainings, and the topics to be covered. In following the CRLA requirements, Laurel said they took the provided themes and "wrap it in Writing Center scholarship" to maintain compliance to keep their CRLA certification.

For each session, the consultants were assigned a reading, which was often abridged. Laurel said, “[Renee’s] really good at taking a reading, a suggested reading and cutting it down into the main points and using that as a spring board for discussion.” Finally, consultants were expected to write a short response to the reading focusing on how they could apply the reading to their Writing Center practice. Consultants were expected to submit their responses before the meeting started.

While the summer institute focused more on the history, theory, and purpose of writing centers, the topics of the professional development sessions focused on practical application and procedural aspects of consulting, like how to greet and approach students. As Alex explained, “It’s not just like, ‘Okay, you guys need to be on time!’ or whatever. It’s actually training. It’s not just rules and stuff.” The focus on the majority of professional development sessions was how to work with different kinds of students and ultimately, improve students’ writing.

Informal synthesis. In combination with consultants’ preparatory experiences in the Writing Center, these participants also learned about other aspects of writing and academia in the other roles they held. Monica, who was in the first semester of her master’s program, started seeing synthesis in the form of reading the same authors. As she reflected on her first semester, she explained,

It’s a lot of synthesis... I would hear these names in my classes. I would see these names in my reading. I would hear even some of the clients repeat these names... So everything ties together, which is very helpful because you’re able to kind of organize your thoughts a little bit better.

In addition to organizing her thoughts better, Monica also found that she better understood the concepts and constructs she was learning. In this way, Monica’s work in the Writing Center and her work as a graduate student created a kind of symbiosis in

which she was able to better apply her knowledge in both places, which supported her growth as a consultant and a student as a result.

Alex, who was an adjunct professor and a professional consultant, found synthesis in her roles in a comparable way. In the final interview, Alex explained how she balanced her roles as a writing center consultant, a college-level freshman composition instructor, and a developmental education-level integrated reading and writing, or IRW, instructor. She enthusiastically explained, “Teaching IRW is kind of a different hat and that's really where I think I combine the two, where the instructor and the Writing Center. Absolutely! That's where it all kind of comes together.” What is so noteworthy about Alex's realization was that although she is a veteran consultant and experienced instructor, this was her first semester teaching an IRW course, which is what prompted the synthesis. Conversely, Monica's recognition of the synthesis was prompted from her finding parallels and overlaps in two of her new roles: writing center consultant and graduate student. In both instances, however, the synthesis supported the preparation and development of both people.

Indirect and Direct Influences

This section covers two important sections. In the first section, I will discuss what hidden, implicit messages indirectly influenced the consultants participating in the study. In the second section, I will discuss the explicit direction, instruction, and collaborations that were direct influences on the consultants.

Indirect influences. The major sources of indirect influence are the larger governing system at the university, and the supervisor's approach.

Larger governing structure. The two larger governing structures that indirectly influenced the consultants were the College Reading and Learning Association and the Learning Center director, Laurel.

CRLA is an indirect influence. In terms of writing center consultant training, CRLA requirements for International Tutor Training Program Certification were among the most influential because Renee and Laurel followed the themes provided by CRLA. While CRLA mandates topics, Renee and Laurel are careful to provide context. For example, Laurel said, “They tend to sort of-- they discuss culture but not in the context of writing in a writing center dealing with writers.” Additionally, when Renee was describing how she selected topics for trainings, she said, “CRLA mandated or determined most of that.” CRLA mandating most of the training topics was noteworthy because although both Renee and Laurel mentioned the CRLA requirements at least once in each interview, none of the consultants mentioned it at all. So again, while these are direct influences for Renee and Laurel, CRLA was an indirect influence for the consultants who received the training. In other words, although CRLA may have a significant amount of say over the preparation consultants received, the involvement of the organization was not plainly conveyed to the consultants.

Learning Center director. As the director of the Writing Center, tutoring, supplemental instruction, and assessment, Laurel had a hand in the programming of all four aspects of the learning center within which the Writing Center resided. As the Learning Center director, one of Laurel’s roles was program evaluation and training to accomplish the ultimate goal of supporting student retention. Laurel’s program planning was largely an indirect influence because she did not explain to consultants what

decisions she made. Instead, all the consultants knew was that there was a structure to follow. As Liz noted,

I rarely see [Laurel] and I-- I'm not sure what she does is important. I don't know what she does here, which I'm sure makes it sound like she isn't doing anything. I'm sure she's doing something. I'm sure she's just so busy but she's just not, like, ever in our space.

Although Liz did not often see Laurel, she frequently experienced Laurel's influence. On her role with consultants, Laurel explained, "I've made a map, I've set up how things should go, and more than anything, I'm like a support." It is important to note that although she was a direct influence on Renee, for consultants like Liz who did not know exactly what Laurel did, many of the Writing Center rules and expectations came in the form of an indirect and unstated influence.

Laurel was also very involved in the content selection of the training sessions and acted as a kind of prior review to Renee's training session planning.

I have to have copies of everything, and then I go, "okay, yeah, this is the direction we need to be going. I think we might supplement, you know, some-- this or here is some resources that I think need to be in here."

The way in which Laurel determined training topics was an implicit influence and this was especially evident when comparing Laurel and Monica's philosophy of working with English Language Learners. Laurel argued, "To me it doesn't matter what your designation is as long as you're given the resources and the tools and are treated with respect and treated with compassion and given great service." Likewise, Monica expressed, "[ESL status] doesn't matter because everybody has their different experience. I mean, to me, as long as you're coming-- as long as you're talking to somebody with respect... then you should be doing your job at least partially correctly." In seeing both Laurel and Monica's position on working with English Language Learners in the Writing

Center, it was clear they shared a philosophy, namely, a person's language ability should not change how a consultant behaves with that student and that all students deserve respect. Very simply: good service, by the standards of the writing center at HSI 2, is good service and that good service ought to be applied equally to every student who comes to the Writing Center, regardless of any designation they seem to carry or culture within which they belong.

While Laurel was very interested in participating in supporting Renee is developing and implementing training sessions, the interest seemed to be just that-- supporting. To accomplish this goal, Laurel made sure not to spend too much time in the Writing Center to not "butt in" and to make it clear that, "[Renee]'s in charge in there." One of Laurel's goals was to change the institutional culture of the Writing Center so that the new consultants "start out knowing [Renee] as the coordinator." Liz's observation of Laurel that she didn't "know what she does here" is indicative of Laurel accomplishing her goal of being an indirect influence.

Supervisor's approach. Within the larger governing structure of the university resided the governing structure for the consultants specifically, which was predominately led by Renee's approach. The major ways Renee's approach indirectly influenced the consultants was through her approach to welcoming new consultants, Renee's approach to the consultants on a day-to-day basis, and Renee's approach to structuring the formal regularly-scheduled professional development sessions to have a course-like feel.

Welcoming new consultants. For new consultants, the first day of work was the full-day training session in the summer. Although learning about the Writing Center and job responsibilities was the explicit goal, Renee described another goal, which was to,

“make people feel like part of our community, preparing them, making them feel like they’re ready to at least observe.” She went on to describe the purpose of the day was “just get them to get in the pool kind of. Like, wade in and realize that we’re all very nice and we’re here to help you and it will be ok.” Renee’s purpose and goals for the pre-semester training day was accomplished at least with Liz who described her introduction to the Writing Center like this,

Being here and meeting everyone and seeing the environment and knowing how organized [Renee] is and that we had a binder full of things that we can go home and read, I was just like, “Oh my gosh this is going to prepare me so well!” I feel in control of my experience at the Writing Center now with my time at the Writing Center and I thought that was invaluable.

The alignment between Renee’s goals for the full-day training session and Liz’s reaction to the day was an example of an indirect influence. Renee’s goal to prepare the new consultants and make them feel ready to observe seems to have been achieved in Liz’s exclamation that she felt prepared.

Interaction with consultants. Renee was responsible for the day-to-day functions of the Writing Center and as such, she spent her time with consultants and was able to indirectly and directly influence their behaviors. For example, consultants were expected to greet students when they enter the Writing Center, but when the consultants forgot to greet students, Renee explained the best reminder was for her to get up to greet the student herself. She explained, “That’s what I do, I guess, modeling it but kind of modeling in a you-should-be-doing-this way,” which was ultimately effective because, “I’m very nice and so I think they’re scared to make me mad” Renee’s understanding of her consultants’ feelings toward her-- and thereby the influence she had on them-- seemed to be accurate. When asked about Renee, Liz described, “We all sort of jokingly

say that she's the best boss that you could ever have and she really is." Liz continued to describe how Renee's presence and involvement with her and the other consultants was impactful,

I'll be saying something dumb and from across the room [Renee] will laugh about it and it's, like, really funny. I mean it makes us-- I mean-- I say it makes "us" but it makes *me* feel like she's invested in us as consultants and what's to make us better and is there to help us and is there to support us and that's really awesome and I really appreciate it.

Through the simple act of being present enough to laugh at Liz's jokes, even when she was not in the conversation, Renee became an influence for Liz in the Writing Center. More specifically, Renee was an indirect influence on Liz not because Renee did explicitly tell Liz she cared and was invested, but because Renee showed her through her actions.

Course-like feel of formal professional development sessions. Another indirect influence was Renee's course-like professional development model, which included creating a syllabus, and providing binders for Writing Center-related materials. As Renee explained,

I tell them to put their readings and whatever else in their binder so that they have all of these resources for the Writing Center in one place... So I think that contributes to the feeling of it being sort of a course.

To understand the influence of the course-like model for training, it's best to look at Renee's end-of-semester review where she said there was "a good turnout at all" of the training sessions and she's had "good turn-in rate from people" on the reading response assignments. This was especially notable because in all of my interviews with the participating consultants, each of them lamented about how busy they were and how many things they were balancing at once. Considering their sentiment, a good attendance

and turn-in rate and what was essentially optional assignments and meetings was the likely the result of the indirect influence of the trainings.

Direct influences. The major sources of direct influence on the writing center consultants were multiple assigned roles, the supervisor's guidance, scholarship, academic experience, and the structures created to help TAs learn from their peers.

Multiple assigned roles. The writing center consultants who participated in the study balanced multiple roles, which included roles that overlapped or influenced Writing Center roles. Many of these additional roles came with direct influences to how the participants functioned, which made these additional roles a direct influence.

Consultants as graders. In addition to being consultants, both Liz and Monica also worked as graders for sophomore literature courses. While these were not positions linked to their roles as writing center consultants, the role of grader was a direct influence. For example, when asked what Monica and Liz would do if one of the students in one of the classes they are grading for came into the Writing Center, Monica said she would, "go ahead and push them to someone else if at all possible because it seems to be... weird." In this instance, Monica's role as grader would influence whether or not she would take a particular student.

On the other hand, Liz identified a potential perk of having the two positions-- writing center consultant and grader. She said

But I'm hoping the one positive thing will be, so if I have, like, four or five students come in from this class that I know have come in from this class that just absolutely, flat-out, do not know what to do for this thought paper, I can kinda report to [the professor].

As Liz described it, this situation would give her the opportunity to "spot a trend" and better serve the students by offering more instruction in class. This would create a

situation where Liz's roles as consultant and grader would directly influence her by availing her to information she would likely not otherwise be able to get.

Consultants as workshop leaders. In addition to offering one-on-one consultations for students, the Writing Center at HSI 2 also offered workshops. According to Alex, "A workshop is basically a class comes in and we have a PowerPoint and a presentation talking about APA or MLA or whatever and then we usually have some sort of activity for them to do as well." During the semester of data collection, the Writing Center at HSI 2 gave the most workshops they had ever conducted in a semester and by November, there were four to five hour-long workshops per day. This allowed so many workshops that in our final interview Renee said, "I'm willing to bet that in workshops alone, we've seen probably 80 to 90% of the freshman class" and that of the 10 to 20% they did not see, "I can name the classes. I think there were like five or six that we didn't see this semester." As a result, workshops became a significant part of the service the Writing Center provided.

For some, this change in the number of workshops acted as a direct influence because workshops caused the Writing Center and its consultants to function differently. As Alex noted, "I have expressed my concern that we're becoming more of a workshop center than a writing center." This "workshop center" was particularly influential for Alex's writing center practice because while she would once "look at their organization, the structure of their sentences, [and] make sure everything's nice," when she taught workshops, which were usually focused on different writing styles in specific content areas, the focus was general instruction to a class of students. The change from one-on-one to a group instructional style in addition to offering instruction on writing styles

instead of offering just-in-time support directly influenced participants' responsibilities and their understanding of their purpose.

Supervisors' guidance. In the Writing Center at HSI 2, there were two distinct supervisors who directly influenced the consultants in unique and important ways: first, the Writing Center coordinator, Renee, and second, the Writing Center Director, Laurel.

Writing Center coordinator. As a supervisor, much of Renee's influence was explicit. The two major ways she acted as a direct influence on her staff was by providing on-going training and by serving as a reference to the consultants. For example, early in the semester of data collection, one of Monica's biggest concerns was to not edit students' papers-- as that would conflict with the Writing Center rules. What helped to give her peace on whether or not she was editing students' work was Renee's corrections. Monica explained, "It's almost like you'll know when you have been wrong because your boss will come in and be like, 'nu-uh'" For Monica, Renee's interruptions as she was consulting was an direct influence because Monica was then able to clearly understand what she was doing wrong and how to fix it. Liz felt a similar support from Renee as Monica. She said if she ever struggled in a consultation, "[Renee] is immediately available for us and she's as much as a resource as like the handout wall and the manuals and the internet." At the risk of overstating, it bears repeating that Liz compared Renee's knowledge and availability to the internet, arguably the single most influential technological development in history. Renee was a direct influence on her staff by providing the knowledge and tools necessary for them to be successful consultants.

Writing Center Director. Laurel was also a direct influence on writing center consultants because she set expectations of consultants and acted as the disciplinarian.

She said,

I'll go in and say, "This is what's going on and this needs to stop" or "This trend needs to-- or we need to make sure." But I always give them the why. It's not an arbitrary something or other.

Laurel's use of transparency when she acted in the "bad cop" role was an example of the way she acted as a direct influence to the consultants. Instead of arbitrarily changing rules or haphazardly acting as a disciplinarian, Laurel clearly described her rational and reason for taking issue with consultant behavior.

Scholarship. The consultants regularly encountered scholarship in the form of research articles, which the consultants described as influential. The two sources of scholarship directly influencing TAs were their coursework and the materials from their formal preparation sessions.

Coursework. As graduate students, the consultants were exposed to scholarship in the courses they were taking, however, it was their experience with the scholarship they created that was influential for the participants. When struggling with writing a paper for a class, two of the consultants made appointments at the Writing Center to get help. Of the experience, Liz said, "I thought that was really great. I'll probably go back to him for a couple of other papers stuff so that's, that's been like a good resource for, like, me as a student to have him there." Monica also had a positive experience. She explained,

I made appointments here, believe it or not. I made appointments with my own co-workers because I wanted to a.) get a feel for being on the other side and b.) I needed the help and they actually were very helpful and so it's another way to tie it in.

This experience was influential for Liz and Monica because they were able to see first-hand what it was like to be a student struggling with her writing and how the Writing Center can be a valuable resource.

Formal preparation session materials. An important aspect of the regularly-scheduled professional development sessions were the readings and reading responses. Renee explained, “What I’m providing them with to read and what we’re talking about, they’re actually internalizing and doing something with it.” The internalizing Renee referred to was evident in Monica’s description of how she used the readings as a catalyst of reflection to guide her Writing Center practice. She explained readings were, “helpful in kinda feeling out what’s working and what’s not working.” In this way, her evaluation of her practice is guided by the articles she’s reading. For Liz, however, the readings are influential in a much bigger way. She said, “I think those articles are really interesting and they make me feel like this is not so much like a job... It’s something that I like can add to like my repertoire of things that I’m good at, right.” Liz went on to describe all of the things these readings would influence, including the way she teaches freshman composition, which she expected to do the following academic year. In this way, the professional development readings influenced Liz’s present work as well as how she will approach future endeavors.

Academic experience. The two main ways academic experience directly influenced consultants was their experience as a student and their experience working with students.

Experience as a student. Consultants consistently mentioned how their personal

academic struggles helped them to relate to students and better serve them. For example, Alex remembered her first few years of college when working with students. She said,

I feel like that because I was a “bad student” my first year or two, I think that helped me be a better teaching and mentor to students because whenever they come in, they’re so ashamed of getting, like, low scores or whatever and I’m like, “I was there, too! It’s ok! You have time to redeem yourself.”

Conversely, when parsing out the differences between graduate and undergraduate students, Monica explained focusing on similarities was more important in “using your experiences to put yourself in the place of the student.” She went on to explain that as a graduate student,

We all have the Starbucks cup in one hand, books under the arm, that look of just pissed off anger--no, pissed off fear... We’re all stressed. We’re all in this together... You’re just one of the, one of the members of the population trying to do your thing to the best of your ability, whatever that thing is.

The major difference between Alex’s approach and Monica’s approach to understanding students who struggle was that Liz and Alex focused on their previous experience as struggling students whereas Monica was mindful that her academic struggle was not over; she just knew a little more about what to expect. While the consultants’ approaches are direct influences to their Writing Center practice because they intentionally tap their experience to help reach students, the difference is noteworthy because while Alex saw parallels based on who her students were and who she was, Monica found the resemblances to her current struggle.

Experience with students. The consultants were also influenced by the experiences they had with the students in the Writing Center. While all of the consultants described the training as influential, Alex, the most experienced consultant in the study

said while the training is influential, it pales in comparison to the actual experience. She said,

So they give you this sort of background on writing centers... but it really doesn't matter until you actually experience it so that's why I can see why we kind of just throw them into the ring... I think doing is better than reading about it per se.

In summary, although reading about theory and understanding the background of writing centers was valuable, the real training or *influence* comes from actually having the experience. This is an example of a direct influence because as new consultants gain experience through working with students in the Writing Center, they were given the opportunity to apply what they learned from the scholarship in the formal training sessions.

This sentiment was echoed in Liz's descriptions of the value of gaining experience in the Writing Center. Liz talked about this specifically in how her experience with second language learners, who she referred to as L2s, were influential because she had an easier time working with those students. She said,

Like suddenly I hit, like, three L2 students in a row, and I was like, "Okay, I can do it," like it was fine. It was just like okay, awesome... Maybe it's because I've had a couple of L2 students who have come back to talk to me that, like, they're, I don't know, bringing their business back to me in particular empowered me as a writing consultant.

Just as Alex described, although Liz knew the procedure to follow when working with students in the Writing Center, it was not until she had the experience of being successful doing it that she was influenced-- what she described as empowered-- by that experience.

Structures created to help TAs learn from their peers. Another influence the consultants note was each other in two important ways. The newer consultants looked to the more experienced consultants for their knowledge and experience and the more

experienced consultants used their opportunity to share their knowledge as an opportunity for growth.

Monica described the process of listening to the more experienced consultants as an important aspect to her growth. In referring to the newer consultants, she said, “We’re still in the process of um trying to apply what we’re hearing to real life and they’ve already done that for a number of years but we can kind of look at them as an example.” The distinction that Monica does not intend to emulate the experienced consultants, but rather learn from them is an important one in terms of considering influence. By listening to the more experienced consultants and considering their experiences to inform her writing center practice, Monica combined her knowledge with theirs.

Alex, the more experienced consultant, said she believed she had a responsibility to share her experiences with the newer consultants. She said she could “give examples, whatever the reading is that week, we can be like, ‘Okay, this is what happens in real life.’” As Renee explained, sharing these experiences also cultivated the experienced consultants. She said,

They’re the people who have been in the community longer so they’re more knowledgeable about certain things and they’re willing to help and share their knowledge, which I think makes anybody grow or develop as a person because you have to share yourself with somebody.

The result is an interesting and rich situation in which everyone was influencing and being influenced. In constructing the training sessions in this way, Renee provided the opportunity for development and growth to all of the consultants.

Within-Case Analysis of HSI 3

HSI 3 was the second-largest university and the university with the largest percentage of students who identified as Hispanic in the study. The participants at HSI 3

were involved in teaching the university's co-requisite course that combined developmental education-level writing and freshman level composition into one course that meets for two and a half hours twice a week. The TAs and the co-requisite course was supervised by Sean, the university's Writing Program Administrator and an undergraduate and graduate-level faculty member. The participating TAs at HSI 3 were Eric, who was teaching his second course at HSI 3, and Hilary, Melissa, and Ana, who were all teaching for the first time.

Preparatory Experiences

In this section, I describe the preparatory experiences of teaching assistants, which came in the form of formal experiences, which were mandated by supervisors, and informal experiences, which occurred beyond the officially scheduled sessions. Formally, TAs attended pre-semester training sessions and they also attended regularly-scheduled events such as a graduate course, TA meetings, and departmental meetings. Informally, these preparatory experiences also created the opportunity for participants to synthesize their experiences in multiple roles including TA, graduate student, and researcher.

Formal pre-semester training session. At HSI 3, pre-semester training typically came in the form of an orientation-like session before the semester started to introduce TAs to the course they would teaching. However, in the semester of this study, Sean was prompted to provide a different structure because so many TAs were out of town in the weeks leading up to the semester. In lieu of multiple face-to-face meetings, Sean sent course resources, scheduled a three-hour hangout on Google Plus, and then the Sunday

before the semester started, the group had one in-person meeting. Ana explained the orientation as an overview of the coming semester. She said,

We learned about the procedures and then things we need to do at least for the first month. He gave us kind of like a walkthrough of everything. Information of what you're supposed to do, the material you're going to need and basically, he just gave us kind of like a very general program, or guide for us to use in our classroom.

In this first meeting, the TAs were introduced to the materials they would need for the semester and they started the conversation about how to use those materials in practice.

The single in-person meeting left some TAs feeling under prepared, but for Melissa, the feeling of under preparedness was also beneficial in a way. She explained,

So, even though, like, I would have liked to have more preparation, I'm kind of glad it started in this way, I guess, in a sense that, like, I got through that first day and it was, you know, good. I left feeling like, like, I did a good job and, you know, the students got something out of it so, um, in a way I'm happy it started that way, but, um, I did not receive much, like, formal preparation for my first day of class at least.

Although Melissa mentioned her feeling of underpreparedness resulting from what she described as a limited orientation to teaching, she also appreciated the trial-by-fire approach to the semester as it helped develop her confidence.

Formal regularly-scheduled training sessions. After the semester started, the TAs started attending regularly-scheduled training sessions that included a graduate course, and two different types of instructor meetings.

Graduate course. The TAs are required to take a rhetoric and composition pedagogy course that Sean taught. Although the course was required for TAs, other students took the class as well and so the curriculum went beyond the first-year writing course. All of the TAs who were participants in this study were master's students in the English as a Second Language, or ESL, program. This meant they had little to no formal

training in the theories of rhetoric and composition, much less how to teach rhetoric and composition.

When asked about the graduate course, Melissa explained, “I would say it’s like partially TA prep but then it’s partially more of, like, the philosophy/theory kind of behind teaching writing and [also] writing generally.” Likewise, Ana said Sean focuses on, “problems in the classroom like in rhetoric and composition classes and so we touch on theory and we touch on practice.” As such, Sean’s focus of the rhetoric and composition pedagogy course was very much a course in both rhetoric and composition *and* pedagogy. This approach was important to mediate his students’ lack of background knowledge about rhetoric and composition, which made the course akin to a just-in-time intervention and instruction for TAs. Eric said, “You’re supposed to spend the first few weeks of class teaching them those basic concepts. It’s also the time when you are kind of learning them in [Sean’s] class.” This unique situation made it so TAs were neophytes one day, and a short time later, they were expected to function as experts. It is also noteworthy that the rhetoric and composition pedagogy course did not specifically cover developmental education-level writing courses, but instead, writing generally.

Assignments. By the middle of the semester, Sean moved the focus of the course from reading and writing about teaching to actually teaching through assigning teaching demonstrations based on student learning outcomes, or SLOs. Ana explained her experience teaching her class, which she referred to as 6325,

Basically we have been teaching like doing mini-teachings or mini-lessons in class that refer to the kinds of SLOs so one of them is like having students technology awareness ...that was my SLO and I created a mini lesson about how to use the inter-library loan system here at [HSI 3]... I chose the SLO and then I built this 8-minute lesson about how to use inter-library loan.

Following each teaching demonstration, Sean guided the class in discussing the teaching they just saw by asking what was confusing and what the TAs would steal. Sean explained this was a very important step in the process because he wanted to be sure the teaching, not the teacher, was the focus of the conversation that followed each demonstration in order to support his students' ability to apply what they learned in their own classrooms. Hilary explained that focusing on what was confusing during a demonstration was helpful for her to remember her students' perspective when she taught. She explained,

So it was a humbling experience, right, cause you feel oh gosh this is probably how my students feel when I have this elaborate idea and I just say, "ok go!" and then there all like "miss, we don't get it." So, yeah so that is good because I learn - I feel, like things I want to use in my class and I remember what it's like to be a student who doesn't get it.

Overall, the graduate course was a theory and practice-driven experience where TAs were able to learn more about a content with which they were not familiar, develop new teaching ideas and strategies, and remember the student experience.

TA and instructor meetings. TAs were expected to attend two different types of instructor meetings. The first was a twice-monthly meeting with the all of the first-year writing instructors. The focus of these meetings was program-wide issues like program assessment. The second meetings were held once a week was a designated time where TAs are given time to discuss issues pertaining specifically to the classes they are teaching. Ana explained,

In the, the, Monday meetings we get to talk specifically about things we're experiencing in the class. If we have any kind of question or any kind of, I don't know, something that's bothering you, you just, talk about it with my classmates and with [Sean] because they're also in the same room and so we all talk about it.

Unlike the graduate course, which focused more on theories and general approaches to teaching, the Monday meetings gave TAs the opportunity to discuss specific issues in their classes. These meetings often included time for TAs to troubleshoot issues they may have been having in the class.

Informal synthesis. While the formal aspects of the TAs' participatory experiences were informative to their experiences as they developed as a TA, the informal synthesis that was facilitated through the formal preparation throughout the semester was also important. In discussing how her professional goals and the courses she had taken informed her thesis topic, which in turn informed her instruction, Hilary said, "Everything I am doing is intertwined now." Eric described this synthesis as helping to connect two previously disparate aspects of his experience as a graduate student. As a TA, he taught rhetoric and composition, which at times conflicted with his ESL coursework. In the semester prior to the study, Eric was assigned to teach a college-level composition class with little guidance. Throughout the semester of the study, however, Eric's teaching was complemented by Sean's course. This improved his experience because in learning how to teach the developmental education/freshman composition course co-requisite, which he referred to as 1301. Eric also learned how to identify what connects the rhetoric and composition and ESL fields and turn that understanding into something new, an amalgamation of his knowledge. He explained,

Now that I have taken the class with [Sean], I feel like I know what I am doing and also the 1301 class have been sort of a bridge between my ESL training and writing so I feel a lot more comfortable this semester so as this semester has progressed, I felt progressively more comfortable with my-- what I am doing and in my own skin as teaching on this level whereas last semester I felt something of a mismatch between what I knew and what I was teaching and now I sort of bridge that gap.

Eric's ability to "bridge that gap" not only complemented his understanding of both ESL and rhetoric and composition, but also made him feel like a more confident instructor. As such, the synthesis Eric described compliments and improved the formal preparation he received.

Indirect and Direct Influences

This section covers two important sections. In the first section, I will discuss what indirectly, or implicitly, influenced TAs. In the second section, I will discuss what directly influenced TAs, which commonly occurred in the form of explicit direction, instruction, or collaboration.

Indirect influences. The major sources of indirect influence are the larger governing system at the university and the supervisor's approach.

Larger governing structure. As members of the community at HSI 3, the participating TAs had to operate within the larger governing structure of the university, which meant they often had a role without a voice. Ana explained,

They tell us what to do and we have sort of like a general idea of what to do but we are not really asked if the things that they give us are helpful or are they really useful or does it work or not. They don't ask for that kind of feedback, like they don't really ask us how do we feel about all these things about having a very strict syllabus... So it is kind of difficult because we only discuss it between TAs but it doesn't get anywhere outside of that.

This lack of voice was confounding to Ana because although she was given the responsibility to teach others, she was not able to control what she taught, which was especially troubling in instances when the curriculum or reading seemed ineffective. Hilary shared Ana's observation when she said, "no one asks us what we think." This lack of a voice was an indirect influence because no supervisor had officially said their voices were not heard. However, by not being asked what they thought about what they

were expected to teach, Ana and Hilary were left feeling as though they did not have a voice that was valued.

The twice-monthly writing program meetings presented another situation where the power differentials were evident. Hilary described her experiences as an attendee of these meetings as times when the discussions were so beyond her understanding of the writing program, she did not understand the purpose of the meeting. She explained,

I always feel really quiet in these meetings and I'm never the quiet person in the meetings, right... I never really say anything and it makes me feel kind of awkward because I don't want to not participate but I feel as though [it is] the end of the meeting [before] I understand what we are even doing or why we are even there.

Hilary's experiences during these meetings was an indirect influence because no one had to tell Hilary she did not know as much or did not have as much experience as the others in the meeting, she knew it through her lack of understanding. She continued,

... sometimes I interject stuff and then sometimes I feel like an imposter, like "surely they must be experts in, like, whatever" but they give me good feedback and they don't make me feel like a newbie I guess so that's cool.

By explaining that no one makes her feel like a "newbie," it is clear that the influence is implicit as Hilary's experience was based on the unsaid and the unacted.

Although the larger structure of the university situated the TAs as functioning without a voice that was heard, in some ways, they also embraced their lack of responsibilities. In comparing his role to the role of lecturers, Eric explained, "I only have 25 students so I can't complain. I mean if I was a lecturer... you would have 125 people to grade." For Eric, the lack of autonomy meant a lack of responsibility in terms of the number of students he taught. Ana also appreciated the advantages Eric described. She said,

I think what I like about my position here as a TA is that everything um-- if I have some kind of questions or if I am-- if I don't know how to deal with those certain lessons or something in my classroom as a teacher I can just go ahead and ask either my boss or any other faculty and I'm sure they will be able to help me.

In summary, Ana and Eric felt as though their role as TAs, and more importantly their role as students, made the supports of others more available. After all, in the larger governing structure of the university, that is how students are generally approached, with support. Ana and Eric's role as instructors were second to their role as students. Their understandings of how they fit into the larger structure as students acted as indirect influences on how they understood their roles, which was punctuated by their comparisons of themselves to lecturers. The dissimilarity in workload was important, but not as important as the differences in their roles. Lecturers were not students and as such, not in the position to receive the same supports.

Supervisor's approach. Within the larger governing structure of the university resided the governing structure for the TAs specifically. Included in this localized structure were indirect influences from Sean. The three major ways Sean was an indirect influence on the TAs was through helping TAs understand his role and theirs, making the TAs feel valued, and through Sean facilitating a community among the TAs.

Defining roles. When the graduate students who would be TAs were notified of their assignments, one of the first things Sean did was start the process of helping the TAs to understand his role as well as theirs. As Hilary recounted,

From the second that I ever emailed him, he gave me his cell phone number and told me, like "Text me if you have any questions or whatever." So I've always felt that if I have questions or if I need something, that I know who he is as the director of the Writing Program but then who the other TAs are, you know.

While in some ways this was a very explicit message, “I am your supervisor. This is how to contact me. I’m here if you need me,” what was implicit about this aspect of Sean’s approach as the TA supervisor was that this introduction and announcement of who he was and that he was available for support provided a sense of confidence for the TAs. Eric similarly described this as understanding his “place in the universe.” In this way, Sean’s availability and support was a direct influence on how Eric functioned in the classroom; however, Sean’s availability was also an indirect influence on Eric by providing him with training, security, and confidence.

TAs feeling valued. The second way Sean was an indirect influence on the TAs he supervised was through making them feel that both they and their work was valued. Hilary explained,

So even though I mean I would look up to [Sean], for example, for pedagogical practices, like he always says to us like, “you guys have such good ideas, I would want to hear them. What are you doing in your classes?”

Through Sean not only teaching the TAs about composition and pedagogy but also asking for their ideas and opinions, he allowed the TAs to share the role of expert, which validated Hilary’s experiences and knowledge. Ana also felt valued through Sean’s approach. She explained, “I think he is supervising but he's not like really like on us all the time which is-- I appreciate it. I don't feel like I am being criticized. It feels like I am really understood, like, supported.” By Sean not closely watching and controlling the TAs he supervised, Sean also gave Ana the sense that she was understood. This is a great indicator of the indirect influence Sean had as Ana did not feel as though she had to justify her actions and decisions, but instead, they were valid and valued.

Facilitating sense of community. The third noteworthy way Sean was an indirect influence on the TAs is by facilitating situations in which TAs were expected to depend on their peers. Most pointedly, by the end of the semester of the study, Sean had carefully calculated absences during the weekly TA meetings in order to create an opportunity for the TAs to discuss the courses they were teaching without his prompting. He explained,

I just don't go. I let them be. I think I try to tell them that I would be a little be late and that I had a lot of stuff going on so I was running from place to place but we only had this hour each week and I would really appreciate it if they just hung around and be patient but I just, I just sit in here listen to music and play guitar for ten minutes and then they learn how to talk. They couldn't talk a lot in the beginning and they talk so maybe that's a little bit me.

Sean gave the TAs the opportunity to learn how to discuss their courses without him present through choosing not to attend the TA meetings on time. What is notable about this example is that none of the TAs mentioned Sean's tardiness to these meetings. Some of the TAs noticed when he was absent, which will be discussed in a later section, but throughout all of the interviews, no one mentioned any suspicion of him intentionally arriving late. This was a great example of Sean's indirect influence in that he purposefully acted in such a way to change the TAs behavior without the TAs' knowledge.

Direct influences. The major sources of direct influence on the TAs are multiple assigned roles, the supervisor's guidance, scholarship, academic experience, and the structures created to help TAs learn from their peers.

Multiple assigned roles. The TAs of this study held multiple roles, which directly influenced their experiences.

TAs' multiple roles. The most salient example of the influence of the TAs' multiple roles was each participant's role as both a TA in a rhetoric and composition program and as a graduate student in an ESL program. While both programs were housed within the English department at HSI 3, the scholarship and philosophies of ESL and rhetoric and composition are different, which meant that the TAs were learning a different content than they were teaching. However, spanning two disciplines was beneficial to their teaching. Eric described the ways in which his approach to teaching 1301 was influenced by his studies in ESL, which he referred to as linguistics below. He said,

So I think one advantage we have that the comp./rhet. majors don't have is we've already developed the whole theory and practice of how to introduce people to a new language and so if you teach them academic English as a foreign language, if you will, because that is what it is, to most of them, they seem to really catch on to it right away.

The direct influence of his knowledge of linguistics and ESL changed the way Eric taught his course as well as the way he approached the entire idea of academic English. Ana also applied her knowledge and the philosophies of ESL to her course through speaking to her students in both English and Spanish, which she perceived to be at the benefit of her students. She explained,

I guess it's very-- like it's a positive way to have two languages available cause we know English is the standard version that we use in schools and also having the possibility of speaking other languages in class, kind of like validates their own languages. That's how I see it and that's because I-- my Master's is in ESL so I feel very comfortable.

With Ana's ESL and bilingual backgrounds, she created a classroom environment where her students had the opportunity to communicate with her in multiple languages in order to understand assignments. Working with the understanding that her courses were to be

taught in English, Ana was able to navigate a sometimes bilingual classroom because of her graduate work in ESL. As such, Ana's approach to teaching was directly influenced by her ESL background.

Supervisor's guidance. As both the TA supervisor and the Writing Program Administrator, Sean was responsible for developing the curriculum and course structure for the courses the TAs taught. The structure he created acted as a direct influence as it determined what the TAs taught, how they taught it, and where and how they were allowed to create assignments and make changes to the course structure. Eric described this structure by saying, "we're just teaching different sections of the same course." The structure of the course also directly influenced the TAs because with the assigned structure came assigned readings. Many of the TAs described the assigned readings as so unpalatable that it made teaching a struggle. Hilary explained,

I keep hearing this thing over and over where it's like, "it's the teacher's responsibility to motivate students," and I'm like, "Jesus Christ!" Like how am I supposed to motivate them when this is what they are reading? You know? It takes a lot of energy to get excited about it and to talk about it in class with a smiling face and with a positive attitude.

Midway through the semester, Ana was frustrated with the readings as well, so she planned to stop using all that were required. In discussing how she would teach the following semester, Melissa said she would also use fewer readings as she was experiencing a comparable frustration with the readings. Hilary, Ana, and Melissa's distaste for the readings is noteworthy. Although these TAs sometimes did not see the value in what they were teaching, in order to stay within the course structure within which they were told to operate, they had to. In this way, the course structure acted as a

direct influence because it not only dictated what the TAs talked about, but it also put them in a position in which they had to teach material they did not like.

Allow leeway. Although the course structure determined much of what the TAs could teach, Sean did allow for some leeway in how the course was taught. For Melissa, customizing her course through rewriting the course assignments gave her a sense of confidence. She explained,

I took the examples that [Sean] had given us and then I like revised them. So like each major assignment I added in my own document. So I think after going through and like revising them for myself that I was able to kind of get a hold of it a little bit more. So I think that's what really helped me to calm down.

The aspects of the course where Sean allowed leeway for the TAs to make slight changes or develop their own methods were very positive for the TAs. This act of allowing leeway was a direct influence because it directly affected the freedom they had and the ownership the TAs felt for their courses.

Scholarship. The TAs regularly encountered scholarship in many forms. Scholarship included research articles, their own research studies, as well as the assignment descriptions the TAs used to teach their courses. The two major forms of scholarship that directly influenced TAs were their coursework and the materials from their formal preparation sessions.

Coursework. As graduate students, coursework acted as a major influence in developing them as instructors. For the participating TAs, the direct influence of coursework came mostly in the form of application. Melissa's World Englishes class was especially influential to how she understood her students' writing. She explained,

I think that class has helped us just becoming more aware of the different writings of English and kind of trying to identify why they are choosing this sentence

formations that they are choosing in their papers like based on their previous language backgrounds.

Much in the same way, Eric read a book that interrogated how bilingualism should be not be considered a disadvantage, but rather a benefit. Of the author he said,

She says really as a bilingual, even if you have limited abilities in one language, it's not so much limited, it's a supplement to your first language. So I'm trying to help them see they're not limited, they're actually more really privileged in a way to have that additional competence from birth really and see it that way and tackle it as a supplement to their knowledge as oppose to trying to catch up to something.

Again, Eric took the philosophy he learned in reading ESL scholarship and applied it to his classroom in a similar way as the way Melissa applied what she learned from her World Englishes course. The difference in Eric and Melissa's approaches to applying what they learned was that while Melissa used the scholarship she encountered in her coursework to conceptualize her students differently, Eric used the scholarship he read to help his students understand themselves in a different way.

Formal preparation session materials. Another source of scholarship that directly influenced TAs was the materials from the formal preparation sessions. A majority of the most influential materials came from the graduate course Sean taught. Some of the materials that directly influenced the TAs were directly related to writing. For example, many of the TAs noted an article about writing as a process instead of a product that was helpful. Another article related to the college experience generally was also influential. Hilary described,

It gave me an idea that has sort of influenced the way I see what we do in our class, which is that for a lot of students and commuter campuses, my classroom is the college experience, you know? So like for me, an undergraduate college experience, you know, class was a big part of it but it was going to football games and meeting new friends and getting involved and doing all this kind of stuff so my challenge now that I see is like how can I get them to make new friends in the

classroom or to become involved in different ways just based on what we do in our classroom.

Hilary used the article she read to influence the way she saw her classroom and the way she approached her students. Both the article about writing as a process and the article about the college experience were directly influential because after reading the articles, the TAs used the information to change the way they taught their respective courses.

The scholarship in the form of teaching materials that the TAs shared was another direct influence. The resource sharing was directly influential because by sharing assignments, one TA could influence the classrooms of others. For example, just as Sean's influence is felt in all of the TAs' courses because he created the course structure for them to follow, if Hilary used one of the documents Ana created for her class then Ana's influence would be felt in Hilary's class.

Academic experience. Much in the same ways in which coursework acted as a direct influence to the TAs, so too did their academic experiences. The two main ways academic experience directly influenced TAs was their experience as a student and their experience working with students.

Experience as a student. All of the TAs described how their time as students helped them to better understand their students. For example, when planning her course, Ana realized, "I always in my classes have to do presentations so I thought, 'Ok! I can use that!'" In this instance, Ana tapped her experience as a student and used it to help her share her course for her students.

Out-of-school experiences were also important in helping TAs better understand how to work with their students. For Eric, growing up in a world with multiple languages

was the direct influence that inspired him to work with second language learners. This experience helped him understand his students' experience. He said,

I know my father never finished high school and he's like 'why do you want to' – he wanted me to go to college but everything he would see me doing he was like, 'do you really need to do that?' And so I know they are getting the same sort of feedback at home, so I kind of want it to be the counteract to that.

Eric used his experience he shared with many of his students to help him understand his students and support them.

Experience with students. The more time TAs spent teaching, the more confidence they gained. Ana explained very simply, "the more experience I get, the more confident I get in my teaching." Time teaching was a direct influence on the TAs' confidence and the longer the TAs spent teaching, the more their understanding of their students developed. For example, in learning about his students' high school backgrounds, Eric said,

You know, they're being traumatized by teachers who are too harsh or teachers who just don't know what they're doing apparently and the writing you get is like, "wow!" You know, I don't even know what to do with that. You know, it's one thing-- you know if it were just ESL but it's not because there's things they tell you their teachers taught them you're like, "oh my goodness that's not good!" You're just kind of you know disappointed I guess and not at your students at all, in the system that just kind of let them down.

Eric wasn't influenced to act differently so much as he was influenced to think differently about his students and how they got to the place they were at. This was an important and moving realization for Eric, who talked passionately about how English language learners were often mistreated and underserved in each of our three interviews.

Structures created to help TAs learn from their peers. One of the most influential aspects of the TAs' experiences preparing to teach was their peers. Sean described the TAs as "incredibly engaged with each other as teachers." The engagement

to which Sean referred came in the form of resource sharing, general instructional support, as well as moral support.

By the end of the semester, the TAs were regularly sharing support, course materials, and they even started conducting formal observations of one another. Eric described the TAs as, “a pretty tight-knit group so-- at least in that element of you know just camaraderie, that kind of support as well, which it can be pretty helpful.” So helpful that Eric posited that the result of the TAs’ support and help of one and other gives their students what is essentially a team of TAs.

It helps that in the sense that there’s eight different TAs, so we can discuss what we’re all doing at the same time and get ideas off each other so that the students are not really getting just the benefit of one TA. But we all share the same office, we all interact a lot. And so we kind of bounce ideas off each other.

The sharing and support happened both in-person and electronically. Hilary explained, “We have a Facebook group for the TAs and so, um, I don't know-- especially the newer TAs, like, say like ‘Hey guys, what are ya'll doing this week?’ and then everyone kinda posts, like, an idea that they have.” Through support and sharing resources, the TAs acted as direct influences of one and other because they were all experiencing teaching the same course at the same time, which gave them all unique insight into the needs and struggles of their peers as well as the best ways to provide support and resources. On what was most influential to helping her become a better teacher, Melissa said, “getting feedback from my colleagues, I think, would be the biggest thing.” The TAs’ network of support provided a direct influence to all of the TAs because from this network helped shape the classroom activities and assignments as well as the affect of the TAs.

Cross-Case Analysis

In the following cross-case analysis, I will discuss the similarities and differences

among the most salient findings focusing on the TAs and their supervisor at HSI 1, the writing center consultants and their supervisors at HSI 2, and the TAs and their supervisor at HSI 3. This analysis will help to inform the larger conclusions, implications, and directions for future research, which I will discuss in the following chapter.

Preparatory Experiences

Preparatory experiences were a mix of formal and informal events and experiences that informed how the semester would go. All three sites had slightly different structures for providing formal training; however, similarities existed across all sites such as the use of both training and support as well as both theory and practical application. The kinds of synthesis each participating TA and writing center consultant experienced was different; however, the catalyst for the synthesis was comparable. Overall, timing was very important throughout the preparation process.

Formal pre-semester training session. The pre-semester training sessions were very important for the participating TAs and writing center consultants to feel settled and prepared for the semester. The trainings varied in length from a couple of shorter meetings to a full eight-hour day training session. The main foci of the pre-semester training sessions were practice, theory, and initiating community. The sections focused on practice included at HSI 2, explaining the basic rules for approaching a student in the Writing Center and at HSI 1 and HSI 3, reviewing the basic set-up for the course the TAs would be teaching. In reviewing theory, the supervisors discussed why particular practices would be used. For example, TAs at HSI 1 used a portfolio method to evaluate their students so conversation in the first training included how that was a measure of

growth and writing as a process. Finally, supervisors initiated community in the pre-semester training sessions through giving everyone an opportunity to meet their new colleagues.

Formal regularly-scheduled training sessions. The formal regularly-scheduled training sessions continued throughout the length of the semester. These sessions occurred either once a week or twice a month. At HSI 2 and HSI 3, the supervisor led the meetings, whereas at HSI 1, the mentor facilitated the meetings and the supervisor did not attend. At all three sites, the sessions focused on training and support. Training came in the form of a continuation of the theory and practice discussions from the pre-semester training with more attention paid to the application of theories and how those theories can influence practice. The support aspect of the trainings included time for troubleshooting in which one TA or consultant would describe a difficult time they had with a student, and others attending the session would offer their ideas for what to do in those situations. This was often the time when more experienced TAs and consultants would help to guide those with less experience by describing what has previously worked for them. The major difference between training and support is that the training aspects were generally prepared topics whereas the support aspects of the sessions were based on the TA and consultant needs. Both training and support aspects were evident across three sites. At HSI 1, however, the focus of the mentoring sessions was more support than training.

Informal synthesis. Throughout the semester of data collection, many of the participants began synthesizing their experiences as TAs or writing center consultants with their other experiences, which included their roles as instructors, graduate students, researchers, and mentors. As a result, the participating TAs and writing center

consultants were able to see the overlaps and concordance of all of their roles and gain perspective on the bigger picture.

Preparatory experiences conclusions. Time was an important aspect of the preparatory experiences of the participating TAs and writing center consultants in the study. For the pre-semester training sessions at HSI 1 and HSI 3, the TAs repeatedly mentioned they still did not feel prepared to teach throughout the semester. Conversely, the less-experienced writing consultants at HSI 2 felt very prepared to start working at the Writing Center. The major difference was the pre-semester training at HSI 2 lasted a full day whereas the formal pre-semester training at HSI 1 was two shorter meetings, and at HSI 3, one three-hour meeting.

Staying consistent with timing and frequency of the formal training sessions throughout the course of the semester was important to the participating TAs and writing center consultants as well. The mentor and supervisors at HSI 1 and HSI 2, respectively, were consistent with the frequency and length of the formal training sessions they facilitated. On the other hand, the supervisor at HSI 3 started canceling TA meetings near the end of the semester, which left some TAs wanting more opportunity for guidance. Setting and maintaining formal preparation session schedules was an important aspect in the preparation process.

Finally, the participants who described the synthesis of their knowledge with their multiple experiences and roles were able to do so based on the time they spent with each of their multiple experiences. In other words, the catalyst of identifying synthesis across their knowledge, many roles, and experiences was the outcome of identifying how new experiences fit with existing roles.

Indirect and Direct Influences

The participating TAs and writing center consultants in this study encountered both indirect and direct influences that impacted the ways in which they taught, consulted students, and understood their roles.

Indirect influences. The preparatory experiences and the direct influences on TAs and writing center consultants were generally similar. However, the most notable differences across the three sites were the ways in which the participants discussed sources of indirect influence.

Larger governing structure. The larger governing structure varied at each site. The participants at HSI 1 talked about the larger structure in terms where they fit within the university organization as a whole, whereas the consultants at HSI 2 talked more about the learning center within which they were located as the larger structure of governance. Even though the writing center coordinator at HSI 2 discussed the Writing Center's place within the larger structure of the university, the consultants seemed not to be as aware. The participants at HSI 3 focused their discussion of a larger structure on the department as a whole, namely comparing the role of TAs to lecturers and professors. The TAs at HSI 1 and HSI 3 discussed how their role as TAs meant they had less of a voice and less responsibility than other instructors. Also parallel was the TAs at both sites identified the lack of responsibility as both a perk and a draw back. Whereas the TAs were not able to make appreciable differences in the design or approach to the courses they were teaching, they found the amount of support and guidance they received as students a major advantage of their student status.

What was similar at each site is that the larger governing structure, no matter how large or distant, indirectly influenced the participating TAs' and writing center consultants' experiences. At HSI 1 and HSI 3, the indirect influence came largely through the TAs having to balance their roles as students, who are supported, guided, and heard, with their roles as TAs, who are supported but also directed and instructed more than heard. Interestingly, the indirect influences at HSI 2 were so implicit that the writing center consultants did not seem to know they existed. For example, when a consultant discussed the Writing Center director who also directed the whole Learning Center within which it was located said, "I don't know what she does here." This is great example of how the Writing Center director operates as an indirect and implicit influence because she created what she called "the map" for the training sessions, which in many ways dictated the pedagogy of the Writing Center.

Supervisor's approach. In much the same way the larger governing structure was an indirect influence, the supervisor's approach was also an indirect influence at each site, however in very different ways. Although each supervisor's approach was to support their staff, the ways in which the supervisors operationalized providing support varied greatly. For example, at HSI 1, support came in the form of the TA supervisor not attending the regularly-scheduled sessions throughout the semester. In these strategic absences, the supervisor allowed the TAs to get the most out of the mentoring structure. At HSI 2, however, the Writing Center coordinator approached supporting the consultants in exactly the opposite way as one of her primary concerns was being present and available in the Writing Center so that she was able to model ideal behavior and interject in consultations to provide feedback and interventions when she saw someone

struggling. Falling somewhere between approaches of the supervisor at HSI 1 and HSI 2 was the support provided by the supervisor at HSI 3. Initially, the supervisor at HSI 3 made himself very available through providing his contact information and by the end of the semester, he would frequently cancel meetings or intentionally arrive the weekly TA meetings late, which forced the TAs to figure out how to talk to each other about their teaching. In this way, the supervisor's approach to support was both availability and absence.

Even though each supervisor operationalized and approached supporting their staffs in very different ways, the resulting indirect influences were the same in that each supervisor achieved almost everything that he or she hoped to achieve with their approach. At HSI 1, the TAs developed a community of learners, at HSI 2, the consultants all felt supported and appreciated, however, not all of the TAs felt completely supported at HSI 3 because the canceled meetings left some of the TAs wanting more support.

Direct influences. Unlike the indirect influences, many of the direct influences similarly affected all of the participating TAs and writing center consultants. Even though the participants in this group varied in their roles and academic levels, what was alike was their current or recent role as a graduate student. This common thread was enough to have many of the direct influences shared across all of the sites and many of the participants.

Multiple assigned roles. All of the participating TAs and writing center consultants in the study were also graduate students or recent graduates so they all held at least two roles. These roles included grader, adjunct faculty, researcher, workshop

facilitator, ESL student, and family member. Each of the participants was directly influenced by the many hats they wore because they each had to balance those multiple roles. Most salient of this influence was the benefit each participant identified from having multiple roles. Many of the participants explained the benefit of applying what they were learning in their graduate coursework directly to the class they were teaching. Those who balanced being a writing center consultant and grader appreciated the opportunity to guest lecture and have more exposure to student writing. Generally, having multiple assigned roles directly influenced the participating TAs and writing center consultants in a positive way.

Supervisor's guidance. Also remarkably similar across all three sites was the ways in which supervisors directly influenced participating TAs and writing center consultants through setting expectations and course structures. Although the supervisors allowed TAs some leeway in making decisions related to day-to-day concerns of the course, a majority of the course structure was determined by the supervisors. As such, the direct influence was clear. The TAs were responsible for understanding the expectations and following them. At HSI 2, the writing center consultants were directly influenced by the way Renee facilitated the regularly-scheduled training sessions and providing feedback and corrections. All the supervisors were direct influences on the participating TAs and writing center consultants through creating a structure and enforcing it.

Scholarship. The scholarship that was directly influential to participating TAs and writing center consultants came in two distinct forms, scholarship that was found and scholarship that was created. Found scholarship included empirical students, articles

about theory and pedagogy, books about teaching, and conference presentations.

Scholarship that was created included writing assignments, original research, handouts, and lesson plans. Both types of scholarship were direct influences.

Coursework. As graduate students, most of the scholarship the participating TAs and writing center consultants encountered was from their coursework. In these classes, they learned about theories they later applied to better understand the classes they were teaching or the students they were consulting. Their coursework also helped the participating TAs and writing center consultants make sense of how the work they were doing fit in to the bigger picture of serving underprepared learners, which helped them see the synthesis across their experiences. Additionally, many participants used their experiences as TAs or consultants to better understand the scholarship they encountered in their coursework. Overall, the scholarship and the participating TAs' and writing center consultants' experiences directly influenced each other.

Formal preparation session materials. The formal preparation session materials at HSI 1 and HSI 3 were mostly created scholarship from the courses the TAs were teaching. All of the TAs were very open and willing to share their materials and happy to use the materials from a fellow TAs course. It is noteworthy that while many of the TAs shared course materials, the materials were truly an influence because the TAs explained how they "stole" ideas from their peers, but ultimately adapted the worksheet or activity for their course. By adapting the materials, the TAs were not only sharing materials but also influencing each other by providing their work as samples or templates. The materials at HSI 2 were also primarily scholarship that was found. As the writing center consultants were not developing course materials, most of their materials were theory or

practice-based reading materials. However, the consultants found these works to be very helpful and directly influential to their writing center practice. Overall, the formal preparation session materials were directly influential because the documents that were shared were explicitly related to the participating TAs' and writing center consultants' needs.

Academic experience. The academic experience of the participating TAs and writing center consultants included their experience as students as well as their experience with students. In both aspects, the participants agreed on two things that were also direct influences in their preparation: first, all students struggle at some point and second, the best way to become a better TA or writing center consultant is to spend time doing it.

Experience as a student. Nearly every participant enthusiastically described their own academic struggles and how those experiences helped them to relate to struggling students in a better and more genuine way. Some participants described being less successful in other content areas like math or biology, which helped them remember what it was like to struggle. Those who did not struggle as undergraduates discussed how struggling as a graduate student helped them relate to their students and many also shared those struggles with the students with whom they worked as an example that everyone struggles. Similar across all sites and nearly all participants was the sentiment that at some time or another, everyone is an underprepared learner and remembering those times and validating those struggles was a direct influence because it inspired them to keep working with underprepared learners and helped them to reach students.

Experience with students. Across all three sites, the shared sentiment with all of the less experienced participating TAs and writing center consultants was in the first interview, “as soon as I get more experience with students, I’ll have more confidence.” Then, in the second interview, “now that I have more time with students, I have more confidence but I still have a lot to figure out.” Finally, in the last interview, “Now that I have a semester behind me, I can’t wait to see how successful I will be with more time with students.” Likewise, the more experienced participating TAs and writing center consultants explained their confidence as a direct result of their time spent teaching or consulting. Many of those with more experience even argued the best training they ever had was actually working with students and as such, experience with students was a tremendous direct influence.

Structures created to learn from peers. The most beneficial direct influence the participating TAs and writing center consultants described was the structures created to help them learn from one another. Again, the structures and operationalizing of the structures looked different but the results were the same, the supervisors successfully facilitated communities of support. Because the supervisor did not attend the regularly-scheduled training sessions at HSI 1, the TAs were mostly dependent on one another for support and training in teaching. The major different at HSI 2 and HSI 3 was that the supervisors were more involved in helping to create those opportunities to share. At HSI 2, the supervisor encouraged consultants to spend time in the Writing Center even they weren’t working to get to know their peers and thereby, develop more of a sense of community. At HSI 3, the supervisor purposely arrived to regularly-scheduled sessions late to give the TAs time to talk among themselves. Across all the sites, peer support and

guidance was a prominent direct influence because participating TAs and writing center consultants said, overwhelmingly, that having access to people going through similar experiences to share ideas and see advice was important and helpful.

Indirect and direct influences conclusions. In considering both indirect and direct influences, the most salient and noteworthy feature is the impact these influences had on the degree to which the TAs and writing center consultants were autonomous. For example, at HSI 1 the supervisor's approach to support and empowering the TAs through his absence was only an illusion of autonomy. It is worth mentioning the illusion was a convincing one as one of the TAs talked extensively about the "autonomy" she had as both a mentor and as a TA. However, in each of the interviews with Peter, he mentioned how he had "given" and "allowed" the TAs autonomy and freedom in their instructional choices. The supervisor also said he was "orchestrating the situation." Considering this orchestration, the autonomy of the TAs at HSI 1 was limited. Because they were in a position to be *given* or *allowed* autonomy, they were also in a position to have it taken away. Someone else-- a supervisor-- was in control of their autonomy, which meant the TAs were not, in fact, autonomous at all. Although the supervisor decided to allow the TAs to make decisions independently of him, they did not truly achieve autonomy, only the illusion of it because the supervisor inherently holds the power and as he cannot relinquish that power, in the same manner, the TAs similarly cannot retain that power.

The consultants at HSI 2 and the TAs at HSI 3 were without autonomy in many instances; however, an important difference is that that lack of autonomy was explicit. In fact, at HSI 2, the supervisors of the Writing Center discouraged the consultants from thinking of their roles as positions of power. As one consultant described, in the pre-

semester training, she was told to refer to the students who came in for consultations as “peers,” as opposed to “clients” or “tutees” because by definition, peers are equals, which is consistent with the Writing Center pedagogy. Much in the same way at HSI 3, many of the TAs compared their lack of responsibility and a voice to others in more powerful positions such as lecturers and professors. At HSI 3, the indirect influences surrounding the TA training were consistent with the TAs’ actual level of autonomy.

The TAs and writing center consultants in this study were also autonomous in important ways throughout their semester of training. Most salient was the autonomy the TAs held as they were teaching their courses. Worth repeating is an eloquent observation by a TA at HSI 1 that although her students knew she was a student herself, she suspected that to them she was just “someone who could potentially give them homework.” This observation is significant because as instructors-- and thereby people with the ability to assign homework-- TAs hold positions of power within their classrooms because instructors are people of power. As soon as the TAs entered the classroom as the instructor, they assumed the role of the person in power in the room and their simulations role of graduate student was no longer their prominent role.

Another significant aspect of the TAs’ and writing center consultants’ self-governance was the way in which the many direct influences they encountered and managed acted as a vehicle to prepare them to be autonomous. The TAs and consultants encountered many direct influences that impacted the way they understood their roles, taught their courses, and approached their writing center practice. For example, for the TAs, the structures to learn from peers facilitated sharing classroom activities and with each resource shared, the TAs had to decide if the activity was appropriate for their

classroom and their teaching style. All of the participating TAs and writing center consultants encountered scholarship from different sources such as the courses they took, the formal trainings they attended, the books and articles shared by their peers, and even the scholarship they created themselves in the form of term papers and original research. With this wide range of scholarship undoubtedly came a wide range of theoretical perspectives and divergent viewpoints. In encountering all of this scholarship, the TAs had to decide what to do with all of that information. They had to determine what was valuable, what was consistent with or counter to their philosophical approaches to their practice, and most importantly, how to apply what they were learning. The extensive decision-making process that accompanied all of the direct influences the participating TAs and writing center consultants encountered served a very important role in their preparation to work with underprepared learners: managing all of those influences helped them at least start the process of developing and identifying their philosophies and pedagogies.

That is not to say decision making *created* autonomy in any real way. Instead, the process of defining what influences to apply and what to dismiss helped the TAs and consultants make sense of their roles and their worlds, which will support them in times when they have autonomy. For instance, one TA at HSI 1 spent her first semester teaching as a time to gather information with the ultimate goal of having a more successful course in the subsequent semesters. Most important to inform her decisions for the next semester was the direct influences of her first semester, which included her supervisor's guidance, her peers' suggested resources, her experiences in the classroom,

and her experiences as a student. Through her experiences in the semester of the study, this TA began compiling the knowledge base that will support her in the future.

The most salient example of participating TAs' and writing center consultants' management of all the direct influences as a vehicle to prepare them to be autonomous is the synthesis many participants described reaching. For example, at HSI 3, a TA described his work as a student and as a TA as "bridged." This realization resulted from the TA finding connections between four aspects of his experience: the developmental education-level writing course he taught, his pedagogy, his ESL coursework and the composition pedagogy course he was taking. The TA's synthesis was not a product of him making connections about all of the direct influences he encountered in an exhaustive way. Instead, he identified what linked and overlapped among those four aspects, which resulted in the TA describing himself as a more confident instructor. The take away here is that through being exposed to multiple and divergent direct influences, the participating TAs and writing center consultants were given the opportunity to select what resonated with them to begin to construct their pedagogies, philosophies, and identities as instructors and writing center consultants.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study show the preparatory experiences of the participating TAs and writing center consultants who taught or consulted students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses were different but many of the same characteristics were present across the three sites. Namely, all of the participating TAs and writing center consultants in this study experienced both a formal pre-semester training session and formal regularly-scheduled training sessions throughout

the semester. The pre-semester trainings featured information on both theory and practice to ready the participants to start working with students. The formal regularly-scheduled training sessions also provided a blend of two important aspects: training and support. The training the participating TAs and writing center consultants received throughout the semester was a continuation of the theory provided in the pre-semester training and the support aspect was the moral support from peers and just-in-time interventions from supervisors to support the participating TAs and writing center consultants as they were navigating their new roles. Informally, the participants also began to identify the ways in which they could understand their new roles and experiences through identifying similarities and overlaps in a synthesis.

The indirect influences the participating TAs and writing center consultants experienced were largely related to the power structures within which the participants were expected to operate. First, the larger governing system was an indirect influence on the participating TAs and writing center consultants because this structure prompted them to consider their roles and how those roles are valued in relation to the rest of the university. Additionally, the supervisor's approach was also an indirect influence. A salient finding throughout this research was that although all of the supervisors provided support for the participating TAs and writing center consultants, the ways in which the supervisors provided that support differed across the three sites. Specifically, one supervisor articulated her support by being present and others provided support by being absent in order to allow the participating TAs and writing center consultants to learn to provide support for one another.

Finally, the direct influences the participating TAs and writing center consultants experienced were all related to their roles as graduate students. The direct influences that were most closely tied to the graduate school experience was influence resulting from the participating TAs and writing center consultants having multiple roles, which was not unique to the participants in this study but a common experience of many graduate students. Other direct influences were the scholarship from the participants' graduate coursework, their overall academic experiences, and the moral and resource support from colleagues. The connection between the direct influence of participating TAs and writing center consultants and their experience as graduate students is especially noteworthy because this means their preparatory experiences were not limited to the formal training sessions their supervisors provided. Instead, those formal experiences only contributed to the participants' entire experience as graduate students, which were ultimately used to inform their developing practice as instructors and writing center consultants.

In summary, the preparatory experiences of the participating TAs and writing center consultants in this study did not happen in a vacuum. Rather, preparation was a continuous and dynamic experience that was not limited to formal preparation sessions. Instead, it was the combination of formal preparation session structures, with informal synthesis and indirect and direct influences that created the opportunity for the participating TAs and writing center consultants to develop in their roles.

Chapter Overview

This chapter focused on the unique findings from each site of the multisite case study in three within-case analyses for HSI 1, HSI 2, and HSI 3. Following the within-

case findings, the cross-case analysis parsed out the findings that were most salient across the three sites and the findings that made each site unique. The three within-case analyses and the one cross-case analysis were organized by research question. First, I discussed the preparatory experiences of the TAs, which included a pre-semester planning session, regularly-scheduled preparation sessions, and informal synthesis. Next, I discussed the indirect influences on the participating TAs and writing center consultants, which included the larger structure within which they operate as well as their supervisor's approach to supporting them. Finally, I discussed the direct influences on the participating TAs and writing center consultants, which included their multiple assigned roles, their supervisor's guidance, the scholarship to which they were exposed, their academic experience, and the structures provided to support learning from peers.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion and Implications

This multisite case study explored the preparatory experiences of and the indirect and direct influences on the graduate TAs and writing center consultants who teach and tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses at three Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) in Texas. To inform my research questions below, the data collected for this study included a total of 41 interviews with TAs, writing center consultants, and their respective supervisors. I interviewed seven TAs, three writing center consultants, two TA supervisors, and two writing center administrators. In combination with pre-interview questionnaires, interviews, and observations, I gathered and analyzed data in order to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the preparatory experiences of graduate TAs and writing center tutors at HSIs who are assigned to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses?
2. What are indirect and direct influences on graduate TAs and writing center tutors as they are prepared to teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses at HSIs?

Discussion

In this section, I will detail the ways in which the findings of this study are consistent with or contrary to the current body of related research. More specifically, I will frame the following section in consideration of Stancliff and Goggin's (2007) findings as their description of TA preparation approaches were most consistent with the

findings of this study. Stancliff and Goggin (2007) identified four distinct approaches to TA preparation in a self-study of their composition TA preparation program. Those approaches are the functional approach, the organic approach, the conversion approach, and the multiphilosophical approach. Although the Stancliff and Goggin (2007) study was singularly focused on TA preparation, their description of the four approaches to TA preparation are consistent with findings in this study regarding to both TA and writing center consultant preparation. I will discuss the functional approach as it applies to the participating TAs' and writing center consultants' preparatory experiences and I will discuss the organic approach, conversion approach, and the multiphilosophical approach as it applies to the participants' indirect and direct influences as they were being prepared to teach or tutor.

Additionally, I find it important to note that although I anticipated finding themes and trends related to the HSI status of each of the institutions in this study, I did not. Although questions throughout all of the protocols were focused on HSIs, I did not find any consistent or salient connections to TA or writing center tutor preparation and the field site's HSI designation. Some participants at some of the sites found the HSI designation of their respective institution an important part of their experience; however, those experiences varied across participants within each field site. This absence of findings is an important finding unto itself. This lack of salience surrounding the HSI designation of each field site means that required elements to achieve HSI designation still allows for institutions to have individual identity and structures. Furthermore, the absence of salience regarding HSI designation at each field site could also be connected

to the topic of this research, more so than the type of universities where this research was conducted.

Preparatory Experiences

In terms of the participating TAs' and writing center consultants' formal preparatory experiences, the functional approach most resembled the formal preparatory sessions in that it is the explicit how-to aspect of training and is the most concrete of the four approaches (Stancliff & Goggin, 2007). In a study of TA training, Janke and Colbeck (2008) identified a training versus education approach in which preparation sessions include both how-to lessons (training) and lessons oriented toward understanding philosophical approaches (education). In both the pre-semester training sessions as well as the regularly-scheduled training sessions, the participating TAs and writing center consultants engaged in the functional approach to training as they were introduced to how to talk to students, what to say, and relatedly, what not to say. Similarly, in DeFeo and Caparas' (2014) study on writing center tutor preparation, the researchers identified a training versus professional development approach, in which training was the practical, application-based approach and professional development was more holistic with a focus on applying theories to current and future experiences. Consistent with Janke and Colbeck's (2008) and DeFeo and Caparas' (2014) findings, the participating TAs and writing center consultants also spent their formal preparatory sessions focusing on theory as well as practical, functional training.

Another important aspect of quality preparation of tutors and TAs found in the existing literature and in the findings of this study is the opportunity for continuous improvement that included formal instruction on pedagogy before and during the

semester (Buehler & Marcum, 2007; Silverman, 2003). Each supervisor provided both pre-semester trainings to introduce the respective TAs and writing center consultants to pedagogical theories and best practices and then the supervisors provided regularly-scheduled trainings throughout the semester. It is noteworthy that although the supervisors did not facilitate the regularly-scheduled trainings at each site, each supervisor did create the structure where continuous training was available. Additionally, the supervisors also created structure in which the respective TAs and writing center consultants could learn and share with their peers, which included sharing pedagogical theories. Through having these experiences, the participants were exposed to the longer-term, theory-focused education (Janke & Colbeck, 2008) and professional development (DeFeo & Caparas, 2014).

Another shared preparatory experience of the participating TAs and writing center consultants was the availability of feedback and constructive criticism, which helped to facilitate continuous improvement (Austin, 2002; Buehler & Marcum, 2007; Wilhoit, 2002.) A major source of feedback was the supervisors who observed TAs or writing center consultants. The supervisors did not provide all of the feedback and constructive criticism the participating TAs and writing center consultants received. The participating TAs and writing center consultants also had the opportunity to receive feedback from their peers. For example, this feedback came in the form of TAs observing one another to give feedback and reflect on their own approaches, writing center consultants debriefing with a more-experienced consultant about a consultation that did not go well and seeking suggestions for improvements, and TAs pursuing feedback from peers about potential lesson plans. Ultimately, each of these encounters gave participating TAs and

writing center consultants the opportunity to improve their practice through critical feedback from another.

Across both TA and writing center tutor preparation literature, facilitating critical reflection is an important aspect of developing successful TAs and writing center tutors (Austin, 2002; Bell, 2001; DeFeo & Caparas, 2014; Devet, 2014a, 2014b; Stancliff & Goggin, 2007). Parallel to other findings across all three sites, the opportunity for critical reflection was available for the participating TAs and writing center consultants in different ways, which included reader response assignments to directed discussions following teaching demonstrations. At one site, this critical reflection was prompted through the supervisor assigning a reader response to carefully selected scholarly readings. At another site, critical reflection was encouraged through teaching demonstrations in two ways. First, the TA who presented a teaching demonstration received feedback and questions from classmates through an instructor-guided discussion. These guided discussions included questions about why the presenting participant made the decisions he or she made in constructing the lesson, which prompted that person to describe their decision-making approaches and consider whether those approaches were best. The second way the teaching demonstrations prompted critical reflection was for the TAs who were not presenting a lesson. As audience members, those participants were confronted with how it felt to be a student. This experience prompted some participating TAs to review critically their own teaching style and approaches to determine if they really were student friendly. What ultimately arose from these experiences were guided experiences where participating TAs and writing center consultants closely examined aspects of their practice in which they were successful and

aspects requiring more attention. In the writing center, Devet (2014) describes this process of guided reflection an important aspect to developing as a stronger tutor, which was the general sentiment of the writing center consultants of this study. Further, for the TAs in this study, the opportunity for guided reflection was especially noteworthy as Austin (2002) identified guided reflection as an important but lacking aspect to the TA experience.

The findings from this study also conflicted with the related literature in important ways. Namely, many researchers who study TA preparation argue that TAs are both implicitly and explicitly told to prioritize research above developing as instructors (Austin, 2002; Buehler & Marcum, 2007; White & McBeth, 2005; Zinn, Sikorski, & Bukist, 2004). For the participating TAs and writing center consultants in this study, however, the conflict between developing as a teacher and developing as a researcher was not evident. Rather, many of participating TAs, writing center consultants, and even some supervisors cited the mutual benefit of teaching and researching in the same semester. Some participants discussed the ways in which research made them better teachers and writing center consultants and other discussed the ways in which teaching and consulting made them better researchers. Many of the realizations of the connectedness of researching and teaching or consulting emerged in the synthesis that participating TAs and writing center consultants experienced. Another departure from the literature was DeFeo & Caparas (2014) who defined the writing center tutorship as a temporary position; however, the two less experienced writing center consultants at HSI 2 who participated in the study were two of very few who did not have years of experience in the writing center. In other words, at HSI 2, working as a writing center

consultant is anything but a temporary position, but rather a position where people stay for an extended time.

Finally, the preparatory experiences of the participating TAs and writing center consultants in this study reflected the experiences of students placed into developmental education. Throughout the study, participants explained their academic struggles and the ways in which they felt aligned with the experiences of the students they taught or consulted. Moreover, Soliday (2002), who refers to developmental education as “remediation”, argued, “though remediation is always with us, it is never present in quite the same ways. It is organized differently to mediate the political needs of institutions at specific moments and places” (p. 67). This argument is especially apropos when considering graduate students because while some undergraduates come to college underprepared for the demands of their coursework, the participating TAs and writing center consultants in this study also came to their respective universities underprepared for the demands of their jobs. In order to support underprepared undergraduates, students who are placed into developmental education courses are assigned to a semester of often intense and just-in-time interventions for the specific reason of supporting their transition into college-level coursework. Analogously, the participating TAs and writing center consultants were placed into an intense course to support their development of skills-- teaching or consulting-- that they required for the same semester of the course to meet the needs of the institutions within which they were housed. In short, the participating TAs and writing center consultants experienced a type of developmental education just like their underprepared undergraduate counterparts.

Indirect and Direct Influences

Three of Stancliff and Goggin's (2007) four approaches to TA preparation are consistent with the findings of this study that relate to the indirect and direct influences on participating TAs and writing center consultants as they are preparing to teach or tutor students who were placed in developmental education-level reading and writing courses. The three approaches are the organic approach, the conversion approach, and the multiphilosophical approach.

The organic approach is the preparation that results from experience (Stancliff & Goggin, 2007). A majority of the participating TAs and writing center consultants discussed experience in the classroom or the Writing Center as a direct influence that contributed to the confidence they felt as TAs or writing center consultants. These experiences were notably consistent with Bruffee's observation that "peer tutors learn as much as they teach" (p. 463). This hands-on experience helped the TAs in the study learn more about teaching as well as helped them identify their place within the larger structure of the university. As students, the TAs were accustomed to being subject to the power of an instructor, but as instructors, the TAs experienced the power any other instructor held. As Bailey (2010) noted, the power instructors hold "is institutionally positioned rather than individually held" (p. 144). As such, the role of TA comes with power the participants had not yet experienced. For some TAs, this caused dissonance because they realized during the class they taught, they were the most powerful person in the room, however, when the class ended, the TAs went back to being powerless graduate students. It's noteworthy that although the powerlessness of the graduate students were felt by the TAs in the study, few defined their roles in terms of power or a lack thereof.

Instead, the participating TAs discussed the power differential by referring to their level or responsibility, their position in the university as not a stakeholder, and their supervisors not asking for their input or their voices in making decisions about the courses the TAs taught. In short, the powerlessness was realized by the participating TAs; however, they did not explicitly discuss their experiences as examples of their powerlessness.

Stancliff and Goggin (2007) described the conversion approach as the time during preparation to discuss how to convert the theories and philosophies of the department and university into practice. In this study, the participating TAs and writing center consultants experienced the conversion approach through their supervisors acting as indirect and direct influences. Through explicitly explaining expectations and describing the pedagogical approaches of the Writing Center or departments, supervisors acted as direct influences and supported the participating TAs' and writing center consultants' theoretical understandings of their practice. For the participating writing center consultants, the theoretical understandings of their practice were a direct influence and these theories were consistent with the general writing center approach wherein tutors and tutees should operate as equals (Bruffee, 1978; Carino, 2003; Cogie, 2001).

The supervisors across all the sites also acted as indirect influences on the participating TAs and writing center consultants when using the conversion approach through creating the illusion of autonomy. In addition to training participants to be TAs or writing center consultants, the supervisors in this study also created the illusion of autonomy by allowing leeway in instructional and consultation decisions to help empower TAs and writing center consultants. Allowing leeway was only an illusion of

autonomy because ultimately, the power to make decisions resided solely within the supervisors. As Smith (1994) argued,

Our very presence as teachers gives us some power in our classrooms no matter where we sit or who leads the discussion. Students know from the title of a course, from the contents of a syllabus, from the grades they receive on papers and quizzes something about the agendas teachers have for them. We cannot put that power down (p. 19).

Just as teachers cannot put their power down, neither can supervisors. Similarly, just as instructors cannot relinquish power, TAs do not have the power to truly be autonomous. However, the supervisors in this study do have the power to create the illusions of autonomy in order to achieve departmental goals of developing TAs who are self-sufficient and empowered in their roles.

The final approach Stancliff and Goggin (2007) outline is the multiphilosophical approach. In this approach, participating TAs and writing center consultants were encouraged to develop their own philosophical framework for teaching or consulting based on the theories and approaches to which they were exposed. In this study, participating TAs and writing center consultants were directly influenced by the philosophies of the scholarship, their multiple roles, and their peers when creating their own philosophical framework. The participating TAs and writing center consultants in this study consistently referred to the scholarship to which they were exposed as a direct influence on their practice because in reading scholarship, the participants read about many different theories and approaches. This exposure to many theories supported the participating TAs' and writing center consultants' development of their own theories and philosophical framework. Through seeking and accepting the influence of many sources of theories and philosophies, the participating TAs' and writing center consultants'

preparatory experiences reached DeFeo's and Caparas' (2014) and Janke's and Coldbeck's (2008) versions of professional development and education, respectively. In other words, through treating multiple sources of theories as influential to both teaching and tutoring, the participating TAs and writing center consultants were learning more than the practical and concrete aspects of their roles. Moreover the participating TAs and writing center consultants identified aspects of tutoring and teaching that helped them develop as scholars and researchers. In this way, the preparatory experiences were professional development (DeFeo & Caparas, 2014) and education (Janke & Coldbeck, 2008) experiences unto themselves.

The multiphilosophical approach (Stancliff & Goggin, 2007) was also supported through the participating TAs' and writing center consultants' considerations of their multiple roles. In addition to being TAs and writing center consultants, these participants were also graduate students, graders, adjunct faculty members, and researchers. Through experiencing and balancing these many roles, the participating TAs and writing center consultants were also exposed to the many different theories and philosophies that influence each of those roles, which they identified as a direct influence on their teaching and consulting. Moreover, the participating TAs and writing center consultants discussed how their previous roles were a direct influence on their current roles. For example, some of the TAs had previously served as writing center consultants, which helped them to be better TAs. As Burnham and Jackson (2002) argued, working in a Writing Center prior to teaching can support a TAs' understanding of the writing process and how to respond to student needs and student writing.

The final example of the multiphilosophical approach is the participating TAs' and writing center consultants' peers. Through the structures their supervisors created for the participants to learn from their peers, the TAs and writing center consultants in this study were exposed to more theories and philosophies of teaching. Additionally, the participating TAs and writing center consultants also had a support group of peers who were going through a similar experience. Consistent with the findings of this study, in a social network analysis of two TAs, Wise (2011) found the informal, unstructured interactions among TAs were the most influential aspect of the TAs' preparation. Through interacting with peers, the participating TAs and writing center consultants had an immediate source of moral support, as well as an available audience to discuss theories. Following the theory of writing center tutors serving in a position of equality to the students who come to the writing center for support (Bruffee, 1978; Carino, 2003; Cogie, 2001), the writing center consultants in this study were influenced by two different groups of peers. The first influential group was the writing center consultants' fellow consultants, and the second influential group was the students who came to the writing center for support.

In summary, the preparatory experiences were generally consistent with the existing literature. Namely, the participating TAs and writing center consultants had pre-semester training, consistent training throughout the semester, and the support of their peers. Additionally, the TAs and writing center consultants in this study had preparatory experiences that exposed them to both the practical applications of how to teach and tutor as well as the theoretical underpinnings that described why particular approaches were used. Less consistent with the literature was the participating TAs' and writing center

consultants' descriptions of what was indirect and direct influences. The TAs and writing center consultants cited virtually all aspects of their experiences as a graduate student as influential to their development as TAs and consultants. However, in the related literature, peers (Wise, 2011) and the larger power structure of the university (Smith, 1994) are the two most salient influences.

Implications

Understanding the experiences of graduate students who are prepared to teach students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses provides unique and important implications for both practice and stakeholders. Implications for practice include conclusions from this study that can improve the preparation experiences of TAs and writing center consultants as well as developmental education professionals. Implications for policy include aspects of the findings that are influential for both state-level policymakers and university-level policymakers, which includes program administrators.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study showed graduate students who teach or tutor students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses are influenced by their entire experiences as graduate students. In other words, the preparation of TAs and writing center consultants was directly and indirectly the responsibility of the entire community within which the graduate students were located. As such, an important implication of this study is that faculty members who work with graduate students should base their approach to their courses on the understanding that they are working with future professionals. Further, the readings faculty members select and the ways in which

they deliver their course is impactful and influential to the current and future instructors and tutors who are the students in their classroom.

Two of the more salient findings of this study were the influence of formal supports and structures for participating TAs and writing center consultants to learn from peers. This means that for TA or writing center consultant preparation programs to be successful, providing consistent and structured formal preparation sessions are paramount. Throughout this study, the participants who felt most prepared to be a TA or writing center consultant were the ones who had the most thorough pre-semester training. Also, the participants whose feelings of being adequately prepared to teach or consult remained throughout the semester were those participants who were given consistent training sessions. Considering the participants' reported feelings of preparedness, faculty and administrators preparing TAs or writing center consultants should provide a thorough pre-semester training session that is followed by consistent training sessions throughout the semester. Additionally, all of the participating TAs and writing center consultants reported the direct influence of the support they received from their peers in the form of both moral support and resource sharing. In summary, in order to successfully prepare TAs and writing center consultants, facilitating a sense of community and providing the opportunity for resource sharing is an unmatched support. Furthermore, there is no indication that these formal structures were successful because most of the participating TAs and writing center consultants were graduate students. With this in mind, it is likely that creating a similar structure for developmental education professionals would be a valuable support. Facilitating pre-semester trainings, regularly-scheduled professional development sessions, and formal structures to share resources and moral support with

peers would help to generate a more professionalized teaching staff or advising group who felt prepared to work with underprepared students. This organizational change for developmental education professionals is likely to be especially successful in Texas where, in 2012, Paulson and colleagues found developmental education professionals from across the state were generally supportive of a professional development-based credential.

Implications for Policy

Through exploring three HSIs, the findings of this study detailed three very different approaches to preparing TAs and writing center consultants. Although required courses and training sessions existed across the three sites, the execution of that training varied widely. This variation shows that it is important for policymakers at the both the university- and state-level to understand that for consistent preparation, more structured policies are required to achieve a systematic approach to TA and writing center tutor preparation. This structured and systematic approach to TA and writing center tutor preparation is especially vital for the developmental education professionals whose preparation to work with underprepared students was limited to their graduate school experiences. Further, given the varied approaches to preparation, this study's findings support the need for a state-level professional development-based credential for developmental educators.

Oftentimes, the success of a developmental education course is determined by the performance of the students placed into the course. At the field sites in this study, graduate students were largely responsible for student performance because TAs made up a majority of the instructors of developmental education-level reading and writing

courses. At these sites, a key component of student success, and thereby program success, was the preparation of TAs. In this way, it is very important for university-level policymakers and developmental education program evaluators to also consider the preparation of the TAs, tutors, adjuncts, and professional faculty and staff who work directly with underprepared students in order to appropriately evaluate programs. In other words, in deciding the quality of a developmental education program, preparation ought to be considered with student success rates, especially in programs like the ones in this study in which graduate TAs are a majority of the teaching force. Furthermore, developmental education program planning should include provisions for professional development to ensure all developmental educators are adequately prepared to work with underprepared learners to ensure student success.

The semester of data collection for this study was the first opportunity for a majority of the participating TAs and writing center consultants to apply the theories of their graduate courses to students in a classroom or writing center setting. As a result, in many ways these graduate students' experiences as a TA or writing center tutor were their first introduction to developmental education. In this way, it is vitally important for university-level policymakers including developmental education program administrators, learning center administrators, and writing program administrators to remember the longer-term implications for the initial preparation they provide. While in the short-term, these professionals are strictly preparing TAs and writing center consultants, program administrators are also socializing potential future colleagues into their profession. Very simply, it would be powerful to treat these preparation experiences

as an *education* in developmental education and underprepared students instead of simply *training* for a position (Janke & Coldbeck, 2008).

Limitations and Delimitations

The primary limitation of this study is that that the participants self-selected to participate. Although I extended the invitation to participate in my study to all of the TAs and writing center tutors at each respective site, ultimately, the self-selection could have created a bias in the experiences I learned about in the data collections procedures. Namely, those who self-selected to participate could have been more loquacious or outgoing, whereas those who chose not to participate could have had very different experiences based on those aspects of their personalities. Additionally, this self-selection strategy meant the participants did not reflect the demographic makeup of their respective field sites.

Another limitation involving participants is that one of the TAs at HSI 3, Melissa, was not available when I visited HSI 3 for the second round of interviews in October. However, she was available for the first interview in September and the final interview in November and so the interview protocol for the interview in November was a combination of questions I asked the participating TAs and writing center consultants in the second and third interviews.

As this study was a multisite case study, it would have been beneficial to spend as much time as possible at each field site and with each participant. I completed three interviews with all but one participant, which was also a limitation. If I had been able to complete more interviews with each participant, I would have had an even richer understanding of the preparatory experiences of the participants. Relatedly, more field

sites would have also produced a richer study. More specifically, adding a field site with a writing center staffed by graduate students would have been valuable to better understand the preparatory experiences of tutors across multiple field sites. Additionally, selecting field sites with only graduate TAs or only graduate writing center tutors would have also given me more exposure to participants with similar experiences, which would have increased my understanding of the experiences of the participants and helped me to describe more dynamic and robust findings. Finally, I selected the three field sites because they were HSIs, and each unique in terms of total student enrollment and student demographics. Selecting three HSIs with more similar characteristics, such as the percent of students identifying as Hispanic, for field sites would have given me a better understanding of the unique traits of specific types of HSIs.

The delimitations of this study are also important to review. In designing this study, I was primarily interested in the subjective experiences of TAs and writing center consultants as they described them. In operationalizing my interest through the execution of this study, I limited my data collection to procedures to pre-interview questionnaires and interviews with TAs, writing center consultants, and their respective supervisors as well as limited observation of training sessions. Including these delimitations, I actively chose not to observe the participating TAs and writing center consultants as they taught or consulted as I was more interested in their descriptions of their work, not my observation and thereby, my interpretation of what of their work. Furthermore, I also chose not to interview others who also act as stakeholders and who would have likely had a valuable perspective on the TA and writing center consultant preparation at their respective institutions. These stakeholders include higher administrators such as college

deans or university vice presidents and the students placed into developmental education-level reading and writing courses that the TAs taught and the writing center consultants tutored. Once again, these interviews would have an added perspective and further description; however, those interviews would have also led me to interpreting the actions of the participating TAs and writing center consultants as described by another person instead of hearing the subjective experience of the participants directly from them.

Recommendations for Future Research

Findings from this study prompt future studies on related issues surrounding graduate student preparedness when working with underprepared learners. While the first semester of preparation is valuable to research, additional longitudinal studies exploring TAs' and writing center consultants' transition into professional roles would be vital to understand the longer-term effects and influences of their initial preparation. A study focused on new professionals recounting their initial preparation experiences would be similarly valuable to better understand what was most influential in the longer term.

The current study was based on the perspectives and experiences of graduate students who teach and tutor students placed in developmental education-level reading and writing courses. To have a more complete understanding of the performance of those graduate students, future studies examining the perspectives of students who are placed into developmental education courses who are taught or tutored by graduate students are necessary. Studies from this perspective would also be valuable to explore both graduate student performance as tutors and teachers, but also to better understand the perspectives and experiences of underprepared learners generally. Relatedly, evaluation studies would be valuable to understand the quality of programs training graduate students who work

with students placed in developmental education-level courses. These evaluation studies would be especially valuable in two forms: (a) evaluations of individual TA or tutor performance, and (b) program evaluations of entire programs devoted to preparing graduate students to work with under prepared learners.

Throughout this study, participating TAs and writing center consultants briefly mentioned extra-teaching and extra-tutoring responsibilities that accompanied their roles as TAs and writing center consultants. As such, it would be valuable to better understand the administrative-oriented preparation graduate students receive. These administrative-oriented aspects could include understanding how to verify rosters and submit final grades, but also the responsibilities of TAs and tutors in serving students in extra-curricular concerns. For example, a study focused on graduate student and Title IX trainings, which are federally-mandated initiatives dedicated to reducing sexual assault at institutions of higher education.

Finally, this study was conducted at three Hispanic Serving Institutions; however the participants were not reflective of the demographic make-up of their respective field sites. In future studies, it would be valuable to understand the preparatory experiences of TAs and writing center tutors with this consideration in mind. Similarly, future studies conducted at Predominately White Institutions or other Minority Serving Institutions like Tribal Colleges and Universities or Historically Black Colleges and Universities are important to understand the preparatory experiences of graduate students at different types of universities.

Summary of Conclusions and Implications

The purpose of this multisite case study was to explore the preparatory

experiences of graduate TAs and writing center consultants who teach and tutor students placed in developmental education-level reading and writing courses at three HSIs in Texas. The major findings resulting from this study is that successful TA and writing center consultant preparation includes structured formal and informal supports that allow the space for critical reflection and work with peers. Additionally, the indirect and direct influences on TAs and writing center consultants are many and located within all aspects of the graduate students' experiences. Implications for policy and stakeholders include supporting both graduate students and developmental education professionals through consistent and frequent professional development experiences that can be augmented through a community of learners for reference sharing and moral support.

Through opening this study with the history of underprepared and traditionally underserved learners in higher education in America, I followed Armstrong, Stahl, and Boylan's (2014) claim that understanding the past was fundamental to understanding the present state of developmental education. Additionally, Mertens (2007a; 2007b) argues that transformative researchers believe, in part, that knowledge is socially and historically situated and to understand the present, you must also understand the past. Through focusing on the preparation of graduate students, however, this study fills an important gap, which is informing the field on the experiences of the graduate students who will inherit the field as they become developmental education professionals.

In focusing on graduate students, this study offered a unique way of seeing the future of developmental education through understanding the experiences of graduate students who, at least for a short time in graduate school, were exposed to the theories, practices, and-- most importantly-- the students of the field. Not all of the participating

TAs and writing center consultants in this study intend to work with underprepared students professionally. For example, one TA in this study plans to go to law school, and a writing center consultant aspires to teach children's literature. These participants are not likely to identify as developmental education professionals in five years, however, through spending valuable time working with and understanding developmental education, it is possible they will identify as advocates of this field and supporters of its mission. No field and no mission is too big to not need the support of others. For the TAs and writing center consultants who have every intention of staying in the developmental education field professionally, some want to become integrated reading and writing instructors and others, basic writing instructors. Many plan to continue their education with PhDs or additional certification to better serve students. For these graduate students, the semester of this study was an important contribution to helping them start to develop their professional identities. For researchers and observers of the developmental education field, these graduate students are our future instructors, writing program administrators, and professional organization leaders.

Finally, although this study provided awareness of the future of the developmental education field, in some aspects, it also provided invaluable insight into the current state of developmental education. I argue that the preparatory experiences of the TAs and writing center consultants in this study are a microcosm of the developmental education field writ large. Just as these participants required consistent and quality preparation based on theory, practice, support, and training, before and during their work with underprepared learners, so too do developmental education professionals. Just as the participants valued the support and guidance of their peers and supervisors in navigating

the challenges and power structures of the classroom and Writing Center, so too do developmental education professionals.

APPENDIX SECTION

APPENDIX A

TA/Writing Center Consultant Pre-Interview Questionnaire

1. What is your teaching/consulting position?
2. Will you have formal preparation to teach this course/consult in the writing center?
3. What previous experiences have prepared you to teach this course/consult in the writing center?
4. Are you interested in participating in a study about TAs/ writing center consultants and their preparation? Participation would include three interviews throughout the Fall 2014 semester.

APPENDIX B

Supervisor Pre-Interview Questionnaire

1. What is your role in your institution?
2. How were you prepared for this role?
3. When you were a graduate student, were you a TA or writing center tutor?
4. If yes, what was that experience like?

APPENDIX C

Interview Protocols

Examining Graduate Teaching Assistants /Writing Center Consultants' Preparatory Experiences

TA/Writing Center consultant Interview Protocol 1

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Location:

Notes:

Introductory Narrative:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important study on the preparation of graduate teaching assistants and writing center consultants. Our interview should take no more than an hour. Please let me know if you have any questions as we proceed through the interview. To facilitate documentation of your affirmation may I digitally record this interview?

My name is Sydney Granger. I am a doctoral student at Texas State.

Our interview should not exceed 60 minutes. During this time, we will cover three topics, your educational background, your experiences as you are being prepared to teach developmental education courses/consult underprepared students, and we'll go over the document you brought. While we value the many diverse aspects of your positions at the university, my focus extends primarily to aspects of these three topics. Thus, I may occasionally need to redirect your response or prompt you to a subsequent question, so that I can respect our focus and your time while remaining within the 60 minute time expectation.

I have requested to interview you because of your experience as a graduate teaching assistant/writing center consultant.

Are you ready to get started with the interview? <Wait for response> This research study will investigate graduate teaching assistants' and writing center consultants' experiences being prepared to teach and consult students placed into developmental education courses.

Introduction: Thank you so much for agreeing to this interview. It is very helpful to me and my research. I will be asking you some general questions about your experiences as both a student and a TA/writing center consultant that I think will lead to some helpful

conversations between us, but first I would just like to ask some follow up questions about the survey I sent and then I'll move on to questions about your background.

Topic Domain I: Background.

1. In the survey you mentioned <fill in the blank>, can you explain more about that?
2. What degree are you working on?
3. Why did you pick that degree?
4. What are your goals after graduation?
5. Do you remember learning to read and write?

Possible follow up:

- a. What was that like?

6. <Fill in the blank> is a Hispanic Serving Institution. Did that have any impact on you choosing this university?

Topic Domain II: Experiences preparing to become a TA/consultant

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Thanks for your responses thus far. Now we are going to change directions slightly to talk more about your TA preparation course/consultant training.

7. Do you know yet what your TA preparation class/consultant training will be like?

Possible follow ups:

- a. What kinds of activities and assignments will you have?
- b. What book will you read?

8. Do you think the class will have any influence on preparing you to teach/consult?

Possible follow ups:

- a. Why will this class be helpful?
- b. Why do you think this class won't be helpful?
- c. What would be helpful?

9. Is there anything you hope to cover in the TA prep class/consultant training?

Topic Domain III: Artifact

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Again, thank you for all of your responses. We are going to change directions once again. Our last section focuses on the document you brought.

10. What document did you bring for us to talk about?

11. Who wrote this document?

Possible follow ups:

a. Do you get to write all the documents for the course?

b. Does <fill in the blank> write all the documents for the course?

12. What is the purpose of this document?

13. Do you think this document achieves its purpose?

Possible follow ups:

a. Why?

b. Why not?

14. What is your overall opinion of this document?

15. Do you have anything else you'd like to say about this document?

Conclusions:

Thank you for your time and for your honest responses to the question. Before we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share?

Post Interview Comments and/or Observations:

Examining Graduate Teaching Assistants'/Writing Center Consultants' Preparatory Experiences

TA/Writing Center consultant Interview Protocol 2

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Location:

Notes:

Introductory Narrative:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important study on graduate teaching assistants and writing center consultants. Our interview should take no more than an hour. Please let me know if you have any questions as we proceed through the interview. To facilitate documentation of your affirmation may I digitally record this interview?

My name is Sydney Granger. I am a doctoral student at Texas State.

Our interview should not exceed 60 minutes. During this time, we will cover three topics, your experiences as a graduate student, your experiences as you are being prepared to teach developmental education courses/consultant underprepared learners, and then we'll go over the document you brought. While we value the many diverse aspects of your positions at the university, my focus extends primarily to aspects of these three topics. Thus, I may occasionally need to redirect your response or prompt you to a subsequent question, so that I can respect our focus and your time while remaining within the 60 minute time expectation.

I have requested to interview you because of your experience as a graduate teaching assistant/writing center consultant

Are you ready to get started with the interview? <Wait for response> This research study will investigate graduate teaching assistants' and writing center consultants' experience being prepared teach and consult students places into developmental education courses.

Introduction: Thank you so much for agreeing to this interview. It is very helpful to me and my research. I will be asking you some general questions about your experiences as both a student and a TA/writing center consultant that I think will lead to some helpful conversations between us, but first I would just like to ask some follow up questions about your experiences as a graduate student.

Topic Domain I: Experiences as graduate student.

1. How is your semester going so far?
2. What is it like to be a graduate student at <fill in the blank>?

Possible follow up:

- a. Could you explain more about <fill in the blank>?

3. What do you think the role of graduate students is at <fill in the blank>? In other words, how do graduate students fit in here?
4. Is that true of your experiences as well?

Possible follow up:

- a. Why or why not?

5. What do you think the role of TAs is at <fill in the blank>?
6. Is that true of your experiences as well?

Possible follow up:

- b. Why or why not?

7. <Fill in the blank> is an Hispanic Serving Institution. Do you think that designation impacts the role of a graduate student or TA?

Topic Domain II: Experiences preparing to become a TA/consultant

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Thanks for your responses thus far. Now we are going to change directions slightly to talk more about your TA preparation course/consultant training.

8. How is your TA preparation course/consultant training going?

Possible follow ups:

- a. What did you talk about in that course/training?
- b. What did you go over this week?
- c. What were those like?

9. Do you think this class is influencing how you teach/consult?

Possible follow ups:

- d. Why is this class/training helpful?

- e. Why do you think this class/training isn't helpful?
- f. What would be helpful?

10. Is there anything you want to learn more about in the TA prep class/consultant training?

11. Are you learning anything about developmental education specifically?

12. How does your supervisor fit in to all of this?

Topic Domain III: Artifact

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Again, thank you for all of your responses. We are going to change directions once again. Our last section focuses on the document you brought.

13. What document did you bring for us to talk about?

14. Who wrote this document?

Possible follow ups:

- c. Do you get to write all the documents for the course?
- d. Does <fill in the blank> write all the documents for the course?

15. What is the purpose of this document?

16. Do you think this document achieves its purpose?

Possible follow up:

- c. Why or why not?

17. What is your overall opinion of this document?

18. Do you have anything else you'd like to say about this document?

Conclusions:

Thank you for your time and for your honest responses to the question. Before we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share?

Post Interview Comments and/or Observations:

Examining Graduate Teaching Assistants'/Writing Center Consultants' Preparatory Experiences

TA Interview Protocol 3

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Location:

Notes:

Introductory Narrative:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important study on graduate teaching assistants and writing center consultants. Our interview should take no more than an hour. Please let me know if you have any questions as we proceed through the interview. To facilitate documentation of your affirmation may I digitally record this interview?

My name is Sydney Granger. I am a doctoral student at Texas State.

Our interview should not exceed 60 minutes. During this time, we will cover three topics, your experiences as a graduate student, your experiences as you are preparing to teach/consult, and then we'll go over the document you brought. While we value the many diverse aspects of your positions at the university, my focus extends primarily to aspects of these three topics. Thus, I may occasionally need to redirect your response or prompt you to a subsequent question, so that I can respect our focus and your time while remaining within the 60 minute time expectation.

I have requested to interview you because of your experience as a graduate teaching assistant/writing center consultant.

Are you ready to get started with the interview? <Wait for response> This research study will investigate graduate teaching assistants' and writing center consultants' experiences as they are being prepared to teach and consult students who have placed into developmental education courses.

Introduction: Thank you so much for agreeing to this interview. It is very helpful to me and my research. I will be asking you some general questions about your experiences as both a student and a TA/consultant that I think will lead to some helpful conversations between us, but first I would just like to ask some follow up questions about your experiences as a graduate student.

Topic Domain I: Experiences as graduate student.

1. Now that it's almost finals, how has your semester gone?

2. Do you know what you'll be doing next semester yet?

Possible follow up:

- a. Will you be teaching?
- b. Do you feel prepared to do that?

3. The last time I visited, we talked about the roles of graduate students and TAs/writing center consultants at <fill in the blank>. Do you still see it that way for graduate students?

Possible follow ups:

- a. Why or why not?
- b. Do you think this is a good thing?

4. Is that true of your experiences as well?

Possible follow up:

- b. Why or why not?

5. Do you still see the role of TAs as <fill in the blank>?

Possible follow ups:

- a. Why or why not?
- b. Do you think this is a good thing?

6. Is that true of your experiences as well?

Possible follow up:

- c. Why or why not?

7. Going into next year, will this change how you see graduate school?

Possible follow ups:

- a. Why or why not?
- b. Do you think this is a good thing?

8. How does your supervisor/TA prep course instructor fit in to all of this?

Topic Domain II: Experiences preparing to become a TA/writing center consultant

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Thanks for your responses thus far. Now we are going to change directions slightly to talk more about your TA preparation course/consultant training.

9. Overall, how was your TA preparation course/consultant training?

Possible follow ups:

- a. What was your favorite part of the course/training?
- b. What was your least favorite part of the course/training?
- c. What was most helpful?

10. What was the most important thing you learned in your TA preparation course/consultant training?

11. Do you feel confident teaching/consulting next semester?

Topic Domain III: Artifact

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Again, thank you for all of your responses. We are going to change directions once again. Our last section focuses on the document you brought.

12. What document did you bring for us to talk about?

13. Who wrote this document?

Possible follow ups:

- e. Do you get to write all the documents for the course?
- f. Does <fill in the blank> write all the documents for the course?

14. What is the purpose of this document?

15. Do you think this document achieves its purpose?

Possible follow ups:

- d. Why?
- e. Why not?

16. What is your overall opinion of this document?

17. Do you have anything else you'd like to say about this document?

Conclusions:

Thank you for your time and for your honest responses to the question. Before we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share?

Post Interview Comments and/or Observations:

Examining Graduate Teaching Assistants'/Writing Center Consultants' Preparatory Experiences

Supervisor/Instructor Interview Protocol 1

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Location:

Notes:

Introductory Narrative:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important study on graduate teaching assistants and writing center consultants. Our interview should take no more than an hour. Please let me know if you have any questions as we proceed through the interview. To facilitate documentation of your affirmation may I digitally record this interview?

My name is Sydney Granger. I am a doctoral student at Texas State.

Our interview should not exceed 60 minutes. During this time, we will cover three topics, your educational background, your roles and responsibilities at <fill in the blank>, and your experiences as you prepare TAs for the classroom/consultants for the writing center. While we value the many diverse aspects of your positions at the university, my focus extends primarily to aspects of these three topics. Thus, I may occasionally need to redirect your response or prompt you to a subsequent question, so that I can respect our focus and your time while remaining within the 60 minute time expectation.

I have requested to interview you because of your experience working with TA/consultant preparation.

Are you ready to get started with the interview? <Wait for response> This research study will investigate graduate teaching assistants' and writing center consultants' experiences being prepared to teach and consult students placed into developmental education courses.

Introduction: Thank you so much for agreeing to this interview. It is very helpful to me and my research. I will be asking you some general questions about your experiences at <fill in the blank> that I think will lead to some helpful conversations between us, but first I would just like to ask some follow up questions about the survey I sent and then I'll move on to questions about your background.

Topic Domain I: Background.

1. In the survey you mentioned <fill in the blank>, can you explain more about that?
2. Why did you want to become a faculty member/writing center administrator?
3. What was school like for you?
4. Do you remember learning to read and write?

Possible follow ups:

- d. What was that like?
 - e. Do you think those experiences have an impact on your decision to teach?
5. How many years have you been a faculty member/writing center administrator at <fill in the blank>?
 6. How many years have you been working as a faculty member/writing center administrator?

Topic Domain II: Roles and responsibilities

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Thanks for your responses thus far. Now we are going to change directions slightly to talk more about TA/consultant preparation.

7. How would you describe your role at <fill in the blank>?
8. How would you describe your role working with TAs/consultants?

Possible follow ups:

- a. Is that a role you define for yourself or one that your institution defines for you?
 - b. If institution: do you agree?
 - c. If self: is this different than your coworkers?
9. <Fill in the blank> is an Hispanic Serving Institution. Do you think that designation influences your roles and responsibilities?

Topic Domain III: TA preparation course

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Again, thank you for all of your responses. We are going to change directions once again. Our last section focuses on the TA/consultant preparation/training you teach.

10. Describe the purpose of the TA/consultant preparation course/training you teach.

11. How do you organize the course/training?

Possible follow ups:

a. Have you always taught the course/training in this way?

b. What kinds of assignments do you require?

12. What is your goal for this course/training? In other words, what knowledge do you hope your students glean from your course/training?

13. Does <fill in the blank>'s HSI status influence your goals for TA/consultant preparation?

14. As an instructor, what does success look like in the TA/writing center consultant preparation?

Conclusions:

Thank you for your time and for your honest responses to the question. Before we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share?

Post Interview Comments and/or Observations:

Examining Graduate Teaching Assistants'/Writing Center Consultants' Preparatory Experiences

Supervisor/Instructor Interview Protocol 2

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Location:

Notes:

Introductory Narrative:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important study on graduate teaching assistants and writing center consultants. Our interview should take no more than an hour. Please let me know if you have any questions as we proceed through the interview. To facilitate documentation of your affirmation may I digitally record this interview?

My name is Sydney Granger. I am a doctoral student at Texas State.

Our interview should not exceed 60 minutes. During this time, we will cover two topics, your role as a TA/writing center consultant preparation course/training instructor, and your experiences as you prepare TAs for the classroom/consultants for the writing center. While we value the many diverse aspects of your positions at the university, my focus extends primarily to aspects of these two topics. Thus, I may occasionally need to redirect your response or prompt you to a subsequent question, so that I can respect our focus and your time while remaining within the 60 minute time expectation.

I have requested to interview you because of your experience preparing TAs/consultants.

Are you ready to get started with the interview? <Wait for response> This research study will investigate graduate teaching assistants' and writing center consultants' experiences as they are being prepared to teach/consult students placed into developmental education courses.

Introduction: Thank you so much for agreeing to this interview. It is very helpful to me and my research. I will be asking you some general questions about your experiences as an instructor//writing center administrator that I think will lead to some helpful conversations between us, but first I would just like to ask about you, okay?

Topic Domain I: Warm up.

1. How is your semester going?

Possible follow ups:

- a. In what ways is it <fill in the blank>?
 - b. Last time I was here you mentioned <fill in the blank>, how is that going?
-

Topic Domain II: Roles and responsibilities

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Thanks for your responses thus far. Now we are going to change directions slightly to talk more about your roles and responsibilities at your university.

2. The last time we talked, you defined your role more or less as <fill in the blank>. <Question related to that role.>

Possible follow ups:

- a. Has your view of that role changed as the semester has gone on?
 - b. Can you give me an example of that with one of your students?
-

Topic Domain III: TA preparation

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Again, thank you for all of your responses. We are going to change directions once again. Our last section focuses on TA/consultant preparation.

3. How is the TA/writing center consultant preparation going?

4. What are you teaching the TA/writing center consultant preparation this week?

Possible follow ups:

- a. Have you always taught the course/prepared the TAs/consultants in this way?
- b. What kinds of assignments do you require?
- c. Are you teaching anything about developmental education?

5. In our previous interview, you defined success as “<fill in the blank>”. Are you seeing that success?

6. In what ways? Can you give me an example?

7. Does your institution’s HSI status influence how you define success in your TA/consultant preparation?

Conclusions:

Thank you for your time and for your honest responses to the question. Before we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share?

Post Interview Comments and/or Observations:

Examining Graduate Teaching Assistants'/Writing Center Consultants' Preparatory Experiences

Supervisor/Instructor Interview Protocol 3

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Location:

Notes:

Introductory Narrative:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important study on graduate teaching assistants and writing center consultants. Our interview should take no more than an hour. Please let me know if you have any questions as we proceed through the interview. To facilitate documentation of your affirmation may I digitally record this interview?

My name is Sydney Granger. I am a doctoral student at Texas State.

Our interview should not exceed 60 minutes. During this time, we will cover one topic, your experiences as you prepare TAs for the classroom/consultants for the writing center. While we value the many diverse aspects of your positions at the university, my focus extends primarily to aspects of this topic. Thus, I may occasionally need to redirect your response or prompt you to a subsequent question, so that I can respect our focus and your time while remaining within the 60 minute time expectation.

I have requested to interview you because of your experience in the preparation of TAs/consultants.

Are you ready to get started with the interview? <Wait for response.> This research study will investigate graduate teaching assistants' and writing center consultants' experiences as they are being prepared to teach or consult students placed into developmental education courses.

Introduction: Thank you so much for agreeing to this interview. It is very helpful to me and my research. I will be asking you some general questions about your experiences as an instructor that I think will lead to some helpful conversations between us, but first I would just like to ask about you, okay?

Topic Domain I: Warm up.

1. How is your semester going?

Possible follow ups:

- c. In what ways is it <fill in the blank>?
- d. Last time I was here you mentioned <fill in the blank>, how is that going?

Topic Domain II: TA/consultant preparation

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: Thanks for your responses thus far. Now we are going to change directions slightly to talk more about TA/consultant preparation.

2. How did the TA/consultant preparation go this semester?

3. What was successful in the TA/consultant preparation this semester?

Possible follow up:

- a. Have you always taught the course/held the training in this way?

4. What didn't work in the TA/consultant preparation this semester?

5. Why do you think <fill in the blank> was unsuccessful?

6. Will you still be in contact with your students next semester?

Possible follow up:

- a. In what ways?

7. Will you be teaching the TA/consultant preparation next semester?

Possible follow ups:

- a. If no, why not?
- b. If yes, will you change anything?

Conclusions:

Thank you for your time and for your honest responses to the question. Before we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share?

Post Interview Comments and/or Observations:

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