Professional Development Made Personal: A Mixed-Methods Investigation of College

Instructors' Perspective Transformations in ACUE's Inclusive Teaching Program

by

Julianne Candio Sekel

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Approved March 2023 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Ray R. Buss, Chair
Lydia Ross
Elizabeth Lawner

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2023

ABSTRACT

College instructors are critical to increasing completion rates and creating more equitable educational opportunities that position all learners for upward mobility. Yet, few have received formal, comprehensive training in inclusive teaching practices that positively affect student learning, improve retention and completion rates, and close equity gaps. The Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) has helped to fill this gap through its Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning (ITEL) microcredential course, a cohort-based professional development opportunity with an international reach. However, no prior studies had investigated whether the ITEL program resulted in transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991) for participants.

In this mixed-methods, action research study, I examined whether eight ITEL participants from four higher education institutions experienced perspective changes when enrolled in a cohort that offered synchronous discussions; if so, what experiences contributed to their perspective changes; and how the changes informed their teaching and nonteaching contexts, including professional and personal interactions. Data sources included participants' module reflections, transcripts from synchronous discussions, and responses to an adapted version of King's (2009) Learning Activities Survey (LAS). Descriptive analysis, content analysis, and grounded interpretation approaches were used to analyze the data. Research findings showed that most participants experienced changes in their perspectives about teaching and outside of teaching that they attributed to their participation in ITEL. Participants identified learning activities that were both unique to this offering and core to ACUE's standard learning design as contributing to their transformations. The majority of participants also attributed their perspective changes, in

part, to learning that occurred in multiple course modules. Participants' qualitative responses were grouped into three major themes—reimagining students' experiences, reimagining one's professional identity as a learner, and reimagining one's life experiences—which were reflected in an emerging framework. The study's results have critical implications for researchers and practitioners, including how they design professional development experiences and the extent to which they incorporate community-building activities, reflection and application opportunities, and facilitation. Additionally, research findings demonstrate the power of inclusive teaching programs to develop educators' personal and professional identities and make them more equity-minded instructors, family members, friends, and community members.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

LEADERSHIP CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

It is in your hands to make of our world a better one for all.

—Nelson Mandela

National Context

"We need radical change." This was the headline of a September 2017 article published by the Lumina Foundation in response to a report on the efforts necessary to meet national postsecondary degree attainment goals (Merisotis, 2017; Nettles, 2017). Despite former President Barack Obama's call for a renewed focus on degree completion in his 2009 State of the Union address and goal for the United States to boast the largest proportion of college graduates globally by 2020, our country has yet to move the needle on completion. The United States has not witnessed any marked difference in retention or completion rates since the former president's speech (American Association of Community Colleges, 2015; Bailey et al., 2015). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES; 2020), the national 6-year degree completion rate at 4-year colleges in 2020 was 62%. At 2-year colleges, only 33% of students completed their degree within 3 years (NCES, 2020). Additionally, scholars have noted that many graduates lack the career-ready skills employers are seeking in job candidates (American Association of Community Colleges, 2012; Hart Research Associates, 2015; Humphreys, 2012).

At the same time, higher education institutions have been forced to confront the troubling reality that ethnic and racial minority, low-income, and first-generation students have dropped out in disproportionate rates in comparison to their peers. For instance,

leveraging data from NCES's Beginning Postsecondary Study, Engle and Tinto (2008) found "low-income, first-generation students were nearly four times more likely – 26 to 7 percent – to leave higher education after the first year than students who had neither of these risk factors" (p. 2). Further, "after six years, only 11 percent of low-income, first-generation students had earned bachelor's degrees compared to 55 percent of their more advantaged peers" (Engle & Tinto, 2008, p. 2). According to Engle and Tinto (2008), many of these students come from ethnic and racial minority backgrounds, a finding substantiated by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (Shapiro et al., 2017).

In a national study of 2- and 4-year institutions, Shapiro et al. (2017) found that 45.8% of Hispanic students and 38% of Black students completed their degree or certificate programs within 6 years, whereas 63.2% of Asian students and 62% of White students did so within the same time frame. When segmented by 4-year institution type, 2-year institution type, and 2-year to 4-year transfers, ethnic and racial disparities were evident in the data (Shapiro et al., 2017). At 4-year public institutions, Black students had a 45.9% completion rate, on average, with 3 in 5 Black men dropping out before attaining a degree (Shapiro et al., 2017). In comparison, completion rates among Hispanic students were 55%, White students were 67.2%, and Asian students were 71.7% (Shapiro et al., 2017). Among 2-year college students, Shapiro et al. (2017) reported White and Asian students had higher completion rates than Hispanic and Black students, 45.1% and 43.8% compared to 33% and 25.8%, respectively. Finally, data from students who began their education at a 2-year institution and transferred to a 4-year institution have shown similar disparities. The authors noted, "While almost one in four Asian students and one in five

white students had completed this transfer pathway by the end of the six-year study period, just one in 10 Hispanic students and about one in 12 black students did" (Shapiro et al., 2017, p. 2). These inequitable distributions in success among various student groups, or *achievement gaps*, have lasting implications, as a number of studies have shown the connection between holding a college degree and future employment, income, job benefits, and civic engagement (Abel & Deitz, 2014; Ma et al., 2016; Pew Research Center, 2014; Trostel, 2015). For these reasons, among many others, the inputs contributing to achievement gaps should be critically examined, and educational leaders, researchers, and practitioners must make an intentional effort to prevent these gaps at the source.

A focus on instructional quality has been one approach to confronting educational inequities, as discussed in the anthology *Closing the Opportunity Gap: What America Must Do to Give All Children an Even Chance* (Carter & Welner, 2013). In this collection, the authors advocated for attention to opportunity gaps to address unequal outcomes, in addition to achievement gaps, which have been more commonly studied. As Welner and Carter (2013) wrote in their opening chapter,

> The "opportunity gap" frame, in contrast, shifts our attention from outcomes to inputs—to the deficiencies in the foundational components of societies, schools, and communities that produce significant differences in educational—and ultimately socioeconomic—outcomes. Thinking in terms of "achievement gaps" emphasizes the symptoms; thinking about unequal opportunity highlights the causes. (p. 3)

Though each of the book's contributors highlighted different causes of opportunity gaps

—for example, inadequate supports, school choice policies, the unequal distribution of resources in segregated schools, and poor teacher quality and curricula—all reinforced the need for data-driven decision-making and improved accountability systems from the time children enter school. According to Ladson-Billings (2013), efforts to address academic disparities are owed to students due to society's negligence to create equitable conditions for marginalized groups throughout history; she referred to this concept as *education debt*.

Alarmingly, as Barnett and Lamy (2013) indicated in *Closing the Opportunity Gap*, "There is very little change in achievement gradients between age five and age eighteen" (p. 101), meaning students' ability to achieve academic success, feel confident as learners, and persist through school has been influenced largely by what happens in early childhood. Given my work in higher education, reading this research prompted questions around whether it is too late to level the playing field when students enroll in postsecondary institutions. Yet, through my work for an international professional development organization that has seen measurable and substantial changes in faculty and student outcomes, I have remained steadfast in my conviction that I have a role to play in shrinking opportunity gaps when students enter college by way of faculty training. As Strikwerda (2019) argued in an *Inside Higher Ed* article, "Faculty members are often the most direct way to help at-risk students" (The Most Direct Way section). He continued,

> Colleges and universities reach out to at-risk students in myriad ways, with registrars, advising centers and financial aid offices all playing important roles. Yet students may decide to ignore such efforts. By contrast, if students do not

show up for class and turn in their work, failure is guaranteed. No matter what

else colleges and universities do for students, success in the classroom is

essential. In the last analysis, then, it is instructors who control their fate. Colleges

and universities can often do more, at less cost, to help at-risk students by

concentrating on how to reach them most effectively in their academic work than

by other means, as important as they may be. (Strikwerda, 2019, The Most Direct

Way section)

As Strikwerda (2019) indicated, faculty members have a critical influence on whether at-

risk students, in particular, stay enrolled in their institutions. Although positive

experiences with faculty members often are empowering, negative experiences could be

fatal. Research results have suggested that ethnic and racial minority students may leave

their institutions based on feelings that faculty members showed bias toward them

(Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Solórzano et al., 2000). Conversely, when faculty members

taught inclusively and built meaningful relationships with students, there was a

disproportionate benefit to students from traditionally underserved backgrounds (Cole,

2007; Manning-Ouellette & Beatty, 2019; Schmid et al., 2016). Students were more

likely to be engaged in their studies, feel like they belonged, and persist into their

subsequent courses (Gutierrez Keeton et al., 2021; Kuh & Hu, 2001; Manning-Ouellette

& Beatty, 2019). In my research, I aimed to chip away at opportunity gaps that have been

perpetuated by a number of inputs in K–12 education through an inclusive teaching

faculty development program. Though no single initiative could eradicate the impacts of

the inequitable opportunities that students have experienced by the time they reach

college, higher education leaders can help to mitigate some of the negative consequences by prioritizing faculty development as a key lever in ensuring equity for all students.

The Role of Faculty Members and Faculty Development

Faculty members have a critical responsibility as change agents in fostering completion efforts and creating more equitable educational opportunities that position all learners, but especially those who have been disproportionately affected by opportunity gaps, for upward mobility. Since students spend more time with their instructors than any other college professionals—an estimated 225 hours per semester, assuming full-time matriculation (EAB, 2016)—faculty members are best positioned to have the greatest impact on student retention and persistence to graduation, students' sense of belonging, and students' development of the soft skills that advance their opportunities for employment. Faculty members have also been viewed as central to "The Big Six" experiences students have during college that lead to increased workplace engagement and overall well-being as alumni (Gallup & Strada Education Network, 2018). According to Strada-Gallup data, when students had professors who excited them about learning and cared about them as people, the odds of them feeling engaged at work more than doubled (Gallup, 2014; Gallup & Strada Education Network, 2018). Additionally, when graduates reported having a mentor during college, 64% identified a professor as that mentor (Gallup & Strada Education Network, 2018, p. 4). Such research has shown that when students are excited about learning and believe their instructors care about them as people, they are more likely to persist in their academic journeys.

Recently, higher education scholars have become more focused on supporting instructors in inclusive pedagogy. This has been evidenced by a number of articles and

webinars, the publication of books recommending concrete teaching strategies (e.g., Addy et al., 2021; Hogan & Sathy, 2022; Kumar & Refaei, 2021; Oleson, 2020), and dedicated faculty development courses such as those offered by Cornell University and Columbia University. Such efforts confirm that higher education leaders perceive inclusive teaching as being important for student equity. Yet, these opportunities can only make a difference for educators and their students at scale with widespread faculty engagement and transformed practice, which is a difficult feat given the history of higher education instructors' lack of preparation for teaching.

To be effective, any instructional reform focused on increasing equity requires both comprehensive pedagogical training and attention to structural and psychological barriers that may deter faculty engagement in professional development initiatives. First, regardless of how many years faculty members have been teaching, very few have received formal, comprehensive preparation in pedagogy (Alsop, 2018; Fertig, 2012; Manzo & Mitchell, 2018), let alone inclusive pedagogy. The majority of faculty members have transitioned from their doctoral programs to teaching in what is often described as "trial by fire" (Alsop, 2018, para. 2) and sometimes equipped with a few academic "hand-me-downs" from veteran faculty (Fertig, 2012, para. 4). Novice instructors may default to using the same teaching practices as their past professors, including some who may have valued "the pedagogy of elimination" (Nash, 2014, para. 2) that designated high dropout rates as badges of honor. In addition, heavy teaching loads, research commitments, faculty skepticism, and the overwhelming number of contingent faculty, among other obstacles, have been acknowledged as risks that could impede efforts to make faculty development part and parcel of whole-college reform (Bailey et al., 2015).

In addition, specialized faculty development programs in diversity, equity, and inclusion present their own set of challenges, because faculty members are often prompted to confront their own biases, values, and beliefs about students and their abilities, putting them in potentially vulnerable and unsettling positions. For instance, instructors may come to important realizations about fixed mindsets they have held about their students that have impeded their students' will to persist in college. Critical data from the 2018 Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE) has demonstrated that fixed mindsets are fairly common among faculty members. CCFSSE's research showed only two in five faculty believed *all* students in their courses could change their basic intelligence, whereas the others held a fixed mindset, to varying extents (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2019, p. 5). Research has shown that a fixed mindset can be especially detrimental to students' learning experiences, because organizational theories of intelligence can outweigh individual beliefs; in short, "what faculty members tell students about their ability to succeed may matter more than what students personally believe" (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2019, p. 5). Further, research results from a longitudinal study of 150 STEM professors and over 15,000 students showed "the racial achievement gaps in courses taught by more fixed mindset faculty were twice as large as the achievement gaps in courses taught by more growth mindset faculty," making faculty members' mindsets the largest predictor of student achievement and motivation (Canning et al., 2019, Abstract). As instructor beliefs can make the difference in students' academic outcomes, it is critical that faculty put in the work to reflect on their beliefs and values for the benefit of their students.

Teaching and learning scholars have articulated that instructors *want* to teach inclusively but many do not know *how* to do so. Addy et al. (2021) cited this notion as an impetus for writing the book *What Inclusive Instructors Do: Principles and Practices for Excellence in College Teaching*. They wrote, "there just did not seem to be enough comprehensive information available regarding what instructors who do implement such [inclusive teaching] approaches do in their classrooms" (Addy et al., 2021, p. xi). In their national study of hundreds of instructors, the authors identified the following obstacles to faculty members' use of inclusive teaching practices:

> Not being aware of the many differences that exist between students, which can impact their learning; not knowing how to implement inclusive teaching practices; fear of accidentally offending students or not wanting negative consequences on teaching evaluations because of risk-taking; not wanting to change teaching practices; not considering themselves responsible for equitable and inclusive teaching; and challenges with managing conflict in student–student interactions. (Addy et al., 2021, p. 7)

Although the barriers described in this section continue to be worthy of consideration, they *must* be overcome or we will risk having more students from historically marginalized backgrounds leave college. The "radical change" we need is for instructors to transform their practice. My work aimed to support this effort by not only showing faculty *how* to teach inclusively but also positioning them within communities of practice that encourage risk-taking, prompt changes to teaching, and instill a belief that they are responsible for equitable and inclusive teaching.

Local Context

  My organization, the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE), was founded in 2014 to address the need for faculty preparation in effective teaching. As the only certification program for higher education faculty that awards credentials in partnership with the American Council on Education (ACE), ACUE supports a network of over 450 colleges and universities in bringing comprehensive online professional development courses to their faculty members, with the goal of increasing the widespread use of evidence-based teaching practices that lead to greater student achievement, equity, and persistence to graduation. Effective Teaching Practices and Effective Online Teaching Practices have served as our core, 25-module certification courses and are comprised of four topic-based groups called microcredentials. These microcredentials include Designing Learner-Centered and Equitable Courses, Creating an Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environment, Promoting Active Learning, and Inspiring Inquiry and Preparing Lifelong Learners. These microcredentials are available for separate enrollment or can be taken sequentially by faculty participants who complete the full certificate programs. We also have developed a Career Guidance and Readiness concentration and an Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning microcredential.

  After institutions have selected the program(s) best aligned with their strategic goals and efforts to support faculty and students, they typically enter into single-year or multiyear partnerships with ACUE. Our team at ACUE often works in partnership with an institution's president, provost, Academic Affairs department, and/or teaching center on program implementation, cohort facilitation, and evaluation plans. Additionally, based on interest from faculty members, ACUE expanded its offerings to allow for individuals

or small groups of instructors to self-enroll in cross-institutional cohorts that are separate from institutional partnerships, which we refer to as Open Enrollment programs.

Since 2015, I have served in many different roles for ACUE, but my position at the time of this research was Executive Director of Learning Media on the Content Development team. In this capacity, I worked closely with our Chief Academic Officer and Executive Director of Curriculum and Assessment to lead the production of ACUE's faculty development programs, with support from a small team of full-time employees and consultants. This work necessitated ongoing research in effective pedagogy, interviews with leading pedagogical experts, and collaboration with faculty members and students to produce authentic and impactful professional development programs that equip instructors with actionable teaching strategies.

Thus far, I have proudly supported the creation of every ACUE program. However, the most meaningful has been Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning, which I refer to hereafter as ITEL. ITEL is a 10-week microcredential program consisting of five modules: Managing the Impact of Biases, Reducing Microaggressions in Learning Environments, Addressing Imposter Phenomenon and Stereotype Threat, Creating Inclusive Learning Environments, and Designing Equity-Centered Courses. Although all of our programs have addressed and encouraged the use of inclusive teaching practices, as outlined in our *Inclusive and Equitable Teaching ACUE Curriculum Crosswalk* (ACUE, 2020), this offering was the first to bring explicit and detailed attention to the above topics. But, more than that, I hypothesized that this course blurred the line between participants' educator and personal identities, not only helping educators become more

equity-minded instructors but also more equity-minded individuals, to the benefit of their

students, colleagues, families, friends, and members of their communities.

When developing this program, I had many transformative moments that

prompted me to reflect on different facets of my identity, and I began to recognize the

power of ITEL to transform other educators' lives. For instance, the first module in ITEL

includes a video self-reflection exercise led by a diversity, equity, and inclusion specialist

who prompts participants to consider different aspects of their privilege. As I thought

about my upbringing in an upper-middle-class family, I realized how my parents put me

on a trajectory toward success. I never had to be concerned with how I would purchase

school textbooks or whether I would go to sleep hungry. In addition to these pivotal

moments of reflection on my identity, I also had incredibly meaningful experiences

interviewing students, who were often on the verge of tears, about their instructors' use of

inclusive teaching practices. In their interviews, students shared sentiments such as the

following:

- "In her class, I felt empowered, as a Black woman, to speak for myself and
  actually have my own thoughts on something."
- "It was such a welcoming atmosphere and that was the most warm and inviting
  class I've taken in college."
- "You were warm, inviting, open, honest. And it just meant the world to me as a
  student who was coming into a master's program when she didn't think that she
  could do it."

- "One question that she asks us in class is 'When you think of a doctor or a scientist, who do you think of or what do you see? And, after my first year of college [in her class], my answer became 'I think of me.'"

As I listened to students vocalize how their instructors increased their sense of belonging, made them feel capable, and created inclusive learning environments, it reaffirmed how inclusive instructors can make the difference in whether students stay and persist to degree attainment. Such experiences not only transformed me as a content developer, researcher, and educator but also as a human. I wondered if other educators engaged in the microcredential course felt the same; what learning experiences, if any, contributed to their perspective transformations; and how faculty participants transferred their knowledge of inclusive teaching to nonacademic contexts. This inquiry formed the basis of my research, having the potential to inform changes to ITEL and other ACUE programs, with the goal of maximizing impact for instructors and students.

ACUE's Impact

I began designing this research study only a few months after ACUE launched the ITEL program. Therefore, ACUE's Analytics team had not yet collected data on the impact of this program. However, past studies completed by our Analytics team and other researchers have demonstrated our programs' measurable impact on faculty members' confidence and learning, as well as student engagement, achievement, completion rates, and equity (see, for example, Hecht, 2019; Lawner et al., 2019; Lawner & Snow, 2018, 2020). These results have been consistent despite variation among our college and university partners in terms of geographic location and institution type (e.g., 2-year, 4-year, public, private) as well as faculty participants' years of teaching experience,

discipline, and employment status (ACUE, 2019). ACUE's positive efficacy studies and international reach demonstrate our ability to lead instructional reform by way of faculty development.

Moreover, our studies of a 5-year partnership between ACUE and the University of Southern Mississippi offer a compelling example of how a faculty development input can change the student achievement output. Our Analytics team's analysis of over 24,000 students taught by 117 ACUE instructors and 2,074 non-ACUE instructors found that the more courses students took with ACUE faculty, "the higher their GPA and the more courses they completed, passed, and succeeded in" (Lawner et al., 2021, p. 46). The benefit to Black students was particularly noteworthy, as "correlations with passing and success were significantly larger for Black students compared to White students" (Lawner et al., 2021, p. 47). These positive outcomes continued when students completed courses taught by non-ACUE faculty, suggesting that the learners were able to transfer skills they honed in ACUE-faculty-led courses. The most recent study showed that when students took courses with ACUE faculty during their first year at Southern Miss, they were more likely to return to the university in the next academic year (Pippins et al., 2022). When I interviewed Southern Miss administrators and faculty members about what contributed to their successful outcomes, every interviewee cited their faculty community as a likely source, which is not surprising given how communities of practices affect feelings of membership (Wenger, 1998).

Although Southern Miss and ACUE's partnership findings were not based on participation in ITEL, they shed light on the promise that ITEL held to close equity gaps and shrink opportunity gaps, especially when situated within faculty learning

communities. Nevertheless, more research was needed to understand whether faculty members' perspectives were changed when completing ITEL, what contributed to these changes (if applicable), and how faculty transferred their new knowledge of inclusive teaching practices into their personal lives. Since ACUE's Analytics team was already tasked with measuring a substantial number of instructor and student outcomes, my research was intended to generate data to inform my work as one of ACUE's curriculum designers for our programs' initial creation and ongoing improvements. I also hoped to understand how ITEL functioned within ACUE's Open Enrollment construct, as instructors from various institutions were prompted to enter a vulnerable space with strangers and grow as a community of practitioners committed to driving equitable student outcomes.

Problem of Practice, Purpose, and Research Questions

My problem of practice was that national opportunity and achievement gaps have persisted when students enter college, in part, due to a lack of focus on instructional quality and inclusive teaching in higher education. The majority of postsecondary faculty have not received formal, comprehensive preparation in how to teach using the pedagogical practices proven to positively affect student learning, improve retention and completion rates, and close equity gaps. Further, college instructors were unlikely to teach more inclusively until they examined their personal biases, beliefs about students, and actions aligned with equity-mindedness both in and outside of the classroom. Although ACUE's ITEL program prompted self-reflection in these areas, we knew very little about whether faculty participants were having perspective transformations when engaged in the course and how they were transferring their new knowledge about

inclusive teaching to nonacademic contexts. Exploration of this learning transfer was of utmost importance because, for such a professional learning experience to be truly transformative, the experience needed to involve a change in the self as both an educator and a person, as professional and personal identities are inextricably linked. ITEL faculty participants' commitment to upholding the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion would need to be consistent across academic and nonacademic contexts if they were to effect change with students. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to examine whether participants in ITEL, when provided with additional community-building reflection opportunities through what I referred to as ITEL+, experienced a perspective transformation, what contributed to it, and how it informed their teaching and nonteaching contexts. The following research questions guided this action research study:

1. How and to what extent does engaging in the ITEL+ program facilitate a perspective transformation in faculty participants?

2. Which experiences in the ITEL+ program contribute to whether faculty participants experience a perspective transformation?

3. How do ITEL+ faculty participants reflect on and apply their learning about inclusive teaching practices to teaching and nonteaching contexts?

Summary and Implications

In this chapter, I provided evidence that inclusive instruction is a critical area for exploration and action to move the needle on student completion. Research has shown that ethnic and racial minority, low-income, and first-generation students leave their postsecondary institutions at higher rates than students who do not have these risk factors. Although some educational researchers have focused on addressing the output, the

achievement gap, I have aligned with many scholars' thinking that attention to the inputs creating and perpetuating opportunity gaps is a better starting place. As faculty members are positioned to have the greatest impact on ensuring equitable student success, I viewed large-scale faculty development focused on inclusive teaching as key. Although implementing this type of faculty development poses many potential barriers, the greater risk is to maintain the status quo or worsen educational inequities.

As a lead content developer for ACUE, I have witnessed the measurable impact our faculty development programs have on faculty and student outcomes firsthand. Since ITEL was a new offering with immense potential for change, I believed it was important to explore participants' learning experiences and how they were transferring their pedagogical knowledge to nonteaching contexts. With the addition of community-enhancing reflection opportunities, I believed there was greater potential for impact. I expected the results of this work to inform the development of ACUE's offerings and yield insights into whether our professional development program brought about personal change, equipping our nation with more equity-minded citizens.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH GUIDING THE STUDY

In the following section, I provide an overview of the theoretical frameworks supporting the study of inclusive teaching faculty development initiatives in higher education. First, I discuss transformative learning theory, the primary theoretical framework for my research, and communities of practice as a secondary framework that accounts for the benefits of social learning (see Figure 1 for a depiction of how the theoretical frameworks and primary topics are organized into a conceptual framework). To establish foundational terminology, I articulate how scholars have defined diversity, equity, inclusion, and equity-mindedness and have characterized what it means to be an equity-minded educator. Next, I share a review of the programs designed to support higher education instructors in using inclusive pedagogy and the outcomes of relevant studies, in an effort to provide context for my additions to ACUE's program in inclusive teaching, which is described in Chapter 3. Lastly, I briefly describe my previous cycles of action research, which have informed the present study.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework
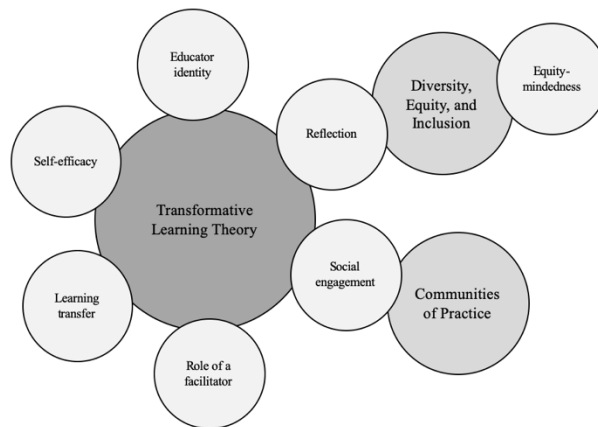
Note. This diagram shows the relationship between the theoretical frameworks and central topics. Sizes and colors are used to represent levels of importance, with transformative learning theory being the most primary to this study.

Transformative Learning Theory

The central theoretical framework for this exploration was transformative learning theory. Aligned with constructivist views, transformative learning theory was first introduced by Jack Mezirow in 1978 and derived from the notion that one of the ways adults learn is through the development of *meaning perspectives*. A meaning perspective, according to Mezirow (1978), "refers to the structure of cultural assumptions within which new experience is assimilated to—and transformed by—one's past experience" (p. 101). Mezirow identified three categories of meaning perspectives—epistemic, sociolinguistic, and psychological—which he later expanded to account for moral-ethical, philosophical, and aesthetic habits of mind; he also noted their ability to overlap and affect one another (Cranton, 2016; Mezirow, 1991). Individuals undergo perspective transformations, Mezirow (1978) proposed, when they "can no longer comfortably deal with anomalies in a new situation" (p. 104) and therefore adopt others' perspectives, with "a conscious recognition of the difference between one's old viewpoint and the new one and a decision to appropriate the newer perspective as being of more value" (p. 105). Old ideals are often rooted in cultural assimilation, which may hinder development toward maturity without the presence of critical reflection, but Mezirow believed that everyone has the ability to change their beliefs. When individuals take on a new perspective, it leads to changes in action, whether individual or collective, to align with the revised viewpoints (Cranton, 2016; Mezirow, 1991). Therefore, the cycle of transformation

involves identification of and separation from perspectives, recasting one's role within the new reality, and societal engagement using the new construction of reality (Mezirow, 1991).

Mezirow (1991) outlined 10 linear, but recursive, phases that represent the full cycle of perspective transformation:

1. A disorienting dilemma;

2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame;

3. A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions;

4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation formation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change;

5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions;

6. Planning of a course of action;

7. Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans;

8. Provisional trying of new roles;

9. Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships; and

10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective. (The Phases of Transformation section, para. 1; see also Figure 2)

The disorienting dilemma, which creates the need for change, may be seen as a single event or a gradual recognition that an existing perspective is no longer suitable. In the context of my research methodology, I sought to identify whether a certain module or learning activity within the ITEL+ faculty development program led to a disorienting dilemma and the subsequent phases of transformation—and the extent to which they

varied by participant. However, I also faced the possibility of instructors not undergoing

perspective transformations, due to barriers such as change being anxiety inducing. As

Mezirow (1978) asserted,

> Making a critical appraisal of the assumptions underlying our roles, priorities and
> beliefs is usually tension producing and can be acutely threatening. We defend
> our social roles with the armor of our strongest emotions, for it is often through
> these roles that we have acquired our very concept of ourselves and achieved our
> greatest satisfactions. Usually a dilemma must generate pressure and anxiety to
> effect a change in perspective. (p. 105)

However, it was my hope that the program design and inclusion of additional drivers of

transformation, as described in Chapter 3, would make the path to change seem less

threatening to participants.

Figure 2

Mezirow's Stages of Perspective Transformation
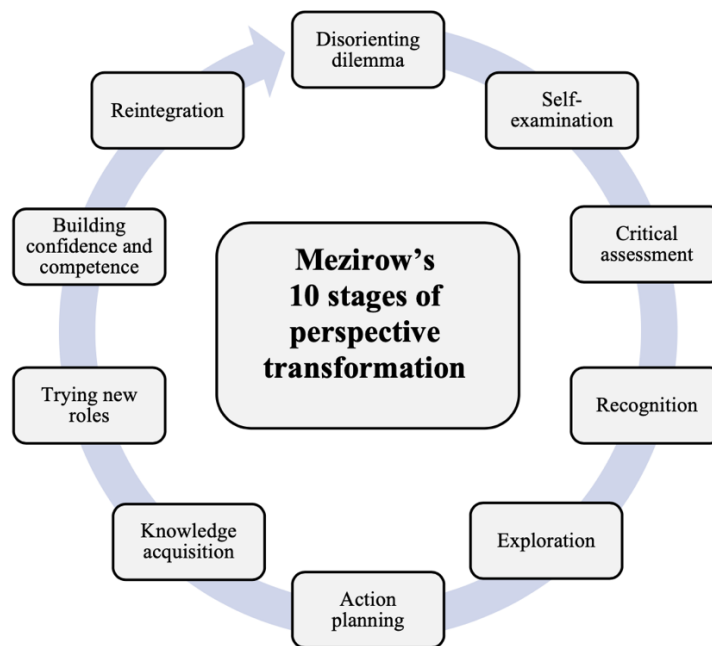
Mezirow's theory, especially in its early days, faced some criticism. According to Cranton (2016), critics commented on the work's omission of "issues to do with social action, power, and cultural context. It was also judged as being too rational, thereby ignoring the role of intuitions, symbols, and images in learning" (p. 17). This led to many expansions of the original work by Mezirow and others. For example, Baumgartner (2001) identified four lenses of the theory's evolution: transformative learning as liberatory and social justice oriented, the importance of rational thought and reflection, transformation contextualized within social environments, and transformative learning as "soul work" (Cranton, 2016, p. 30). Also key to addressing some of the initial criticisms was Mezirow's (1991) later focus on groups and organizational change through social movements. Many scholars have taken up studies focused on group learning and social justice, which "involves calling into question social norms, social values, and issues related to oppression, abuse, brutality, violence, and war" (Cranton, 2016, p. 42). Cranton emphasized that an integrated conceptualization of transformative learning means that the individual and the social can coexist, and though they may begin with different questions, both can lead to a process of perspective transformation and action.

In an effort to be explicit about the tenets of transformative learning theory that were most relevant to my work, I discuss six important subcomponents related to the theory: reflection, educator identity, self-efficacy, learning transfer, the role of a facilitator, and social engagement.

Reflection

Reflection was critical to Mezirow's (1991) theory and was perceived as "the central dynamic in intentional learning, problem solving, and validity testing through

rational discourse" (Making Meaning Through Reflection section, para. 2). First, learners

must have self-awareness that their perspectives need to be revised. As Mezirow's second

phase of transformation clarifies, they could experience guilt or shame in the process that

must be overcome. Mezirow (1991) differentiated between three categories of reflection:

content reflection (i.e., "What is happening here? What is the problem?"), process

reflection (i.e., "How did this come to be?"), and premise reflection (i.e., "Why is this

important to me? Why do I care about this in the first place?"; Cranton, 2016, pp. 25–26).

According to Cranton (2016), premise reflection truly transforms learners, because while

"content and process reflection may lead to the transformation of a specific belief, . . . it

is the premise reflection that engages learners in seeing themselves and the world in a

different way" (p. 26). Learners' engagement in reflective questioning about content,

process, and premise often leads them to adopt different viewpoints. For these reasons,

opportunities for reflection were embedded into the ITEL+ intervention.

Educator Identity

When educators reflect on their practice, it not only contributes to a new way of

thinking but also a new way of being. Cranton (2016) wrote that "by definition,

transformative learning leads to a changed self-perception. When people revise their

habits of mind, they are reinterpreting their sense of self in relation to the world" (p. 8).

Importantly, at the core of my research was the belief that one's educator self is

inseparable from the personal self outside of the classroom. They are interdependent and

shape one another. King (2009) supported this notion:

> Transformative learning and change is not an experience that happens in isolated
>
> classrooms. Instead, the classroom experience, dialogue and transformation are

23

deeply interwoven with the learner's entire life, and therein lays simultaneously some of the greatest possibilities and the greatest difficulties they will encounter as they progress through transformative learning journeys. (Educators, Ethics and Transformative Learning section, para. 1)

Thus, "transformative learning is both intellectual and whole life change" (King, 2009, Educators, Ethics and Transformative Learning section, para. 7). In order for professional learning experiences to be truly transformative, I have asserted, they must involve a change in the self as an educator and as a person. An individual cannot be an equity-minded educator if not an equity-minded person. Therefore, the transformation must impact the holistic educator.

Self-Efficacy

The occurrence of change is often contingent upon whether individuals believe they are capable of change. In Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy, self-efficacy is defined as "beliefs in one's capacity to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). In other words, self-efficacy refers to whether individuals believe they are capable of successfully completing a task and have some control over the outcome. These expectations are influenced by both the self and others. According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy can increase or decrease through repeated successes or failures, observing others succeed or fail, receiving encouragement or disapproval from others, and associating certain emotions with efficacy expectations. Thus, the cycle of transformative learning necessitates enhancing self-efficacy, as individuals must increase their confidence and competence in their new roles, beliefs, and actions. It is often a process of trying out new perspectives on others, such as

implementing new teaching practices with students, and modifying those perspectives. If educators receive a positive response, they are likely to feel validated in their new beliefs and actions. Mezirow (1978) affirmed that behaviors need to take place in a low-risk environment, which is why professional development opportunities must be intentionally designed to build community and allow for practice. He wrote, "Self confidence needed for perspective transformation is often gained through an increased sense of competency and through a supportive social climate in which provisional tries are encouraged with minimum risk" (Mezirow, 1978, p. 107). Therefore, he argued, those undergoing transformative experiences require the appropriate resources and support, which relates to the later sections on social engagement and facilitation. Finally, because of the specific focus on equity and inclusion in this study, Bensimon et al.'s (2007) discussion of self-efficacy is of critical importance. They asserted,

> Practitioners' personal theories about the causes of racial patterns of inequality partly reflect their feelings of self-efficacy as agents of change—i.e., do they consider what their role is or could be in the making or unmaking of unequal outcomes? From the perspective of practice theory, practitioners' beliefs, knowledge, and level of expertise can produce conditions that perpetuate or reverse inequalities in educational outcomes. (p. 30)

My intervention, described in Chapter 3, aimed to address practitioners' beliefs, knowledge, and levels of expertise, with the goal of building educators' self-efficacy so they would feel competent and confident to take action to confront educational inequities.

Learning Transfer

A primary goal of education is for students to apply their learning in and outside of the classroom (Cranton, 2016). In applying learning transfer to transformative learning, Mezirow noted that if individuals did not take any action, perhaps transformation did not occur (Cranton, 2016). Within a faculty development context, the transfer of learning into student-centered environments is arguably the most important indicator of a program's success. Taking it one step further to training in inclusive teaching, educators should also be able to transfer their learning—on implicit bias, microaggressions, stereotype threat, and so forth—into nonacademic contexts. Though transferring learning to a different situation than that in which it was learned, or what some cognitive psychologists have called *far transfer* (Barnett & Ceci, 2002), requires additional processing and adaptation, it is essential to the holistic transformation of an educator's personal and professional identities.

Role of a Facilitator

Cranton (2016) described the role of an educator as a facilitator who "responds to the needs of the learners, fosters a meaningful group process, provides support and encouragement, builds a trusting relationship with learners, helps to challenge people's assumptions and beliefs, and accepts and respects learners" (p. 81). In the context of faculty development programs that include educators as facilitators of learning for their colleagues, these responsibilities are just as important. Functioning on the constructivist belief that knowledge is coconstructed, faculty learners and facilitators negotiate meaning in relation to one another. Importantly, the process of transformative learning requires support from others, which Cranton (2016) called the "moral responsibility" of

facilitators (p. 122). Support becomes especially critical when discourse may cause feelings of discomfort or anxiousness. The role of a facilitator is to ensure open and respectful dialogue. It is also to encourage and support action. When it comes to faculty development programs, this means the facilitator aids in faculty participants' implementation of new practices.

Social Engagement

Another important characteristic of transformative learning is discourse. Although perspective transformation can take place individually or socially, within groups and organizations, Mezirow acknowledged that socialization often facilitates critical questioning, reflection, and problem-solving (Cranton, 2016). Having the self-efficacy to make and sustain changes relies on "association with others who share the new perspective . . . [and provide] support and reinforcement," according to Mezirow (1978, p. 105). In Cranton's (2016) characterization, both learning groups and learner networks support perspective transformation and continued action. Networks include "any sustained relationship among a group of people within a formal or informal learning context or a relationship that extends beyond the boundaries of the learning group" and may form through small-group discussions, study groups, or active learning activities (Cranton, 2016, p. 127). In discussions of communities of practice, it is important to consider how membership in larger learning groups, as well as learner networks, contributes to revised beliefs and actions. The next section takes a deeper dive into communities of practice.

Communities of Practice

While transformative learning can occur individually or within social groups, my exploration into inclusive teaching faculty development acknowledged that learning is often a social process and many professional development programs are designed to encourage collaboration. Therefore, I employed communities of practice as a secondary framework. In their 1991 book *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, Lave and Wenger coined the term *communities of practice* to describe a type of social learning in which groups of individuals are actively engaged together in pursuing common interests, which shapes their identities and expertise. Communities of practice focus on a common domain of interest, represent reciprocal learning through mutual engagement, and lead participants to develop a shared repertoire of practices and language (Wenger, 1998). Through their active participation, participants negotiate meaning, experience a sense of belonging, and reconcile various identities that are characteristic of multimembership and heterogeneity. Communities of practice also foster mutual accountability regarding areas of priority and how meaning is constructed (Wenger, 1998). Not surprisingly, then, they also can result in disagreement and conflict (Wenger, 1998).

As a vehicle to learning through "situated experience" (Wenger, 1998, p. 12) and social engagement, communities of practice can provide a platform for educators to collaboratively address challenges. In terms of classroom instruction, this framework may also encourage educators to implement

> inventive ways of engaging students in meaningful practices, of providing access
> to resources that enhance their participation, of opening their horizons so they can

put themselves on learning trajectories they can identify with, and of involving

them in actions, discussions, and reflections that make a difference to the

communities that they value. (Wenger, 1998, p. 9)

In this way, communities of practice are perceived as having a direct and positive impact

on students. However, most studies have reported on faculty members' satisfaction and

outcomes resulting from group-based professional development, while few have

evaluated student outcomes in relation to faculty participation.

Higher education researchers and practitioners have recognized the importance of

faculty engagement in communities of practice (McDonald & Cater-Steel, 2017a;

McDonald & Cater-Steel, 2017b), and professional development studies have spanned

areas such as supporting new or part-time educators (Cox, 2013; Crawford & Saluja,

2017; Harvey & Fredericks, 2017; Kensington-Miller, 2017), implementing high-impact

practices (Newman, 2017), and sustaining collaboration (Fraser et al., 2017; McCormack

et al., 2017). Others have examined communities of practice as a way to expand the use

of evidence-based teaching practices and have successfully measured resulting student

outcomes. A useful example of this is Hoyert and O'Dell's (2019) study of Pedagogical

Interest Groups (PIGs) established to support faculty in redesigning their courses and to

impact student success rates. In PIGs of six to eight faculty teaching mostly gateway

courses at a state university, faculty were tasked with learning about a new teaching

practice for approximately one semester and then implementing it with their students.

Full courses were redesigned to include the successful pedagogical strategies. At the time

of publication, 46 faculty had participated in eight cross-disciplinary PIGs and 12 new

teaching practices had been implemented in 15 different classes (Hoyert & O'Dell, 2019).

To measure impact, a combination of faculty-determined criteria, such as attendance rates and assignment quality, as well as institutional data on grades, pass rates, and retention rates were used. Notably, the researchers found the redesigned courses had one-third fewer course withdrawals in comparison with the previous semester, retention rates rose 10 percentage points, and grades increased (Hoyert & O'Dell, 2019). The campus-wide freshman retention rate also increased from 65.6%, a 5-year average, to 67.9% the first year PIGs were introduced. This study demonstrates how an intentionally constructed community of practice can inform changes in practice, and it bridges the gap between participation in faculty development and improved student outcomes.

In another important study, Gast et al. (2017) completed a systematic literature review of 18 peer-reviewed research articles that focused on the relationship between team-based professional development and higher education instructors' learning and attitudes about the team-based experiences. The types of teams included were communities of practice, teacher design teams, and teacher inquiry communities. A thematic synthesis and coding of the articles focused on two major themes: the effects of faculty development on instructor learning and the influential factors that contribute to successful team-based professional development. The subthemes for instructor learning included collegiality, critical reflection, teaching approach, pedagogical knowledge, and teacher identity. Some of the key findings included the value of reflection on teaching practices, the use of student-centered teaching strategies, increased understanding of how to build relationships with students, and transformed perspectives of the instructor's identity and role in student learning. These findings support the need to think critically about how to build and sustain communities of practice aimed at enhancing student

outcomes, as changes in mindset and attitude are often viewed as a precursor to changes in instructional behaviors.

The studies on communities of practice linked to faculty development show that when instructors participate in social learning, they increase their knowledge and application of effective teaching practices, become more reflective, gain confidence in their ability to experiment with new practices, and reimagine their educator identities; perhaps more importantly, such efforts also can increase student retention and achievement. Faculty development programs focused specifically on inclusive teaching and designed for transformative impact should be structured around building communities of practice to reap similar benefits. Inclusive teaching training programs that have included communities of practice are presented later in this chapter.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Equity-Mindedness

In addition to presenting the theoretical frameworks, it is important to establish the foundational terminology used throughout this research, beginning with equity-mindedness. Coined by the University of Southern California's Center for Urban Education (n.d.), the term *equity-mindedness* represents "the perspective or mode of thinking exhibited by practitioners who call attention to patterns of inequity in student outcomes" (para. 1). According to leading scholars, equity-minded practitioners

- "are willing to assess their own racialized assumptions, to acknowledge their lack of knowledge in the history of race and racism, to take responsibility for the success of historically underserved and minoritized student groups, and to critically assess racialization in their own practices as educators and administrators" (McNair et al., 2020, p. 20) and

- "say and do things that reflect an awareness of equity issues and a willingness to address them. Equity perspectives are evident in actions, language, problem-framing, problem-solving, and cultural practices. This includes being 'color conscious,' noticing differences in experience among racial-ethnic groups, and being willing to talk about race and ethnicity as an aspect of equity" (Bensimon, 2009, p. 7).

Extending its meaning beyond educational contexts, Bensimon et al. (2007) further defined equity-mindedness as "a multi-dimensional theoretical construct derived from concepts of fairness, social justice, and human agency articulated in several disciplines, including philosophy, critical race theory, feminist theory, psychology, organizational behavior, economics, and education" (p. 32). I use the term equity-mindedness in my research to refer to heightened awareness of the practices, policies, values, and beliefs that perpetuate inequities, including but not limited to racism, and engaged thinking about how to confront all forms of marginalization and perceived difference both in and outside of education. This definition is intended to directly address racism and racialized assumptions while being inclusive of those who identify with other minoritized populations, such as those with disabilities and nonbinary gender identities. Additionally, as my research aimed to explore how faculty transferred their knowledge of equity both within and outside of their teaching roles, a more encompassing definition of equity-mindedness was necessary.

Since diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are at the core of this research, it is also important to establish the relationship between these principles. Addy et al. (2021) have offered the following definitions:

- Diversity: "how learners differ from one another with regard to their social identities, demographics, perspectives, prior experiences, attitudes, knowledge, skills, and other attributes" (p. 4)

- Equity: "acknowledges the differences between learners, their diversity, and the types of learning environments that help diverse students succeed" (p. 4)

- Inclusion: "creating a welcoming environment and intentionally not excluding any learners" (p. 4)

I adopted these definitions in my research, using equity to refer to how individuals embrace others' differences as assets and inclusion to describe the creation of equitable conditions and environments. However, I also extended the definition of educational equity to include the ideals set forth by the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U; n.d.): "the creation of opportunities for historically underserved populations to have equal access to and participate in educational programs that are capable of closing the achievement gaps in student success and completion" (para. 7). Because I intended to address opportunity gaps by way of faculty development in inclusive teaching, this definition of equity was especially germane.

In providing grounding for this research, it is vital to note that the term *equality* is not synonymous with *equity*. While equality means ensuring learners experience the same forms of educational engagement and opportunities, equity acknowledges that different learners, because of their diverse identities and experiences, may require different types of access. Simply put, equality means "sameness," while equity means "fairness" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). A primary goal of my research was to create more equitable conditions by increasing practitioners' equity-mindedness, to support them in becoming

33

better educators and citizens. In order to demystify what it means to be an equity-minded practitioner, key attributes of equity-minded instructors are addressed in the next section.

Characteristics of Equity-Minded and Inclusive Educators

Everyone at an institution is responsible for creating an inclusive environment that fosters students' sense of belonging and belief in their ability to succeed in their academic and professional pursuits. Thus, it is critical to increase transparency about the actions that all members of an institution, including faculty, can and should take toward this end. As part of an "Equity for All" intervention to support institutions in raising awareness of racial disparities through inquiry-based teams, Bensimon et al. (2007) articulated four qualities of equity-minded practitioners:

1. Being color-conscious (as opposed to color-blind) in an affirmative sense. To be color-conscious means noticing and questioning patterns of educational outcomes that reveal unexplainable differences for minority students; viewing inequalities in the context of a history of exclusion, discrimination, and educational apartheid.

2. Being aware that beliefs, expectations, and practices can be racialized unintentionally. Examples of racialization include attributing unequal outcomes to students' cultural predispositions and basing academic practices on assumptions about the capacity or ambitions of minority students.

3. Being willing to assume responsibility for the elimination of inequality. Rather than viewing inequalities as predictable and natural, an equity-minded practitioner would allow for the possibility that they might be created or exacerbated by taken-for-granted practices and policies, inadequate

knowledge, a lack of cultural know-how, or the absence of institutional support.

4. Being able to demonstrate authentic caring (Valenzuela 1999). To care authentically means to reach out to students proactively and give them the tools they need to succeed—e.g., teaching them how to study, showing them how to format a paper. Authentic care encompasses substantial help-giving actions and should not be confused with being understanding or sympathetic. While understanding and sympathy may provide the motivation for help-giving actions, they are not sufficient to make a difference in minority students' lives. (pp. 32–33)

Collectively, these attributes call for practitioners to be attentive to cultural and historical context, to reflect on practices that could further marginalize students, to be accountable for addressing educational inequities, and to provide care and support to students.

These principles are well aligned to what scholars have called *culturally responsive* or *culturally relevant pedagogy* (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995), "using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Culturally responsive teaching includes "developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity, including ethnic and cultural diversity content in the curriculum, demonstrating caring and building learning communities, communicating with ethnically diverse students, and responding to ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Such practices can help to build instructors' cultural competence within the teaching context, but they are certainly not an exhaustive list. More recently, the term *culturally sustaining pedagogies*,

or teaching that "seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation" has also been used (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1). Culturally sustaining pedagogies have focused on cultural strengths as assets to the educational experience, particularly those of communities of color (Paris & Alim, 2017). Since my research extended beyond embracing and sustaining cultural identities to recognizing all facets of identity (e.g., gender, socioeconomic status, age, religion, and so forth) as fundamental strengths, it is important to see the use of culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogies as offering subsets of strategies that are embedded into the holistic practice of an equity-minded educator.

In the preface to Addy et al.'s (2021) book, Longmire-Avital and Felten also provided a list of what constitutes an inclusive instructor. Like Bensimon et al. (2007), they noted accountability for making instruction inclusive and demonstrating care for students as among the top traits. Additionally, they argued that inclusive educators "continue to *learn* about both their students and their teaching" and "*change* their teaching based on evidence about the practices that support and challenge all students to thrive" (Addy et al., 2021, p. x). Since most instructors want to teach inclusively but may not know how (Addy et al., 2021), both of these characteristics are significant. If educators are to demonstrate equity-mindedness and foster a learning environment that allows all students to succeed, they must be aware of the evidence-based teaching practices that advance this cause.

When educators engage in formal and informal professional development opportunities, they can learn to better align their teaching practices with strategies that are

supported by research. All of ACUE's courses include inclusive teaching strategies, but the focus of my research, the ITEL microcredential, offers a deeper dive into inclusive pedagogy. In the sections that follow, I share an overview of the topics addressed in ACUE's microcredential and other nationally available faculty development programs designed to support inclusive teaching as well as studies that highlight institutional offerings and the outcomes they have produced. The purpose of this exploration is twofold: to elucidate the practices that constitute inclusive teaching and to trace various national and institutional approaches to developing equity-minded and inclusive practitioners as a means of comparison to ITEL, which reaches faculty in the United States and abroad.

Inclusive Teaching Faculty Development Programs

The body of research on postsecondary faculty training in inclusive teaching has been rapidly growing, especially in recent years. Though the need to evaluate programs' effectiveness remains (Goldstein Hode et al., 2018), recent studies have demonstrated the potential of existing programs to prompt changes in instructional practice and point to necessary areas for future growth. A review of the literature shows that inclusive teaching programs vary drastically in terms of recruitment and participation, duration, delivery models, depth of topics addressed, opportunities for implementation and reflection, and interaction with colleagues and facilitators. While many programs have welcomed faculty from different disciplines, concerns about high dropout rates in STEM courses—with women and students of color withdrawing in disproportionate numbers—have led to increased attention on preparing STEM faculty to teach inclusively (Dewsbury, 2017; Dewsbury & Brame, 2019; Killpack & Melón, 2016). These studies are briefly addressed

37

in this section due to the widespread value of the pedagogy for faculty in any department and the transferability of the research findings. However, research focused solely on instructor training in Universal Design for Learning (UDL; e.g., Cash et al., 2021; Hromalik et al., 2020) was not included because, while the principles of UDL certainly represent inclusive practices, my conceptualization of equity-based pedagogy extends beyond UDL. I also excluded studies on inclusive teaching workshops spanning only a few hours or days (e.g., Aragón et al., 2017; Gillan-Daniel et al., 2020) and general diversity training that does not address pedagogy. As Hudson (2020) has argued, "the positive effects of a one-time, half-day diversity training session do not last beyond a day or two and in some cases increase racial bias and incite backlash if they are mandatory, not voluntary" (p. 1). Further, Glowacki-Dudka et al. (2012) wrote,

> A stand alone [*sic*] workshop does not allow the instructors the opportunity to fully engage with one another as they seek to integrate newly accepted theories into practice and as they continue to need a sounding board to help them critically reflect on assumptions of teaching. (p. 11)

Since the focus of my research was a comprehensive inclusive teaching program designed for transformative impact, research on action-oriented training was most relevant. I begin with an overview of national programs.

National Programs

ACUE is not the only organization that supports faculty across multiple institutions in becoming more equitable and inclusive instructors. The Equity Literacy Institute has produced a host of courses, some of which are free and open access, while others have one-time or subscription-based fees. In addition, Cornell University and

Columbia University both have offered self-paced, massive open online courses (MOOCs) through EdX that allow educators to hone their skills in leading inclusive courses. Table 1 includes a comparison of the topics, delivery formats, and approximate time commitments of the Cornell, Columbia, and ACUE courses. Although a more extensive description of ACUE's ITEL microcredential is offered in Chapter 3, it is important to point out the similarities in objectives and topics between courses as part of this discussion, though ACUE's course is not a MOOC. All courses have been described as evidence based, reflection oriented, and designed to support instructors in applying inclusive teaching approaches. There is significant overlap between content areas. All three courses have aimed to (a) develop instructors' self-awareness of their own and students' identities by understanding implicit bias and challenging their assumptions about students; (b) foster inclusive course climates that promote effective dialogue and mitigate conflict; (c) integrate course design elements that ensure diverse representation and accessibility of content; and (d) help instructors understand how impediments to the learning environment, such as microaggressions and stereotype threat, can impact students' sense of belonging and ability to succeed. These commonalities are helpful in defining some of the key research-based strategies for inclusive teaching.

Useful evidence of how these national programs lead to changes in practice can be found in the self-study of Donovan et al. (2021). In this study, colleagues from the online MS in Educational Technology program at California State University, Fullerton engaged in the Cornell University, Columbia University, and Equity Literacy Institute courses to revise the graduate program in which they serve as program directors as well as full-time and part-time professors. The participants concluded that their learning in the

professional development programs "impacted [their] entire learning ecology" (Donovan et al., 2021, p. 71), including how they design their courses and online course environments, facilitate students' learning, and convey their commitment to equity and inclusion to students. This research demonstrates the potential of national programs to lead to concrete action if practitioners are dedicated to applying their new learning. It also shows that programs need not be institution specific, given faculty members' ability to transfer their knowledge from research-based professional development opportunities into their own contexts.

Institutional Programs

Institutions have also implemented programs to help faculty teach more equitably and inclusively, often representing joint efforts of teaching centers and other campus departments. At Xavier University, for example, cohorts of faculty and administrators participated in the Diversity and Inclusive Teaching Academy, which formed as a collaboration between the Institutional Diversity and Inclusion Office and Center for Teaching Excellence and consisted of a 16-week, hybrid course spanning two semesters (Ceo-DiFrancesco et al., 2019). Self-reported measures of faculty learning about diversity and inclusion topics as a result of their participation and overall satisfaction with the usefulness of the program were high, ranging from 80% to 100%. Qualitative data revealed that faculty valued belonging to a community of practice and engaging with meaningful content. Yet despite faculty indicating plans to take action in their teaching based on what they learned, a major shortcoming of the study was the absence of knowledge about whether inclusive strategies were actually implemented (Ceo-DiFrancesco et al., 2019). The same could be said for Iowa State University's mandatory

Inclusive Classroom Annual Training, which consisted of three self-paced modules followed by a synchronous session for each department led by the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT; Hengesteg et al., 2021). Although the module of emphasis in Hengesteg et al.'s (2021) article, which focused on student development theories, was said to include "tangible action items developed by CELT staff informed from existing literature that faculty could incorporate into their teaching to move the needle toward a more inclusive environment" (p. 5), the authors recognized that a limitation of the study was not knowing whether faculty implemented the practices they learned during the training.

Table 1

Comparison of Nationally Accessible Inclusive Teaching Courses

Course	Module topics	Format	Duration
ACUE: Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning (ACUE, n.d.)	Module 1: Managing the Impact of Bias Module 2: Reducing Microaggressions in Learning Environments Module 3: Addressing Imposter Phenomenon and Stereotype Threat Module 4: Creating Inclusive Learning Environments Module 5: Designing Equity-Centered Courses	Facilitated, online course with institutional or open-enrollment cohorts	10 weeks (2 weeks per module; hours per week not specified)
Columbia University: Inclusive Teaching: Supporting All Students in the College Classroom (Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning et al., n.d.)	Overview of Inclusive Teaching Module 1: Establishing and Supporting an Inclusive Course Climate Module 2: Setting Explicit Expectations Module 3: Promoting Diversity and Inclusion Through Course Content Module 4: Designing All Course Elements for Accessibility Module 5: Cultivating Critical Self-Reflection	MOOC, self-paced	Estimated 6 weeks (2 to 3 hours per week)
Cornell University: Teaching & Learning in the Diverse Classroom (Ouellett & Ivanchikova, n.d.)	Module 1: Instructors: Reflect on your social identities and lived experiences, and consider how these shape who you are as a teacher and your approach to the classroom or other learning environments. Module 2: Students: Explore students' social identities, what the research says about how social identity may become salient in the classroom, and selected, key strategies for supporting student learning, including ameliorating implicit bias and stereotype threat, and fostering a disability-inclusive learning environment. Module 3: Pedagogy: Examine how to create and sustain an inclusive learning climate, with a focus on strategies useful in facilitating dialogue when unexpected challenges come up and how to prepare in advance for such moments. Module 4: Curriculum: Evaluate your curriculum—what you teach—at both course and disciplinary levels, from a diversity perspective. Module 5: Action and Change: Plan for future actions you may take to affect the broader context of inclusion in teaching and learning, when and how you want to make change from the individual (course), to institutional (college), to cultural (disciplinary, community) levels.	MOOC, self-paced	Estimated 5 weeks (2 to 4 hours per week)

Note. Cornell University's descriptions are copied from their website to provide clarity on the module topics.

In some instances, programs were intentionally designed to encourage implementation of the recommended inclusive teaching strategies, which was successful in a portion of the cases. One successful example was Gutierrez Keeton et al.'s (2021) Teaching First-Generation College Students Across Cultural Strengths program, which was designed using a cultural strengths framework. Over a period of 6 months, a group of undergraduate and graduate instructors and instructional designers from nine campuses within a California public university system engaged in facilitated, asynchronous and synchronous online learning opportunities. For 5 weeks in the summer, participants completed 15 to 20 hours of activities, followed by a fall semester that allowed them time for implementation, assessment, reflection, and dissemination of their findings. The objectives and structure of the program guaranteed that faculty would make, at minimum, two changes to their teaching, including revision to a course syllabus and at least one teaching or assessment practice. A key finding was that faculty were eager to evaluate how the practices they implemented impacted their students, which is a promising indicator that faculty participants made the connection between their teaching behaviors and student impact. Similarly, in Hudson's (2020) ethnographic study, she described how her participation in a 5-month hybrid program, Teaching Inclusion and Diversity Everywhere (TIDE), required the completion of a diversity statement and lesson plan assignments. She asserted that the focus on accountability within a facilitated community of practice motivated her to change her practice, resulting in improved student course evaluations (Hudson, 2020).

The faculty development program at the University of Wisconsin–Madison was also inherently designed to encourage implementation of practices through the

development of an action and evaluation plan (Schmid et al., 2016). UW–Madison's training consisted of a 4-week module embedded within a year-long effective teaching program that supported cross-disciplinary cohorts of faculty and was centered on evidence-based teaching and reflection. Similar to ACUE's ITEL course, the module began with a larger focus on educational inequities and reflection on implicit bias, such that faculty devoted time to "self-work before . . . discussing potential solutions" (Schmid et al., 2016, p. 20). In fact, much of the content and program design overlaps with ACUE's ITEL microcredential program. However, a critical difference is that there is only a week dedicated to faculty learning about inclusive instructional practices, which likely affected the study's outcomes. Participants reported improved knowledge and skills—especially in engaging with students and addressing diversity and equity in their classes—and indicated plans to adjust their teaching approaches in the future. Yet, many faculty participants said "their teaching materials did not change much after the module" (Schmid et al., 2016, p. 21), which may indicate that greater instruction on inclusive course design is needed.

Research by Reinholz et al. (2020), Goldstein Hode et al. (2018), and Rodriguez et al. (2021) also connected the dots between engagement in inclusive teaching faculty development programs and the subsequent actions taken by participants. Conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, Reinholz et al.'s (2020) study employed a professional learning community to draw implications about teaching practices that could be implemented to improve participatory equity in synchronous, online STEM courses. While there are a number of studies focused on improving inclusive teaching in STEM (e.g., Hirst et al., 2021; Macdonald et al., 2019; O'Leary et al., 2020), Reinholz et al.'s

(2020) research is particularly relevant because the professional learning community was interdisciplinary and the recommended practices support learning in both STEM and non-STEM courses. In this study, faculty were observed and provided with data about their students' participation in their online courses. They met with their learning community to discuss their course-specific data and set a goal to "make at least one actionable change" in each subsequent cycle (Reinholz et al., 2020, p. 4). The researchers found that changes in practice corresponded with the observation data and learning community discussions, which shows the value of making data-informed changes and using discourse with colleagues to think deeply about ways to refine instructional practice.

Goldstein Hode et al.'s (2018) research, which was guided by transformative learning theory, employed a pretest and posttest to measure whether participants gained cultural competence through their participation in a 4-week, online Diversity 101 course. Research questions focused on whether participants enhanced their understanding of diversity and its importance to the institution, became more aware of social privilege, became more amenable to engagement with different cultures, and felt better prepared to respond to bias and discrimination. Quantitative pretest and posttest responses showed that changes in the value of diversity, awareness of social privilege, and openness to different cultures were all statistically significant. While quantitative data on self-efficacy in responding to bias and discrimination were considered inconclusive because the scale did not meet reliability standards, qualitative data indicated participants' self-efficacy increased (Goldstein Hode et al., 2018). Goldstein Hode et al. (2018) called for future studies to assess self-efficacy, as "self-efficacy can be an effective way to increase the cultural competence of faculty and staff" (p. 362). They also noted that diversity training

within institutional contexts will only make a difference if faculty and staff participants are able to transfer their knowledge, which reinforces the importance of learning transfer as part of my research.

In another study that emphasized faculty application of learning, Rodriguez et al. (2021) presented findings from a Purdue University program in which faculty developed their own social justice projects following their participation in critical cultural awareness workshops. This research supported the value of participating in a community of practice and allowing faculty choice in projects. The program design also ensured that faculty took action to drive equitable change. However, a major shortcoming was the lack of comprehensiveness in the initial training. Only two brief workshops offered instruction and activities on identity, privilege, and cultural awareness, and then participants set out to develop project proposals. Thus, participants indicated that they did not receive enough practice during the workshops. This study provides a useful reminder that faculty may not feel prepared to transfer their learning from professional development opportunities if they are not adequately prepared during the programs. Therefore, inclusive teaching programs must provide robust preparation for faculty if they are to result in sustained change; commitment to subsequent action cannot take the place of foundational learning, as both are necessary.

A final area worth discussion is *who* participated in the diversity training opportunities presented in the research and *why* they enrolled. While some institutions, such as Iowa State University, made their training mandatory for faculty (Hengesteg et al., 2021), others recruited faculty, staff, and administrator volunteers (Ceo-DiFrancesco, 2019; Hudson, 2020), and still others welcomed graduate students into mixed cohorts.

One example involving graduate students is Glowacki-Dudka et al.'s (2012) study of a university's 3-week, facilitated seminar, Developing Pedagogies to Enhance Excellence and Diversity, which included 18 faculty and three graduate students. In this program, participants were tasked with planning to implement a teaching innovation in one of their courses following the seminar. While the authors determined that some instructors' participation in the seminar led to a transformative learning experience, there were a few critical shortcomings of this study. First, although the seminar offered some teaching strategies, "the aim was not to hand out concrete recommendations" (Glowacki-Dudka et al., 2012, p. 2), which likely led to survey and interview responses that indicated participants wanted more depth and "more ideas of how to implement inclusive pedagogy" (p. 5). Second, the extent to which the survey instrument and interview served to measure transformative learning is unclear. Third, as the authors acknowledged, participants who agreed to be interviewed were already highly motivated, and therefore the qualitative data may not represent the majority of participants' perspectives. These three areas for improvement were addressed within my research, as I focused on actionable inclusive teaching practices and methodically measuring transformation, with qualitative data collection from all participants.

In addition to the many models described above, there have also been diversity training programs offered exclusively to graduate students. For example, at the University of Michigan, graduate student instructors (GSIs) have engaged in the 5-week Diversity and Inclusive Teaching seminar in interdisciplinary cohorts that are facilitated and divided into smaller peer learning teams (Daniels & Schoem, 2020). Participants' learning experience, according to the authors, was intended to be transformative, such

that the graduate students built an inclusive mindset. Like other programs, the University

of Michigan's training has resulted in high satisfaction rates and plans to implement

practices, but no clear data regarding their actual implementation. Yet the program's

recruitment methods were perhaps the most concerning component. Daniels and Schoem

(2020) noted that, through a brief application process, "facilitators are able to select a

thoughtful and motivated set of GSIs who are best prepared to engage in a transformative

learning experience, and are most likely to apply what they learn to their future practice"

(p. 86). Further, "those with less experience in DEI are encouraged to participate in other

campus offerings and invited to apply again in the future" (Daniels & Schoem, 2020, p.

86). This meant that those who lacked expertise in DEI topics—and who likely needed

the support most—may not have been enrolled in the program. Another area of concern,

not specific to this study, is that those who may need the support most might not apply at

all. Goldstein Hode et al. (2018) described this challenge:

> Individuals who are more culturally competent are also more aware of their own
>
> deficits and are therefore more motivated to take advantage of professional
>
> development opportunities. Individuals with less knowledge or competence are
>
> not as likely to be aware of their deficits and therefore less likely to seek out
>
> diversity training. (p. 360)

While mandating participation in institutional programs certainly comes with its own set

of obstacles, it is equally important to consider what is lost when campus members do not

participate in efforts intended to create more equitable experiences for the students they

serve.

Research Implications

The research on national and local inclusive teaching programs paints a picture of the wide variety of offerings that support the development of equitable teaching competencies. The description of national programs serves as a broad depiction of key topics incorporated into training programs and sheds light on how learning from national programs can be applied to institutional contexts. All of the studies further the notion that one-and-done workshops on inclusive teaching will not lead to sustained changes in practice. The research also demonstrates that programs must be designed to provide adequate foundational knowledge and practice opportunities with embedded reflection and must focus on faculty participants' implementation of inclusive pedagogy learned in the training. Importantly, as the majority of programs have employed cohort-based models, the research outcomes validate the importance of cultivating interdisciplinary communities of practice, with encouraging peers and facilitators, to change faculty mindsets and practice. Finally, though transformative learning was not systematically measured in the reviewed studies, the research shows that transformative learning theory is a viable lens for designing and evaluating the impact of inclusive teaching programs. In the last section of this chapter, I offer context for how my previous cycles of action research have led to my present inquiry into inclusive teaching training.

Previous Cycles of Action Research

In the sections that follow, I offer an overview of my previous cycles of action research, along with the key takeaways that have guided my current research. Importantly, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated that I shift my focus to align with ACUE's offerings. My initial area of inquiry was exploring the role of faculty

development in Guided Pathways, which is a widespread reform effort intended to improve the student experience and increase equity by establishing a more clearly defined path for students from before they enroll in college through degree attainment. My problem of practice for the first two cycles was that colleges and universities have been perpetuating low student retention and completion rates by failing to include faculty in their work to ensure that students experience a meaningful and cohesive academic journey, and too few instructors have been prepared to lead instructional change because most lack formal training in how to teach effectively. However, as our Content Development team at ACUE changed directions in the midst of the pandemic and halted our creation of a specialized Guided Pathways faculty development program, I modified my research area to align with my team's current work.

Although Guided Pathways and inclusive teaching may initially appear as disparate topics, there is a critical relationship between them. Both are centered around creating more equitable learning experiences for students and ensuring students persist along their paths to completion and meaningful careers. Many of the core inclusive practices that cultivate equity-centered learning environments (e.g., ensuring students experience a sense of belonging and representation within a course; mitigating the impact of biases, stereotype threat, and imposter syndrome; building a growth mindset in students; creating conditions for respectful interactions; and developing relationships with students, to name a few) are the same practices that help students stay on a program pathway and ensure students are engaging in high-quality learning, which are pillars of the Guided Pathways framework. Therefore, when instructors engage in a program in which they learn about and implement inclusive teaching strategies, their improved

practice furthers the goals of Guided Pathways, which means the present research was aligned with my initial goal of empowering faculty to serve as change agents in Guided Pathways reform. Thus, I describe my Cycle 0 and Cycle 1 research for researchers and practitioners interested in embedding instructional reform into their Guided Pathways efforts, though these cycles have broader relevance to both the present study and the field of faculty development at large.

Cycle 0

In my Cycle 0 research, conducted in fall 2020, I led a qualitative study consisting of semistructured interviews with three of my ACUE colleagues to further clarify the role of faculty in Guided Pathways reform and how our organization could provide support for Pathways institutions. The study addressed three research questions: (a) What is the role of faculty members in Guided Pathways reform? (b) What type of intervention should ACUE develop to support faculty members in contributing to Guided Pathways reform? and (c) What can ACUE do to support our institutional partners in effectively implementing an ACUE intervention that aids in Guided Pathways instructional reform? The three major themes that emerged from my grounded interpretation analysis of interview transcripts were the role of faculty and institutions; the importance of evidence-based teaching practices, career relevance, and learning outcomes; and the need to assess impact.

First, all participants framed Guided Pathways as an institutional responsibility, with both instructional and structural reforms being led by administrators. In order for instructional reform to take place, they argued, faculty members need to be included in the reform efforts from the start, motivated to participate, and effectively supported.

51

Secondly, participants made it clear that ACUE's existing offerings were already suitable to guide faculty members in the type of instructional reform necessary for Guided Pathways. However, the interviewees called for increased attention to career guidance and cohesive learning outcomes for a Pathways-specific faculty credential. The third major theme that emerged was the importance of assessing faculty and student impact. The participants agreed that ACUE's existing framework for evaluating the impact of our programs on faculty and student outcomes likely would not be sufficient for a Pathways-specific program. While they noted that the existing construct is helpful in assessing areas like instructor self-efficacy and student course completion, there were opportunities to build upon this framework. Collectively, the results of this research suggested that participants believed ACUE was already positioned to lead instructional reform with our existing faculty development programs. However, both our programs and strategies for evaluating effectiveness could be enhanced to better meet the goals of Guided Pathways reform. In addition, responses from my colleagues implied that they did not think Guided Pathways reform could succeed without faculty members—and without faculty members being formally trained in the use of evidence-based teaching practices.

Cycle 1

In spring 2021, I conducted my Cycle 1 research using a mixed-methods approach. I employed one of ACUE's existing online learning modules that supported Pathways goals—Helping Students Persist in Online Learning (referred to hereafter as the Persistence module)—to explore its impact on instructors' implementation of research-based teaching practices, self-efficacy, and understanding of their role in Guided Pathways reform at a Pathways-focused community college. The purpose was to

investigate how ACUE's comprehensive faculty development efforts could support Guided Pathways institutions in preparing and engaging instructors to help increase student persistence through completion, in alignment with Pathways goals. The study focused on the following research questions:

1. How does ACUE's Helping Students Persist in Online Learning module impact participating faculty members' implementation of research-based teaching practices at a Guided Pathways-focused college?

2. How does faculty engagement in ACUE's Helping Students Persist in Online Learning module impact their self-efficacy in meeting the primary goal of Guided Pathways, helping students persist toward degree completion and/or transfer?

3. How does faculty engagement in ACUE's Helping Students Persist in Online Learning module impact their perception of their role in their college's Guided Pathways reform efforts?

I intentionally recruited one of ACUE's long-term institutional partners that had been engaged in Guided Pathways reform for a number of years to participate. Given the timeline for Cycle 1, I leveraged demographic and module Reflection Survey data from three cohorts of faculty, representing 82 participants, who completed the Persistence module in November 2020 as part of their enrollment in ACUE's Creating an Inclusive and Supportive Online Learning Environment microcredential course. I also conducted interviews with two faculty participants. Quantitative analysis was conducted to address Research Question 1. To address Research Questions 2 and 3, interviews were coded using a grounded interpretation approach with constant comparison, including line-by-

line initial coding, the grouping of codes into categories, and the synthesis of categories into major themes.

This study led to three major findings connected to the research questions. First, the quantitative and qualitative data showed that the Persistence module impacted faculty learning and implementation of research-based teaching practices. On average, participants implemented one new teaching practice per module and planned to implement or adjust their approach to another seven practices. The teaching practices that most often represented new learning for faculty were assigning activities and assignments that address growth mindset, communicating the connection between increased effort and improved performance, and helping students overcome imposter syndrome. However, the results indicated that the majority of faculty only *planned* to implement these practices and did not do so when completing the module. In response to Research Question 2, it was clear that the interview participants felt confident about helping students persist from their course to the next one and believed they had control over whether students earned their degrees. An unanticipated finding, however, was that participants did not attribute their self-efficacy to their completion of the Persistence module. Frequently, participants noted that ACUE helped them to feel more confident, but they referred to teaching practices they learned when engaging in other ACUE modules that were part of the full microcredential, or even other microcredentials they had completed. Finally, data collected and analyzed to address Research Question 3 provided valuable insights into how faculty members conceived of their role in Guided Pathways reform. The interviewees described their role as managing expectations and choice around career paths, connecting students with campus resources, addressing misconceptions around

Pathways and careers, helping students navigate and persist through changes, ensuring students experience safety and a sense of belonging in the classroom, breaking through silos with administrators and other departments to advocate for students, and taking a genuine interest in students' lives. The extent to which their participation in the Persistence module influenced their perception of their role was unclear.

Implications

The previous cycles of action research, but particularly Cycle 1, represented critical learning experiences that informed different facets of my current study. One was the type of data that was most beneficial in responding to my research questions. As part of my qualitative analyses for the present study, I reviewed participants' module reflections. I had planned to analyze interviewees' module reflection assignments in Cycle 1, but I was unable to do so because of time constraints and believed this work would have been valuable. Since module reflections are rich sources of information regarding participants' implementation of practices, they were vital to addressing my research question about ITEL+ faculty participants' implementation of practices in and outside of their teaching. Additionally, I learned about the challenges of completing the IRB process at a partner institution where I was not employed. Due to the significant hurdles I faced, I decided to study one of ACUE's Open Enrollment cohorts for my dissertation research cycle, to ensure control over the process. I also decided to serve as the facilitator to maintain more control over faculty members' participation in the microcredential, and to encourage them to implement, rather than plan to implement, the recommended teaching practices. Lastly, a key takeaway from Cycle 1 was that I needed to either collect qualitative data immediately following participants' completion of a

module or study full microcredentials, rather than single modules, since participants did not think of the learning modules in isolation. For this reason, I assessed the impact of a full, five-module microcredential program for my dissertation study and asked faculty participants to complete a survey seeking quantitative and qualitative responses immediately following the program.

Summary

In Chapter 2, I began with a comprehensive overview of transformative learning theory and communities of practice, including their relevance to my research. Next, the foundational principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and equity-mindedness, as well as the characteristics of an equity-minded educator, were defined. I then shared the research on inclusive teaching faculty development programs produced for national and institutional use, along with implications for my research. I concluded by summarizing my previous cycles of action research and their relevance to the present study, thus bridging the gap between Guided Pathways and inclusive teaching faculty development. In the next chapter, I describe the ITEL+ innovation and methodology for my study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

In the first two chapters, I argued that opportunity gaps should be addressed by way of intentional faculty development programs that support college faculty in teaching inclusively and equitably. Since ethnic and racial minority, low-income, and first-generation students have dropped out in disproportionate rates (Engle & Tinto, 2008; Shapiro et al., 2017), institutional leaders must focus their efforts on ensuring that students experience quality instruction within every class. While powerful teaching and strong faculty–student relationships benefit all students, research has shown that there is a greater benefit to those from traditionally marginalized backgrounds (Cole, 2007; Manning-Ouellette & Beatty, 2019; Schmid et al., 2016). I also have established my organization, ACUE, as a trusted partner and change agent in supporting institutions in instructional reform, with studies demonstrating our programs' impact on faculty learning as well as student achievement, persistence, and equity (ACUE, 2019; Hecht, 2019; Lawner et al., 2019; Lawner et al., 2021; Lawner & Snow, 2018, 2020; Pippins et al., 2022).

The previous chapter offered an overview of the main frameworks informing my research. I synthesized transformative learning theory with the related topics of reflection, educator identity, self-efficacy, learning transfer, the role of a facilitator, and social engagement. Social engagement was further explicated through a discussion of communities of practice. I then established the foundational terminology for my research, presented some of the characteristics of inclusive educators, and summarized key extant studies of national and institutional inclusive teaching programs, pointing to their

strengths and shortcomings. Finally, I explained how my previous cycles of action research led to my current inquiry.

In this chapter, I provide an overview of my mixed-methods action research study, including the setting, participants, my role as a researcher, the ITEL+ program, my data collection and analytical methods, and my implementation timeline. Importantly, the alignment between my research questions and data sources is made explicit. In an in-depth explanation of ACUE's ITEL microcredential program, I offer a rationale for the adjustments I made to the program's implementation to produce its derivative, ITEL+. As previously stated, my goal was to strengthen the community of practice in a cohort comprised of faculty participants from across the country and to ensure participants could transfer their professional development learning to other contexts, given the intersection of educators' personal and professional identities. I also sought to uncover whether instructors experienced a perspective transformation due to their participation in ITEL+ and, if so, which learning activities contributed to it. Therefore, my study addressed the following research questions:

1. How and to what extent does engaging in the ITEL+ program facilitate a perspective transformation in faculty participants?
2. Which experiences in the ITEL+ program contribute to whether faculty participants experience a perspective transformation?
3. How do ITEL+ faculty participants reflect on and apply their learning about inclusive teaching practices to teaching and nonteaching contexts?

Overview of Action Research

My study of inclusive teaching faculty development is characterized as action research. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) have described action research as "systematic procedures completed by individuals in an educational setting to gather information about and subsequently improve the ways in which their particular educational setting operates, how they teach, and how well their students learn" (p. 587). Buss (2018) and Mertler (2020) further defined the recursive process as studying and planning, taking action, collecting and analyzing data, and reflecting on the evidence. Given its cyclical nature, action research studies may never have a definitive end point, as data analyses and implications can inform future action research cycles for continuous improvement. Among the benefits of action research are educator–researchers' ability to lead inquiry in their local settings (Buss, 2018; Mertler, 2020) as well as the immediacy of response to a problem, the opportunity to improve practice, strengthened communication and collaboration between colleagues, and new ways of examining problems (Mertler, 2020). In my context, a primary benefit was having the ability to change my own professional setting, support faculty in enacting change within their settings, and contribute to national and international impact, because faculty across many institutions enroll in ACUE's courses. The following section offers an overview of the setting and participants in my action research study.

Setting and Participants

Setting

As I shared in Chapter 1, ACUE is a faculty development organization that partners with colleges and universities to support instructors in learning about and

implementing research-based teaching practices. At the time of writing, our staff consisted of about 60 full-time employees and a number of contract employees. Additionally, ACUE had 352 active institutional partners across 48 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Canada. Through our Open Enrollment model, our cohorts enrolled faculty and staff in 36 U.S. states as well as Mexico, Qatar, England, Canada, China, Germany, Indonesia, Australia, Oman, Singapore, and Afghanistan. My research was conducted virtually using Canvas, ACUE's learning management system (LMS), as the asynchronous learning environment and Zoom videoconferencing for synchronous discussions.

Participants

In the previous chapters, I indicated my intent to recruit participants through ACUE's Open Enrollment model. Different from our institutional model which brings together up to 30 faculty and staff from their own college or university into cohorts, Open Enrollment is a construct that allows individuals and small groups to self-enroll in cross-institutional cohorts. As discussed in Chapter 2, an earlier cycle of action research contributed to my decision to recruit Open Enrollment participants for this study, given it afforded me more control over the program's facilitation and did not involve IRB approval outside of my institution, Arizona State University (see approval in Appendix A). Different from our institutional partnership model in which faculty participation is commonly paid for by their institutions, Open Enrollment participants could use either personal or institutional funds to pay the course fee.

There typically are no restrictions to the types of participants who sign up for Open Enrollment cohorts. ACUE has welcomed faculty, nonteaching staff,

administrators, and even individuals who are not affiliated with a higher education organization to engage in our programs. However, given the focus of my research questions, I aimed to recruit only faculty participants for this study. In order to accomplish this, I worked with our Open Enrollment Director of Program Management, who was responsible for arranging participants into cohorts for each course. As each of the 51 participants registered for the ITEL program in summer 2022, she divided them into two cohorts, ensuring each cohort included an even mix of institutions and that my cohort consisted of only instructors. The final count for my cohort was 25, while 26 registrants were assigned to a cohort led by another facilitator.

In my initial welcome email for the course, I shared information about the study and the consent form (see Appendix B), inviting all of my cohort members to participate. I also sent two reminder messages about the study at the start of the program. Eight of the 25 cohort members, representing four different institutions, agreed to participate and signed the consent form. Seven participants completed my end-of-course survey, which included demographic information. Of these seven participants, five were female (71.4%) and two male (28.6%). Six (85.7%) identified as White and one (14.3%) as Middle Eastern or North African. In terms of employment status, all participants held full-time positions at a single higher education institution, with three (42.9%) being tenured faculty members, one (14.3%) on a tenure track, and three (42.9%) working at an institution with no tenure system. The number of years teaching in higher education ranged from 10 to 27 ($M = 17.29$, $SD = 6.58$) in the following disciplines: nursing ($n = 3$, 42.9%), sociology/social work ($n = 2$, 28.6%), occupational therapy ($n = 1$, 14.3%), and marketing ($n = 1$, 14.3%). Participants' typical teaching loads varied dramatically, as they

reported teaching between 45 and 1,800 students per year (*Mdn* = 120). The majority of participants indicated that they taught in a variety of formats, with six (85.7%) teaching a mix of face-to-face, hybrid/HyFlex, and online courses and one (14.3%) teaching only face-to-face courses. Because ACUE strongly encourages faculty members to take our courses while they are actively teaching and can implement the recommended practices with students, it is also important to note that three participants (42.9%) taught for the duration of the ITEL program, while four participants (57.1%) taught during a portion of the time they were engaged in the program. Finally, for five participants (71.4%), ITEL was their first experience with ACUE, while two participants had previously completed ACUE courses, one (14.3%) having earned a single microcredential and one (14.3%) having completed both of ACUE's full courses to earn our highest certification, the Advanced Certificate in Effective College Instruction.

My Role as the Researcher

Since 2015, I have been involved in the development of all of ACUE's programs, including ITEL. I have always been passionate about contributing to the success of our programs, but as a content developer, there often have been multiple degrees of separation between participants and myself. In order to ensure that the study was most meaningful for me as a practitioner–researcher, I decided to serve as the program's facilitator, which I discuss more in the next section. In this capacity, I led the program launch, shared module announcements, facilitated synchronous module discussions, and supported participants as a mentor and coach.

My researcher positionality was best characterized as an *insider in collaboration with other insiders* (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Herr and Anderson (2005) have described

this position as existing when insider researchers work together democratically for the purpose of enacting change. Although my study's participants came from different institutional and organizational settings, they were considered insiders by way of their participation in the Open Enrollment cohort. As a group embarking on the journey toward more inclusive and equitable teaching, they

> engage[d] in inquiry in ways that help[ed] the group move from working as isolated individuals toward a collaborative community; they [sought] to engage their members in learning and change; they work[ed] toward influencing organizational change; and they offer[ed] opportunities for personal, professional, and institutional transformation. (Herr & Anderson, 2005, pp. 36–37)

Participants helped to shape meaning through their module reflections and contributions to synchronous module discussions. Importantly, because participants represented multiple institutions and held multimembership in learning communities outside of their departments, the potential for personal, institutional, and organizational transformation was expansive.

The purpose of my position was to maximize this impact. In addition to being one of ACUE's content developers, I also have earned ACUE's Certificate in Effective College Instruction and have served as an adjunct instructor, which I shared with participants during our discussions. Therefore, my experiences as an ACUE employee, facilitator, and course-taker, as well as a college instructor, were reflected in my interactions with participants. My participation in the study as the program's facilitator also influenced me as a content developer, researcher, leader, and educator. Although my researcher positionality may be perceived as a limitation in traditional education research

because my participation could have influenced the study's outcomes, the same is not true of action research, in which an educator's insider status is a defining characteristic.

Description of the Innovation

Participants engaged in ACUE's ITEL microcredential, which is a five-module, online program that runs for 10 consecutive weeks, with 2 weeks of dedicated time for each module. In keeping with ACUE's model, the program began with a synchronous launch intended to build community and acclimate learners to the course. Prior to the launch, participants were asked to introduce themselves in an introductory discussion forum in Canvas and to complete a brief enrollment survey, designed by ACUE's Analytics team. Learners then engaged sequentially in the following modules:

- Managing the Impact of Biases

- Reducing Microaggressions in Learning Environments

- Addressing Imposter Phenomenon and Stereotype Threat

- Creating Inclusive Learning Environments

- Designing Equity-Centered Courses

The learning objectives and recommended practices for each module are listed in Appendix C. Within each module, participants engaged in ACUE's standard learning design. Aligned with research in andragogy and pedagogy, every module is intentionally designed to support faculty in moving from foundational knowledge to higher level thinking; demonstrate respect for instructors' prior knowledge and experiences; and prompt faculty to implement, reflect on, and refine their use of evidence-based teaching practices. Figure 3 provides a visual representation of the learning design with descriptions of module components. At the end of the first week of each module, which is

64

typically when course-takers complete the Observe & Analyze activity, participants were given the option to join a synchronous online discussion with their cohort members by Zoom, which is the primary differentiator between ITEL and ITEL+. Following the completion of all five modules, learners participated in a final discussion forum reflecting on their experience in the form of video submissions and completed an end-of-course survey administered by ACUE's Analytics team.

Figure 3

ACUE's Module Learning Design With Equity Chat Addition
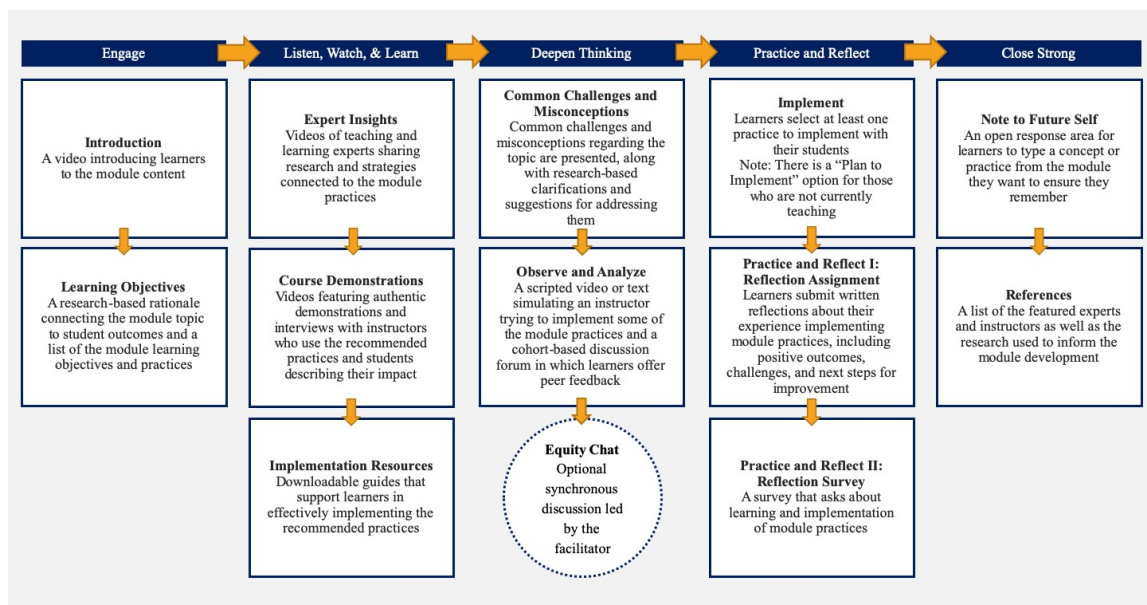
Note. Expert Insights and Course Demonstrations are sometimes presented in the inverse order. The order depends on which sequence is more logical for learners based on the module topic.

There are important features of the learning design that align with the frameworks and research discussed in Chapter 2 and that participants experienced when completing ITEL+. First, through the Course Demonstration videos, participants could see their

higher education colleagues from different schools implementing the recommended practices with students in their courses. In interview footage within these videos, the featured faculty members explain how and why they implement these practices, and their students describe how the practices have impacted their learning. Later in the module, in the Observe & Analyze section, participants analyzed examples of the module practices in use and exchanged insights and recommendations with their cohort members in a discussion forum. Subsequently, when participants selected and used the practices they learned with their own students—if they were able to while engaged in the program— they had the opportunity to observe student impact firsthand. These experiences directly align with the theory of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), because participants often gain confidence by seeing other instructors succeed in implementing the practices and, ideally, by having their own positive experiences when using inclusive teaching practices with their students. While it is true that negative experiences with implementation could result in decreased self-efficacy, the videos, resources, and opportunities for practice included in each module are designed to increase participants' confidence, which is key to transformative learning. Individuals taking action on their learning, through their implementation of module practices, is also a critical indicator of transformation (Cranton, 2016), and thus was a core characteristic of the program aligned with transformative learning theory.

Additional design features aligned with transformative learning theory included the cohort model, the presence of a facilitator, and embedded opportunities for reflection. As is standard of all ACUE programs, the ITEL+ program used a cohort model. The cohort typically functions as a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) in which

participants focus on a common domain of interest and benefit from reciprocal learning and the development of a shared repertoire of practices and language. Research shared in Chapter 2, such as Hoyert and O'Dell's (2019) qualitative study of Pedagogical Interest Groups and Gast et al.'s (2017) review of team-based professional development programs, demonstrated the benefits of engaging higher education faculty in communities of practice as part of professional development in order to improve student outcomes, increase their self-efficacy, and construct their teacher–scholar identities. Studies of inclusive teaching faculty development programs also have supported the use of cohorts to build communities of practice (Ceo-DiFrancesco et al., 2019; Daniels & Schoem, 2020; Hudson, 2020; Reinholz et al., 2020; Rodriguez et al., 2021). Since I expected that cultivating an authentic community of practice among a cross-institutional cohort could be challenging, I added optional synchronous online discussions to each module, amounting to five, 1-hour meeting opportunities. These meetings were significant because they created five new exchanges between participants, in addition to interactions during the initial program launch, asynchronous Observe & Analyze discussion forums, and final asynchronous program discussion. Synchronous meeting agendas focused on two essential questions: (a) How did participants plan to implement module practices with their students? and (b) How did participants transfer their learning from the modules to their lives outside of teaching? These questions corresponded with my goal to effectuate transformative learning experiences for participants through learning transfer, reflection, and social engagement. Although reflection is already an important part of every module, as evidenced by the reflection assignment, Observe & Analyze discussion forum, and "Note to Future Self" closing activity, the addition of synchronous

discussions provided a platform for participants to express and refine their thinking with peers in real time.

Additionally, as discussed in the previous section, I served as the ITEL+ cohort facilitator. Although ACUE's institutional programs often are facilitated by a campus facilitator who provides mentorship and guidance, Open Enrollment cohorts are led by ACUE contractors. As a content developer of the ITEL program and a full-time ACUE employee, I have intimate knowledge of the microcredential content. However, this was the first ITEL and Open Enrollment cohort that I facilitated, as well as the first ACUE program that I facilitated in years. Although I initially thought that I might face obstacles due to the lack of institutional and geographic context of participants, my insider knowledge was advantageous to participants and to me as someone poised to develop future ACUE programs. The role of a facilitator has been viewed as critical to the success of any change innovation (Hall & Hord, 2006), and facilitators are expected to provide necessary encouragement and validation, which is believed to increase self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Therefore, I viewed my facilitation, which extended beyond the asynchronous environment to the additional live discussions, as critical to the success of the ITEL+ intervention and to whether participants experienced perspective transformations.

Research Plan

This section outlines the mixed-methods action research study, including the methodology, instruments, data collection, analysis procedures, and implementation timeline. I also present the alignment between the study's research questions and the proposed methods.

Methodology

In order to address my three research questions, I employed quantitative and qualitative methods. Data sources included five module reflections per participant, transcripts from five synchronous discussions, and responses to a transformative learning survey. Figure 4 offers a conceptual model of the triangulation mixed-methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) with quantitative and qualitative strands.

Figure 4

Conceptual Model of Triangulation Design Using Validating Quantitative Data Variant
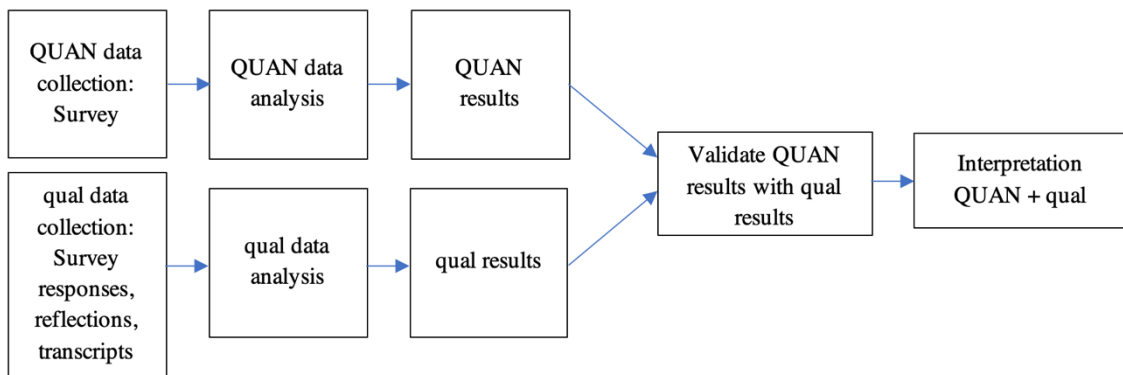
Note. Reproduced from Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 63 and modified to include data collection methods from the present study.

First, as participants engaged in each module, they submitted module reflections in Canvas. They also had the opportunity to engage in the synchronous module discussions that I facilitated and later transcribed for analysis. Following the completion of all five modules, participants were asked to respond to a survey. The survey included both closed and open-ended questions. Priority was given to quantitative survey data, in order to address the first and second research questions. This allowed me to understand whether faculty participants had perspective transformations while engaged in ITEL+

and, if so, which learning experiences contributed to them. Qualitative data from the

open-ended survey responses and module reflections were analyzed alongside

quantitative data to validate participants' responses regarding perspective

transformations. Then, module reflections and synchronous module discussion transcripts

were analyzed to provide a response to Research Question 3 and further substantiate

findings related to transformation. Finally, results of quantitative and qualitative results

were interpreted.

Data Sources and Instruments

In this study, I utilized three data sources: module reflections, transcripts from

synchronous discussions, and responses to a postintervention Learning Activities Survey

(LAS; King, 2009), described later in this section. Table 2 shows the alignment between

my research questions, data sources, and analysis methods. In order to address Research

Question 1, responses to closed and open-ended questions on the LAS, along with

module reflections, were analyzed. Quantitative responses on the LAS also aligned with

Research Question 2. Given the qualitative nature of Research Question 3, module

reflections and synchronous discussion transcripts were used to triangulate findings. In

the following paragraphs, I present a description of each data source, data collection

methods, and discussions of reliability and validity.

Learning Activities Survey. I employed a modified version of King's (1997)

LAS, an instrument designed to evaluate Mezirow's (1991) 10 stages of perspective

transformation, which were outlined in Chapter 2. According to King (2009), its primary

purposes are "identifying whether adult learners have had a perspective transformation in

relation to their educational experience; and if so, determining what learning activities

have contributed to it" (Overview section, para. 1). King (2009) divided the original survey into four sections:

- Part 1 "identifies the stages of perspective transformation and asks participants for a brief description of their experience."

- Part 2 "determines which learning experiences may have promoted a perspective transformation."

- Part 3 "is a series of questions determining which of the learning activities respondents have participated in."

- Part 4 "collects information on demographic characteristics that are suggested from the field of transformative learning theory." (Overview section, para. 1)

Table 2

Alignment Between Research Questions, Data Sources, and Analyses

Research questions	Data sources (*Analyses*)	
	1	2
RQ1. How and to what extent does engaging in the ITEL+ program facilitate a perspective transformation in faculty participants?	Learning Activities Survey *(descriptive analyses)*	Module reflections *(content analysis)*
RQ2. Which experiences in the ITEL+ program contribute to whether faculty participants experience a perspective transformation?	Learning Activities Survey *(descriptive analyses)*	
RQ3. How do ITEL+ faculty participants reflect on and apply their learning about inclusive teaching practices to teaching and nonteaching contexts?	Module reflections *(grounded interpretation)*	Synchronous discussion transcripts *(grounded interpretation)*

My modified version of the survey, provided in Appendix D, was organized into these four sections and most closely resembles King's (2009) professional development iteration for instructors learning to teach with technology. Modifications were made to sections that King suggested researchers customize to their own settings and to include the language most familiar to participants. Importantly, however, my survey maintained all questions that assess participants' stages of transformation in alignment with Mezirow's theory and all items that King (2009) recommended be preserved to ensure the validity of the instrument.

Part 1 of the LAS directly aligned with Mezirow's (1991) stages of perspective transformation. First, participants were asked whether they experienced a change in perspective about their teaching since taking ITEL+ and were prompted to explain the change in perspective. In addition, because Research Question 3 involved "nonteaching contexts," the next question asked about whether participants experienced a change in their ideas or points of view outside of a teaching context and, if so, to explain this change. These questions were intended to ensure the instrument's validity by summarizing the question that followed and to help participants pinpoint precise transformational experiences (King, 2009). Maintaining the exact language of King's (2009) survey, the third question asked participants to check off the changes they experienced while engaged in ITEL+. Each item directly corresponded with a stage of perspective transformation. For example, the first statement, "I had an experience that caused me to question the way I usually act," relates to the first stage of perspective transformation, a disorienting dilemma. The item "I do not identify with any of the statements above" was also provided for participants to indicate the absence of

perspective transformation. Participants who did not experience a perspective

transformation were directed to skip Part 2.

In Part 2, participants were asked about the learning activities or academic life

changes that contributed to their changes in perspective. Learning activities consisted of

experiences within the ITEL+ program—such as participation in module components,

reflection exercises, and engagement with colleagues—that could have led to perspective

transformations. Academic life changes, on the other hand, were experiences that took

place outside of the ITEL+ program that could have influenced participants' lives, such

as a new institutional role or employment at a different institution. If a participant began

teaching at a different institution, for example, they could have faced entirely different

student demographics, including significantly higher rates of returning adult learners,

Pell-eligible students, and so forth. I included questions related to academic life changes

because, as King (2009) argued, "precipitous events may lead to transformational

experiences. People are often encouraged to respond to new ways of thinking because of

'trigger events' in their lives . . . and some may interact with educational experience"

(Facilitating Transformative Learning section, para. 6). Although King's (2009) survey

included nonacademic life changes (e.g., marriage, divorce, death), I excluded these

because I was interested solely in trigger events related to ITEL+ and academia.

However, if participants attributed their perspective change to another life event, they still

were able to indicate that in response to an open-ended question in Part 2.

In an effort to understand what aided participants' perspective transformations,

Part 2 explicitly asked whether the following contributed: the ITEL+ program, a specific

ITEL+ module, a significant academic life change, or a person. I added a question about

whether a specific ITEL+ module contributed to the experience to gain insight into whether transformation could be commonly linked to one or more topics addressed in the program. Each question regarding contributors to transformation was formatted as a yes/no response, and if a participant selected *yes*, there was a *check all that apply* section prompting for more detail. In King's (2009) original instrument, learning activities could be grouped into six categories that appear in perspective transformation literature: critical thinking assignments, discussions, self-assessments, discovery of one's voice, support by a person, and miscellaneous learning activities. I retained these categories for later analysis. However, because my study was focused largely on the implementation of inclusive practices in and outside of participants' teaching roles, I added another category: implementation and interaction. This category accounted for learning activities related to the implementation of module practices or reflection on interactions with others that were based on learning in the ITEL+ program. Table 3 details my groupings of the learning activities on the survey into these categories. Although the categories were "not entirely mutually exclusive" (King, 2009, Facilitating Transformative Learning section, para. 4), I assigned each learning activity to the category that most closely matched its primary purpose. Although a causal relationship between the learning activities and perspective transformation could not be assumed, the activities could be viewed as contributing to transformation (King, 2009). Following the questions addressing contributors to change, Part 2 ended with the questions "What will you do differently in your teaching because of this change?" and "What will you do differently in your life because of this change?" Because the purpose of meaningful faculty development is sustaining changes in practice, I was interested in learning the actions that faculty

participants planned to take, if any, as a result of their perspective transformations. Further, because transformative learning involves "whole life change" (King, 2009, Educators, Ethics and Transformative Learning section, para. 7), the latter question was intended to uncover possible changes in participants' nonteaching contexts.

While Part 2 of the LAS prompted for information about contributors to perspective transformation, the purpose of Part 3 was to reveal whether participants engaged in or experienced the possible contributors. The first question asked which learning activities were among participants' experiences while completing ITEL+ and duplicated the list from Part 2. Similarly, mirroring the options in Part 2, the second question asked participants which academic life changes, if any, they experienced during their time completing ITEL+. The purpose of Part 3, which was completed by both those who did and did not report perspective transformation, was to identify whether certain learning activities and life changes could be counted as possible factors contributing to the presence or absence of perspective transformation.

In the final section of the survey, Part 4, I collected demographic information. The question set contained a mix of selections from King's (2009) survey and ACUE's enrollment survey, as well as some additional questions of interest for this inquiry. The following information was obtained: (a) prior experience with ACUE programs, (b) years of higher education teaching experience, (c) employment status at institution(s), (d) approximate number of students taught in an academic year, (e) academic discipline, (f) teaching format, (g) teaching status during ITEL+, (h) race/ethnicity, and (i) gender. The survey concluded with the question "Is there anything else you would like to share that was not addressed in your previous responses?"

Table 3

Arrangement of Survey Items Into Learning Activity Categories

Learning activity categories	Survey items
Critical thinking assignments	• Completing the self-reflection exercise on implicit bias and privilege • Participating in the Observe & Analyze videos and discussions • Writing a note to my future self
Discussions	• Participating in the synchronous module discussions on Zoom • Collaborating with the colleagues in my cohort
Self-assessments	• Completing the Reflection Survey about my learning and implementation
Discovery of one's voice	• Writing a reflection as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment • Doing my own personal reflection, writing about concerns, and/or journaling
Support by a person	• A fellow cohort member's support • A colleague's (who is not enrolled in the ITEL course) support • The facilitator's support • The support of a leader at my institution
Miscellaneous learning activities	• Engaging with the Introductory videos and questions • Engaging with the Course Demonstration videos • Engaging with the Expert Insights videos • Engaging with the Implementation Resources (i.e., Planning Guides) • Engaging with the Common Challenges and Misconceptions • Exploring the module references • Engaging with the facilitator's announcements and messages • Doing my own research outside of the course • Reflecting on the structure of the ITEL course • Participating in the ITEL course launch
Implementation and interaction	• Implementing a teaching practice as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment • A specific interaction I had with one or more of my students while taking the ITEL course • Reflecting on past or future interactions with one or more of my students while taking the ITEL course • A specific interaction I had with a friend, family member, coworker, or acquaintance while taking the ITEL course • Reflecting on past or future interactions with a friend, family member, coworker, or acquaintance while taking the ITEL course

It is important to note that King's (2009) survey is usually followed up with interviews that occur after survey data collection and analysis. Follow-up interviews are typically conducted individually with a subgroup of participants (King, 2009). The

suggested interview protocol closely mirrors the survey questions. King (2009) has described these interviews as "an opportunity for adult educators to test their understanding and interpretation of the data with the participants," as they explain their LAS responses ("Additional Information"). Some researchers have adopted alternative approaches to individual follow-up interviews, such as focus groups (see King, 2009, Chapter 9), or a combination of confirmatory qualitative data sources, including journal entries and reflective essays alongside interviews (see King, 2009, Chapter 6). Instead of using follow-up interviews, I analyzed participants' module reflections as a method to "test the interpretation" (King, 2009, "Additional Information") of survey responses. Because these reflections were aligned with the specific content in the ITEL+ modules and were submitted throughout the 10-week duration of the program, they provided a reliable source of information about perspective transformation. While participants engaging in interviews following the survey data collection and analysis process could be susceptible to memory distortion, using module reflections that were written while participants were completing the program allowed for a more accurate representation of their experiences. The module reflections also expanded the qualitative data captured, rather than attempting to retrieve similar responses at two points in time, during the surveys and interviews. Finally, while interviews are often conducted with only a subgroup of participants, collecting and analyzing module reflections allowed for a more complete understanding of all participants' experiences.

Procedures. One week prior to the end of the program, participants received an email that included an invitation to complete the LAS via a link to a Google Form. The message explicitly stated that participants should not begin the survey until they

completed the final module. The message also clarified that the survey would take about 10 to 30 minutes to complete, depending on the breadth of their responses. Two reminder emails were sent over the course of 2 weeks to those who had not yet completed the survey. All participants except one submitted responses. Once the survey was closed, all responses were downloaded, assigned a pseudonym, and matched to module reflection submissions and synchronous discussion transcript segments. Survey data were stored on a password-protected computer to ensure confidentiality.

Validity and Reliability of Resultant Data. King's (2009) original instrument was validated through pilot studies, repeated sampling, and successive member-checking interviews within three educational institutions, which led to revisions that were incorporated in subsequent versions of the instrument. An expert panel reviewed and critiqued the instrument, which was refined and piloted again. Notably, the stages of perspective transformation, which are retained in checklist form on my LAS instrument, "were correlated pair wise and found to demonstrate a broad and consistent characterization of responses" (King, 2009, Validation section, para. 2). All of these measures led King (2009) to conclude that the information collected through closed-ended LAS questions, open-ended LAS questions, and subsequent interviews accurately depicts learners' perspective transformation and experiences. While King's (2009) use of follow-up interviews improved the survey's validity, in my research participants' module reflections and synchronous discussion contributions helped to triangulate their LAS responses. As previously noted, all questions that King (2009) assessed for validity and recommended be left unchanged—because they are accurate measures of perspective transformation—were preserved in my survey. King's (2009) construct, in its original

78

and modified forms, also has proven to be a credible instrument for evaluating

perspective transformation over time, as King (2009) has conducted numerous studies on

transformative learning in various contexts using the LAS, and it has been widely

adopted and modified by researchers.

Additionally, reliability was addressed in King's (2009) instrument through the

use of multiple measures to assess perspective transformation (PT). The PT-index was

developed as a way to assign numerical values to participants' responses based on

whether they (a) experienced a perspective change related to the experience being studied

(PT = 3), (b) experienced a perspective change not directly related to the experience

being studied (PT = 2), or (c) did not experience a perspective change during the period

of study (PT = 1). According to King (2009), "through the process of evaluating each of

these items separately and then developing a composite PT-index determined, the

reliability of the Learning Activities Survey was strengthened" (Reliability section, para.

1). In my study, I used a modified version of the PT-index, as follows:

- PT = 5: The participant experienced a perspective change about their teaching
  and their life outside of teaching that is related to their participation in ITEL+.

- PT = 4: The participant experienced a perspective change only about their
  teaching related to their participation in ITEL+.

- PT = 3: The participant experienced a perspective change only about their life
  outside of teaching related to their participation in ITEL+.

- PT = 2: The participant experienced a perspective change not directly related
  to their participation in ITEL+.

- PT = 1: The participant did not report experiencing a perspective transformation.

This modified version was intended to further strengthen reliability because it maintains a necessary separation between perspective transformation in teaching and nonteaching contexts and also accounts for any responses indicating change in both contexts.

Module Reflections. Module reflections were also used in this study. As depicted in Figure 3 earlier in this chapter, ACUE's learning design includes a reflection assignment in each module. Participants in my study completed all five reflection assignments as part of the ITEL+ program. In the first module, the reflection assignment was based on participants' completion of a self-reflection exercise on implicit bias and privilege. In the second module, the reflection assignment helped to support participants in planning to reduce and mitigate the impact of microaggressions in their courses. The general structure of the reflection guidelines for the other three modules was generally the same. Participants had two assignment options: an implementation reflection (IR) and a plan-to-implement reflection (PTIR). For the IR assignment, participants were prompted to select at least one of the recommended practices per module and use it with their students during the ITEL+ program. Alternatively, the PTIR instructed participants to select a teaching practice they could use with their students in the future. Participants were allowed to select options on a module-by-module basis. While there was some variation between modules—especially between the earlier and later modules in the microcredential—the core question prompts for reflection assignments were as follows:

- Which of the practice(s) shared by the experts and faculty in this module did
  you implement? (IR) or Which of the practice(s) shared by the experts and
  faculty in this module will you prepare yourself to implement? (PTIR)

- How did your use of the practice(s) impact your students or others? (IR) or
  How do you expect your use of the practice(s) to impact your students or
  others? (PTIR)

- What steps will you take to continue to use the practices in your course? (IR
  and PTIR)

Participants had access to the supporting resources for completing reflections, which
included a checklist, rubric, and reflection template. Submissions could be made in
Canvas via file upload or text entry. Following our standard protocol, ACUE-hired
readers scored participants' reflection submissions according to the rubric. While ACUE
facilitators are responsible for addressing participants' questions about implementation,
ACUE readers determine the extent to which reflections meet the rubric criteria.
Participants are invited to submit reflections as many times as necessary to meet the
criteria, which is what earns them a badge for module completion, along with completion
of the module's Reflection Survey.

     Procedures. After completing the Observe & Analyze component in each module,
participants advance to the Practice and Reflect section, which contains the reflection
assignment. Screenshots of the reflection assignment are provided in Appendix E.
Participants were prompted to review the list of learning objectives and practices
recommended in the module. The implementation resources supporting each module
practice were also linked on this page to further encourage implementation. Then,

participants were asked to select the primary practice and any secondary practice they were going to discuss in their reflections from a drop-down menu. For the first two modules, participants clicked a single button to advance to the next page. In the following three modules, they selected whether they would write an IR or a PTIR. When they submitted their selections, the appropriate reflection assignment guidelines appeared. If participants were writing a PTIR, they could proceed with their writing and submission. Those writing an IR implemented their selected practice in one of their courses and then composed and submitted their reflection. Upon submission, participants received a confirmation message. In keeping with ACUE's standard process, an ACUE reader scored participants' submissions in alignment with the rubric. Following participants' completion of all five module reflections, I retrieved participants' module reflection submissions from Canvas. I condensed reflection assignment submissions into documents for each participant that included all five of their submissions. These documents were saved on a password-protected computer for analyses and later matched to survey and transcript data.

Credibility of Resultant Data. In a previous section, I alluded to why I used module reflections as a data source. They are a reliable source of insight into perspective transformation because they use the participants' own words to represent their experiences and are collected from all participants at the same point in time. The fact that these submissions are held to standard rubric criteria, and ACUE readers are responsible for ensuring reflections meet these criteria, contributes to the instrument's reliability across cohort members. The timing of data collection also ensures validity because faculty participants reported on their experiences implementing or planning to implement

module practices while they were engaged in each module. I also collected and analyzed all participants' module reflections, obtaining a more complete depiction of participants' experiences than a subgroup would.

Credibility of the module reflections is also established through ACUE's continual use of these reflections as a data instrument, "thick description" (Tracy, 2010, p. 843), and triangulation. First, ACUE has used module reflections as a source of meaningful qualitative data since 2015 when our first pilot modules launched. Reflections have offered a way to demonstrate efficacy to institutional partners and substantiate the results of Practice and Reflect II Reflection Surveys, in which participants report on their learning and implementation of module practices. Because of the way these assignments are designed, they typically generate rich details from participants that allowed me to include thick description (Tracy, 2010) in my own analyses and discussion. Thick description is defined as "in-depth illustration that explicates culturally situated meanings (Geertz, 1973) and abundant concrete detail (Bochner, 2000)" (Tracy, 2010, p. 843). When ACUE course-takers write reflections, they often include the steps they took to implement the module practices and specific details about student reactions or outcomes. Therefore, reflections submitted as part of this study allow me to *show*, rather than *tell*, with thick description when reporting findings. In addition to thick description, Tracy (2010) included triangulation as a key indicator of credibility. As Tracy (2010) noted, "*triangulation* in qualitative research assumes that if two or more sources of data, theoretical frameworks, types of data collected, or researchers converge on the same conclusion, then the conclusion is more credible" (p. 843). When examining data from the module reflection submissions, the open-ended questions on the LAS, and the

83

synchronous discussion transcripts, I expected to find consistencies in participants'
responses that would help to explain the closed-ended survey data regarding perspective
transformations and, when applicable, the corresponding learning activities.

Synchronous Discussions. The third method of data collection consisted of
transcripts generated from five, 1-hour synchronous discussions that were held on Zoom
every 2 weeks throughout the duration of the program. Each synchronous meeting was
focused on a different module topic, corresponding with the ITEL+ program schedule
(see Table 4). Importantly, they were optional, because one of the benefits of ACUE's
programs is the convenience of the asynchronous format. There are also quite a few
challenges associated with mandating attendance at synchronous sessions, including
coordinating schedules and participants' potential hesitation to discuss sensitive topics,
among others. As noted previously, I facilitated the sessions. During the first meeting, we
started with brief introductions so participants could get to know one another. In
subsequent meetings, I began by addressing any questions that participants had. The rest
of the session time was largely dedicated to building community as well as supporting
learning transfer and reflection. Although I initially planned a set agenda for these
meetings that modeled effective online teaching practices, it quickly became evident that
the sessions should be more informal. Our discussions were guided by the topics in which
participants wanted to reflect and seek feedback from peers. However, I did use similar
prompting questions in each meeting to learn about participants' key takeaways, uncover
any challenges with the module content, and brainstorm the practices they planned to
implement with students and colleagues.

Table 4

ITEL+ Program Schedule and Corresponding Discussions

Dates	Module	Synchronous discussion
May 21–June 4, 2022	Managing the Impact of Biases	1
June 4–June 18, 2022	Reducing Microaggressions in Learning Environments	2
June 18–July 2, 2022	Addressing Imposter Phenomenon and Stereotype Threat	3
July 2–July 16, 2022	Creating Inclusive Learning Environments	4
July 16–July 30, 2022	Designing Equity-Centered Courses	5

Procedures. In my opening announcement for the program, I sent participants a poll to determine the day of the week and time that worked best for the majority of those interested in attending the sessions. Once dates were determined, I shared a schedule with participants (see Appendix F). As sessions approached, I also included reminders in weekly announcements. During each session, I logged onto Zoom and began recording, triggering a message to participants that recording was in progress. After each meeting ended, I downloaded the meeting transcript from my Zoom account and saved it on a password-protected computer for later analysis.

Rigor. In addition to the explanations of validity, reliability, and credibility included throughout this section, it is important to recognize additional standards of rigor that were met in this study. The rigor of the study was addressed through the repetition of action research cycles, polyangulation of the data, and referential adequacy (Mertler, 2020). First, critical learning from the previous cycles of action research was used to inform the methodology of the current cycle, as discussed in Chapter 2. Second, polyangulation of the data—the use of multiple data sources to clarify and confirm quantitative and qualitative data—contributed to the study's quality. For example, closed-

85

ended survey questions that asked whether participants experienced perspective transformation were followed by open-ended questions prompting participants to explain their responses. In addition, analyses of reflection and transcript data served to increase accuracy and allowed for more in-depth cross-checking of survey responses. Finally, rigor was enhanced through referential adequacy, or ensuring "all aspects of a given action research study . . . [are] reflective of the experiences and perspectives of those inherently involved in the study's setting" (Mertler, 2020, p. 28). Since module reflections and discussion transcripts were collected at five points in time throughout the study, these data sources offer information about the participants as insiders (Herr & Anderson, 2005) while they were engaged in each module. In addition, module reflection guidelines and the LAS utilized the language that was most familiar to participants engaged in ITEL+. As previously indicated, I customized the LAS to include wording from ITEL+ to ensure participant comprehension. In sum, the steps that I took to design this study added to the quality of the research and maximized the potential to leverage the study's results for improvement in my setting, which is the purpose of action research.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data. Data analyses began immediately following the end of the ITEL+ program, as indicated in the timeline in Table 5. To begin my quantitative data analyses from the LAS, I exported the data from Google Forms as a spreadsheet. In order to address Research Question 1 about whether engaging in ITEL+ facilitated a perspective transformation in faculty participants, the modified PT-index, discussed earlier in this chapter, was used. I assigned numerical values ranging from 1 (*no perspective transformation*) to 5 (*perspective transformation about teaching and life*

outside of teaching based on participation in ITEL+) to surveys based on an assessment of participants' responses to the corresponding questions, which included both closed and open-ended responses. I reviewed the first two closed-ended questions in Part 1 first: "Since you began taking the Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning course, do you believe you have experienced a change in your perspective about your teaching?" and "Since you began taking the Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning course, do you believe you have experienced changes in any of your ideas or points of view outside of a teaching context?" If participants selected "yes" for both, for example, they were assigned a tentative PT score of 5. I then read their explanations of the changes in perspective as confirmation of change occurring.

Table 5

Implementation, Data Collection, and Data Analysis Timeline

Month	Actions
March 2022	Completed IRB process and secured approval
April–May 2022	Recruited participants
May–August 2022	Facilitated ITEL+ and administered LAS
August–September 2022	Compiled module reflections, synchronous discussion transcripts, and LAS responses
October–December 2022	Conducted data analyses
December 2022	Reported findings and interpretations

An additional corroborating source was the question that included a checklist corresponding with Mezirow's 10 stages of perspective transformation. While Mezirow's stages were developed based on a pattern he observed in a study of women's participation in college reentry programs, and these stages have been recognized by other researchers, Mezirow has asserted that participants may not experience or recognize every stage. As Mezirow (1991) noted, the stages of transformation are not "invariable developmental

steps . . . [but rather] sequential moments of 'meaning becoming clarified'" (Chapter 6

Summary section, para. 8). Therefore, the only response to the question regarding

transformation stages that invalidated a reported perspective transformation was the

selection of "I do not identify with any of the statements above." A final measure to

confirm that the transformation was related to one's participation in ITEL+ was my

review of responses to the first question in Part 2 of the LAS: "Thinking back to when

you first realized that your views or perspective had changed, what did learning about

inclusive teaching have to do with it?" Responses to this question helped me to determine

whether participants would be more accurately assigned a PT score of 2, indicating that a

participant's perspective change was not directly related to their participation in ITEL+.

PT scores were entered manually into the spreadsheet. Descriptive statistics were used for

the majority of data, given they were predominantly categorical. Frequencies were

determined for all closed-ended questions using SPSS and converted into percentages, as

recommended by King (2009).

Research Question 2 was addressed by determining the frequencies and

percentages for Part 2 of the LAS. First, I sorted the data set to study responses submitted

by those who experienced a perspective transformation related to ITEL+ (i.e., a PT-index

score of 3, 4, or 5). Although those who did not report a perspective transformation were

prompted to skip Part 2 of the LAS, this sorting ensured that entries that were invalid or

submitted by participants who I deemed did not experience transformation were removed

prior to analysis. PT-index scores for teaching and nonteaching changes in perspective

were grouped together because Research Question 2 does not differentiate between the

type of perspective transformation that faculty participants experienced. Once frequencies

and percentages were calculated, the learning activities that contributed to perspective transformations were ranked. This allowed me to determine the module learning activities, module topics, academic life changes, and people who participants reported most frequently as contributing to their perspective changes.

In addition, I leveraged my grouping of the ITEL+ learning activities into the seven categories presented in Table 3: critical thinking assignments, discussions, self-assessments, discovery of one's voice, support by a person, miscellaneous learning activities, and implementation and interaction. I calculated frequencies and percentages for each of the categories and ranked them in order of contribution to perspective transformation. These tabulations allowed for a more complete response to Research Question 2. Since all participants—those who experienced perspective transformations and those who did not—completed Part 3 of the LAS, frequencies were calculated for this section. These data were viewed as a reference point, because if minimal perspective transformation were reported, a lack of engagement in certain ITEL+ learning activities or presence of academic life changes could have been considered as contributing factors.

Qualitative Data. Qualitative data from the open-ended LAS responses, module reflections, and synchronous discussion transcripts were analyzed to address Research Questions 1 and 3. With regard to Research Question 1, qualitative responses from the open-ended questions in Part 1 were assessed alongside the quantitative responses in Part 1 to generate the PT-index score. Then, open-ended responses from the LAS and module reflections were analyzed using deductive coding. First, I developed a codebook that included Mezirow's 10 stages of perspective transformation (see Appendix G). Each stage was assigned a code, a description based on the corresponding survey item(s), and

one or more examples of the types of reflection excerpts I expected to code for each level

of transformation. For example, for the first level, a disorienting dilemma, the

corresponding survey items were "I had an experience that caused me to question the way

I usually act" and "I had an experience that caused me to question my ideas about social

roles." Examples of possible reflection excerpts that I would code at this level were

"Engaging in this module made me rethink everything" and "When I watched the video

on microaggressions, I realized I had inadvertently committed microaggressions against

my students." For the "provisional trying of new roles" level, the corresponding survey

item was "I tried out new roles so that I would become more comfortable or confident in

them" and the example listed in the codebook was "I started to become more lenient with

my attendance policy to see if it impacted students." I did a preliminary review of a

sample of participants' reflection excerpts to confirm that that they were representative of

the responses in the sample. Then, I added the codebook to HyperRESEARCH and coded

all participants' LAS responses and reflections.

To address Research Question 3, I employed a grounded interpretive approach,

based on grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006), to analyze participants' module reflections

and segments from the synchronous discussion transcripts. In HyperRESEARCH, I

created cases for each participant that included their reflections and discussion

contributions. I developed an initial set of process and in vivo codes that "[stuck] closely

to the data" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 47), to prevent me from making "conceptual leaps"

(Charmaz, 2006, p. 48). I also used constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to

compare earlier and later observations in the data. Importantly, while module reflections

from all eight participants were coded, discussion excerpts were only coded for the five

participants in this study who engaged in at least one synchronous discussion. There were additional cohort members who were active contributors to the synchronous discussions but did not participate in my study; these cohort members' transcript segments were removed prior to analysis.

Following initial coding, I condensed and categorized the data using focused coding (Charmaz, 2006, p. 57). After grouping the codes into theme-related categories, I reviewed the categories to identify the relationships between them and then determined three major themes and an emerging framework from the data. The emerging framework was developed to elaborate on how faculty participants in ITEL+ experienced a perspective transformation and how they reflected on and applied their learning about inclusive teaching practices in teaching and nonteaching contexts.

Summary

In Chapter 3, I shared extensive details about my study's methods and the ITEL+ program. I also presented a rationale for the use of the LAS, module reflections, and synchronous discussion transcripts to address my research questions. Although my research instruments, procedures, and analytical techniques were adapted from King's (2009) widely used survey and interview protocol, I took intentional steps to ensure that my derivative research methods were equally valid and reliable. In Chapter 4, I present the results of my research.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter, I share the results of the study. As discussed in the previous

chapter, the study included eight participants from four different higher education

institutions. Notably, all participants who submitted demographic data were deemed

seasoned instructors, because they all had at least 10 years of teaching experience and

held full-time employment at their institution during the time of the study. For the

majority of participants, ITEL+ was their first experience completing an ACUE program.

When designing this study, I had hypothesized that participants may be more likely to

experience perspective transformation if ITEL+ was their first exposure to ACUE. By

comparison, I had theorized that ACUE's veteran participants may be less likely to

change their perspectives related to inclusive teaching topics, having learned related

practices in other ACUE courses. I also expected ACUE's veteran participants to be well

equipped to reflect on their learning and transfer this knowledge to their work with

students, since the ITEL+ program followed ACUE's standard learning design, which

facilitates implementation of and reflection on the use of module practices. This

information about the participants provides important context for understanding and

interpreting the results. The following results are organized by research question.

Research Question 1

In the first research question, I asked, "How and to what extent does engaging in

the ITEL+ program facilitate a perspective transformation in faculty participants?" On

the LAS, perspective transformation was divided into two subcategories: changes in

perspective about teaching and changes in ideas and points of view outside of a teaching

context. Of the seven participants who completed the LAS, all participants reported

changes in their perspectives about teaching (*n* = 7, 100%) and five reported changes in

their ideas and points of view outside of a teaching context (*n* = 5, 71.4%). When asked

whether they attributed the change to their participation in ITEL+, all participants

responded *yes* (*n* = 7, 100%). Participants were also prompted to check off statements

aligned with Mezirow's stages of perspective transformation that applied to them.

Frequencies and percentages for these statements are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Responses to the Statements Aligned With the Stages of Perspective Transformation

Stage	Statement	# Agree	% Agree
1	I had an experience that caused me to question the way I usually act.	5	71.4%
1	I had an experience that caused me to question my ideas about social roles. (Examples of social roles include what an instructor should do or how a mother or father should act.)	5	71.4%
2	As I questioned my ideas, I realized I no longer agreed with my previous beliefs or role expectations. (i.e., the role of an instructor…)	2	28.6%
2	Or instead, as I questioned my ideas, I realized I still agreed with my beliefs or role expectations. (i.e., the role of an instructor…)	4	57.1%
3	I felt uncomfortable with traditional social expectations.	2	28.6%
4	I realized that other people also questioned their beliefs.	5	71.4%
5	I thought about acting in a different way from my usual beliefs and roles.	4	57.1%
6	I tried to figure out a way to adopt these new ways of acting.	5	71.4%
7	I gathered the information I needed to adopt these new ways of acting.	5	71.4%
8	I tried out new roles so that I would become more comfortable or confident in them.	3	42.9%
9	I began to think about the reactions and feedback from my new behavior.	4	57.1%
10	I took action and adopted these new ways of acting.	3	42.9%
	I do not identify with any of the statements above.	0	0%

Note. The # Agree column represents the number of participants who checked off each statement. The % Agree column indicates the percentage of participants who agreed out of all participants who completed the survey.

In the previous chapter, I described my modified version of King's PT-index, which takes participants' responses to the question regarding levels of transformation and the open-ended questions into consideration to verify whether or not perspective transformation occurred and assigns a numerical value based on whether the change was related to ITEL+. I used the following PT-index:

- PT = 5: The participant experienced a perspective change about their teaching *and* their life outside of teaching that is related to their participation in ITEL+.

- PT = 4: The participant experienced a perspective change only about their teaching related to their participation in ITEL+.

- PT = 3: The participant experienced a perspective change only about their life outside of teaching related to their participation in ITEL+.

- PT = 2: The participant experienced a perspective change not directly related to their participation in ITEL+.

- PT = 1: The participant did not report experiencing a perspective transformation.

Upon reviewing participants' responses to the question about stages of transformation and their open-ended responses, I determined that one participant who reported perspective transformation did not experience it. When asked to explain the perspective transformation on the survey, the participant wrote, "It is not that my perspective changed, but I gained new knowledge on how to be a more inclusive teacher." Further,

94

the only response checked off on the survey item related to stages of perspective transformation was "As I questioned my ideas, I realized I still agreed with my beliefs or role expectations." Therefore, this participant was assigned a PT score of 1. A review of the other participants' open-ended responses and reporting on stages of perspective transformation validated their responses about transformation related to their participation in ITEL+. Five of the seven participants who completed the LAS (71.4%) were assigned a PT score of 5, indicating a perspective change about their teaching and their life outside of teaching related to their participation in ITEL+. One participant (14.3%) was assigned a PT score of 4, which signified that the participant's perspective change was connected only to their teaching and was related to their participation in ITEL+. Of the six participants who experienced perspective transformation, four were new to ACUE, one had completed an ACUE microcredential, and one held ACUE's highest credential, having completed two full courses.

To further elaborate on the quantitative findings, I coded participants' open-ended responses on the LAS and their module reflections using my codebook of Mezirow's 10 stages of perspective transformation (see Appendix G). The 10 codes were applied a total of 347 times, with the distribution presented in Table 7. Importantly, in this exploration, I aimed to provide insights into how engaging in the ITEL+ program facilitated perspective transformations in participants, building on participants' survey responses that were shared in Table 6. In the following sections, I highlight examples from the open-ended survey and reflection data to show how participants developed concrete action plans aligned with their perspective changes. Although these isolated examples are meaningful

on their own, the greater impact lies in the cumulative effect of each participant's new

beliefs and behaviors.

Table 7

Frequency of Stages of Perspective Transformation Codes

Stage	Code	Frequency	% of total codes
A disorienting dilemma	Disorienting dilemma	2	0.58%
Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame	Self-examination	28	8.07%
A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions	Critical assessment	4	1.15%
Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation formation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change	Recognition	2	0.58%
Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions	Exploration	56	16.14%
Planning of a course of action	Action planning	135	38.90%
Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans	Knowledge acquisition	8	2.31%
Provisional trying of new roles	Trying new roles	23	6.63%
Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships	Building confidence and competence	87	25.07%
A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective	Reintegration	2	0.58%

Cassandra

Cassandra, an occupational therapy instructor with 27 years of teaching experience and prior experience in an ACUE course, described her perspective transformation as recognizing that certain teaching practices she uses "could be a barrier to students" (PT score = 4). An example of this could be found in Cassandra's first module reflection, in which she wrote about how her grading practices were biased, and therefore inequitable. In the sentences below, I included codes in parentheses to demonstrate the stages of perspective transformation that were tagged for this example. Cassandra explained that she sometimes assigned harsher grades to the submissions graded first and to assignments submitted by students for whom she has high expectations (self-examination). As a result of her learning in the module, she planned to begin grading students' assignments anonymously (action planning) and looked into her university's learning management system to see whether it has a setting to redact names from students' work (knowledge acquisition). Cassandra also started to consider how the use of this practice would impact students (building confidence and competence), noting that they would receive grades based on their actual performance and could feel encouraged to employ more creative approaches when completing their assignments.

Another example was found in Cassandra's reflection for the Designing Equity-Centered Courses module. Here the participant described coming to the realization that she may not be articulating assignment expectations clearly enough. Despite providing a grading rubric, exemplars from past students, and a video explanation for assignments, Cassandra still received questions from students about assignments. Therefore, she identified the one assignment in each course that students asked the most questions about

97

and began revising the assignment guidelines using the transparent assignment template discussed in the module. To further refine the guidelines, Cassandra planned to review the feedback she left most frequently on assignments with low grades and incorporate this feedback into the assignment guidelines. As a result of these actions, Cassandra expected that students would submit higher quality assignments, requiring fewer comments from her and fewer revisions from students.

Felicia

For Felicia, a nursing instructor with 10 years of teaching experience and no prior engagement with ACUE, changes in perspective included an increased awareness of how students' life experiences can impact their learning, ways the professor can positively or negatively influence students' learning, and the effect of implicit biases and microaggressions (PT score = 5). The impact of the course extended beyond the classroom and into Felicia's life outside of teaching. As she commented, "I see [implicit bias and microaggressions] in my personal life now and attempt to change things." In terms of implicit bias, Felicia had not previously understood how her biases, which she attributed, in part, to her small-town upbringing, led her to make certain assumptions about students that may not be true. For example, because Felicia did not see many men represented in the nursing field, when men enrolled in her courses she assumed they would "not put forth effort in learning" and would "lean on the many women in the course to get information from and . . . to complete assignments." She also expected that they would not volunteer to lead group projects. Before engaging in ITEL+, Felicia also thought her role as an instructor was to treat all students equally. However, after completing the first module, her thinking shifted. "Equity is what needs to be guiding

me," she wrote. Felicia now believed that to create an equitable course she needed to consider the experiences that students bring to the table and can share with their classmates. As she reflected, "I need to make sure the naïve, small town girl isn't closing possibilities of learning for my students by not recognizing and including their life experiences."

Felicia also learned a great deal about microaggressions in ITEL+. Before completing the program, Felicia did not think she experienced or observed any microaggressions, despite being familiar with the term. However, after watching the course videos, which she called "an eye opener," she recognized different examples of microaggressions that she has witnessed, their effects, and how she should respond in the future if they occur. Importantly, she came to understand how microaggressions affect students by making them feel "devalued and unimportant," and how she could make a difference by speaking up, validating students' feelings, and ensuring that she takes accountability for any microaggressions she may commit. She also discussed her intent to use a framework shared in the course resources to address microaggressions in the future. Felicia's transformation related to microaggressions will be discussed in greater detail within the context of Research Question 3.

Kate

Like Felicia, Kate's first engagement with ACUE was completing ITEL+. A 10-year nursing faculty member, Kate's perspective changes came in the areas of implicit bias and communicating inclusion and belonging to students (PT score = 5). Completing the self-reflection exercise on implicit bias made Kate realize her privileges and the assumptions she has made about students. For example, she assumed that students who

performed poorly on exams procrastinated or did not study enough, and she did not consider actions she might take to support them. After engaging in the course, Kate viewed teaching students effective study strategies as part of her role and understood the need to increase her sense of empathy toward students. She also recognized that professors cannot solely blame students for failures in their courses, but part of the onus must be on her as the instructor.

In addition, Kate expressed that she formerly believed she was open to new perspectives and ideas, but after her experience in ITEL+, she realized this was still an area for growth. As a result of her learning in ITEL+, Kate had already employed specific strategies to make her courses more inclusive and set plans to implement others. One example was Kate's creation of a liquid syllabus, described in ITEL+ as a web-based syllabus designed to ensure students feel welcome and to increase accessibility. Kate shared her excitement about using her liquid syllabus in the fall semester to increase transparency for students, make her and her coinstructor seem approachable, and communicate to students that the course is learner centered. Kate's additional plans for modifying her courses consisted of developing community norms with students, facilitating an empathy exercise, and continuing to add more diverse perspectives to her course materials, among others. She believed that these steps would help to make it more "obvious" to students that she values diversity and inclusion and wants to ensure students feel like they belong in her courses.

Michael

For Michael, an ACUE Advanced Certificate holder and 19-year instructor of nursing, perspective changes occurred through learning about implicit bias,

microaggressions, and imposter phenomenon (PT score = 5). By engaging in the first ITEL+ module, Michael realized assumptions he made about students based on whether they were attentive, talkative, or asked a lot of questions. He called the self-reflection exercise on bias "enlightening," because it prompted him to consider the various ways his biases could influence his interactions with students and cause him to "[not] give them a chance." As a result of this learning, Michael outlined plans to use surveys, introductory discussions, and office hours to get to know his students. He also shared a desire to demonstrate empathy by being more flexible with students. Michael said this empathy could come in the form of "giving them extra time on an assignment, or understanding when they are ill or have a family member they are caring for, can't find childcare or ran out of gas and can't afford gas to get to school." Michael hoped to mitigate the impact of his biases by increasing his sense of empathy.

Michael also experienced an important transformation in regard to his thoughts about microaggressions and imposter phenomenon. Similar to Felicia, Michael did not fully understand microaggressions prior to taking ITEL+. He was not able to recognize microaggressions—or when he had unintentionally committed them. Engaging in ITEL+ caused Michael to realize a need to "be more cognizant of [his] actions" and words so he does not exhibit microaggressive behaviors that could affect students' academic performances and emotional well-being. Establishing a plan of action, Michael decided to integrate resources from ACUE into his courses to teach students about microaggressions, survey students about microaggressions, and discuss the impact of microaggressions with his colleagues. He also established plans related to his learning about imposter phenomenon. Before the course, Michael had no idea that he or his

students had experienced imposter phenomenon. Yet, by engaging in the program, he began to reflect on his own experience as a first-generation college student and his feelings he would not succeed because his background was different than that of his peers. To combat his students' potential feelings of imposter phenomenon, Michael planned to discuss the concept in class, invite students to talk to him in times of doubt, and share his own experiences.

Robert

When Robert enrolled in ITEL+, he was 17 years into his career teaching marketing courses and, like many others in the cohort, it was his first introduction to ACUE. Robert described his perspective transformation as impacting both his professional and personal lives (PT score = 5). Considering his interactions with students, Robert started to think about "the unintended outcomes of [his] actions." He realized that, before engaging in the ITEL+ course, he had not fully understood everything that affects students when they enter class. Robert reflected on making assumptions about students: "Whether through missed classes or missed assignments, I have sometimes thought that the 'effort is just not there,' or they 'don't care.'" However, by completing ITEL+, Robert saw the need to get to know his students more and demonstrate empathy toward them. "My assumptions on students' level of knowledge or effort given need to be reassessed," he concluded. Drawing on recommended practices from the course, Robert decided he would grade students' assignment submissions anonymously and offer "second chances" in the form of multiple assignment attempts as students work toward mastery. Robert also planned to implement additional practices to build an inclusive environment for students, such as collecting anonymous feedback, discussing the impact

of microaggressions, collaborating with students to develop community agreements, sharing resources, creating an inclusive syllabus, and bringing more diverse examples into his instruction. He anticipated these actions would help students feel a greater sense of belonging and "feel like they are being heard and respected."

In addition to influencing Robert's instruction, participating in the course also affected his life outside of teaching. When asked to explain this influence on the LAS, Robert wrote about initiating conversations with family and friends about implicit bias and privilege. Further, he shared a recent experience of serving on a hiring committee and recommending that they include interview questions about how the faculty candidates prioritize equity and inclusion in their classrooms. Another example could be found in Robert's reflection on implicit bias. Through ITEL+, Robert recognized certain privileges he enjoys that others, including coworkers, do not. He said, "My background and identity do not cause me to feel unsafe," acknowledging that safety is not a privilege experienced by everyone. As Robert reflected on what contributed to his perspective changes throughout ITEL+, related and unrelated to teaching, he summarized it as follows:

> I think hearing from the diverse group of people in the videos and in our class, about the impact these issues had on them—or how they saw a benefit in adopting these tools in the classroom with their students really had the biggest impact. Some of the stories that were shared were eye-opening—and some had me questioning if I could have inadvertently done something like this in the past.

Zoey

The final participant who experienced transformation was Zoey, a sociology and social work professor of 24 years whose first experience with ACUE was completing

ITEL+. Although Zoey shared that she had perspective changes about her interactions with coworkers and friends, she spoke at greater length about how her work with students changed (PT score = 5). Zoey's major takeaway from the course was that even though she had substantial expertise in DEI principles, she could take an even bigger role in using inclusive practices with students. In Zoey's first reflection, she wrote quite a bit about past experiences and practices she had already used prior to enrolling in ITEL+. Nevertheless, as the course progressed, she began to recognize different 'tweaks' she could make to her teaching to benefit students. As a result of her learning, Zoey adjusted her office hours to provide virtual options, planned exercises to teach her students about microaggressions, talked about the potential of implementing a buddy system to combat students' feelings of imposter phenomenon, described a resource pamphlet she intended to create for students and colleagues, and planned modifications to her syllabus. As one of her syllabus revisions, Zoey indicated she would provide more thorough note-taking suggestions to students. She reflected, "I will no longer assume that students know how to do this in an online course and I can provide a better explanation of 'how' to possibly consider doing this each week." Importantly, Zoey also planned to share what she learned in ITEL+ with her colleagues. Because she felt the inclusive syllabus checklist and transparent assignment template would be beneficial to her department, she discussed her plan to introduce these resources in an upcoming curriculum meeting.

Though brief, this overview of participants' perspective changes was presented to offer insight into the types of transformations participants experienced by engaging in ITEL+. In the following section, I discuss the learning activities and life changes to which participants attribute these transformations.

Research Question 2

Building on the first research question regarding whether perspective transformation occurred and was attributed to ITEL+, in the second research question, I asked about the experiences contributing to transformation. To address this question, survey responses for the participant who did not experience perspective transformation were removed from the data set. Experiences were grouped on the survey by learning activities in which participants engaged as part of the course, experiences related to a particular module, academic life changes (e.g., a new position at their institution, a new curriculum, etc.), and specific people or interactions that may have contributed to the perspective transformation (see Part 2 of the LAS in Appendix C).

In Table 8, I present the learning activities participants noted as playing a role in their perspective transformations. All participants who experienced transformation attributed it, in some part, to the learning activities they engaged in during the course. The most frequently cited learning activity was ACUE's self-reflection exercise on implicit bias and privilege ($n = 6$, 100%). Included in the first module of the program, this exercise guided instructors through critical thinking questions about their upbringing and experiences that may influence how they see themselves and others. The majority of participants ($n = 5$, 83.33%) also checked off the following: *engaging with the Course Demonstration videos*, *engaging with the Expert Insights videos*, *engaging with the Common Challenges and Misconceptions*, *writing a reflection as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment*, and *exploring the module references*. All of these components have been central to ACUE's learning design and have been included in all of our courses. In contrast, the learning activities selected the least were *doing my own research outside of*

the course (which was not a requirement; *n* = 1, 16.67%), *participating in the ITEL*

course launch (*n* = 1, 16.67%), and writing a note to my future self (*n* = 0). Having such

a large difference in frequencies for the items *exploring the module references* and *doing*

my own research outside of the course is surprising, as any deep dive into the reference

lists could be seen as additional work completed outside of the course.

Table 8

Learning Activities That Influenced Perspective Change

Frequency	Percent	Survey response(s)
6	100%	• Completing the self-reflection exercise on implicit bias and privilege
5	83.33%	• Engaging with the Course Demonstration videos • Engaging with the Expert Insights videos • Engaging with the Common Challenges and Misconceptions • Writing a reflection as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment • Exploring the module references
4	66.67%	• Engaging with the Introductory videos and questions • Engaging with the Implementation Resources (i.e., Planning Guides) • Participating in the Observe & Analyze videos and discussions • Implementing a teaching practice as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment • Participating in the synchronous module discussions on Zoom • Engaging with the facilitator's announcements and messages • Doing my own personal reflection, writing about concerns, and/or journaling • Collaborating with the colleagues in my cohort
3	50%	• Completing the Reflection Survey about my learning and implementation
2	33.33%	• Reflecting on the structure of the ITEL course
1	16.67%	• Doing my own research outside of the course • Participating in the ITEL course launch
0	0%	• Writing a note to my future self

Although all six participants considered program learning activities as contributing to their transformation, fewer (*n* = 4, 66.67%) viewed specific people and their interactions with others as influencing it. As shown in Table 9, the most commonly selected responses in this category were *reflecting on past or future interactions with one or more of my students while taking the ITEL course* and *a specific interaction I had with a friend, family member, coworker, or acquaintance while taking the ITEL course*. Other responses included the facilitator's support (*n* = 2, 33.33%), *reflecting on past or future interactions with a friend, family member, coworker, or acquaintance while taking the ITEL course* (*n* = 2, 33.33%), and *a specific interaction I had with one or more of my students while taking the ITEL course* (*n* = 1, 16.67%).

Table 9

People and Interactions That Influenced Perspective Change

Frequency	Percent	Survey response(s)
3	50%	• Reflecting on past or future interactions with one or more of my students while taking the ITEL course • A specific interaction I had with a friend, family member, coworker, or acquaintance while taking the ITEL course
2	33.33%	• The facilitator's support • Reflecting on past or future interactions with a friend, family member, coworker, or acquaintance while taking the ITEL course
1	16.67%	• A specific interaction I had with one or more of my students while taking the ITEL course
0	0%	• A fellow cohort member's support • A colleague's (who is not enrolled in the ITEL course) support • The support of a leader at my institution

As discussed in the Chapter 3 and demonstrated in Table 10, I also grouped participants' responses about influential learning activities and people to determine

whether certain types of participation could be viewed as contributing more to perspective changes than others. These categories included critical thinking assignments, discussions, self-assessments, discovery of one's voice, support by a person, miscellaneous learning activities, and implementation and interaction. Though some survey items could certainly fit into multiple categories, each survey item was assigned to a single category for the purpose of this analysis. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for each category. To calculate percentages, the total count for each category was divided by the total possible counts, had all participants checked off all of the survey items in the category. As shown in Table 10, the top three categories that contributed to perspective transformation were discovery of one's voice (75%), discussions (66.67%), and miscellaneous learning activities (60%). The category with the lowest proportion of survey items selected by participants was support by a person (8.33%), which was an interesting finding given that discussions ranked as the second-most influential category.

In addition to noting learning activities and interactions, participants were also asked whether a specific module influenced their perspective transformation and were prompted to check all that applied. All six respondents identified at least one module as contributing to their perspective change, with participants selecting three modules on average. As Table 11 displays, the module participants found to be most influential was Addressing Imposter Phenomenon and Stereotype Threat ($n = 6$, 100%), followed by Reducing Microaggressions in Learning Environments ($n = 5$, 83.33%). In contrast, Designing Equity-Centered Courses was the module selected least often ($n = 1$, 16.67%).

Table 10

Learning Activity Categories That Influenced Perspective Change

Learning activity categories	Survey items	Frequency	Percent
Critical thinking assignments	• Completing the self-reflection exercise on implicit bias and privilege • Participating in the Observe & Analyze videos and discussions • Writing a note to my future self	10	55.56%
Discussions	• Participating in the synchronous module discussions on Zoom • Collaborating with the colleagues in my cohort	8	66.67%
Self-assessments	• Completing the Reflection Survey about my learning and implementation	3	50%
Discovery of one's voice	• Writing a reflection as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment • Doing my own personal reflection, writing about concerns, and/or journaling	9	75%
Support by a person	• A fellow cohort member's support • A colleague's (who is not enrolled in the ITEL course) support • The facilitator's support • The support of a leader at my institution	2	8.33%
Miscellaneous learning activities	• Engaging with the Introductory videos and questions • Engaging with the Course Demonstration videos • Engaging with the Expert Insights videos • Engaging with the Implementation Resources (i.e., Planning Guides) • Engaging with the Common Challenges and Misconceptions • Exploring the module references • Engaging with the facilitator's announcements and messages • Doing my own research outside of the course • Reflecting on the structure of the ITEL course • Participating in the ITEL course launch	36	60%

Implementation and interaction	• Implementing a teaching practice as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment	13	43.33%
	• A specific interaction I had with one or more of my students while taking the ITEL course		
	• Reflecting on past or future interactions with one or more of my students while taking the ITEL course		
	• A specific interaction I had with a friend, family member, coworker, or acquaintance while taking the ITEL course		
	• Reflecting on past or future interactions with a friend, family member, coworker, or acquaintance while taking the ITEL course		

Table 11

ITEL+ Modules That Influenced Perspective Change

Module	Frequency	Percent
Managing the Impact of Biases	4	66.67%
Reducing Microaggressions in Learning Environments	5	83.33%
Addressing Imposter Phenomenon and Stereotype Threat	6	100%
Creating Inclusive Learning Environments	2	33.33%
Designing Equity-Centered Courses	1	16.67%

The final survey item pertaining to Research Question 2 was related to any substantial academic life changes that participants may have experienced during the duration of the program. Only two of the six participants attributed their perspective transformation, in part, to academic life changes, including new initiatives or institutional priorities at their institution ($n = 2$, 33.33%) and a new curriculum or new learning objectives for their courses ($n = 1$, 16.67%). Although participants indicated experiencing other life changes while engaged in ITEL+ in another section of the LAS, not all life changes were perceived as influencing perspective change.

Research Question 3

In Research Question 3, I asked, "How do ITEL+ faculty participants reflect on and apply their learning about inclusive teaching practices to teaching and nonteaching contexts?" Although some examples of reflection and application were shared earlier in the descriptions of perspective transformation, in this section I offer a deeper examination of participants' experiences of transferring their learning from ITEL+ into their teaching and beyond. In addition to drawing on participants' module reflections, I also analyzed transcripts from the five synchronous meetings, which I referred to as Equity Chats, that were held throughout the program. Importantly, reflections and meeting transcript excerpts were analyzed for all participants, including those who did not experience perspective transformation or complete the LAS.

Initial coding of the reflection assignment submissions and discussion transcripts, using process and in vivo coding, yielded a total of 894 unique codes. The codes were grouped and aggregated into 12 theme-related categories, as displayed in Table 12. Table 12 also shows how the categories were further refined by exploring the connections between them, which is typical of axial coding (Saldaña, 2021, p. 308), resulting in three major themes. These themes included (a) reimagining students' experiences, (b) reimagining one's professional identity as a learner, and (c) reimagining one's life experiences.

First, through their participation in ITEL+, faculty participants began to envision and witness how using inclusive teaching practices benefits students, as they increased their awareness of the challenges students face and how they could improve the learning environment to increase student achievement, career preparation, and sense of belonging.

111

Second, they reflected on their role as an instructor and as a learner engaged in a supportive cohort, considering how the recommended practices aligned with their teaching philosophies, problem-solving with other cohort members, and making plans for continued development. Participants also reimagined life experiences outside of the classroom, specifically in terms of how concepts they learned in ITEL+ related to their interactions with colleagues in their respective workplaces and their relationships with relatives and friends. For these reasons, the core concept I identified from this analysis was *reimagining*, and the emerging framework could be described as follows: Faculty participants actively reflected on and applied their learning from ITEL+ through "lightbulb" moments within the modules that prompted them to reimagine their professional identities, how they could influence students' experiences by using inclusive practices, and how DEI principles affect their relationships outside of the classroom. In the following sections, I share examples from the program that illustrate the three major themes and emerging framework.

Table 12

Progression of Codes Into Themes Using a Grounded Interpretation Approach

Initial code examples	Theme-related categories	Major themes
• Believing students want to do well • Focusing on students' assets • Needing to reconsider assumptions about students • Tapping into students' wealth of experiences	Changing perspectives about students	Reimagining students' experiences
• Considering possible negative impact • Facing challenges implementing online • Struggling with how to balance flexibility with expectations of professionalism • Using required university syllabus language that is cold and exclusionary	Considering obstacles to implementation	

- Empowering peers to help others
- Establishing community norms
- Setting the tone by talking about the impact of microaggressions
- Welcoming students to the course

Creating an inclusive environment

- Being available to answer students' questions
- Sharing resources with students
- Using surveys and introductory discussions to get to know students
- Wanting to support all students

Getting to know students and their needs

- Acknowledging students' challenges
- Considering student impact
- Reflecting on past experiences with students
- Wanting students to feel like they belong

Heightening awareness of students' experiences

- Developing students' thinking and application skills
- Meeting professional expectations
- Talking with students about privilege
- Wanting students to develop skills to work with others

Preparing students for life beyond the classroom

- Adjusting office hours
- Considering how you seek student feedback
- Questioning whether expectations were clear
- Using group contracts

Reflecting on and refining teaching practice

- "I'm in awe of my learning"
- Realizing what imposter phenomenon means for the first time
- Thanking a peer for a practice idea
- "This adds to my toolkit"

Embracing the learning experience

- Considering impact of upbringing
- Considering open communication as part of teaching philosophy
- Having a responsibility as a role model to address microaggressions
- "I'm on my journey. I'm not there yet."

Reflecting on identity and role

Reimagining one's professional identity as a learner

• Needing practice responding to microaggressions • Seeking examples of community learning agreements • Wanting to get better at using inclusive language • Wanting to make changes with coteacher	Seeking continuous improvements	
• Bringing learning from ACUE to DEI committee • Changing department policy based on ACUE learning • Encouraging peers to uphold community norms • Feeling imposter phenomenon due to colleagues	Applying ITEL+ concepts to the workplace	Reimagining one's life experiences
• Acknowledging racism in family members • Being more direct in addressing microaggressions with family • Recalling story with family member commenting the gender binary • Recognizing imposter phenomenon in children	Applying ITEL+ concepts to personal life	

Theme 1: Reimagining Students' Experiences

To illustrate the first theme, in the following sections I provide several illustrations from participants' module reflections and contributions to our discussions that demonstrate how participants reimagined students' experiences.

"There's No Way . . . They Studied." One example of how participants applied their new knowledge from ITEL+ to their teaching was observed in the first module discussion on biases. At the end of the session, participants discussed what actions they planned to take as a result of their learning—and why. Building on comments from the other cohort members, Kate reflected on previous assumptions she had made about students:

When students would fail an exam, the first thing that went through my mind is they didn't study. There's no way that they got a 54% that they studied. I mean, there's no way. Right? Well, I do feel like they studied, however I probably

114

wasn't thinking . . . did they not have time to study because they had to work or they had to—maybe they didn't, they don't have the strategies. So, are there, are there other things that I need to be looking at versus like, well, they don't care about it. They didn't study, they didn't listen to me. And so I think that this module has really opened my eyes with that.

Through her engagement in the first module, Kate built a greater sense of empathy toward students. She further articulated her intention to get to know students so she could offer better support for their needs. Now, when students performed poorly on an exam, Kate planned to say, "Tell me more about how you prepared. And what can I do to help?"

"We Have Expectations, But Do We Share Our Expectations?" Because many participants worked and taught in clinical settings, they brought to our meetings specific issues with which they were grappling to discuss with their cohort members. For instance, as participants learned about policies reflecting empathy toward students, such as flexible due dates and attendance policies, some were concerned that becoming more lenient would conflict with their goal of preparing students for careers in healthcare. Cassandra shared there are certain hands-on learning experiences that are critical to students achieving mastery and therefore require students to attend class, such as a simulation in which the school's theater students act as standardized patients for her students to treat. Additionally, some of the nursing faculty discussed the importance of being on time for their jobs and wanting to instill this in students to ensure they are prepared when they enter the workforce. Felicia said,

As a nurse, you need to be on time. You need to be on time with medications. You know, you've got IV fluids due at a certain time, and we're trying to get that,

115

that into them. But then when you have those students that chronically have life

happening, and it does happen that way, I've been there, how do you balance that,

where you feel like you're helping them, you're being empathetic and being, you

know, course-policy-minded but yet on the same token, holding them to a

standard of, okay, these are the expectations for professionalism?

Though participants could sympathize with one another through these shared experiences

and goals for students, they were also able to identify possible solutions. For example,

Felicia shared with the group something she heard a colleague say: "We have

expectations. But do we share our expectations?" She described that one way to address

the challenge of balancing empathy with developing students' professional skills could be

to increase transparency. Felicia proposed implementing a practice the first day of class

in which instructors share their expectations with students and invite students to share

their expectations of the instructor and their peers with the class. Kate expanded on the

idea by suggesting that instructors have students use a rubric to self-evaluate their

professional behaviors on a regular basis. This conversation was just one example of how

participants reflected on module concepts with their community of peers and were able to

advance one another's thinking and devise practical solutions that they could apply

within their disciplines.

 "I Recognized a Microaggression in Myself." Another example of participants

benefiting from the learning community could be found in the discussion for the second

module, which was on the topic of microaggressions. Felicia opened the meeting by

disclosing that when she viewed the examples of microaggressions in the module, she

realized that she had committed a microaggression against a student in class that week.

116

Similar to an example of name pronunciations in the ITEL+ module, Felicia described making light of finally being able to pronounce an ethnic name and then exclaiming that the next student's name on the roster, which she likened to a name like John, was easier to pronounce. Felicia confided in the cohort about how she felt:

> I should have right then and there addressed it. I did not. I just kind of went on just checking attendance, making sure everybody is there. And I was just mortified and embarrassed that I did it. But, I recognized it. I don't know before this course if I would have recognized me doing that microaggression.

Drawing on advice from the experts and faculty featured in the module, Felicia understood that she should have addressed the microaggression and lamented over not doing so. However, she also understood that being able to recognize a microaggression was a sign of progress.

> In response, another participant, Kate, empathized with Felicia and shared her own example of a time that one of her students committed a microaggression against another student. Kate recounted this experience:

> So I was teaching the class on HIV, and I had just a group, like a random group of people on a picture, people of different ethnicities, backgrounds, ages, whatever. And . . . I ask the students, "Can anyone point out in this picture who has HIV?" Because really the intent is, we don't know who has HIV. . . . And someone blurted out the student's name in the class . . . [who] identified as homosexual.

Kate said that, at the time, she did not know how to respond and was grateful that another student spoke up, directly addressing the perpetrator. Kate wished she had spoken up in class and also followed up with the victim of the microaggression. She encouraged

Felicia to reach out to the student with the ethnic name since the incident happened recently. "You'll feel so much better," Kate said. "And the student will, too." Felicia indicated that she would think about following up because, in her words, "I don't like that I've dropped the ball. . . . I don't want anyone to ever feel insecure . . . [or] that they're not worthy to be where they're at." From here, Felicia and the other participants discussed resources in the module that they would use to address microaggressions in the future. Kate even planned to bring a short cheat sheet to class so that she would have a protocol to follow if microaggressions were to occur. This example demonstrated faculty members readily recognized the concepts from ITEL+ at play in their current and past experiences with students and were eager to develop plans to mitigate the impact of microaggressions in the future, with support from their cohort members.

Theme 2: Reimagining One's Professional Identity as a Learner

Next, several illustrations from participants' module reflections and contributions to our discussions are captured below to demonstrate how participants reimagined their professional identities as learners.

"Now I Have the Tools." The module discussions and reflection submissions contained countless examples of how participants planned to implement, or had already implemented, the recommended teaching practices with students. Because ACUE's learning design prompted faculty members to use at least one practice per module, it came as no surprise that participants took this requirement seriously, and the majority identified multiple practices in each module to incorporate into their teaching. Some of these examples were discussed within the context of perspective transformation, as the stages of transformation include planning for and executing new courses of action.

However, it is important to bring attention to additional examples of how participants applied their knowledge to address Research Question 3. In the paragraphs that follow, I offer three examples of participants setting concrete plans to implement—or implementing—recommended strategies from the program.

Bonnie. In an effort to combat students' feelings of imposter phenomenon, Bonnie planned to invite five or six of her former students to record an online discussion with her about overcoming their struggles and achieving success in her psychological statistics course. She had already identified a diverse group of panelists she planned to ask (e.g., a veteran, a returning adult with children, a first-generation student who worked full time, etc.) and indicated her intent to work with the institution's teaching center to create a video of the discussion. She described the anticipated impact of this practice as follows:

> Seeing other students they can identify with who were successful in the course should build self-efficacy and help counteract negative stereotypes. Further, I expect that having my former students describe the strategies they used to be successful will help promote a growth mindset. All of these students, to some extent, thought something like 'I am not good at math' or 'I am not a good student.' I hope to help students to shift those mindsets to 'I am not good at math yet,' or 'I can be good at math,' or 'I can be a good student.'

Because Bonnie recognized that many students were fearful of taking mathematics classes, she thought having current students see success in the form of video commentary would help to further breed success.

Cassandra. During the program, Cassandra decided to refine her fall syllabi after learning new syllabus practices in an ITEL+ module. She recognized that her institution's syllabus language was "cold and exclusionary in nature," and therefore added her own language to the mandatory diversity and accessibility statements. For example, she wrote the following as a second paragraph to the diversity statement:

> Materials and activities are presented in this course that are respectful of diversity such as gender, sexuality, disability, age, SES, ethnicity, race and culture. I encourage and appreciate your suggestions of how to improve the effectiveness of this course for you personally or for other students or student groups. If any of our class meetings or assignment due date [*sic*] conflict with your religious events, please let me know ahead of time so that we can make arrangements for you.

Cassandra anticipated that this addition would help students feel more comfortable reaching out to her.

Robert. During our synchronous discussion and in Robert's reflection, he wrote about feeling inspired to "embrace failure." For his fall courses, Robert planned to change the policy for a series of simulation assignments from a single attempt to multiple attempts, allowing students additional opportunities to build their skills as they worked toward mastery. Robert's aha moment was realizing that "whether it is on the first try or the second, it really doesn't matter when, as long as they successfully grasp the concept." As a result of this adjustment, Robert expected that students would "find comfort in developing the skills they are learning," feel like they "can make mistakes and have a chance to learn from them," and "feel more comfortable and prepared to face the final

simulation." Robert believed this change could lead to increased confidence in students and decreased feelings of imposter phenomenon.

Theme 3: Reimagining One's Life Experiences

Finally, in the sections that follow, I present multiple examples that illustrate topics related to the third theme, reimagining one's life experiences. These examples are descriptive of similar instances found in participants' module reflections and our Equity Chats.

"It's Totally Changed Our Attendance Policy in the Department." In addition to reflecting on and making adjustments to their teaching practice based on their learning in ITEL+, participants also initiated new discussions with their colleagues, some of which even brought about policy changes. For example, learning about stereotype threat prompted Michael to consider how this concept has affected male students in the school's nursing program. As he considered that most photos of nurses in recruiting materials have featured females, Michael planned to speak with his nursing DEI committee about strategies for diversifying their program. In addition, he collaborated with colleagues on a review of the wording in their department's syllabi and found a lack of inclusive language, which they aimed to resolve through revisions to their syllabi. Similarly, after learning about inclusive syllabi and transparency in assignment guidelines, Zoey indicated her plans to bring ITEL+ resources, an inclusive syllabus checklist and transparent assignment template, to an upcoming curriculum meeting with her department to encourage colleagues to use these resources.

Cassandra also brought new ideas to her department and witnessed the immediate impact of her learning in ITEL+. In the first module, participants learned about ways to

ensure attendance policies were equitable and demonstrated an understanding of students'

lives. At the time, Cassandra's department had been engaging in discussions about more

strictly regulating attendance. After Cassandra shared what she learned in ITEL+, her

department changed their attendance policy to offer some flexibility and account for the

reality that "sometimes things come up." She described it as "really exciting" being able

to go into a department meeting and transform her colleagues' perspectives about how

they can acknowledge students' experiences *and* meet their goals for student learning.

      "It's Constant Papercut After Papercut." Although participants from the same

institutions regularly commented on the benefits of ITEL+ giving them a shared language

to discuss DEI topics within the context of teaching, they also voiced common challenges

of how a lack of inclusion had affected their workplace. In the module discussion on

microaggressions, participants described witnessing microaggressions between

colleagues, which created a "hostile work environment" and deterred them from serving

on committees with certain individuals. They commented on how their leadership

dismissed microaggressions between colleagues, attributing them to individuals'

personalities that "won't change." As Kate explained, "No one speaks up and then it just

becomes the norm and then it's constant papercut after papercut." Moreover, Felicia

acknowledged that these fractured relationships between faculty members has impacted

students due to faculty members opting out of certain committees. The participants also

recognized how much the work environment has impacted their self-esteem and led to

imposter phenomenon. In Kate's words, "The ideas are just shot down by maybe certain

faculty, and that makes us feel very inferior and worthless and almost like an imposter,

where it's like, well, am I even cut out to be a teacher?" The participants who work in

healthcare attributed these behaviors, in part, to poor modeling from professionals in their field—for example, how they have seen some doctors treat nurses or interns—and believed that some faculty members have carried these behaviors into their discourse with colleagues on campus. Though there could be no immediate resolution to this issue within our brief discussion, I tried to draw connections between some of the recommended teaching practices that could help to create a more respectful and inclusive environment—for example, establishing community norms within departments or using an oops/ouch protocol during meetings. Although no plan of action was set, this example shows that participants could readily recognize how the absence of inclusive and equitable practices has impacted their interactions with coworkers.

"When It Becomes Family . . . You Don't Want to Cause Rifts." In addition to reflecting on their relationships with colleagues, participants also considered interactions they have had with family members that were relevant to their ITEL+ learning. For instance, Felicia, who often referred to the influence of her small-town upbringing, recalled when a family member made a snide comment about gender-neutral bathrooms at a family reunion. She questioned whether she should have responded and expressed concern about creating tension within her family. Felicia asked, "How do you convince them that, you know, that's not okay—what you said is not okay—when there—when it becomes family and then you don't want to cause rifts?" She also began to question whether some of her students grew up in certain areas that limited their exposure to diverse identities and perspectives.

Replying to Felicia, Kate acknowledged the challenge of addressing biases with relatives and shared that she has witnessed racism within her extended family. Yet Kate

expressed pride that her children feel empowered to directly address racist remarks. She said, "Even my 14-year-old daughter will finally say, 'That is not okay to say. That is *not* okay.'" One of participants' key takeaways from gaining strategies to address microaggressions was that they should express their discontentment and not shy away from displaying emotions in their response. Similar to when Felicia realized she had committed a microaggression in class, participants viewed recognizing microaggressions as a useful starting point but acknowledged that changes do not happen overnight. As Kate summarized,

> I think bringing it to their awareness is the first step . . . maybe people just don't know, again, like sometimes I didn't know what a microaggression was and maybe you didn't know that you were even doing one at the time. And— but when it starts to be more apparent, you start to pay closer attention to things like that, and maybe we could respond. It's going to just take time.

Though participants indicated that they acquired new practices to approach difficult situations with students and relatives in the future, the majority also noted that appropriately addressing microaggressions would require continued learning and practice.

"We All Go Through Mud Differently." Although I could share an abundance of examples demonstrating how participants transferred their knowledge to teaching and nonteaching contexts, I will conclude with one final anecdote from Felicia that encapsulates participants' reimagining of how they perceive and engage with others. Felicia said,

I have this image . . . on my desk and I feel like I need it posted almost

everywhere for all my students. But as we've been talking, this is what's popped

in my head . . . a picture of a Jack Russell and a lab, and they are muddy. And, of

course, the Jack Russell has mud almost clear up to his neck and the lab is, you

know, just maybe to just like their knees. And it says, "We all go through mud

differently." And I think we have to think about, you know, our responses, either

to our students, to ourselves, to our colleagues, to think that even though we may

not have that intent, we went through that mud differently than they went through

that mud. . . . And maybe we need to just be aware and maybe that's something

we need to share . . . you don't know what mud they went through.

As participants were prompted to reflect on the concepts of equity and empathy

throughout the program, it was crucial they understood all learners have had different

experiences relevant to how they show up in the classroom each day. Additionally,

another part of this research entailed learning about whether participants reflected on and

applied the same concepts in their personal lives. Felicia's description of the dog photo

provides a meaningful summary of participants' learning experiences in ITEL+:

Participants came to realize that they—along with students, colleagues, family members,

and friends—all go through mud differently. Being aware of the mud and providing

appropriate, supportive, and inclusive responses is what equity is all about.

Summary

In Chapter 4, I shared the results of my study, including findings for each of the

three research questions. These findings show that perspective transformations occurred

that were related to participation in ITEL+, which learning experiences contributed to

perspective changes, and how participants transferred their knowledge to professional and personal settings. The results of this study have important implications for both my local and larger contexts, which I discuss in the next chapter. I also connect the results to the theoretical underpinnings and extant literature framing the study, offer insights into key limitations, and suggest areas for future exploration.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Offering a comprehensive professional development course in inclusive teaching that could lead to changes in instructional behaviors is a key strategy to confront opportunity and achievement gaps, increase student success, and improve completion rates. Nevertheless, such a program would not be truly effective without prompting participants to self-examine their implicit biases, assumptions, and personal beliefs, given they bring their "whole selves" to the classroom each day, just as students do. In this research study, I have explored my belief that in order to increase educators' equity-mindedness, we must develop the whole person, because instructors' personal and professional identities are bound together.

To maximize the potential impact of ACUE's existing inclusive teaching program, I included five synchronous discussion opportunities in the program, giving participants a space to workshop challenging ideas, seek feedback on their plans to implement the recommended teaching practices, and share their personal experiences related to the module topics. As the facilitator of the course and these synchronous discussions, I viewed it as my responsibility to ensure that participants engaged in a high-quality learning experience that would precipitate perspective changes and help them evolve into more equity-minded educators and people. In addition, it was important to contribute to the research regarding the efficacy of inclusive teaching programs, since measuring effectiveness has been a shortcoming of past efforts (Goldstein Hode et al., 2018). Thus, I conducted this research to assess whether faculty participants in ITEL+ experienced perspective transformations; if so, what contributed to them; and how

participants transferred their learning to teaching and nonteaching contexts. In the study, I asked the following research questions:

1. How and to what extent does engaging in the ITEL+ program facilitate a perspective transformation in faculty participants?

2. Which experiences in the ITEL+ program contribute to whether faculty participants experience a perspective transformation?

3. How do ITEL+ faculty participants reflect on and apply their learning about inclusive teaching practices to teaching and nonteaching contexts?

In this chapter, I discuss the findings of this action research study within the context of my conceptual framework and share implications for practice, limitations, and future research recommendations.

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study show that most participants did, in fact, experience perspective transformations related to ITEL+. Five of the seven participants who completed the LAS (71.4%) experienced perspective changes about their teaching and personal lives. By comparison, another participant's perspective change was connected only to their teaching ($n = 1$, 14.3%). Only one participant (14.3%) did not experience any perspective transformation. Although this sample size is small and findings cannot be generalized, these results provide a useful foundation for understanding how engagement in ITEL+ precipitates new thoughts and beliefs, a process which often results in changes in behaviors to align with these new perspectives (Cranton, 2016; Mezirow, 1991).

When participants selected the statements that represented Mezirow's stages of perspective transformation, five participants (71.4%) checked off the statements

indicating they experienced the first stage, a disorienting dilemma, which could have been a single event or gradual realization their existing viewpoints were no longer adequate (Cranton, 2016; Mezirow, 1991). Initially, I hypothesized that the disorienting dilemma, which King (2009) has described as causing "disequilibrium" because it offsets a learner's balance (Theoretical Roots of Transformative Learning section, para. 8), would be one specific module or learning activity within ITEL+. Although participants referred to certain modules and exercises in their descriptions of their perspective changes on the LAS, I was amazed by the number of ITEL+ experiences that caused disequilibrium. For many participants, multiple events within the course—or in combination with people, interactions, and academic life events—disrupted learners' existing beliefs and perspectives. Therefore, the disorienting dilemma could be characterized as a series of dilemmas leading participants through the other stages of perspective transformation, resulting in a substantial cumulative impact for each participant by the end of the course. Though I also had speculated that past experience in ACUE courses may have thwarted our veteran participants from experiencing perspective transformation in ITEL+, the data do not support this idea. The data show perspective changes for participants who had previously taken ACUE courses *and* those who were new to ACUE. The one participant who did not experience perspective transformation was new to ACUE.

In terms of ITEL+ learning activities, the six participants who demonstrated transformations considered the self-reflection exercise on implicit bias as key to their perspective changes. Because this activity is intended to prompt learners to think about their upbringing, intersectional identities, and relationships in new ways, it is not

surprising that participants' assumptions and beliefs were challenged by engaging in the exercise. The self-reflection occurs in the first module, which encourages learners to be vulnerable and equips them with a reoriented frame of mind for the rest of the course. The other learning activities that the majority of participants ($n = 5$, 83.33%) reported as helping to precipitate perspective changes are standard features of every ACUE course: Course Demonstration videos, Expert Insights videos, Common Challenges and Misconceptions, and the Practice & Reflect assignment. The first three of these components guide participants in implementing the recommended practices. In the course, they are able to observe other faculty from a variety of institutions implementing the practices and hear from students about their impact, gain insights from DEI experts, and begin to think about how to overcome potential challenges to using the practices. This gives them an opportunity to expand their perspectives and prepares them to apply the strategies in their own teaching.

When participants considered other aspects outside of the course that could have aided in their perspective changes, two thirds reported that people or interactions played a role. These included interactions with students; interactions with friends, family members, coworkers, or acquaintances; and the facilitator's support. Interactions included those in the past, present, and future. Thus, participants' ability to connect their course learning to these interactions is an indicator they were able to reflect on and transfer their knowledge to academic and nonacademic settings, demonstrating the program's immediate impact.

Combining the people and interactions category with the program activities that contributed to transformation was less informative than expected. When these groups

were assembled into seven larger categories—critical thinking assignments, discussions, self-assessments, discovery of one's voice, support by a person, miscellaneous learning activities, and implementation and interaction—I found that the most frequently cited categories facilitating transformation were discovery of one's voice, discussions, and miscellaneous learning activities. Meanwhile, support by a person had, by far, the lowest proportion of survey items selected by participants. Considering that participants found discussions to be extremely impactful, it seems questionable that support by a person would have such a drastically different ranking. A likely deficiency of the groupings is that each survey item was assigned a single category that seemed best aligned to its purpose. Yet, after sorting the survey items, it was clear that most of them could easily fit under multiple categories. Participating in the Observe & Analyze videos and discussions is a good example of this. Although I assigned this activity to the critical thinking assignments category, because it asks course-takers to analyze teaching scenarios, it also could have been classified under the discussions category, given that faculty members engage in asynchronous discussions about the scenarios. Therefore, the original categories of course learning activities and people and interactions seem to provide more useful insights into contributors to perspective change than the larger categories do.

The other possible contributors that participants were asked about, course modules and academic life changes, also provide insights into their experiences. The first three modules in the course—Managing the Impact of Biases, Reducing Microaggressions in Learning Environments, and Addressing Imposter Phenomenon and Stereotype Threat—were selected by the majority of participants as influencing their perspectives ($n = 4$, $n = 5$, and $n = 6$, respectively). One point of interest is that the self-

reflection exercise on implicit bias identified by all participants as contributing to transformation appears in the learning module that only four participants (66.67%) noted as contributing to transformation. It is unclear why this misalignment exists, and this may be an area for additional exploration. In terms of academic life changes, only two participants attributed their perspective changes, in part, to new initiatives or institutional priorities ($n = 2$, 33.33%) and a new curriculum or new course learning objectives ($n = 1$, 16.67%). Though these numbers may be small, they show participants' institutional contexts can have an influence on shaping their perspectives and on connections they make to the ITEL+ content.

Finally, the Research Question 3 findings reveal ITEL+ caused participants to reimagine their professional identities, their ability to impact students' experiences, and their interactions outside of the classroom. In Chapter 4, I shared a number of examples from participants' module reflections and our Equity Chat discussions to show the various ways in which participants reflected on and applied their learning about inclusive teaching practices. When considered alongside the descriptions of perspective changes participants shared for Research Question 1, it becomes clear they were not just thinking about making adjustments to their teaching; they were actually making them. Results from studies in Chapter 2 demonstrate teaching behaviors do not change if faculty members feel ill equipped to implement new strategies and further indicate researchers' challenges with assessing behavioral changes as a result of faculty engagement in professional development programs. Given that participants provided detailed descriptions of how they implemented the practices or shared revised artifacts for their upcoming semester (e.g., syllabus excerpts, revised assignment policies, etc.), we can be

fairly certain that teaching behaviors change due to ITEL+. Yet, admittedly, the data collected for this study are still merely scratching the surface. A critical next step for assessing the impact of faculty development programs is assessing how instructors' use of these practices affects students. As I discussed in Chapter 2, ACUE's Analytics team is making trailblazing advancements in this area, with numerous research studies connecting the dots between faculty development efforts and student outcomes. Given the limited length of time, scope, and summer timeline, my research falls short in evaluating student outcomes. Nevertheless, I am hopeful other researchers will heed the call to design longitudinal studies to measure how transformative learning experiences within faculty development programs, as assessed using the LAS and corresponding qualitative data, affect participants' students in subsequent semesters.

Two other key takeaways from the results of Research Question 3 are the influence of institutional leadership and the need for continued learning. In previous chapters, I make an important distinction between ACUE's institutional programs and Open Enrollment programs, with my research being conducted as part of the Open Enrollment offering. A critical success metric for institutional programs is support from leaders, such as presidents, provosts, and department chairs. However, with Open Enrollment, even when institutions include small groups of instructors within our cross-institutional cohorts, there is often a lack of leadership presence. Examples shared for Research Question 3—in particular, the examples of departmental policy changes and how administrators fail to address microaggressions between colleagues—illustrate that faculty members reflecting on and applying inclusive teaching practices is insufficient; for these practices to benefit students and the campus culture as a whole, leaders must

also be equipped with strategies to foster inclusion and belonging across their institutions. Leaders may gain some of these practices by actively listening to instructors who have engaged in training opportunities, like in the departmental policy change example. This would allow leaders to build on their faculty members' momentum and also serve as change agents in their institutional DEI efforts. Conversely, if leaders have no preparation in inclusive and equitable practices, whether through formal instruction or via their faculty, any efforts instructors try to make are likely to fall short of their potential.

Another chief consideration is the need for ongoing learning opportunities, a point raised by many of the participants and frequently coded, resulting in the category of "seeking continuous improvements." Although participants expressed feeling more confident about refining their teaching and more knowledgeable in the ITEL+ topic areas, they also recognized their learning should not stop at the end of the ITEL+ program. In addition to seeking more opportunities for general DEI training and discussions about course topics with their colleagues, participants also voiced specific needs to practice effectively addressing microaggressions, access examples of community agreements, and improve their use of inclusive language, among others. As Cassandra, who has been engaged in DEI work for years, often put it, "I'm on my journey. I'm not there yet." Participants' desire for additional training is important to highlight, because even though they experienced perspective changes leading to deeper reflection and clear plans of action, they understand that becoming more equity-minded is a lifelong journey and is not accomplished simply by participating in a 10-week professional development program.

Now that findings for each research question have been addressed, I return to the conceptual framework for this study and share how the six subcomponents of transformative learning theory—reflection, educator identity, self-efficacy, learning transfer, the role of a facilitator, and social engagement—are represented in the research findings.

Reflection

Previously, I discussed the importance of reflection and how opportunities for reflection are embedded in ACUE's learning design. My study's findings show participants identified two of the primary reflection components of ITEL+, the self-reflection on implicit bias and the Practice & Reflect assignments that appear in every module, as contributing to their perspective changes. Further, Cranton (2016) postulated that, of the three types of reflection (i.e., content, process, and premise), premise reflection, which involves thinking about the personal significance of the learning, is what transforms individuals most because it "engages learners in seeing themselves and the world in a different way" (p. 26). As participants in my study often focused on why they care about DEI and the positive or negative consequences for students, it is evident they engaged in premise reflection, seeing their responsibilities as educators and as humans in a different way by the time the course concluded.

Educator Identity

One of the key findings related to Research Question 3 is that, through their participation in ITEL+, participants reimagined their professional identities as learners. They thought critically about their role as instructors as well as their personal identities. This corresponds with Cranton's (2016) depiction of an educator identity, as

135

transformative learning experiences lead to "changed self-perception . . . [and] reinterpreting their sense of self in relation to the world" (p. 8). How participants reinterpreted their identities is illustrated in the examples of perspective change. For example, before ITEL+, Kate viewed her role as administering and grading exams; however, after engaging in self-reflection during the program, she now perceives part of her role as teaching students effective study strategies to enable their success. The results show participation in ITEL+ also prompted faculty members to consider what they value most as educators. Participants pointed to open communication, preparing students for their careers, transparency, treating students with respect, validating students' feelings, and making sure all voices are heard, among other principles, as core to their teaching philosophies. Articulating these principles made it easier for participants to determine which of the recommended teaching practices align with their values and how they want to present themselves as educators—and as people.

Self-Efficacy

Increasing self-efficacy requires that participants believe they are capable of achieving a specific outcome—in this case, of implementing the recommended practices and positively influencing their students. Although participants had moments of self-doubt (e.g., the code "wondering if I'm capable of teaching"), they had even more moments of self-assurance (e.g., the codes "feeling confident about improving teaching," "feeling knowledgeable in class," "believing in self to mitigate implicit bias in teaching," "feeling validated about things you do well in the module," and "now I have the tools"). If participants had been able to more frequently use the practices with students and observe successes while engaged in ITEL+, I would have expected to see their self-

efficacy develop further, given that experiencing repeated successes is a predictor of increased self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Notably, two other predictors that increase self-efficacy are witnessing others succeed and receiving encouragement from others (Bandura, 1977), both of which occurred during the program. For example, through the Course Demonstration videos, one of the main components that influenced perspective changes, participants are able to observe faculty across the country having success using the recommended practices, and they hear about the positive impact in student interviews. In addition, participants often received encouragement during the Equity Chats and in the Observe & Analyze discussion forums. When Felicia realized she had committed a microaggression against a student, for instance, the other cohort members both empathized with her and instilled confidence that she could use the knowledge she gained from ITEL+ to effectively address her indiscretion with the student. Therefore, although participants may not have received immediate feedback from students indicating the successes of their efforts, they still experienced increased self-efficacy through support from their colleagues.

Learning Transfer

Learning transfer is another important part of the study, as evidenced by Research Questions 1 and 3. I sought to undercover whether participants transferred their learning from ITEL+ into concrete actions in their teaching and nonteaching contexts. This is important because, according to Cranton (2016), a lack of action may indicate the absence of perspective transformation. Results from both research questions demonstrate participants' ability to transfer their learning to their teaching and to their interactions with colleagues and relatives. To name a few teaching examples, Bonnie planned to

create a video of her past students to help combat imposter phenomenon in her current students, Cassandra rewrote the diversity statement on her syllabi, and Robert changed an assignment policy to allow for multiple attempts. Additionally, professional and personal examples include when Cassandra initiated changes to her department's attendance policy based on her learning in ITEL+ and Felicia and Kate reflected on how they could use practices recommended in the course to address microaggressions instigated by their family members. Participants' transfer of their new knowledge to various contexts is likely one of the reasons they experienced perspective changes during the program.

Role of a Facilitator

As the facilitator of the ITEL+ cohort, I sought to ensure participants experienced transformative learning by spending a substantial amount of time writing module announcements to motivate course-takers to fully engage in the content, addressing any frequently cited questions or concerns, and demonstrating that, like them, I also have experiences with these topics and grapple with similar challenges. My commitment to facilitating could also be found in original posts and replies in the Observe & Analyze discussion forums, my timely responses to course-takers' messages, my outreach when course-takers fell behind, and my attentiveness during the Equity Chats. Because I believe knowledge is coconstructed, in keeping with constructivist views, I often used open-ended, prompting questions when I facilitated the Equity Chats and challenged course-takers to progress in their understanding together, rather than immediately connecting them to appropriate strategies. Cranton (2016) described the role of a facilitator as offering encouragement, building trust, addressing learners' needs, and challenging learners' assumptions, all of which I attempted to do. As a result of my

efforts, two of the participants attributed their perspective transformations, in part, to my support. In addition, participants regularly expressed their gratitude toward me during the Equity Chats and in ACUE's module surveys.

Social Engagement

The final subcomponent of transformative learning theory that I highlight in this research is social engagement. According to Mezirow (1978), refining one's practice and sustaining changes requires being in the presence of others who share similar beliefs and can provide encouragement. A critical observation from this study is that participants who were employed at the same institutions, and particularly those in the same departments, often engaged in discussions with one another about the recommended practices in ITEL+ and how they could operationalize these practices in their settings. Kate said she was thankful her colleagues were enrolled in ITEL+:

> I'm fortunate, my colleague that I coteach with, she's taking this class as well. [Cohort member name redacted] and I used to share cohorts of students, so we kind of had some similar experiences perhaps. . . . I'm fortunate that she's taking the class too, because now her and I can bounce ideas off each other and kind of have the same terminology and language.

To cite another example, in one of Zoey's module reflections, she indicates plans to discuss the use of ITEL+ resources, an inclusive syllabus checklist and transparent assignment template, with Deandra and other colleagues in their department at an upcoming curriculum meeting. These relationships with colleagues, which create learner networks (Cranton, 2016), are important to faculty continuing the use of inclusive teaching practices after ITEL+. If changes are not sustained beyond the duration of the

139

program, the transformations that faculty participants reported would be considered superficial.

Communities of Practice

Related to the topic of social engagement and fundamental to my study's framework is the concept of communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The community of practice established through the ITEL+ cohort model was equipped with shared language and practices, as previously discussed, and allowed participants to pursue their common interest of becoming more equity-minded and inclusive educators. Other characteristics of communities of practice can include members working together to actively involve students in their learning and to overcome challenges (Wenger, 1998). The latter is something I regularly observed during our synchronous discussions, such as when participants raised concerns about demonstrating empathy toward students when they wanted students to understand professional expectations (e.g., being timely). Another challenge they debated was providing students with adequate resources versus hand-holding. These discussions provided participants with critical opportunities to exchange ideas and propose solutions aligned with their teaching goals and professional identities. Although ACUE's standard ITEL program includes asynchronous discussion boards where similar points could be raised, participants benefited immensely from problem-solving and relating with one another in real time during the Equity Chats I added to establish ITEL+. In fact, one of the participants called the Equity Chats the best part of the entire program, which I surmise is due to the authentic exchanges that occurred between members of the community of practice.

Implications for Practice

The results discussed in the previous sections have a number of implications for my local and larger contexts. In Chapter 1, I shared research showing faculty members are well positioned to serve as change agents to improve student success and equity. When all students—but especially those considered to be at risk—have positive experiences with faculty, they are more likely to remain enrolled, be engaged in their learning, and feel a sense of belonging (Gutierrez Keeton et al., 2021; Kuh & Hu, 2001; Manning-Ouellette & Beatty, 2019; Strikwerda, 2019). Additionally, when they have a growth mindset about their students, it could outweigh any fixed beliefs students have about their own abilities, given that "what faculty members tell students about their ability to succeed may matter more than what students personally believe" (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2019, p. 5). Although faculty members can take the initiative to improve their teaching and beliefs about students on their own, the present study adds to the body of research indicating that comprehensive faculty development programs and communities of practice can foster major positive outcomes for faculty, and thereby for institutions and their students. In this study, perspective transformation is made possible largely though course learning activities, which should signal to institutional leaders and faculty members that professional development programs can facilitate perspective changes, but only when they are effectively designed and executed. Faculty developers seeking to design their own programs should be intentional about incorporating opportunities for reflection, learning transfer, peer interactions, and support from a seasoned facilitator, because these factors may increase the likelihood of perspective changes occurring.

In Chapter 1, I referred to Addy et al.'s (2021) assertion that instructors want to teach inclusively but many are not equipped with the strategies to do so. Results from the current study show that when faculty are exposed to actionable strategies, such as those in ITEL+, they are able to apply these practices in their teaching, as well as in nonteaching settings. The participants in my study were able to contribute to DEI committees and their department meetings in meaningful and informed ways, leading to positive changes. They also transferred their learning to interactions with colleagues, relatives, and friends, making them better coworkers and people. Importantly, all of the participants were seasoned instructors with years of teaching experience, and many had former training in DEI. Yet, all of the participants, including the one who did not experience perspective transformation, indicated ITEL+ helped them to add "more tools in [their] toolkit," in Deandra's words. This shows the power of ITEL+ to affect both new and veteran instructors' behaviors and that faculty members can implement changes to become more inclusive and equity-minded individuals, if given the tools to do so. Practitioners and researchers alike should view it as their responsibility to help bridge the gap between theory and practice and should have clear systems in place to measure the effects of these efforts.

In terms of my local context, I expected that conducting this research would help me to understand the experiences of faculty who engage in ACUE's ITEL program and inform changes to my work, which is a key feature of action research. The findings of this study confirm the value of this offering and prompt me to consider recommendations I could offer to my team. One is that although faculty members found most of the course learning activities to be essential to transformative learning, none of the participants

deemed writing a note to their future selves as important to their perspective changes. Although my team designed the activity to serve a concrete purpose within ACUE's learning design, it may be worth exploring alternatives that participants would find more helpful or simply revisiting how we convey the purpose of this task. The same could be said of the program launch, which also had a low ranking on the list of learning activities contributing to transformation. Because our organization regularly launches new programs, it is critical to participant retention that these orientation sessions meet our goals of motivating course-takers, building community, and articulating clear expectations for engagement in ACUE courses.

Another important takeaway is how much quality facilitation matters. In recent months, my team has been brainstorming ways to better onboard and provide ongoing support to ACUE's facilitators. My intimate knowledge of our programs and experience as the facilitator in this study make me well positioned to contribute to these conversations. As a facilitator, I benefited from having excellent support from our Open Enrollment Director of Program Management, who organized weekly meetings for all of ACUE's Open Enrollment cohort facilitators to troubleshoot issues and exchange ideas. I found these meetings to be extremely worthwhile and believe a similar model would be advantageous to our institutional cohort facilitators. Moreover, based on my experience, I feel confident advocating for the addition of Equity Chats to both Open Enrollment and institutional cohorts, if facilitators are prepared to effectively lead these discussions. Although the Equity Chats were optional in the current study, the number of participants who attended ranged from 3 to 11 ($M = 6.2$, $SD = 3.11$), representing 12% to 44% of the entire cohort. Anecdotally, I understand that other Open Enrollment facilitators have

attempted to host synchronous discussions in the past but did not have any attendance. I believe my intentional use of warm, welcoming language; calendar invitations; and regular reminders in module announcements likely resulted in these attendance rates. Notably, the same five or six participants regularly joined the sessions, which communicates that they saw value in them. At the same time, keeping the synchronous sessions optional allowed faculty members who preferred to engage in a fully asynchronous experience the ability to do so. Based on these outcomes, I am hopeful that I can support ACUE's continued efforts to ensure quality facilitation in every cohort.

A final observation that has implications for my work at ACUE is that there would be an immense benefit to enrolling more higher education leaders into our cohorts, whether as auditors or participants. As previously discussed, higher education leaders have a crucial role to play, as they can invest in comprehensive faculty development initiatives to increase the widespread use of inclusive teaching practices and model the use of these practices in their interactions with others on campus. In one example shared in the findings section for Research Question 3, Felicia and Kate recognized their leader's inability to address microaggressions, which negatively impacted their work environment. If leaders receive training in these topics, such issues could be mitigated. Fortunately, during the year I spent planning and conducting this study, my team expanded the ITEL microcredential to feature institutional leaders and staff, in addition to instructors, applying inclusive practices in their roles. This new offering, titled Fostering a Culture of Belonging (FCB), supports leaders in developing in the same topic areas that are addressed in ITEL and holds enormous potential to make a difference in equity and inclusion campus wide at institutions across the country.

Challenges and Limitations

Although the results of this study are beneficial, important challenges and limitations also exist. First, as noted in Chapter 2, research results show those who self-select to participate in diversity programs are usually more culturally competent than those who choose not to participate (Goldstein Hode et al., 2018). My sample included faculty members who chose to enroll in ITEL, many of whom had DEI expertise. Although this could affect the potential for perspective transformation, whether positively or negatively, it is important to note that participants may have started ITEL+ with greater cultural competence than the general population of higher education faculty.

Second, a major shortcoming is that I was unable to have all 25 course-takers agree to participate in my study before participating my cohort. Because I was facilitating a preplanned summer program, I had to enroll half of the Open Enrollment participants into my cohort (the other half were assigned to another cohort), which meant that they could complete the microcredential regardless of whether they opted into my study. With only 32% of my full cohort participating in the study, I regrettably missed out on survey, reflection, and meeting data from many cohort members. Two course-takers who regularly attended the Equity Chats were not part of this study, yet I observed perspective changes in them throughout the program. Thus, I ended up with a smaller sample of my cohort than I would have liked. I also cannot assume that my sample is representative of the entire cohort.

Other limitations are related to the timeline of the study. After I designed the study, a new activity was added to the module on microaggressions, based on feedback from previous course-takers. Although participants in this study completed the exercise,

it was not listed as a learning activity on the LAS. Participants could have written it next to "Other" when they checked off survey items, but none did. Had I listed the activity on the LAS, I believe participants would have indicated that it contributed to their perspective changes, given the number of participants who reported that the microaggressions module played a role in their transformations.

Additionally, conducting this research during the summer may be a shortcoming. At ACUE, we stress the importance of implementation in our learning design, prompting participants to apply at least one of the recommended teaching practices in each module with students. Surprisingly, all seven participants who submitted responses on the LAS taught during a portion of ITEL+ ($n = 4$, 57.1%) or during the entire program ($n = 3$, 42.9%). Although they could have used ITEL+ practices in their summer courses, participants almost exclusively wrote about changes they made for the fall semester. I can speculate that participants may not have applied the practices in their summer courses due to condensed schedules or discomfort with making adjustments midcourse, however I cannot be certain. The consequence, however, is that participants missed out on observing student impact while enrolled in ITEL+, which—if the impact were positive— could have led to increased self-efficacy.

Finally, although my role as the cohort's facilitator is not necessarily a limitation, given a researcher's insider status is a central component of action research, it is worth acknowledging that my own biases and online presence had the potential to impact the study's outcomes. As the facilitator, I maintained full control over the module announcements, my participation in discussion forums, the Equity Chats, and my correspondence with participants. I also was aware of how facilitation impacts the

success of faculty development programs and that I could be one of the sources to which participants attributed their perspective changes. However, as the facilitator, I worked to follow best practices for facilitating ACUE courses and teaching online, without performing any actions that fell outside the scope of this role. Additionally, beyond the initial recruitment messaging, I did not refer to the research study, nor did I ask participants about perspective changes, except on the LAS. I also refrained from doing any targeted outreach to recruit cohort members based on their engagement in the Equity Chats; the study's participants responded to recruitment messages that were sent to all cohort members. Moreover, when I developed a plan to analyze the data, I employed a grounded interpretation approach to avoid making "conceptual leaps" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 48). These were intentional steps I took in an effort to mitigate any potential effects.

Recommendations for Future Research

Researchers must continue to evaluate how inclusive teaching programs impact faculty members, including how and to what extent they experience perspective changes. More importantly, changes in student outcomes should be measured. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine whether faculty members sustain changes to their teaching practices over time and how these changes affect student achievement, equity, and retention. With a larger number of participants, researchers could also examine whether variables such as past professional development experiences, self-reported DEI expertise, or years of teaching experience, to name a few, are associated with perspective transformations. If replicating this study, I would also encourage researchers to conduct follow-up interviews with a subgroup of participants to better understand their perspective transformations, a method that King (2009) employed. Although module

reflections offer invaluable insights into participants' perspective changes, interviews would provide additional rich data.

Closing Remarks

The study described in this paper validates that transformative learning theory is a viable framework for evaluating the impact of inclusive teaching programs—and for informing the design of these programs. Because I conducted this study in my own professional context, I have the ability to leverage the findings to make meaningful changes within my organization. However, such efforts also can have a ripple effect. Working with faculty members from four different institutions as part of this study could incite positive changes for the instructors, as well as their colleagues and students, which represents small-scale impact. Yet, because ACUE supports hundreds of institutions in the United States and abroad, any changes I make to our course offerings and facilitation could potentially have a colossal impact on our current and future partners. To conclude, I believe participants' perspective changes can be summarized by the words posted on Felicia's desk: "We all go through mud differently." Perhaps ensuring more faculty members, on a broader scale, receive this message—and gain the instructional practices to reflect this notion in their interactions with students and colleagues—is exactly what we need to achieve "radical change" in our equity and postsecondary education completion agendas.

REFERENCES

Abel, J. R., & Deitz, R. (2014). Do the benefits of college still outweigh the costs? *Current Issues in Economics and Finance, 20*(3). https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/research/current_issues/ci20-3.pdf

Addy, T. M., Dube, D., Mitchell, K. A., & SoRelle, M. E. (2021). *What inclusive instructors do: Principles and practices for excellence in college teaching*. Stylus.

Alsop, E. (2018, February 11). Who's teaching the teachers? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. https://www.chronicle.com/article/Who-s-Teaching-the-Teachers-/242488

American Association of Community Colleges. (2012). *Reclaiming the American dream: Community colleges and the nation's future*. https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/21stCentReport.pdf

American Association of Community Colleges. (2015). *Community college completion report*. http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/Trends/Pages/completion_report.aspx

Aragón, O. R., Dovidio, J. F., & Graham, M. J. (2017). Colorblind and multicultural ideologies are associated with faculty adoption of inclusive teaching practices. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 10*(3), 201–215. https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000026

Association of American Colleges & Universities. (n.d.). *Making excellence inclusive*. https://www.aacu.org/making-excellence-inclusive

Association of College and University Educators. (n.d.). *Inclusive teaching for equitable learning*. https://acue.org/?acue_courses=inclusive-teaching-for-equitable-learning

Association of College and University Educators. (2019). *ACUE student, faculty, and institutional impact research: Independent review process and findings*. https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/ACUE-Research-Review-Findings-2019.pdf

Association of College and University Educators. (2020). *Inclusive and equitable teaching ACUE curriculum crosswalk*. https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ACUE_Inclusive_Equitable_Teaching_Crosswalk_singlepage_110320-1.pdf

Bailey, T. R., Jaggars, S. S., & Jenkins, D. (2015). *Redesigning America's community colleges: A clearer path to success*. Harvard University Press.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, *84*(2), 191–215. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self efficacy: The exercise of control*. Freeman.

Barnett, S. M., & Ceci, S. J. (2002). When and where do we apply what we learn? A taxonomy for far transfer. *Psychological Bulletin, 128*(4), 612–637. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.128.4.612

Barnett, W. S., & Lamy, C. E. (2013). Achievement gaps start early. In P. L. Carter & K. G. Welner (Eds.), *Closing the opportunity gap: What America must do to give every child an even chance* (pp. 98–110). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199982981.003.0007

Baumgartner, L. M. (2001). An update on transformational learning. In S. Merriam (Ed.), *The new update on adult learning theory* (pp. 15–24; New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education No. 89). Jossey-Bass.

Bensimon, E. M. (2009, January 9). *Accountability for equitable outcomes in higher education* [Conference brief]. Roundtable on Increasing Success of Newly Emerging Majority College Students, Center for School Change, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN. https://cue.usc.edu/files/2016/01/Bensimon_Accountability-for-Equitable-Outcomes_brief_final_010709.pdf

Bensimon, E. M., Rueda, R., Dowd, A. C., & Harris, F., III. (2007). Accountability, equity, and practitioner learning and change. *Visions for the Future of Urban Universities, 18*(3), 28–45.

Buss, R. R. (2018). Using action research as a signature pedagogy to develop EdD students' inquiry as practice abilities. *Impacting Education, 3*(1). https://doi.org/10.5195/ie.2018.46

Canning, E. A., Muenks, K., Geren, D. J., & Murphy, M. C. (2019). STEM faculty who believe ability is fixed have larger racial achievement gaps and inspire less student motivation in their classes. *Science Advances, 5*(2). https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aau4734

Carter, P. L., & Welner, K. G. (2013). *Closing the opportunity gap: What America must do to give all children an even chance*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199982981.001.0001

150

Cash, C. M., Cox, T. D., & Hahs-Vaughn, D. L. (2021). Distance educators' attitudes and actions toward inclusive teaching practices. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 21*(2), 15–42. https://doi.org/10.14434/josotl.v21i2.27949

Center for Community College Student Engagement. (2019). *A mind at work: Maximizing the relationship between mindset and student success*. The University of Texas at Austin, College of Education, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy, Program in Higher Education Leadership.

Ceo-DiFrancesco, D., Kochlefl, M. K., & Walker, J. (2019). Fostering inclusive teaching: A systematic approach to develop faculty competencies. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice, 19*(1), 31–43. https://doi.org/10.33423/jhetp.v19i1.666

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage.

Cole, D. (2007). Do interracial interactions matter? An examination of student-faculty contact and intellectual self-concept. *The Journal of Higher Education, 78*(3), 249–281. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2007.11772316

Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning, Jungels, A. M., Patel, C., & Irvin, A. (n.d.). *Inclusive teaching: Supporting all students in the college classroom* [MOOC]. EdX. https://www.edx.org/course/inclusive-teaching-supporting-all-students-in-the

Cox, M. D. (2013). The impact of communities of practice in support of early-career academics. *International Journal for Academic Development, 18*(1), 18–30. https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2011.599600

Cranton, P. (2016). *Understanding and promoting transformative learning: A guide to theory and practice* (3rd ed.). Stylus.

Crawford, E. G. C., & Saluja, S. (2017). Where's my parking permit? Bringing new staff together as a learning community. In J. McDonald, & A. Cater-Steel (Eds.), *Communities of practice: Facilitating social learning in higher education* (pp. 471–504). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2879-3_23

Creswell, J. W., & Guetterman, T. C. (2019). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (6th ed.). Pearson.

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage.

Daniels, T., & Schoem, S. (2020). Preparing inclusive educators through transformative learning [Special issue]. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 163*, 83–90. https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.20418

Dewsbury, B., & Brame, C. J. (2019). Inclusive teaching. *CBE–Life Sciences Education, 18*(2). https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.19-01-0021

Dewsbury, B. M. (2017). On faculty development of STEM inclusive teaching practices. *FEMS Microbiology Letters, 364*(18). https://doi.org/10.1093/femsle/fnx179

Donovan, L., Green, T. D., Besser, E., & Gonzalez, E. (2021). The whole is greater than the sum of the parts: A self-study of equity and inclusion in online teacher education. *Studying Teacher Education, 17*(1), 57–81. https://doi.org/10.1080/17425964.2021.1897975

EAB. (2016). *The evolving role of faculty in student success*. Author.

Engle, J., & Tinto, V. (2008). *Moving beyond access: College success for low-income, first-generation students*. The Pell Institute. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED504448.pdf

Fertig, J. (2012, March 29). *How do professors learn to teach (or do they)?* [Blog post]. https://www.jamesgmartin.center/2012/03/how-do-professors-learn-to-teach-or-do-they/

Fraser, C., Honeyfield, J., Breen, F., Protheroe, M., & Fester, V. (2017). From project to permanence: Growing inter-institutional collaborative teams into long-term, sustainable communities of practice. In J. McDonald, & A. Cater-Steel (Eds.), *Communities of practice: Facilitating social learning in higher education* (pp. 567–598). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2879-3_27

Gallup. (2014). *Great jobs, great lives. The 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index report: A study of more than 30,000 college graduates across the U.S.* https://news.gallup.com/reports/197141/gallup-purdue-index-report-2014.aspx

Gallup & Strada Education Network. (2018). *2018 Strada-Gallup Alumni Survey: Mentoring college students to success*. https://news.gallup.com/reports/244058/2018-strada-gallup-alumni-survey.aspx

Gast, I., Schildkamp, K., & van der Veen, J. (2017). Team-based professional development interventions in higher education: A systematic review. *Review of Educational Research*, *87*(4), 736–767. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654317704306

Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(2), 106–116. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487102053002003

Gillan-Daniel, D. L., Petty, E. M., Schmid, M. E., Stahr, A., & Raymond, N. C. (2020). Addressing biases in health care by promoting inclusive teaching practices among faculty in health professions education programs: "Learning to say the right words at the right time." *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 2020*(162), 123–133. https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.20397

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Aldine de Gruyter.

Glowacki-Dudka, M., Murray, J., & Concepción, D. (2012). Reflections on a teaching commons regarding diversity and inclusive pedagogy. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 6*(2), Article 13. https://doi.org/10.20429/ijsotl.2012.060213

Goldstein Hode, M., Behm-Morawitz, E., & Hays, A. (2018). Testing the effectiveness of an online diversity course for faculty and staff. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 11*(3), 347–365. https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000063

Gutierrez Keeton, R., Mendoza, Y., Zarate, M. E., & Magruder, E. D. (2021). Teaching faculty to reach first-generation college students: The impact of a professional development course on faculty. *College Teaching*. https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2021.1909526

Hall, G. E., & Hord, S. M. (2006). *Implementing change: Patterns, principles, and potholes* (2nd ed.). Pearson.

Harper, S. R., & Hurtado, S. (2007). Nine themes in campus racial climates and implications for institutional transformation. In S. R. Harper, & L. D. Patton (Eds.), *Responding to the realities of race on campus* (pp. 7–24; New Directions for Student Services: No. 120). Jossey-Bass.

Hart Research Associates. (2015). *Falling short? College learning and career success*. http://www.aacu.org/leap/public-opinion-research/2015-survey-results

Harvey, M., & Fredericks, V. (2017). CoPs: Enhancing quality learning and teaching with sessional staff. In J. McDonald, & A. Cater-Steel (Eds.), *Communities of practice: Facilitating social learning in higher education* (pp. 505–523). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2879-3_24

Hecht, D. (2019). *A study of ACUE professional development at Rutgers University–Newark*. Center for Advanced Study in Education. https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/091218_ACUE_CASE_technical-report.pdf

Hengesteg, P. S., Bestler, L., & Marcketti, S. B. (2021). "18 is not a magic number": Faculty reflections on student development theories in creating inclusive classrooms. *Innovative Higher Education*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-021-09558-6

Herr, K., & Anderson, G. L. (2005). *The action research dissertation: A guide for students and faculty*. Sage.

Hirst, R. A., Anderson, K. L., Packard, B. W.-L., Liotta, L. J., Bleakley, B. H., & Lombardi, P. J., & Burkholder, K. C. (2021). Faculty learning at the individual and group level: A multi-year analysis of an interdisciplinary science faculty learning community focused on inclusive teaching and mentoring. *Journal of College Science Teaching, 50*(6), 20–30.

Hogan, K. A., & Sathy, V. (2022). *Inclusive teaching: Strategies for promoting equity in the college classroom*. West Virginia University Press.

Hoyert, M. S., & O'Dell, C. D. (2019). Developing faculty communities of practice to expand the use of effective pedagogical techniques. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 19*(1), 80–85. https://doi.org/10.14434/josotl.v19i1.26775

Hromalik, C. D., Myhill, W. N., Carr, N. R. (2020). "ALL faculty should take this": A Universal Design for Learning training for community college faculty. *TechTrends, 64*(1), 91–104. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-019-00439-6

Hudson, N. J. (2020). An in-depth look at a comprehensive diversity training program for faculty. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 14*(1), Article 3. https://doi.org/10.20429/ijsotl.2020.140103

Humphreys, D. (2012). What's wrong with the completion agenda—and what we can do about it. *Liberal Education, 98*(1), 8–17.

Kensington-Miller, B. (2017). Catalyst: Developing a community of practice for supporting new academics. In J. McDonald, & A. Cater-Steel (Eds.), *Communities of practice: Facilitating social learning in higher education* (pp. 449–469). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2879-3_22

Killpack, T. L., & Melón, L. C. (2016). Toward inclusive STEM classrooms: What personal role do faculty play? *CBE–Life Sciences Education, 15*(3). https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.16-01-0020

King, K. P. (1997). Examining learning activities and transformational learning. *International Journal of University Adult Education, 36*(3), 23–37.

King, K. P. (2009). *The handbook of the evolving research of transformative learning based on the Learning Activities Survey* (10th anniversary ed.). Information Age.

Kuh, G. D., & Hu, S. (2001). The effects of student-faculty interaction in the 1990s. *The Review of Higher Education, 24*(3), 309–332. https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2001.0005

Kumar, R., & Refaei, B. (2021). *Equity and inclusion in higher education: Strategies for teaching*. University of Cincinnati Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 465–491. https://doi.org/10.2307/1163320

Ladson-Billings, G. (2013). Lack of achievement or loss of opportunity? In P. L. Carter & K. G. Welner (Eds.), *Closing the opportunity gap: What America must do to give every child an even chance* (pp. 11–24). Oxford University Press.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press.

Lawner, E. K., Chasteen, A., Lester, K. F., Pippins, T., & Snow, M. (2021). *Cumulative academic impact of students having multiple course experiences with instructors who have completed one or more ACUE microcredential courses*. ACUE. https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/USM-Technical-Report-Booklet.pdf

Lawner, E. K., & Snow, M. (2018). *Teaching makes the difference: Higher student success rates at Delta State University*. ACUE. https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/ACUE_StudentImpactReport_DeltaState_122018_v7.pdf

Lawner, E. K., & Snow, M. (2020). *Advancing academic equity at Broward College: Improved course completion and passing, particularly among Pell-eligible and Black students*. ACUE. https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ACUE_Broward-Tech-Report_100120.pdf

Lawner, E. K., Snow, M., MacCormack, P., Waltje, J. (2019). *Better in Texas! Impact of ACUE-credentialed faculty on student course completion*. ACUE. https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/ACUE_StudentImpactReport_TWU_050719_v2.pdf

Ma, J., Pender, M., & Welch, M. (2016). *Education pays 2016: The benefits of higher education for individuals and society*. The College Board. https://research.collegeboard.org/pdf/education-pays-2016-full-report.pdf

Macdonald, R. H., Beane, R. J., Baer, E. M. D., Eddy, P. L., Emerson, N. R., Hodder, J., Iverson, E. R., McDaris, J. R., O'Connell, K., & Ormand, C. J. (2019). Accelerating change: The power of faculty change agents to promote diversity and inclusive teaching practices. *Journal of Geoscience Education, 67*(4), 330–339. https://doi.org/10.1080/10899995.2019.1624679

Manning-Ouellette, A., & Beatty, C. C. (2019). Teaching socially just perspectives in first year seminars: A faculty guide to strengthen inclusive teaching methods. *The Journal of Faculty Development, 33*(2), 19–24.

Manzo, W. R., & Mitchell, K. M. W. (2018, September 11). We need to rethink training for Ph.D.s. *Inside Higher Ed*. https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2018/09/11/academic-training-phds-needs-focus-more-teaching-opinion

McCormack, C., Kennelly, R., Gilchrist, J., Hancock, E., Islam, J., Northcote, M., & Thomson, K. (2017). From dream to reality: Sustaining a higher education community of practice beyond initial enthusiasm. In J. McDonald, & A. Cater-Steel (Eds.), *Communities of practice: Facilitating social learning in higher education* (pp. 599–622). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2879-3_28

McDonald, J., & Cater-Steel, A. (Eds.). (2017a). *Communities of practice: Facilitating social learning in higher education*. Springer.

McDonald, J., & Cater-Steel, A. (Eds.). (2017b). *Implementing communities of practice in higher education: Dreamers and schemers*. Springer.

McNair, T. B., Bensimon, E. M., & Malcolm-Piqueux, L. (2020). *From equity talk to equity walk: Expanding practitioner knowledge for racial justice in higher education*. Jossey-Bass.

Merisotis, J. (2017, September 14). *We need radical change to hit 60 percent by 2025*. Lumina Foundation. https://www.luminafoundation.org/news-and-views/we-need-radical-change-to-hit-60-percent-by-2025/

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). 'Equity' and 'equality': How they differ and overlap. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved October 29, 2021, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/equality-vs-equity-difference

Mertler, C. A. (2020). *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators* (6th ed.). Sage.

Mezirow, J. (1978). Perspective transformation. *Adult Education Quarterly, 28*(2), 100–110. https://doi.org/10.1177/074171367802800202

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. Jossey-Bass.

Nash, M. (2014, January 22). From weeder to leader [Blog post]. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. https://www.chronicle.com/blogs/conversation/2014/01/22/from-weeder-to-leader/

National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *Undergraduate retention and graduation rates*. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_ctr.asp

Nettles, M. T. (2017). *Challenges and opportunities in achieving the national postsecondary degree attainment goals*. *ETS Research Report Series*. https://doi.org/10.1002/ets2.12141

Newman, T. (2017). Making an impact: Utilising faculty learning communities to enhance teaching and learning. In J. McDonald, & A. Cater-Steel (Eds.), *Communities of practice: Facilitating social learning in higher education* (pp. 423–435). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2879-3_20

O'Leary, E. S., Shapiro, C., Toma, S., Sayson, H. W., Levis-Fitzgerald, M., Johnson, T., & Sork, V. L. (2020). Creating inclusive classrooms by engaging STEM faculty in culturally responsive teaching workshops. *International Journal of STEM Education, 7*(1), Article 32. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-020-00230-7

Oleson, K. C. (2020). *Promoting inclusive classroom dynamics in higher education: A research-based pedagogical guide for faculty*. Stylus.

Ouellett, M. L., & Ivanchikova, M. (n.d.). *Teaching & learning in the diverse classroom* [MOOC]. EdX. https://www.edx.org/course/teaching-learning-in-the-diverse-classroom

Paris, D., & Alim, H. S. (Eds.). (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world*. Teachers College Press.

Pew Research Center. (2014, February). *The rising cost of not going to college*. https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2014/02/11/the-rising-cost-of-not-going-to-college/

Pippins, T., Snow, M., & Lawner, E. K. (2022). *First-year and beyond: Higher retention rates among first-year students taught by ACUE faculty at the University of Southern Mississippi*. ACUE. https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/USM-Technical-Report-Booklet.pdf

Reinholz, D. L., Stone-Johnstone, A., White, I., Sianez, L. M., Jr., & Shah, N. (2020). A pandemic crash course: Learning to teach equitably in synchronous online classes. *CBE–Life Sciences Education, 19*(4), Article 60. https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.20-06-0126

Rodriguez, A. J., Ciftci, A., Howell, K., Kokini, K., Wright, B., & Nikalje, A. (2021). Promoting equity, diversity and social justice through faculty-led transformative projects. *Innovative Higher Education*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-021-09560-y

Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4th ed.). Sage.

Schmid, M. E., Gillan-Daniel, D. L., Kraemer, S., & Kueppers, M. (2016). Promoting student academic achievement through faculty development about inclusive teaching. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 48*(5), 16–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/00091383.2016.1227672

Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Huie, F., Wakhungu, P., Yuan, X., Nathan, A., & Hwang, Y. (2017). *A national view of student attainment rates by race and ethnicity – Fall 2010 Cohort (Signature Report No. 12b)*. National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/Signature12-RaceEthnicity.pdf

Solórzano, D., Ceja, M., & Yosso, T. (2000). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate: The experiences of African American students. *The Journal of Negro Education, 69*(1/2), 60–73.

Strikwerda, C. J. (2019, September 14). Faculty members are the key to solving the retention challenge. *Inside Higher Ed*. https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2019/09/04/faculty-must-play-bigger-role-student-retention-and-success-opinion

Tracy, S. J. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight "big-tent" criteria for excellent qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16*(10), 837–851. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410383121

Trostel, P. (2015). *It's not just the money: The benefits of college education to individuals and to society*. Lumina Foundation. https://www.luminafoundation.org/resource/its-not-just-the-money/

University of Southern California, Center for Urban Education. (n.d.). *Equity mindedness*. https://cue.usc.edu/about/equity/equity-mindedness/

Welner, K. G., & Carter, P. L. (2013). Achievement gaps arise from opportunity gaps. In P. L. Carter & K. G. Welner (Eds.), *Closing the opportunity gap: What America must do to give every child an even chance* (pp. 1–10). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199982981.003.0001

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice*. Cambridge University Press.

APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Craig Mertler
Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - West Campus 602/543-2829
Craig.Mertler@asu.edu

Dear Craig Mertler:
On 3/19/2022 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review: Initial Study	
Title:	Professional Development Made Personal: A Mixed- Methods Investigation of College Instructors' Perspective Transformations in ACUE's Inclusive Teaching Program
Investigator: Craig Mertler	
IRB ID: STUDY00015693	
Funding: None	
Grant Title: None	
Grant ID: None	
Documents Reviewed:	• Candio Sekel_IRBprotocol_03-16-22.docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • CandioSekel_consentform_03-19-22.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • CandioSekel_recruitment_methods_ACUEwebsite_03- 15-22.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • CandioSekel_recruitment_methods_Emailfollowup_03- 16-22.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • CandioSekel_supportingdocuments_03-15-2022.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Response letter, Category: Other;

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 3/18/2022.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required.

Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

REMINDER - - Effective January 12, 2022, in-person interactions with human subjects require adherence to all current policies for ASU faculty, staff, students and visitors. Up-to-date information regarding ASU's COVID-19 Management Strategy can be found here. IRB approval is related to the research activity involving human subjects, all other protocols related to COVID-19 management including face coverings, health checks, facility access, etc. are governed by current ASU policy.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator
cc: Julianne Candio Sekel

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM

My name is Julie Candio Sekel, and I am a doctoral student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU). I am conducting a research study to explore the experiences of college instructors as they learn about, implement, and reflect on inclusive teaching practices as part of ACUE's Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning (ITEL) microcredential program.

I am inviting your participation, which will involve submitting the five module reflections that are embedded in the program, participating in five synchronous discussions with your cohort (optional), and completing a Learning Activities Survey at the end of your experience.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to stop participation at any time. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study, there will not be any penalty (e.g., you can still complete the microcredential through ACUE). You must be 18 years or older to participate.

The benefits to participation are the opportunity to engage in additional learning experiences with your cohort members and to reflect more deeply on your use of inclusive and equitable teaching practices. There are no right or wrong responses in this study. Any findings will be useful to my learning and understanding. There are no foreseeable risks to your participation.

I will be accessing your module reflections and Learning Activities Survey responses with your permission. I will also video record the synchronous module discussions and retain a recording for analysis. Due to the nature of synchronous cohort discussions, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed among cohort participants. However, reflection, survey, and video transcript data will be deidentified during analyses. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications, but your name or image will not be used.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the researcher, Julie Candio Sekel at jcandios@asu.edu or 201-694-6180 or Dr. Craig Mertler, the dissertation chair, at craig.mertler@asu.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at 480-965-6788.

By signing below you are agreeing to be part of the study.

Name:

Signature: Date:

APPENDIX C

LIST OF ITEL MODULE LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND PRACTICES

Module 1: Managing the Impact of Biases
1. Examine how unconscious bias may affect your thoughts, decisions, and actions
   - Reflect on how your identities and implicit biases may impact your teaching
   - View students through an asset-based mindset
   - Use student feedback to continuously improve inclusivity
2. Mitigate the potential of implicit bias in grading practices
   - Use inclusive grading practices to increase equity
   - Use rubrics to ensure equity
3. Use empathy to create equitable learning experiences
   - Use surveys, discussions, and meetings to get to know your students as individuals
   - Design course policies that reflect an understanding of your students

Module 2: Reducing Microaggressions in Learning Environments
1. Recognize and mitigate the impact of microaggressions
   - Recognize microaggressions
   - Address microaggressions
   - Support students who have experienced microaggressions
2. Empower students to recognize and respond to microaggressions
   - Discuss the definition and impact of microaggressions with students
   - Help students respond to microaggressions

Module 3: Addressing Imposter Phenomenon and Stereotype Threat
1. Reduce the impact of imposter phenomenon
   - Recognize indicators of imposter phenomenon
   - Normalize feelings of imposter phenomenon
2. Reduce the impact of stereotype threat
   - Recognize stereotype threat and the impact on students
   - Counteract negative stereotypes
3. Counteract imposter phenomenon and stereotype threat
   - Cultivate a sense of belonging
     - Establish peer-to-peer support
     - Invite former students to share struggles and success strategies
   - Build students' skills to increase their confidence
   - Promote a growth mindset

Module 4: Creating Inclusive Learning Environments
1. Share academic and social support resources
   - Share a variety of resources and opportunities to increase students' sense of belonging
2. Foster appreciation for diverse identities
   - Use inclusive language
   - Prepare students to productively work together
3. Set expectations for productive dialogue

- Create community agreements with students
- Explicitly invite diverse perspectives and viewpoints
- Manage hot moments

4. Provide equitable learning opportunities
- Survey students about the resources they need to learn
- Offer varied assignment types and submissions

Module 5: Designing Equity-Centered Courses

1. Communicate your commitment to diversity and inclusion
- Create an inclusive syllabus
  - Use student-friendly language and visuals
  - Include diversity and accessibility statements
  - Include academic and social support resources
- Incorporate diverse perspectives and experiences in your course
  - Ensure course readings and materials include diverse perspectives
  - Ensure your course examples reflect a diverse society
  - Explore the lack of diverse representation

2. Be explicit about assignment expectations
- Use the transparent assignment template
- Provide examples of student work

3. Ensure your course is accessible to all students
- Build accessibility into your course design
- Use accessible approaches when teaching
- Engage students in producing accessible materials

APPENDIX D

LEARNING ACTIVITIES SURVEY FOR ITEL+

This survey is part of a research project about the experiences of college instructors as they learn about, implement, and reflect on inclusive teaching practices as part of ACUE's Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning (ITEL) microcredential program. I am looking at two aspects of this experience: first, how instructors' perspectives about diversity, equity, and inclusion have or have not changed within teaching and/or nonteaching contexts and, second, what may have contributed to this potential change. Please respond honestly, as there are no right or wrong answers. Any outcomes of this research will be useful to my learning.

The survey is divided into four sections:
- Reflection on Learning Experience (3 questions)
- Individual Learning Activities and Life Changes (4 questions)
- Frequency of Learning Activities and Life Changes (2 questions)
- Demographic Information (11 questions)

In total, the survey consists of 20 questions, with some multipart questions, and takes approximately 10 to 30 minutes to complete, depending on the breadth of your responses to the open-ended questions. Your responses will be confidential. Thank you for your participation.

Part 1: Reflection on Learning Experience

1a. Since you began taking the Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning course, do you believe you have experienced a change **in your perspective about your teaching**?
- Yes
- No

1b. If "yes," please briefly describe this change of perspective.

2a. Since you began taking the Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning course, do you believe you have experienced changes in any of your ideas or points of view **outside of a teaching context**? (Your ideas about implicit bias, microaggressions, or managing hot moments in the workplace or with friends/family may be topics of possible change.)
- Yes
- No

2b. If "yes," please briefly describe this change of perspective.

3. Here is a list of some of the changes you may have experienced in the Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning program. Please check off any that apply to you.
- I had an experience that caused me to question the way I usually act.

- I had an experience that caused me to question my ideas about social roles. (Examples of social roles include what an instructor should do or how a mother or father should act.)
- As I questioned my ideas, I realized I no longer agreed with my previous beliefs or role expectations. (i.e., the role of an instructor…)
- Or instead, as I questioned my ideas, I realized I still agreed with my beliefs or role expectations. (i.e., the role of an instructor…)
- I realized that other people also questioned their beliefs.
- I thought about acting in a different way from my usual beliefs and roles.
- I felt uncomfortable with traditional social expectations.
- I tried out new roles so that I would become more comfortable or confident in them.
- I tried to figure out a way to adopt these new ways of acting.
- I gathered the information I needed to adopt these new ways of acting.
- I began to think about the reactions and feedback from my new behavior.
- I took action and adopted these new ways of acting.
- I do not identify with any of the statements above.

Part 2: Individual Learning Activities and Life Changes

Instructions: If you **have** experienced a change in your perspective, in teaching and/or nonteaching contexts, please continue to question 4 and complete all of Part 2. If you have not experienced such a change, please skip to Part 3, which begins on the next page.

4. Thinking back to when you first realized that your views or perspective had changed, what did learning about inclusive teaching have to do with it?

5. Some possible contributors to such a change are listed below. Please check off all those which may have played a part in this change of perspective.

5a. Was it part of the ITEL program that influenced the change?
- Yes
- No

5b. If "yes," what was it? (Check all that apply.)
- Engaging with the Introductory videos and questions
- Engaging with the Course Demonstration videos
- Engaging with the Expert Insights videos
- Engaging with the Implementation Resources (i.e., Planning Guides)
- Engaging with the Common Challenges and Misconceptions
- Participating in the Observe & Analyze videos and discussions
- Implementing a teaching practice as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment
- Writing a reflection as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment
- Completing the Reflection Survey about my learning and implementation

- Writing a note to my future self
- Exploring the module references
- Completing the self-reflection exercise on implicit bias and privilege
- Participating in the synchronous module discussions on Zoom
- Engaging with the facilitator's announcements and messages
- Doing my own personal reflection, writing about concerns, and/or journaling
- Doing my own research outside of the course
- Collaborating with the colleagues in my cohort
- Reflecting on the structure of the ITEL course
- Participating in the ITEL course launch
- Other: _____

5c. Was it a specific ITEL module that influenced the change?
- Yes
- No

5d. If "yes," which module(s) was it? (Check all that apply.)
- Managing the Impact of Biases
- Reducing Microaggressions in Learning Environments
- Addressing Imposter Phenomenon and Stereotype Threat
- Creating Inclusive Learning Environments
- Designing Equity-Centered Courses

5e. Was it a significant change in your life that influenced the change?
- Yes
- No

5f. If "yes," what was it? (Check all that apply.)
- New teaching assignment within my institution
- New curriculum/learning objectives for my course(s)
- New position/role at my institution
- New leadership at my institution
- New initiatives or institutional priorities at my institution
- New employment at a different institution
- Other: _____

5g. Was it a person who influenced the change?
- Yes
- No

5h. If "yes," what was it? (Check all that apply.)
- A fellow cohort member's support
- A colleague's (who is not enrolled in the ITEL course) support

- The facilitator's support
- The support of a leader at my institution
- A specific interaction I had with one or more of my students while taking the ITEL course
- Reflecting on past or future interactions with one or more of my students while taking the ITEL course
- A specific interaction I had with a friend, family member, coworker, or acquaintance while taking the ITEL course
- Reflecting on past or future interactions with a friend, family member, coworker, or acquaintance while taking the ITEL course
- Other: _____

5i. If none of the contributors to change listed in questions 5a-5h applied, what do you think contributed to the change?

6. What will you do differently in **your teaching** because of this change?

7. What will you do differently in **your life** because of this change?

Part 3: Frequency of Learning Activities and Life Changes

8. Which of the following **have been part of your experience** while engaging in the ITEL program? (Check all that apply.)
- Engaging with the Introductory videos and questions
- Engaging with the Course Demonstration videos
- Engaging with the Expert Insights videos
- Engaging with the Implementation Resources (i.e., Planning Guides)
- Engaging with the Common Challenges and Misconceptions
- Participating in the Observe & Analyze videos and discussions
- Implementing a teaching practice as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment
- Writing a reflection as part of the Practice & Reflect assignment
- Completing the Reflection Survey about my learning and implementation
- Writing a note to my future self
- Exploring the module references
- Completing the self-reflection exercise on implicit bias and privilege
- Participating in the synchronous module discussions on Zoom
- Engaging with the facilitator's announcements and messages
- Doing my own personal reflection, writing about concerns, and/or journaling
- Doing my own research outside of the course
- Collaborating with the colleagues in my cohort
- Reflecting on the structure of the ITEL course
- Participating in the ITEL course launch
- Other: _____

9. Which of the following occurred during the time you were engaged in the ITEL program? (Check all that apply.)
- New teaching assignment within my institution
- New curriculum/learning objectives for my course(s)
- New position/role at my institution
- New leadership at my institution
- New initiatives or institutional priorities at my institution
- New employment at a different institution
- Other: _____

Part 4: Demographic Information

10. Other ACUE courses completed:
- The inclusive teaching microcredential was my first experience engaging in an ACUE program.
- I have engaged in a few of ACUE's learning modules, but I have not earned any microcredentials or certificates.
- I have completed one microcredential (6- or 7-module) program other than this inclusive teaching microcredential.
- I have completed between 8 and 24 ACUE modules (multiple microcredentials), but have not yet completed a full, 25-module course.
- I have completed a full, 25-module course (e.g., Effective Teaching Practices or Effective Online Teaching Practices).
- I have earned my Advanced Certificate in Effective College Instruction, having completed both Effective Teaching Practices and Effective Online Teaching Practices.
- Other: _____

11. How many years have you taught in higher education?

12. Which of the following best describes your employment status at your institution?
- Tenured faculty member
- On a tenure track (not yet tenured)
- Adjunct/non-tenure-track faculty member
- Faculty member at an institution with no tenure system
- Full- or part-time nonteaching staff member
- Graduate or teaching assistant
- Other: _____

13. Which of the following best describes your employment as a postsecondary educator?
- Employed full time at one community college, college, or university
- Employed part time at one community college, college, or university
- Employed the equivalent of full time at more than one community college, college, or university

- Other: _____

14. Approximately how many students do you teach in a typical academic year?

15. In what academic discipline do you teach?

16. Do you teach courses in an online, face-to-face, or hybrid format?
- I teach only face-to-face courses.
- I teach only hybrid or hyflex courses.
- I teach only online courses.
- I teach a mix of face-to-face, hybrid/hyflex, and online courses.

17. Please share when, if at all, you were teaching during your participation in the ITEL program.
- I taught for the duration of the ITEL program.
- I taught during some part of completing the ITEL program.
- I did not teach while completing the ITEL program.

18. What is your race/ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic, Latino, Latina, or Latinx
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- An option not listed here
- Prefer not to say

19. With what gender do you identify?
- Female
- Nonbinary
- Male
- An option not listed here
- Prefer not to say

20. Is there anything else you would like to share that was not addressed in your previous responses?

APPENDIX E

MODULE REFLECTION ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES AND SUBMISSION SPACE

Module reflection page in Canvas

ITEL1: Practice & Reflect I - Reflection Assignment

Implemented   Submit   Result

Review practices for this module

Once you have completed the Self-Reflection for Educators exercise, use the list below to review the practices highlighted in the module. Select one or two of those practices that, based on your self-reflection, your engagement with the course content, and your students, you feel would help to mitigate the potential for implicit bias to negatively impact your students.

1. **Examine how implicit bias may affect your thoughts, decisions, and actions**.
   - Work to view students through an asset-based mindset *(Download the implementation resource on the asset-based mindset.* ⤓ *)*
   - Use student feedback to continuously improve inclusivity *(Download the implementation resource on soliciting feedback.* ⤓ *)*
2. **Mitigate the potential impact of bias in grading practices.**
   - Use inclusive grading practices to increase equity *(Download the implementation resource on inclusive grading practices.* ⤓ *)*
   - Use rubrics to ensure equity *(Download the implementation resource on using rubrics to ensure equity.* ⤓ *)*
3. **Use empathy to create equitable learning experiences.**
   - Use surveys, discussions, and meetings to get to know your students as individuals *(Download the implementation resource on getting to know your students.* ⤓ *)*
   - Design course policies that reflect an understanding of your students *(Download the implementation resource on designing course policies.* ⤓ *)*

Select your practice(s) for reflection

Select the primary practice you will discuss in your reflection

Choose a primary practice	▼

Select any additional secondary practices you will discuss in your reflection (optional)

Choose a secondary practice

I'm ready to write my reflection

Reflection assignment guidelines page in Canvas

ITEL1: Practice & Reflect I - Reflection Assignment

Implemented ——— Submit ——— Result

Practice(s) Implemented Change

Primary practice: Work to view students through an asset-based mindset

Secondary practice(s): Use student feedback to continuously improve inclusivity

Write reflection assignment

Now that you have selected the practices you will reflect on, please use this checklist and rubric ⬇ as well as the reflection guide ⬇ to ensure your reflection is complete. The reflection guide can also be submitted as your assignment. Please see the questions and sample responses below to better understand the expectations.

1. **What did you learn about your identities and privilege, and the assumptions you might make about your students and others?**
   a. To meet the criteria, share what you learned through this reflection.
      ▪ For example: *I found the privilege exercise to be very impactful. I always bristled a bit when others talked about privilege because I worked so hard to get through school. Nothing was handed to me and I found it challenging but persevered. Looking at the different types of privilege and hearing Dr. Ruiz-Mesa point out the privilege of being educated or being able to speak out without fear of repercussions made me think more deeply about this. I also realized that I sometimes make assumptions about my students because of my own experiences as a student. Because I worked hard to get through school, I assume my students who may miss a class or be late passing in an assignment just aren't working hard enough.*
   b. To exceed the criteria, include an explanation of how your identities, privilege, and assumptions may be impacting your students and others.
      ▪ For example: *Thinking about the assumptions I make about my students based on my own identities and privilege and the associated biases made me think about prior interactions I've had with my students. Through this reflection, I realized that the assumptions I was making about their commitment to school made me less lenient with late work and absences. In listening to the students who were interviewed, I saw how this approach may make my students think that I don't care about their success.*

2. **Which of the practices shared by the experts and faculty in this module are you planning to implement to help mitigate your implicit biases?**
   a. To meet the criteria, describe the practice or practices you plan to implement and why they were selected.
      ▪ For example: *I plan to use a survey to get to know my students as individuals and then follow up with office hours for groups. I want my students to be successful and I want them to know I'm here to support them. Without really understanding their goals and challenges I won't get there. Through the survey and office hours, I will be better able to know them as individuals, understand the challenges they face and therefore better support them.*
   b. To exceed the criteria, include an explanation of the steps you will take to implement the practice or practices you selected.
      ▪ For example: *I really liked the technology questions that were asked by Dr. Blalock. I assume that all students have access to technology but now realize that may not be the case. I have had office hours before and only a few students show up. I am going to rename them student hours and give extra credit for the first visit. I'm also going to have group drop-in hours where students can just come by without an appointment and work with others or ask questions.*

3. **How will you know if you are successful?**
   a. To meet the criteria, share how you will continuously reflect on the progress you are making in mitigating the impact of implicit bias in your teaching.
      ▪ For example: *I am taking this microcredential because I want to hone my skills at becoming an inclusive teacher, so I decided earlier this semester to keep a teaching journal. I will add a discussion of these two practices to my journal entries. I will also use the anonymous survey that a few instructors mentioned. I found the Observe & Analyze interesting and was intrigued by what the instructor learned from her students. I'm still a little unsure of the questions I should ask but the examples in the course will help me develop a useful tool.*
   b. To exceed the criteria, share the strategies you will take if your efforts are not successful.
      ▪ For example: *It's never easy to receive negative feedback and I know from my own experience, that I tend to find excuses or write it off. It will be important for me to remember this and take the feedback at face value. If a student has shared a negative experience, I need to own their thoughts and feelings. I will plan to respond to negative feedback found in the surveys by addressing it head on, reflecting on my own behaviors and to consider how I may approach situations differently.*

Reflection assignment submission page

ITEL1: Practice & Reflect I - Reflection Assignment

Submitted: 11/20/2021, 7:56:48 PM

Implemented ——— Submitted ——— Result
Go back

Great job! Your reflection assignment has been submitted!

Your reader will review your assignment and provide you with feedback and a score. You will be notified when your assignment has been scored. To view your submission, click here.

In the meantime, please proceed to the **reflection survey** to complete the module:

Complete Reflection Survey

177

APPENDIX F

EQUITY CHAT FLYER

YOU'RE INVITED TO
EQUITY CHATS

For ITEL Summer Cohort A

SCHEDULE

Mod 1 | Embracing Assets
Thursday, June 2nd, 2-3pm EST

Mod 2 | The Microaggressions Paths We Traveled
Tuesday, June 14th, 7-8pm EST

Mod 3 | Where I Belong
Thursday, June 30th, 2-3pm EST

Mod 4 | An Inclusive Space Looks...
Thursday, July 14th, 2-3pm EST

Mod 5 | Designing for Equity
Thursday, July 28th, 2-3pm EST

ON THE AGENDA

- Build community
- Collaborate on ways to implement practices to maximize student impact
- Reflect on how to apply learning in other settings
- Wrestle with challenges—with your cohort's support!

APPENDIX G

RESEARCH QUESTION 1 CODEBOOK

Code	Level	Corresponding survey item(s)	Example(s)
Disorienting dilemma	1. A disorienting dilemma	I had an experience that caused me to question the way I usually act.	"Engaging in this module made me rethink everything."
		I had an experience that caused me to question my ideas about social roles. (Examples of social roles include what an instructor should do or how a mother or father should act.)	"When I watched the video on microaggressions, I realized I had inadvertently committed microaggressions against my students."
Self-examination	2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame	As I questioned my ideas, I realized I no longer agreed with my previous beliefs or role expectations. (i.e., the role of an instructor…) Or instead, as I questioned my ideas, I realized I still agreed with my beliefs or role expectations. (i.e., the role of an instructor…)	"I used to think there was nothing wrong with saying 'Where are you *really* from?' to minoritized groups, but now I see it as adding another papercut to cuts they have felt their whole lives."
Critical assessment	3. A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions	I felt uncomfortable with traditional social expectations.	"As a professor, I feel pressure to have all the answers. I realize now that it's OK to admit that I experience imposter phenomenon."
Recognition	4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation formation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change	I realized that other people also questioned their beliefs.	"When I read the O&A discussion comments, I realized that my peers also questioned whether they had committed microaggressions against their colleagues."

Exploration	5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions	I thought about acting in a different way from my usual beliefs and roles.	"I realized that part of my responsibility is to caption every video and offer it to every student, rather than just those who ask for accommodations."
Action planning	6. Planning of a course of action	I tried to figure out a way to adopt these new ways of acting.	"I thought about what might happen if I started using the transparent assignment template to share guidelines with my classes."
Knowledge acquisition	7. Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans	I gathered the information I needed to adopt these new ways of acting.	"I read Zoom how-to guides to learn about captioning." "I watched a video on inclusive syllabi."
Trying new roles	8. Provisional trying of new roles	I tried out new roles so that I would become more comfortable or confident in them.	"I started to become more lenient with my attendance policy to see if it impacted students."
Building confidence and competence	9. Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships	I began to think about the reactions and feedback from my new behavior.	"I thought about how changing my late-work policy would impact my students who work while going to school." "I considered how developing class norms with students would help them feel ownership of the learning environment."
Reintegration	10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective	I took action and adopted these new ways of acting.	"Based on my new view that students need opportunities to make mistakes, I changed my policy to allow for exam retakes."